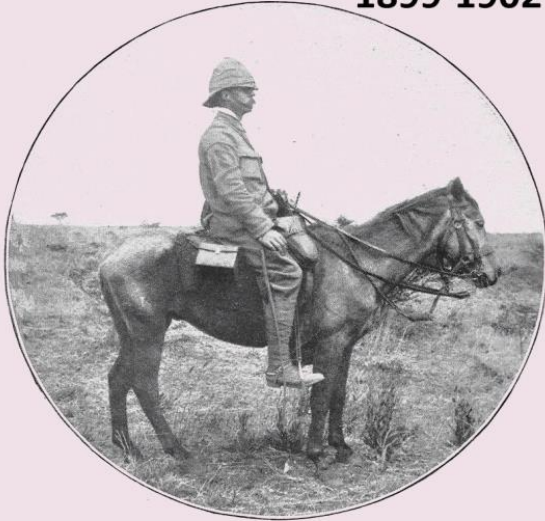


British Military Chaplaincy and Religion in South Africa 1899-1902



Dahlia Harrison

Be different: buy direct
from the author or
tslbooks.uk

Introduction

For there is nothing hidden except for the purpose of being exposed;
nothing has become carefully concealed but
for the purpose of coming into the open.

Mark 4:22

The main reason for writing this book is to perpetuate the memory of those chaplains who served alongside the Victorian soldier during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. There is no intention to glorify war, to criticise or defend the British Army in the field or at home, or the individuals, institutions or nations involved in the conflict. The lost voices of these men deserve to be given a hearing so this is an attempt to 'bring them into the light of the world.' There was a 'Ministry on the Move,' and their privations and hardships were many. Their service impacted on the changes in the post-war years, not least the number of chaplains who would be needed in any future campaign.

Over the last decade, British Army chaplaincy has been given a great deal of attention. This is to the credit of a minority of historians who had the foresight to study and research in depth the linkages that exist between religion and war. Despite a significant number of academic publications there are still areas of this subject insufficiently studied. Indeed, recent scholarship shows that interest in the subject has concentrated on the First World War (1914-1919), understandable due to the centenary commemorations held between 2014 and 2018. The shortage of detailed studies of the influence of the British Army chaplain and religion on the late Victorian soldier represents a significant gap in the history of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department (RACHD).

The most recent history of the RACHD spans the period from the early eighteenth-century to the Cold War (1945-1980), illustrating the major role that the Department played in the British Army.¹ At the time of its publication, it was considered that the history of the RACHD had a much greater significance for British religious history than it had

¹ Michael Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains' Department Clergy under Fire*, (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2008)