

ROMAN NIR

**THE ACTIVITIES OF THE POLISH SECTION
“WAR RELIEF SERVICES-NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE” IN GREAT BRITAIN
FROM 10.12.1943 TO 31.07.1946**

INTRODUCTION

Another financially independent and most active constituent society is a branch of the United States. This has its aim:

1. The establishment and conducting of Catholic welfare centres for Poles in Great Britain.
2. The Care of Polish children in this country.
3. The assistance of D.P's, including European Voluntary Workers of all nationalities in this country.
4. The assistance of other societies and centres working for the above in this country.

Already 122 centres have been established, including 4 hostels, 38 canteens with recreational centres, 65 rest and recreational centres with no canteen attached, 10 training and workshop centers, 1 study centres 3 nurseries and 1 general distributing store. These establishments are at present mostly in camps and hostels for Polish workers, but they are also in towns cities where Poles are settled.

Workshop training includes carpentry, electrical, motor and radio engineering and repairs, weaving, rug-making book-binding, machine-knitting tailoring, dressmaking, shoemaking and leather work. More than 3,500 Poles completed their training in N.C.W.C. workshops and received official certificates.

Over six million visitors have been received in N.C.W.C. centre since they began to operate in 1943, and during the last 18 months over 4,400 garments and 41,000 lbs. of food have been distributed. The feeding of 1,800 undernourished children has been undertaken. 23 non – N.C.W.C. centres have been assisted. Books and Catholic periodicals are sent regularly to many Polish camps and hostels.

N.C.W.C. – Polish Projects in Great Britain have been most happy to co-operate with all other Catholic societies engaged on Polish welfare in the United Kingdom, and have worked for this throughout¹.

REPORT ON W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. POLISH PROJECTS

W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. Polish Projects activities in Gt. Britain started at the very moment of the arrival 30.11.1943 of the Rev. A.J. Wycislo, Delegate of W.R.S. – N.C.W.C., nominated by Executive Committee as Field Director, Polish Projects. Together Most Rev. Bishop J. Gawlina, chairman of N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in the Middle East and in Gt. Britain, Rev. Wycislo decided to create 12 N.C.W.C. Centers for Poles in Gt. Britain. The stations and troops which were to have these Centers and which kind of Centers they were to be was also confirmed. Rev. Wycislo made an estimate of 65.000 dollars for the establishment of these 12 Centers and their conducting for 9 months, i.e. from 1.1.1944 to 30.9.1944. The above mentioned sum 65.000 dollars was received by Bishop Gawlina very promptly.

Bishop Gawlina immediately created in London an N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gt. Britain Committee who set to work at once. Very Rev. Canon A.R. Gogoliński-Elston was nominated Hon. Secretary of this Central Committee and was made responsible administrator for all N.C.W.C. Polish Project activities in Gt. Britain. The common aims of N.C.W.C. activities all over the world were directing aims of N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gt. Britain Central Committee.

The especial aim was to have care about the Polish Soldier, his spiritual and moral welfare, and to ensure his cultural development in a truly Catholic and Polish atmosphere.

¹ D. SZOPIŃSKI, *Katolicka Rada Narodowa (National Catholic Welfare Council)*, "Przegląd Kościelny –The Polish Ecclesiastical Review". A Monthly Publication for the Clergy. Published by the Association of the Polish Clergy of America, vol. 10, 1923, no 2, pp. 61-66; War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference, Introduction. The Catholic University of America. Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Washington, pp. 250-260 (hereafter CUA); Archives Rev. Msgr Alexander Gogoliński-Elston, War Relief Services-NCWC, Polish Projects in Great Britain, London, pp. 49, (hereafter AGOG); R. NIR, *Materiały archiwalne Sekcji Polskiej War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference w Orchard Lake i Londynie*, Rom 1999, pp. 213-250.

The cultural aids bought for N.C.W.C. Centers in Gt. Britain were destined to be used after the war by Polish people in Poland. Fr. Gogolinski-Elston was ordered to start work immediately and already on the 10th of December 1943 the Polish Hearth in Blackpool was taken over, as the first N.C.W.C. Centre for Poles in Gt. Britain. On the 12th of December 1943 N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreational Centre for Polish University Students was opened in Edinburgh, 15th of December 1943 an N.C.W.C. Polish Air Force Canteen in Blackpool was opened, 24th of December 1943 an N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreational Centre for Polish Convalescent Airmen in Blackpool and N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreational Centre in Special Secret Duty Detachment in “X” (military secret) were created.

The year 1944 began with these 5 N.C.W.C. Centers well established. From the beginning in spite of having N.C.W.C. money great difficulties in organization were experienced because of lack of N.C.W.C. plenipotentiary power from the N.C.W.C. Executive Committee or from Field Director. Polish Projects. At that time the Y.M.C.A. had usurped a *quasi*-monopoly for creating and conducting welfare centers in the Polish Forces, stationed in Gt. Britain. Many Protestant institutes, e.g. Church of England, Church of Scotland, Salvation Army canteens etc. were already in existence in camps and station where Polish Forces were².

In consolidation of extraordinary specific conditions in Gt. Britain and especially in the Polish Forces these difficulties seemed insurmountable. It was decided that all N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gt. Britain should be created under the title of: “W.R.S. – National Catholic Welfare Conference”

with the subtitle: “Institutes of the Polish Military Bishop”. It was this which made easier the creating of N.C.W.C. Centers for Poles everywhere in Gt. Britain. Because the N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gt. Britain Committee did not know of the general N.C.W.C. badge, the Polish military chaplains badge (Cross on Eagle) was used in every N.C.W.C. Centre in Gt. Britain. (Fr. Gogolinski-Elston saw the

² AGOG, “Polish Projects”, pp. 1-5; The Most Rev. Aloysius John WYCISLO, June 17, 1918 Chicago – died October 11, 2005 Green Bay. From 1934 to 1940 he was an assistant pastor and youth ministry leader at St. Michael Parish in Chicago. He was named assistant director of Chicago archdiocesan Catholic Charities in 1939 and earned a master’s degree in social work The Catholic University of America in Washington in 1942. In 1943, when the U.S. bishops established War Relief Services-later renamed Catholic Relief Services-he was named field director for relief operation in the Middle East, India and Africa. Over the next decade, he and his staff of 125 resettled 600,000 to 700,000 war refugees. He also organized postwar relief and development programs in France, Great Britain, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania. Many foreign governments, including Italy, France, Poland, Belgium, Spain and several countries in Latin America, decorated him for his work in relief and rehabilitation.

official N.C.W.C. badge for the first time in August last year, when Rev. Wycislo gave him this sleeve N.C.W.C. badge)³.

The general management of N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gr. Britain from the very beginning of its work faced a problem, upon the solution of which depended the development of all N.C.W.C. activities in Gt. Britain: i.e.

a. to centralize the whole work in one central N.C.W.C. office, which would have entailed a large central staff and large administrative personnel in each individual N.C.W.C. Centre,

b. or to decentralize the whole work calling upon the good will and generosity of Polish military chaplains.

The latter course was chosen by Most Rev. Bishop Gawlina. This caused a fundamental and essential change of conception of N.C.W.C. organization in Gt. Britain, but it was really a happy choice⁴.

The chaplains were the right men in the right places. They found the proper people to help them in their new work. For each N.C.W.C. Centre there had to be a local committee, who were responsible for N.C.W.C. activity, and had autonomy (within proper and wise limits) so that these good-willed people working sometimes very hard had the satisfaction of achievement.

Directors were sent by the N.C.W.C. Secretariat (Polish Projects in Gt. Britain) that:

1. money must not be wasted on rent for premises, but to try to obtain rent-free premises from military authorities, magistrates or local societies,

³ Very Rev. Msgr Rafał GOGOLINSKI-ELSTON (1902-1982), priest of diocese in Łuck in the east Poland. On July 1, 1934, he was appointed to the Polish Army. He became the chaplain of the 21st Warsaw Regiment He was the editor of the monthly "Rozkaz Wewnętrzny Biskupa Polowego Wojsk Polskich" Warsaw-Londyn. He was wounded 1939 and together with Bishop J. Gawlina and the made in Romania. On March 7, 1941 he became the chaplain of the Polish Air Force in Blackpool, England. From 1943 he became the director of the charity organization of the American Episcopate War Relief Service-National Catholic Welfare Conference in Great Britain. He was awarded the Silver Cross of the Virtuti Militari Order, the British Empire Order. He was a prelate and canon.

⁴ Archbishop Joseph F. GAWLINA (1892-1964). Theological and philosophical studies in Wrocław. He was ordained on June 19, 1921 by Cardinal Bertram. Soon after his ordination he was appointed administrator of a large parish in Wielkie Debiensko, Polish Silesia. When a new Silesian Diocese was formed in Poland, Rev. Gawlina was appointed its secretary general by the then Apostolic Administrator of the diocese Katowice. Catholic Press Agency in Warsaw and served as its director until 1930. In 1933 the Holy Father designated Msgr. Gawlina as Military Bishop for the Polish Armed Forces. From 1933 to 1939 Bishop Gawlina reorganized religious activities in the Polish Armed Forces. In 1935 Bishop Gawlina represented the Polish Hierarchy at the Golden jubilee of the Polish Seminary in Orchard Lake, Michigan. Upon the occupation of Poland by Germany and Russia, Bishop Gawlina proceeded to Rome where he was given extension of jurisdiction to cover Polish exiles on foreign soil. Archbishop Gawlina has a military rank of Lieutenant General.

2. furniture and furnishing should be borrowed; bought only when unobtainable in any other way,

3. only necessary equipment should be bought,

4. administrative personnel wherever possible to be obtained from military authorities (Polish N.C.O.s and Polish WACs) or to be voluntary helpers, – or paid by Polish Red Cross,

5. saving money in the above mentioned ways the whole financial effort would be directed to the best conducting of the local N.C.W.C. Centre according to recognized N.C.W.C. ideals.

All these directions were perfectly understood and followed by Polish military chaplains who showing the greatest effort in their N.C.W.C. work, gathered together around themselves the best people, who aimed only at the moral and social welfare of the Polish Soldier fighting so far from his own country.

The chaplains' personal hard work, their own magnificent initiative, & the help of voluntary workers, who always and everywhere responded to the chaplains' & call – gave really marvellous result. During the length of time covered by this report i.e. from 10.12.1943 to 31.7.1946 (i.e. more than 31 months), instead of 12 N.C.W.C. centers for 9 months (i.e. 108 working months) there were established and running in Gt. Britain 62 N.C.W.C. Polish Projects (counting number of months of running existence of individual centres: total: 833 ½ months).

Money received from Rt. Rev. Mgr O'Boyle: 89.000 dollars

Statement: 1.8.1946:

a. NCWC Central Found: approx. 12.000 dollars

b. Presumed balance at NCWC individual Centers

– appr. 12.000 dollars

Total: approx. 24.000 dollars

(Notice: Presumed balance at NCWC individual Centers is quite sure and without doubt).

Generally speaking the expenditure was only approx. 65.000 dollars, i.e. money received from Rt. Rev. Mgr O'Boyle: 24.12.43-26.2.1944⁵.

There were 62 N.C.W.C. Polish Projects established and run in Gt. Britain from 10.12.1943 to 31.7.1946. And there are still 35 running NCWC Centers. This

⁵ Patrick A. O'BOYLE, cardinal, executor director NCWC-WRS 1943-1947; executor director Catholic Charities of New York Archdiocese 1947-1948; M. McGREGOR, *O'Boyle, Patric Aloysius (1896-1997)*, in: *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, ed. M. Glazier, T.J. Shelley, Collegeville, Minnesota 1997, pp. 1064-1066.

will always be the pride and glory of American and Polish Catholic work and cooperation in Gt. Britain, a testimony to the magnificent effort of Polish military chaplains and to the wonderful work of all the wonderful work of all the good people who were their willing helpers.

And all of this was possible only thanks to the great generosity of U.S. Catholic Bishops, the War Relief Services, National Catholic Welfare Conference, N.C.W.C. Executive Committee and their excellent Committee and Field Directors.

I. ORGANIZATION

1. W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. Executive Committee

From the very beginning, owing to war conditions, it was very difficult to keep in permanent touch with the above Committee and Field Director, Polish Projects. Rev. Fr. Wycislo, passing through London to the Middle East in December 1943, gave a few general directions about the work to be done, in Gt. Britain, but little was said about general N.C.W.C. rules of organization. That is why although in Gt. Britain the aims of N.C.W.C. were just the same as everywhere where the work was under the personal guidance of the Field Directors, the basis of organization in Gt. Britain developed on different lines; as was outlined at the beginning of this report.

In January 1944 Rev. Fr. Wycislo sent a preliminary estimate budget of 65.000 dollars for 12 N.C.W.C. to be run for 19 months. In August 1945 Rt. Rev. Msgr. B. Michalski and Very Rev. Fr. Gogolinski-Elston met Very Rev. Fr. Swanstrom and Very Rev. Fr. Wycislo in London, and were told that they could have a new budget estimate 15.000 per year. At the same time Fr. Wycislo gave to Fr. Gogolinski-Elston rules for running N.C.W.C. Canteens in II Polish Corps in Italy and in Middle East. But it was too late completely to change N.C.W.C. organization (Polish Projects) in Gt. Britain, and it would have been expensive and unnecessary as the work had been proceeding nearly two years most efficiently and at a very low cost financially. As has been remarked earlier N.C.W.C. in Gt. Britain by decentralization avoided the necessity for a large, paid administrative staff⁶.

Other conferences between N.C.W.C. Representatives from United States and N.C.W.C. in Gt. Britain, took place: in March 1944: Mr. Bruce Mohler – Most Rev.

⁶ Rev. Msgr B. MICHALSKI (1892-1968). Dean General of the Polish Army. In the Polish Army from 1919. 1919-1920 chaplain on field hospitals. From 1921 to 1933 worked in the Curia of the Polish Army. From 1940 to 1946 he worked in the Curia of the Polish Armed Forces in France and then in Great Britain. From 1964 he was a Vicar General for Poles in England. He was awarded the Medal of Independence and a Gold Cross of Merit.

Bishop Gawlina and Fr. Gogolinski; in April 1945: Very Rev. Fr. J.P. Boland – Most Rev. Bishop Gawlina, Fr. Gogolinski – but these latter conferences seemed to be rather unofficial. Representatives of N.C.W.C. from U.S. visited N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gt. Britain⁷.

1. Mr Joseph Wnukowski: December 1943 (7.12.):

1. Blackpool-Polish Hearth – Rest and Recr. Centre
2. Blackpool-Polish Air Force NCWC Canteen – with Rest and Rect. Centre

2. Mr. Bruce Mohler: March 23, 1944:

1. Blackpool-NCWCPolish Hearth – Rest and Recr. Centre with Canteen
2. Blackpool-NCWCCanteen – with Rest and Recr. Centre
3. Blackpool-NCWCRest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen in Conv. Depot

3. Very Rev. Fr. J.P. Boland – 14-15.4.1945:

1. Blackpool: NCWCPolish Hearth
2. Blackpool: NCWCCanteen
3. Blackpool: NCWCTraining Centre
4. Sealand: NCWCRest and Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
5. Sealand: NCWCRest and Rect. Centre for Polish WAAFs (WACs)
6. Ormskirk: NCWCRest and Recr. Centre for Soldiers in Gen. Military Hospital (Polish) – (Fr. Boland opened this Centre)

7. Ormskirk: NCWCRest and Recr. Centre for Soldiers (TB Section) in Pol. Gen. Mil. Hospital – (Fr. Boland opened this Centre himself)

8. MorecambeNCWCRest & Recr. Centre with Canteen for Polish Airmen
9. Halton: NCWCRest & Recr. Centre for Polish Air Force Youth
10. London: NCWCRest & Recr. Centre with Canteen for Polish Airmen
11. London: NCWCRest & Recr. Centre for Polish N.C.O.s. (Army)
12. London: NCWCRest & Recr. Centre for Polish Mil. Police Soldiers

As is known they reported their remarks and impressions directly to Rt. Rev. Mgr. P. O’Boyle.

In addition to list of NCWC Centers in Gt. Britain visited by NCWC Representatives from U.S., it could be added that Mr. Joseph Wnukowski passing through Gt. Britain from East Africa to U.S. this August has visited following NCWC Centers⁸.

⁷ Msgr. J.P. BOLAND, hospital director Buffalo diocese 1928-1937; director Official Nurses Registry, chairman New York State Labor Relations 1937-1945; director emeritus Buffalo Diocese; Member council on Nursing New York State; Protonotary Apostolic 1955.

⁸ Joseph Stanley WNUKOWSKI, social services. Director WRS-NCWC East Africa 1943-1946; Director Orphan’s Project Catholic Commission for Refugees N.Y.C. 1946-1952; Order of Polonia Restituta.

1-3.8.1946:

1. London: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Mil. Police Soldiers
2. London: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish N.C.O.s
3. London: NCWC Canteen for Soldiers in Pol. Gen. Staff HQ – (where Mr. Wnukowski was present at opening ceremony)
4. Cammeringham: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
5. Cammeringham: NCWC Training Centre (Tailoring and Dress making)
6. Dunholme Lodge: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Scouts
7. Dunholme Lodge: NCWC Training Centre (Knitting by machine)
8. Welton: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
9. Cranwell: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Air Force Youth
10. Skallingtherpe: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
11. Donna Nook: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles – prisoners of War in Gr. Britain.

8.8.1946:

12. London: NCWC Rest & Recr. Centre with Canteen for Polish Airmen (P.A.F.HQ).

2. W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gr. Britain Committee.

The above Committee consist of:

Chairman: Most. Rev. Bishop J.F. Gawlina, Military Bishop

Members: Rt. Rev. Msgr. B. Michalski. Vicar General to the Polish Forces in Gt. Britain Prince K. Radziwill

Prof. Dr. A. Zóltowski,

Honorary Secretary: Very Rev. Canon A.R. Gogolinski-Elston

The address of the Committee is: c/o The Most Rev. Bishop J.F. Gawlina

Polish Catholic Mission, 2, Devonia Road, Islington, London, N.I. – England

Committee's Duty is generally to direct and control all NCWC – Polish Projects activities in Gr. Britain.

3. W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. Polish Air Force Projects Committee

In Polish Air Force HQ in London there is a special Committee of the highest officers of the Polish Air Force, nominated by C. – in – C. of the P.A.F. It gives suggestions to the Central NCWC Committee in London about the needs of the P.A.F. soldiers, the kind of needs and where they occur.

4. Secretary

From W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gt. Britain Committee depended directly Honorary Secretary, Very Rev. Canon A.R. Gogolinski – Elston, who was responsible for general administration of all NCWC Polish Projects in Gr. Britain. His duty was to establish new NCWC Centers, to estimate their budgets, to supervise their budgets, to supervise their running and expenditure and to ensure official audits by authorities Fr. Gogolinski-Elston was working without any staff, personally keeping all accounts and books, making all official correspondence, visiting NCWC Centers periodically and when necessity arose. He also closed NCWC Centers – liquidated them many of his visits to NCWC Centers were made by plane, but if by railway then the tickets were provided by R.A.F. authorities. Fr. Gogolinski-Elston was an ordinary station chaplain, his work for NCWC – Polish Projects in Gt. Britain was honorary and completely unpaid. Because he had no staff the expenses of general administration were exceedingly small.

5. Local N.C.W.C. Centre Committees.

Every NCWC Centre (Polish Projects) in Gt. Britain is directed by a local committee which consists of officers, N.C.O.s and Privates, delegated and nominated by Commanding Officer of unit. The Chaplain of the unit is always a member of the local committee as the delegate of the Central NCWC Polish Projects Committee in London and of the Most Rev. Bishop Gawlina.

Education Officers and Managers of the Centre were members of this committee. On the P.A.F. N.C.W.C. Centers committees there are always British officers who give valuable help. N.C.W.C. Centers for University Students consists of university professors, students and chaplain.

6. Chaplains

In each local NCWC Centre the chaplain was the soul of the committee and truly the driving force of its work. They themselves were the best and most effective workers. It is thanks to their great efforts, their tact, their encouragement that such magnificent results were achieved with so little expense⁹.

Finance

Money sent by Rt. Rev. Msgr. P.J. O'Boyle and received by Bishop Gawlina:

⁹ AGOG, p. 7; WRS-NCWC in Great Britain General Report, Introduction, Catholic Relief Services United States Catholic Conference, Inc., Baltimore, pp. 1-9, (hereafter CRS).

1943.	24.12	\$ <u>40.000</u>	
		40.000	
1945.	June	5.000	
	September	5.000	
	November	2.000	
	December	2.000	
	December	<u>2.000</u>	
		16.000	
1946.	February	2.000	
1946.	March	2.000	
	April	2.000	
	May	1.000	
	May	1.000	
		<u>8.000</u>	
	Total:	89.000	
	Total in £:		22.029 7. 10

From this money 22.029 7. 10

N.C.W.C. Central Committee

in Gt. Britain sent to individual

19.121 1. 9

NCWC Centers

2.908 6. 1

Balance on August 1st 1946

(Balance on 1.8.1946 in \$: about 12.000)

It is impossible to show exact amount of balance in individual N.C.W.C. Centres on 1.8.1946 because not all reports about balance have been received. Balance shown is that of N.C.W.C. London Central Committee's Found.

Book-Keeping

Book-keeping in N.C.W.C. local Centers was done correctly and in due order.

Book-keepers were chaplains in charge themselves or accountants (book-keeper specialists) nominated by military authorities. In all NCWC Centers was the same method of book-keeping.

Money

The money for establishment and conduct was given to the local NCWC committee by the secretary of the central NCWC Committee in London after he had been presented with the approximate estimate for installations or for monthly conduct. All money was given subject to the approval of the Most. Rev. Bishop Gawlina or his Deputy, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Michalski.

The chaplain of the unit was always watching that there was no wasting of money and that expenses did not rise above the estimate approved by the Bishop Gawlina. Any excess not approved was chaplain's personal responsibility and the chaplain had to make it good.

Audits

Audits were ordered by Commanding Officers of the unit at least once every 6 months, by accountants nominated by military authorities. Rev. Fr. Gogolinski-Elston visiting each NCWC Centre periodically controlled its activities and its book-keeping.

Reports

All NCWC Centers have sent periodically their financial reports and statements to NCWC central committee in Gt. Britain. If NCWC Centre had buffet (canteen) then periodical report of sales was also made. (Some of such reports and statements are included here by way of example)¹⁰.

Expenditure

Particular reports about expenditure will be sent in short time, after receipt of individual NCWC Centers' reports. Generally speaking NCWC Centers spent their money supply almost only for their activities. Where possible advantage was taken of British Council, Polish Red Cross, British or Polish Societies etc., facilities. Particularly about premises, furniture, personnel paid etc. It is time now for Polish Forces to be prepared for demobilization which is imminent. It is uncertain when this will commence, but only a short time remains before the dissolution of military units, and formation of new so-called Polish Resettlement Corps. There are now transfers of units, changes of camps etc.

Directions have been sent to all chaplains in charge (NCWC), that in case of dissolution or transfer of their units – they must pack N.C.W.C. property, take it with them to new places and, without any, without any delay, immediately open N.C.W.C. Centers in new camps.

¹⁰ AGOG, pp. 7-9, Finance, General Report.

Therefore it was necessary to supply all chaplains in charge (NCWC) with money to facilitate this by giving them possibility to cover expenses incurred in packing and transporting N.C.W.C. property and goods, as well as to adapt new premises for N.C.W.C. Centers, by painting, decoration etc.

This was most essential because Y.M.C.A., which lost its *quasi*-monopoly is now anxious to regain it and have its influence in new Polish Resettlement Corps.

Then it was decided to give chaplains the possibility of opening new N.C.W.C. Centers without any waiting for new permission, without any hesitation, or waiting until sufficient funds were obtained.

All chaplains, working with N.C.W.C. during nearly three years are worthy of confidence, which they have never betrayed and certainly will not in future.

Now almost all chaplains in charge (NCWC) have sufficient NCWC funds to run their NCWC Centers at least for some months or possibly even for 6 months.

They have (August 1st 1946) as has been said about Ł: 3.000 in hand.

B. Area Served

W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. served area comprising Gr. Britain and Northern Ireland.

Four N.C.W.C. Centers in Independent Polish Airborne Brigade went with this Brigade to Europe on D-day.

C. Kind of N.C.W.C. Activities in Gr. Britain

1. Establishing and conducting of NCWC Welfare Centers for Poles
2. Aid for non – NCWC Centers in units
3. Help for Polish R.C. priest, liberated from Dachau Concentration Camp

1.	In:	For specific military units – (and these did not have permanent quarters but moved with their units:	9
		In garrisons, stations – (these sometimes changed their premises but not their garrison, station;	53
		Polish Army	27
2.	In:	Polish Air Force	29
		Polish Merchant Navy	1
		Polish Prisoners of War	3
		Polish civilians	2
			62

3.	In:	Fighting units and Operational Training Units	18
		Camps, stations	14
		Garrisons	15
		Repatriation Transit Camps	5
		Hospitals	4
		Prisoners of War (Poles in Gr. Britain)	3
		School	2
		University town (city)	1
			62
			40
4.	For:	Soldiers and Polish WACs	3
		Polish WAAFs (WACs) only	42
	Youth –a.	Schools	3
		b. University students	3
			6
		Invalids	3
		Wounded and sick soldiers	4
		Scouts	3
		Polish Prisoners of War in Gr. Britain	3
			62
5.	There were:		
		Recreational and Rest Centers	53
		Hostels	3
		Study Institute	1
		Training Centers and workshops	5
6.	Editorial ¹¹		62
7.	N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreational Centers with buffet (canteen)		20
	N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreation Centers with Soldiers' Shop		11

¹¹ ACU, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Washington, William John Shepherd, Assistant Archivist, Letter to author, 2 February 2000.

D. The of N.C.W.C. Polish Projects in Gr. Britain

From 10.12.1943 to 31.7.1946:

62 N.C.W.C. Welfare Centers were established according to needs:

(Notice: It is emphasised that NCWC activity covered all Polish Air Force fighting units in Gr. Britain, i.e. 13 Polish Squadrons. It must be added that 318 Polish Reconnaissance Fighter Squadron was in Italy and there it was under care of NCWC, working on Appenine Peninusla)¹².

E.N.C.W.C. Polish Project in Gr. Britain – Statement

1943 (10.12.1945 – 31.12.1943)

Army

1. “X” Recr. & Rest Centre Soldiers on Special Secret duty

Detachment

Polish Air Force

2. (1) Blackpool Recr. & Rest Centre “Polish Hearth” with buffet

3. (4) Blackpool Recr. & Rest Centre with Canteen (Gospoda Lotnicza)

4. (5) Blackpool Recr. & Rest Centre for Poles in Convalescent Deepport University Studies

5. Edinburgh Recr. & Rest Centre for Polish University Students¹³.

1944

Army

1. Glasgow NCWC Soldiers’ Hostel

2. Glasgow NCWC Recr. & Rest Centre for Soldiers of Polish garrison

3. London NCWC Recr. & Rest Centre for Polish N.C.O.s

4. London NCWC Recr. & Rest Centre for Soldiers of Pol. Mil. Police

5. London NCWC R. & R. Centre for Signal Troop Company

6. “X” NCWC R. & R. Centre in Pol. Airborne Brigade (I Bat.)

7. “X” NCWC R. & R. Centre in Pol. Airborne Brigade (II Bat.)

8. “X” NCWC R. & R. Centre in Pol. Airborne Brigade (III Bat.)

9. “X” NCWC R. & R. Centre in Pol. Airborne Brigade (IV Bat.)

10. “X” NCWC R. & R. Centre in Spec. Secret Duty Detachment

Polish Air Force

¹² CRS, NCWC. Polish Project un Great Britain-Statement 1943-1946, Baltimore Jean Holloway, Assistant Archivist, Letter to Author, 30 January 2000; AGOG, pp. 10-23, Baltimore Sr. Rosalie McQuaide, CSJP, Archivist Historian and records Manager CRS, Letter to Author, 28 January 2000; Cristine White, Secretary WRS-NCWC, London, Letter to author, 5 April 2003.

¹³ AGOG, p. 10, General Report.

11. (1) Blackpool NCWC Polish Hearth
12. (2) Blackpool NCWCR. & R. Centre with Canteen
13. (3) Blackpool NCWCR. & R. Centre for Poles in Convalescent Deport
14. (4) Blackpool NCWC Training Centre and workshop
15. (5) CranwellNCWCR. & R. Centre for Pol. Air Force Youth
16. (6) Halton NCWCR. & R. Centre for Pol. Air Force Youth
17. (7) London NCWCR. & R. Centre with Canteen in P.A.F. HQ.
18. (9) Morecambe NCWCR. & R. Centre for Polish Airmen
19. (10) Sealand NCWCR. & R. Centre for Polish Airmen
20. (11) Western-super
MareNCWCR. & R. Centre with Canteen for Polish Airmen
21. (12) 307 Sq.NCWCR. & R. Centre for Polish Airmen
22. (13) 133 Wing NCWCR. & R. Centre for Polish ground personnel
23. (13) 133 Wing NCWCR. & R. Centre for Polish flying personnel
University Students
24. (1) Edinburgh NCWC Rest and Recreational Centre for Poles University
Students
25. (2) Edinburgh NCWC Study Institute for Poles University Students¹⁴.

	Active running Centers 1.1.1944	Established new Centers during 1944	Centres closed during1944	Active running NCWC Centers 31.12.44
Army: Garrisons & units	1	9		10
Polish Air Force Fighting units		3		3
Station, garrisons	3	5	1	7
P.A.F. Youth	—	<u>2</u>	—	—
PAF. total	3	10	1	12
University Students	1	1		2
1944: NCWC CENTERS total:	5	20	1	24

¹⁴ CRS, The Wycislo Collection Record Group XX-4, pp. 30, Baltimore, January 4, 1996.

1945**Army**

new	1.	Folkestone	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers of Pol. AAA Battery
new	2.	Folkestone	Training Centre and workshop Soldiers of Pol. AAA Battery
closed	3.	Glasgow	Soldiers' Hostel
closed	4.	Glasgow	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Soldiers
new	5.	Kirton Lodge	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers of Artillery (Tr.C.)
	6.	London	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish N.C.O.s
	7.	London	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers of Pol. Mil. Police
	8.	London	Rest & Recr. Centre for Signal Troop Company
	9.	Pol. Airborne	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers (I Bat.)
	10.	Brig.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers (II Bat.)
	11.	Pol. Airb.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers (III Bat.)
	12.	Brigade	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers (IV Bat.)
closed	13.	Pol. Airb.	Rest & Recr. Centre Centre for Soldiers
new	14.	Brigade	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Repatriation Transit
new	15.	Pol. Airb.	Camp (I)
new	15.	Brigade	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Repatriation Transit
new	17.	Secret Duty	Camp (II)
new	18.	Detachm.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Repatr. Transit Camp (III)
		Oxfords	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Repatr. Transit Camp (IV)
		Oxfords	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Repatr. Transit Camp (V)
		Oxfords	
		Oxfords	
		Oxfords	

Hospitals

opened &	19.	(1) Ormskirk	Rest and Recreational Centre for wounded and sick sold
closed	20.	(2) Ormskirk	Rest & Recr. Centre (No. 2) for wounded & sick soldiers
new	21.	(3) Whitchurch	R. & R. Centre for wounded soldiers in Mil. Hosp. No. 4.
new	22.	(4) Whitchurch	R. & R. Centre (No. 2 – TB section) soldiers in Mil. Hosp. No. 4

Invalids

new	23.	(1) Edinburgh	Hostel for Polish Invalids – with Rest & Recr. Centre
new	24.	(2) Edinburgh	Hostel for Polish Invalids (No. 2)
new	25.	(3) Edinburgh	Training Centre and workshops for Polish Invalids

Polish Air Force

op. & cl.	26.	(1) Abingdon	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
	27.	(2) Blackpool	NCWC Polish Hearth – R. & R. Centre with buffet
	28.	(3) Blackpool	NCWC Polish Canteen with R. & R. Centre
closed	29.	(4) Blackpool	Training Centre with workshop for Polish Airmen
opened	30.	(5) Cammeringham	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
opened	31.	(6) Cammeringham	Training Centre with workshop for Polish Airmen
opened	32.	(7) Coltishall	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
	33.	(8) Cramwell	Rest & Recr. Centre for P.A.F. Youth
opened	34.	(9) Dunholme	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen – Scouts
opened	35.	(10) Dunholme	Training Centre with workshop for Polish Airmen

	36	(11) Halton	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Air Force Youth
opened	37	(12) Jurby	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Flying Personnel Rest &
opened	38.	(13) London	Recr. Centre with Canteen in P.A.F. HQ.
	39.	(14) Morecambe	Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen for Polish Airmen
op. & cl.	40.	(15) Sealand	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
op. & cl.	41.	(16) Welton	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
op. & cl.	42.	(17) Weston-s-Mare	Rest & Recr. Centre with Canteen for Polish Airmen
opened	43.	(18) Wilmslow	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish WAAFs (WACs) only
	44.	(19) Weeton	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
closed	45.	(20) 303 Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
closed	46.	(21) 304 Bomber Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
	47.	(22) 307 N.F.Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
	48.	(23) 133 wing	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
	49.	(24) 133 Wing	Rest & Recr. Centre for Flying Personnel

University Students

50.	(1) Edinburgh	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish University Students
51.	(2) Edinburgh	Study Institute for Polish University Students

Polish Merchant Navy

opened	52.	Gr. Wyrley	Rest & Recr. Centre with Canteen in Pol. Navy College
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Pol. Prisoners of War

opened	53.	(1) Grimsby	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles Prisoners of War in Gr.B.
opened	54.	(2) Grimsby	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles Prisoners of War in Gr. B.

	Active running Centers 1.1.1945	Centers opening during 1945	Centers closed during 1945	Active running NCWC Centers 31.12.45
Army:				
Garrisons & units	10	8	3	15
Hospitals		4	2	2
Invalids		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>
Total	10	15	5	20
Polish Air Force:				
Fighting units & O.T.U.	3	5	3	5
Station & garrisons	7	6	2	11
P.A.F. Youth	2			2
Polish WAAFs (WACs)		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	12	12	6	18
Polish Merchant Navy College (Youth)		1		1
University Students	2			2
Polish Prisoners of War in Gr. Britain		2		2
NCWC Centres in 1945 –	24	30	11	43
Total				

1946 (1.1. – 31.7.1946)¹⁵.**Army**

	1.	Folkestone (1)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Soldiers of Pol. AAA Battery
closed	2.	Folkestone (2)	Training Centre and workshop for Sold. of Pol. AAA Battery
	3.	Inverary	R. & R. Centre for Soldiers (Pol. Airb. Br. Dept)
	4.	Kirton Lodge	R. & R. Centre for Soldiers of Pol. Artil. Tr. C.
	5.	London (1)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Pol. N.C.O.s
	6.	London (2)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Soldiers of Pol. Mil. Police
	7.	London (3)	R. & Rec. Centre for Signal Troop Company
	8.	Ind. Pol. Airb. Br. (1)	R. & Rec. Centre for Soldiers (BAOR)
	9.	Ind. Pol. Airb. Br. (2)	R. & Rec. Centre for Soldiers (BAOR)
	10.	Ind. Pol. Airb. Br. (3)	R. & Rec. Centre for Soldiers (BAOR)
closed	11.	Oxford (1)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in Repart. Transit Camp
closed	12.	Oxford (2)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in Repatr. Transit Camp
closed	13.	Oxford (3)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in Repatr. Transit Camp
closed	14.	Oxford (4)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in Repatr. Transit Camp
closed	15.	Oxford (5)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in Repatr. Transit Camp

Hospitals

	16.	Whitchurch (1)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in Milit. Hospital
	17.	Whitchurch (2)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in Milit. Hospital

Invalids

closed	18.	(1) Edinburgh	Hostel for Polish Invalids, with R. & R. Centre and canteen
closed	19.	(2) Edinburgh	Hostel for Polish Invalids
closed	20.	(3) Edinburgh	Training Centre and workshops

Polish Air Force

closed	21.	(1) Blackpool	NCWC Polish Hearth – R. & Recr. Centre with canteen
closed	22.	(2) Blackpool	Canteen with R. & R. Recr. Centre
	23.	(3) Cammeringham	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Airmen
	24.	(4) Cammeringham	Training Centre with workshop for Pol. Airmen
	25.	(5) Coltishall	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Airmen
	26.	(6) Cramwell	Rest & Rec. Centre for P.A.F. Youth
	27.	(7) Dunholme Lodge	Rest & Rec. Centre for Pol. Airmen (Scouts)
	28.	(8) Dunholme Lodge	Training Centre with workshop for Pol. Airmen
	29.	(9) Halton	Rest & Rec. Centre for P.A.F. Youth
	30.	(10) Jurby	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Flying Personnel
	31.	(11) London	Rest & Rec. Centre with canteen in P.A.F. HQ.
closed	32.	(12) Morecambe	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Flying Personnel
opened	33.	(13) Scallingthorpe	Rest & Rec. Centre for Pol. Airmen
	34.	(14) Sealand	Rest & Rec. Centre for Pol. Airmen
	35.	(15) Welton	Rest & Rec. Centre for Pol. Airmen
opened	36.	(16) Welton	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish WAAFs (WACs) only
closed	37.	(17) Weston-s-Mare	Rest & Rec. Centre with canteen

¹⁵ CUA, WRS-NCWC, Report to Board Of Trustees (1943-1946), Washington, January 3, 1996.

opened	38.	(18) 300 Bomb. Sq.	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish WAAFs only
opened	39.	(19) 300 Bomb. Sq.	Rest & Rec. Centre for Pol. Airmen (Scouts)
	40.	(20) 303 Fight. Sq.	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Airmen
	41.	(21) 304 Bomb. Sq.	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Airmen
	42.	(22) 307 N.F.Sq.	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Airmen

University Students

	43.	(1) Edinburgh	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish University Students
	44.	(2) Edinburgh	Study Institute for Polish University Students
opened	45.	(3) London	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Catholic Univ. Students

Polish Merchant Navy

	46.	Gr. Wyrley	Rest & Rec. Centre for Youth of Pol. Merch. Navy College
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Polish Prisoners of War in Gr. Britain

closed	47.	(1) Grimsby (1)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in P.O.W. Camp
closed	48.	(2) Grimsby (2)	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in P. of W. Camp
opened	49.	(3) Donna Nook	Rest & Rec. Centre for Poles in 292 P. of War Camp

Polish Civilian Youth

opened	50.	Edinburgh	Rest & Rec. Centre for Polish Civilian Youth
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	Active running Centers 1.1.1946	Centres opening during 1946	Centers closed during 1946	Active running NCWC Centers 1.8.1946
Army:				
Garrisons & units	15		6	9
Hospitals	2			2
Invalids	<u>3</u>		<u>3</u>	—
Army total:	20		9	11
Polish Air Force:				
Fighting units & O.T.U.	5	1		6
Station & garrisons	11	1	4	8
Polish WAAFs (WACs)only				2
Pol. Air. Force Youth	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	—	<u>2</u>
Polish Air Force total:	18	4	4	18
Polish Merchant Navy	1			1
Polish University Students	2	1		3
Polish Prisoners of War in Gr. Britain	2	1	2	1
Polish Civil Youth		1		1
N.C.W.C. Centers – 1.1.1946 – 31.7.1946	43	7	15	35

During period from 10.12.1943 to 31.7.1946 there were established and running 62 N.C.W.C. Centres (Polish Projects) in Gr. Britain¹⁶.

I. Army

1.	Folkestone (1)	Rest and Recr. Centre for Polish Soldiers of AAA Battery
2.	Folkestone (2)	Training Centre and workshop for soldiers as above
3.	Glasgow (1)	Soldiers' Hostel
4.	Glasgow (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish soldiers of garrison
5.	Kirton Lodge	Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers of Pol. Art. Tr. C.
6.	London (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen for NCOs (Polish)
7.	London (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen for soldiers of Polish Military Police
8.	London (3)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Signal Troop Company (Polish)
9.	Pol. Airb. Brig. (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers (I Bat.) cant. shop
10.	Pol. Airb. Br. (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers (II Bat.) cant. shop
11.	Pol. Airb. Br. (3)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers (III Bat.) cant. shop
12.	Pol. Airb. Br. (4)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers (IV Bat.) cant. shop
13.	Secred Duty Det.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers
14.	Oxford (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Report. Transit Camp
15.	Oxford (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Report. Transit Camp
16.	Oxford (3)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Report. Transit Camp
17.	Oxford (4)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Report. Transit Camp
18.	Oxford (5)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in Report. Transit Camp

Hospitals

19.(1)	Ormskirk (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre wounded sick soldiers in Military Hospital
20.(2)	Ormskirk (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers as above
21.(3)	Whitchurch (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers (wounded and sick) in Polish General Military Hospital No. 4
22.(4)	Whitchurch (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers as above (TB section)

Invalids

23.(1)	Edinburgh (1)	Hostel for Polish Invalids with canteen
24.(2)	Edinburgh (2)	Hostel for Polish Invalids
25.(3)	Edinburgh (3)	Training Centre and workshops for Polish invalids

II. University Students

26.(1)	Edinburgh (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish University Students
27.(2)	Edinburgh (2)	Study Institute for Polish University Students
28.(3)	London	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Catholic Un. Students

III. Polish Merchant Navy

29.	Gr. Wyrley	Rest & Recr. Centre for Youth in Pol. Merch. Navy Colles with canteen
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¹⁶ Ibidem, pp. 10-19.

IV. Polish Air Force

30.(1)	Abingdon	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
31.(2)	Blackpool	Rest & Recr. Centre – Polish Hearth – with canteen
32.(3)	Blackpool	Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen for Pol. Airmen
33.(4)	Blackpool	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen in Convalesc. Depot.
34.(5)	Blackpool	Training Centre and workshop for Pol. Airmen
35.(6)	Cammeringham	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Airmen
36.(7)	Cammeringham	Training Centre with workshop for Pol. Airmen
37.(8)	Coltishall	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
38.(9)	Cramwell	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Air Force Youth
39.(10)	Dunholme Lodge (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Airmen (Scouts)
40.(11)	Dunholme Lodge (2)	Training Centre and workshop for Pol. Airmen
41.(12)	Halton	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Air Force Youth
42.(13)	Jurby	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Flying Personnel
43.(14)	London	Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen in P.A.F. HQ.
44.(15)	Morecambe	Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen for Pol. Flying Pers
45.(16)	Scallingthorpe	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
46.(17)	Sealand	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen (canteen & shop)
47.(18)	Welton (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
48.(19)	Welton (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish WAAFs (WACs) only
49.(20)	Weston-super-Mare	Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen for Pol. Airmen
50.(21)	Wilmslow	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish WAAFs (WACs)only
51.(22)	Weeton	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
52.(23)	300 Bomber Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish WAAFs only
53.(24)	300 Bomber Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen (Scouts)
54.(25)	303 Fighter Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
55.(26)	304 Bomber Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
56.(27)	307 Night Fighter Sq.	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen
57.(28)	133 Air Wing	Rest & Recr. Centre for 4 Pol. Fighter Sq. (ground personnel)
58.(29)	133 Air Wing	Rest & Recr. Centre for 4 Pol. Fighter Squadrons (flying personnel)

Polish Prisoners of War in Gr. Britain

59.(1)	Grimsby (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Prisoners of War
60.(2)	Grimsby (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Prisoners of War
61.(3)	Donna Nook	Rest & Recr. Centre for in 292 P.O.W. Working Camp (Poles)

Polish Civilian Youth

62.	Edinburgh	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Civilian Youth
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On the 1st day of August 1946 there were running the following 34 N.C.W.C. Centers in Gr. Britain (Polish Projects):

Army:

1.(1)	Folkestone (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Soldiers of Pol. AAA Battery
2.(2)	Folkestone (2)	Training Centre with workshop for soldiers as above
3.(3)	Kirton Lodge	Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers of Pol. Art. Tr. C
4.(4)	London (1)	Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish N.C.O.s
5.(5)	London (2)	Rest & Recr. Centre soldiers of Pol. Mil. Police

-
- | | | |
|-------|------------------------|---|
| 6.(6) | London (3) | Rest & Recr. Centre for Signal Troop Company |
| 7.(7) | BAOR | Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Airb. Brigade soldiers |
| 8.(8) | Pol. Airb. Brogade (2) | Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers of II Bat. |
| 9.(9) | Pol. Airb. Brig. (3) | Rest & Recr. Centre for soldiers of III Bat. |

Polish Air Force

- | | | |
|---------|--------------------|---|
| 10.(1) | Cammeringham (1) | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 11.(2) | Cammeringham (2) | Training Centre with workshop for Pol. Airmen |
| 12.(3) | Coltishall | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 13.(4) | Cramwell | Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Air Force Youth |
| 14.(5) | Dunholme Lodge (1) | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen (Scouts) |
| 15.(6) | Dunholme Lodge (2) | Training Centre with workshop |
| 16.(7) | Halton | Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Air Force Youth |
| 17.(8) | Jurby | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Flying Personnel |
| 18.(9) | London | Rest & Recr. Centre with canteen in P.A.F. HQ. |
| 19.(10) | Scallingthorpe | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 20.(11) | Sealand | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 21.(12) | Welton | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 22.(13) | Welton | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish WAAFs (only) |
| 23.(14) | 300 Bomber Sq. (1) | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen (Scouts) |
| 24.(15) | 300 Bomber Sq. (2) | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish WAAFs only |
| 25.(16) | 303 Fighter Sq. | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 26.(17) | 304 Bomber Sq. | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 27.(18) | 307 N. Fighter Sq. | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Airmen |

Hospitals

- | | | |
|--------|----------------|--|
| 28.(1) | Whitchurch (1) | Rest & Recr. Centre for wounded and sick soldiers in Pol. Gen. Military Hospital No.4. |
| 29.(2) | Whitchurch (2) | Rest & Recr. Centre for wounded & sick soldiers in Pol. Gen. Military Hospital No.4. (TB section). |

University Students

- | | | |
|--------|---------------|--|
| 30.(1) | Edinburgh (1) | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish University Students |
| 31.(2) | Edinburgh (2) | Study Institute for Polish University Students |
| 32.(3) | London | Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Catholic Univ. Students |

Polish Merchant Navy

- | | | |
|-----|------------|--|
| 33. | Gr. Wyrley | Rest & Recr. Centre for Pol. Merch. Navy Youth |
|-----|------------|--|

Polish Prisoners of War in Gr. Britain

- | | | |
|-----|------------|--|
| 34. | Donna Nook | Rest & Recr. Centre for Poles in 292 P. of W. Camp |
|-----|------------|--|

Polish Civilian Youth

- | | | |
|-----|-----------|---|
| 35. | Edinburgh | Rest & Recr. Centre for Polish Civilian Youth ¹⁷ . |
|-----|-----------|---|

¹⁷ Ibidem, pp. 7-9.

F. Aid for non N.C.W.C. Centers In Units

Besides running N.C.W.C. own Centers – help was given to units own recreational centers (gifts of books, loan of libraries films, equipment, and advice in organization and conducting).

This help was given directly by individual N.C.W.C. Centers at the discretion of local chaplains – in – charge

13 other centers were helped by NCWC Centers from 1.1.1944 to 31.7.1946:

Army

- | | | |
|----|-------------|---|
| 1. | St. Andrews | Centre for students of secretary school |
| 2. | Manchester | Soldiers of Polish Army – in hospital |
| 3. | Preston | Polish soldiers in hospital |

Polish Air Force

- | | | |
|--------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 4.(1) | Kirkham | Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 5.(2) | St. Annes-on-Sea | Centre for Polish Flying Personnel |
| 6.(3) | Ringway | Centre for Polish Airmen |
| 7.(4) | Cleveleys | Hospital – welfare for Polish Airmen |
| 8.(5) | Haylock | Hospital – welfare for Polish Airmen |
| 9.(6) | Welton | Hospital – centre for Polish Airmen |
| 10.(7) | Walney Island | Centre for Polish Airmen |

Polish Prisoners of War

- | | | |
|-----|------------|---|
| 11. | Donna Nock | Hospital – welfare for Pol. Prisoners of War. |
| 12. | Grimby | Hospital – centre for Polish Prisoners of War |

Youth From Poland (liberated from concentration camps)

- | | | |
|-----|------------|---|
| 13. | Windermere | Rest camp for Youth from Poland ¹⁸ . |
|-----|------------|---|

G. Help for Polish R.C. Priests Liberated from Dachau¹⁸

N.C.W.C. – Central Find Gr. Britain helped to organize the sending of cassocks for Polish Priests liberated from Dachau Concentration Camp. N.C.W.C. paid for purpose £: 48-10-0 (approx. 192 dollars), which was necessary to complete these purchases¹⁹.

II. CENTRAL DESCRIPTION OF N.C.W.C. CENTERS IN GR. BRITAIN

Each N.C.W.C. Centre had American, Polish and British Flags. They all displayed the inscription:

¹⁸ Ibidem, pp. 10-13.

¹⁹ Cristine White, Secretary WRS-NCWC, Help for Polish R.C. Priests liberated from Dachau, Letter to author, 10 May 2002.

in English: NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE

and in Polish: ŚWIETLICA BISKUPA POLOWEGO W.P.

differing only as to include type of Centre (i.e. recreation, club, canteen, hostel, training centre, workshop etc.), and Forces intended for.

All N.C.W.C. Centers are conspicuously labelled outside and inside in English:

“WAR RELIEF SERVICES – NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE”

and in Polish:

“KOMITET KATOLICKICH BISKUPÓW STANÓW ZJEDNOCZONYCH AMERYKI PÓŁN.”

(i.e. The Catholic Bishops Committee – U.S.A.)

Each N.C.W.C. Centre also has a notice exhibited in public explaining what W.R.S. – N.C.W.C. is, and that it is upheld by help from United States Catholics for their Polish catholic brothers, or there is a notice – board saying that all or part of running expenses are paid by W.R.S. – N.C.W.C.

All N.C.W.C. Centres-Polish Projects in Gr. Britain are conducted in a sincere Catholic and Polish national spirit but soldiers of all other denomination without exception have right of entry receive the same treatment as Catholic. All antireligious books and periodicals are banned. All political polemics and discussions are prohibited N.C.W.C. Centers in Gr. Britain always and everywhere were the only places where Polish soldiers found a Polish Catholic atmosphere and where they had a part of Poland and their home.

The appearance of N.C.W.C. Centers was almost everywhere excellent and it is general opinion not only Polish, that they were some of the best Welfare Centres in Gr. Britain. The Polish people using them took great pride in them and themselves helped to keep them in perfect order.

General impression of atmosphere and appearance of N.C.W.C. Centres may be obtained from 342 photographs in two albums sent to Rt. Rev. Mgr. P. O’Boyle, on 15.8.1946 per Mr. Joseph Wnukowski.

The general opinion was that N.C.W.C. (Polish Projects) Centres in Gr. Britain were so well organized, established and run that they could be models for welfare institutes. This general recognition is given a point in the following:

A. In some N.C.W.C. Centres (e.g. in Blacpool: NCWC Polish Hearth and NCWC P.A.F. Canteen) there were organized by special request courses of instruction and practical training (lectures and practice) in welfare work for:

1. Polish Air Force Education Officers (2 courses).
2. Polish Red Cross welfare workers.
3. Polish Welfare N.C.O.s from Polish Army in Scotland.

4. Twice American Education Officers from North Base in England themselves organized excursions and demonstration by them of results achieved by NCWC Polish Hearth in Blackpool in establishment, organization and running of some sections.

5. Three times lectures similar to above were organized by British Western Command for British Educational and Welfare Officers.

6. Running of canteen in NCWC Polish Hearth and in NCWC P.A.F. Canteen in Blackpool was observed and commended by group of American canteen workers.

7. Maj. Gen. Beath (famous author Jan Hay) at request of the British Council spent some time at the Polish Hearth watching its ordinary activities and taking notes.

8. Polish Ministry of Information organized visits of British and Polish authorities to N.C.W.C. Centers in Gr. Britain.

B. Rev. Fr. Gogolinski-Elston by special request held lectures about N.C.W.C. (Polish Projects) in Gr. Britain (organization, establishment, running and achievements) on special courses for Welfare Workers in Polish Army (Scotland) – 3 times, and in Polish Air Force-twice, – 4 lectures²⁰.

ATTENDANCE

All N.C.W.C. Centres in Gr. Britain gave eager hospitality to all Polish Soldiers, Polish WAAFs and Polish civilians. Where military conditions permitted British people were allowed to come as guests with their Polish friends.

Where there were American Camps in the locality (e.g. near Blackpool) there were plenty of American soldiers of Polish descent who patronized N.C.W.C. Centers. They came especially on Polish National and Catholic Feastdays (as 3rd of May, 11th of November, Christmas Eve) to take Polish traditional supper or Easter breakfast. (In NCWC Polish Hearth – Blackpool – sometimes were crowds of G.I. of Polish descent). In all N.C.W.C. Centers eager hospitality was given to Societies, such as the Anglo-Polish Society, Anglo-Polish Catholic Association (APCA) to hold meetings and occasional courses in N.C.W.C. premises.

²⁰ A.J. WYCISLO, *Mission of Mercy to the Victims of War*, New York 1949, pp. 29; K. PEKALA, *Dzieło miłości i miłosierdzia, "Caritas"*, no 21, 1947, pp. 155-158.

N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreational Centers and other NCWC Polish Projects were always crowded and popular as can be seen from the following statement, showing numbers of visitors²¹.

N.C.W.C. PERSONNEL

Personnel working in N.C.W.C. Centres consisted of:

	Centres	Persons
1. Paid Personnel:		
a. paid by local NCWC Centres, from money received from NCWC Central Found:	(5)	9
2. Unpaid Personnel:	Centra	Personel
a. Polish N.C.O.s, WAAFs, WACs, and men, nominated by Polish military authorities (Some of the – mentioned personnel were given gratuities, or even partly paid in 5 NCWC Centres: total 24 persons).	(60)	126
b. Voluntary helpers	(10)	<u>131</u>
	Total:	267
Total of personnel working in NCWC Centres in Gr. Britain		287

The aim was to have all unpaid personnel, or if paid for then to be paid from non – NCWC sources (i.e. NCWC Central Committe).

It was only good chance and ability of chaplains that they obtained unpaid personnel from military, authority or gathered together enthusiastic voluntary workers.

Some of unpaid personnel nominated by military authorities occasionally or periodically were given small gratuities at discretion of chaplains in charge or local committees.

Unpaid workers were part-time or full-time workers.

It is very difficult to give exact number of voluntary workers working in N.C.W.C. Centres from 10.12.1943, but apprexinately there were more than 300 voluntary workers.

(Facilities for writing English lotters and preparing English lessons were given to Soldiers in NCWC Centres by British voluntary workers).

Voluntary workers were:

from local Anglo-Polish Society, Anglo-Polish – Catholic Society, Polish Women, Polish WAAFs, WACs.

²¹ AGOG, pp. 25-26, General Description of NCWC Centers in Great Britain, Attendance.

All voluntary helpers working in N.C.W.C. Centres (Polish Projects) in Gr. Britain after finishing their co-operation with individual N.C.W.C. Centre or after closing this Centre's – were given special gratitude diploma and honorary badge²².

N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreation Centres in Gr. Britain

There were 53 N.C.W.C. Rest and Recreational Centres. Amongst them:

1.3 were for Polish Scouts – (Polish Air Force: 2, and Polish civilian youth: 1). These Centres were organized on the same general lines as all other NCWC Rest and Recreational Centres in Gr. Britain, but they had special books and periodicals for Scouts and Guide-Guerla.

All Polish soldiers and Polish civilians were allowed to come.

2.3 NCWC Centres were for Polish Prisoners of War in Gr. Britain. These Prisoners were in P.O.W. Working Camps in Gr. Britain.

Forced to serve with German Forces they tried to escape and only bad luck prevented them from joining the Polish Army.

3.5 NCWC Centres were established and run for Polish Soldiers stationed in Repartition (Transit) Camps before departure for Poland.

All these Centers were situated in Oxforshire.

They were helped in equipment by NCWC Centres in Blackpool and Morecambe.

It was decided (August 1945) by Field Director (Polish Projects) Rev. Fr. Wycislo that Polish Units returning to Poland could take with them NCWC property.

4.4 NCWC Centres were run for Polish soldiers wounded in Italy and France, who were brought to Gr. Britain for treatment.

Amongst them were many soldiers (Men and women) badly wounded during the Warsaw Insurrection: VIII-X.1944. After the fall of Warsaw they were taken prisoner by the Germans. Liberated by U.S. Army were brought to Gr. Britain²³.

I. REST AND RECREATIONAL CENTRES

1. Premises

All N.C.W.C. Centres Polish Project) in Gr. Britain had their own premises: paid and rented by N.C.W.C.1 given by military authorities and others⁶¹

²² A.J. WYCISLO, *Role of Catholic Relief Services-NCWC*, Chicago 1960, pp. 25; AGOG, ERS-NCWC in Great Britain, pp. 4-8.

²³ CUA, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Washington, William John Shepherd, Letter to author, 5 April 2001; Cristine White, Letter to author, 4 June 2001.

Premises were situated in halls or more frequently in barracks, or even in Nissen huts. Always they were well adapted to rest and recreational purposes.

They were painted in bright colors, well lighted, well heated and comfortable. By local individual initiative they were well, sometimes extremely well, decorated in Polish style. There were always flowers and plants.

In all NCWC Centres there was insistence upon cleanliness and order.

All premises used by NCWC Centres (except one) were lent rent-free by military authorities or had been requisitioned by them.

In almost all NCWC Rest and Recreational Centres heat, light, power and sometimes even gas bills were paid by military authorities.

Cleaning and maintenance expenses also in some Centres were defrayed by military authorities.

Everywhere establishment entailed and adaptation and repairs of premises, sometimes this was paid by NCWC, sometimes by military authorities.

If the welfare Centre has more than one room then the largest room is reserved for buffet, meetings, entertainments and noisy games, (table-tennis etc.) There is a radio and gramophone.

Other rooms are for reading, writing, studying and silent games (chess etc.). Action to help Polish People organized in NCWC Centres. In some NCWC in Great Britain action was organized to help Polish Prisoners of War in Germany, Polish people deported to Russia, Polish Displaced Persons in Germany and Polish Children in Poland. It was taken on the personal responsibility of local NCWC Centres Committees, and they did not have permission to devote any NCWC money directly for these purposes. In each NCWC Centre which helped Polish people, a special committee was organized for this purpose and results of action were prominently displayed.

1. Aid for Polish people deported to Russia. In 1941 and 1942 in some NCWC Centres action was taken to collect clothes for Polish people deported to Russia. About 1600 lbs of clothes were collected, cleaned and repaired by soldiers and Polish WAAFs themselves, and sent to Russia through the help of Red Cross societies (Polish, British, Canadian).

2. Aid for Polish Displaced persons in Germany. Action similar to that aforementioned was taken in some NCWC Centres to help Polish Displaced Persons in Germany, liberated from concentration camps. About 2100 lbs of clothes were collected, cleaned and repaired by Polish soldiers and WAAFs themselves and sent to Poles in Germany through the help of Red Cross societies. 158 books Polish were collected and sent to Poles in Germany.

3. Aid for Polish Prisoners of War in Germany. During hostilities in individual NCWC Centres action was organized aimed at helping Polish Prisoners of War

in Germany, by a) buffet profits (partly or wholly) b) soldiers' shop profits, c) collecting money, received from special entertainments, dancing, parties, theatrical performances, bridge etc, d) collecting clothes and comforts. About 6000 parcels with food (10 shil.each), and about 250 parcels with clothes were sent to Polish Prisoners of War (Blackpool's NCWC Centres alone sent more than 4000 parcels with food, i.e. about £:2000) and 201 parcels with clothes).

4. Aid for Polish Children in Poland. In some NCWC Centres action was organized to help Polish Children in Poland, by collecting money from special entertainments (dancing, parties, theatrical performances etc) Parcels with clothes, medicines and comforts were sent through the help of British Red Cross and Polish Children Relief Fund²⁴.

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²⁴ A.J. WYCISLO, *The Catholic Program For The Resettlement Of Displaced Persons*, "The Polish Review", vol. 8, 1948, no 12, December 25, pp. 6-7,11.

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DZIAŁALNOŚĆ POLSKIEJ SEKCJI „WAR RELIEF SERVICES-NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE” W WIELKIEJ BRYTANII 1943-1946

Streszczenie

W 1943 roku Amerykańska Konferencja Biskupów Katolickich w ramach NCWC powołała Polską Sekcję WRS-NCWC, celem niesienia pomocy Polakom uchodźcom w Wielkiej Brytanii. Na czele Sekcji stanęli ks. Alojzy Wysisło z Chicago i ks. Rafał Gogoliński-Elston z Londynu. Sekcja Polska w Wielkiej Brytanii zakładała i prowadziła dla Polaków różne instytucje i placówki, jak domy wypoczynkowe, hotele, domy dla inwalidów i dla starców, domy dla dzieci, sierocińce, szkoły, uczelnie, kursy, warsztaty, kantyny stałe i ruchome, bufety, herbaciarnie, szpitale, ambulatoria, laboratoria, gabinety dentystyczne, jak również wyposażone nowoczesne ambulanse i wozy sanitarne. Od grudnia 1943 roku do sierpnia 1946 roku założono i prowadzono w Wielkiej Brytanii 62 Polskie Centra. Największą nagrodą dla nich było to, że dzięki ofiarności amerykańskich katolików, biskupów katolickich i Dyrekcji WRS-NCWC mieli możliwość efektywnej pracy społecznej dla polskich żołnierzy, studentów, jeńców i uchodźców.

Słowa kluczowe: Sekcja Polska WRS-NCWC; Wielka Brytania; Polonia; II wojna światowa

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE POLISH SECTION
“WAR RELIEF SERVICES-NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE
CONFERENCE” IN GREAT BRITAIN
FROM 10.12.1943 TO 31.07.1946

S u m m a r y

WRS-NCWC Polish Projects activities in Great Britain started at the very moment of the arrival 30 November 1943 of the Rev. A. Wycislo, Delegate of WRS-NCEC, nominated by Executive Committee as Field Director, Polish Projects. Very Bishop J.F. Gawlina immediately created in London an NCWC Polish Projects in Great Britain Committee. Rev. Canon R. Gogolinski-Elston was nominated Secretary of this Central Committee. The common aims of NCWC activities all over the world were directing aims of NCWC Polish Projects in Great Britain Central Committees. The especial aim to have care about the Polish Soldier, his spiritual and moral welfare, and to ensure his cultural and educational development in a truly Catholic and Polish atmosphere. Rev. Gogolinski-Elston was ordered to start work immediately and already on the 10th of December 1943 the Polish Hearth in Blackpool was taken over, as the first NCWC Centre for Poles in Gt. Britain. On the 12th of December 1943 NCWC Rest and Recreational Centre for Polish University Students was opened in Edinburgh, 15th December an NCWC Polish Air Force Canteen in Blackpool was opened, 24th of December 1943 an NCWC Rest and Recreational Centre for Polish Convalescent Airmen in Blackpool and NCWC Rest and Recreational Centre in Special Secret Duty Detachment in “X” (military secret) were created. Polish Projects in Gt. Britain will be an excellent testimonial to American Catholics with their Bishops, to War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference, organization with its so effective Executive and Field Director.

Key words: Polish Projects WRS-NCWC; Great Britain; Polonia; World War II