



George Anderson Wells
Canadian Expeditionary Force
Chaplaincy Department
Boer War
World War I & II

Born: 18 November 1877

Died: 10 April 1964

Place of Birth: Salmon Cove, Clarke's Beach,
Conception Bay, Newfoundland

Parents: William John and Cicily Martha (Spooner)
Wells

George grew up in Salmon Cove area (Clarke's
Beach) and went on to become an ordained Church
of England minister.

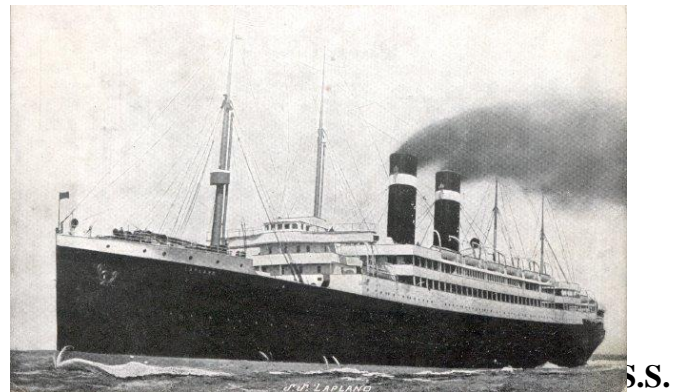
Firstly, Wells served with the 2nd Canadian
Mounted Rifle s (CMR), 34th Horse attached to the
British forces in the South African Boer War as a
trooper from 1901 to 1902. He was known as a
highly skilled horseman, a little unusual for
somebody from Newfoundland. After his service,
he went to Manitoba in 1903 and was educated at

Winnipeg's St. John's College, receiving a BA
degree. He later received an MA degree from the
University of Chicago.

He was ordained an Anglican deacon in 1910. In
September 1910, he married Charlotte McDonnell
of Montreal. Then he was ordained a priest in 1911.

George enlisted in the CEF (Canadian
Expeditionary Force) at Valcartier, Quebec in
August 1914, and joined the 6th Battalion, Fort
Garry as Chaplain on 24 September 1914. His
enlistment papers describe George as being 6' tall
with black/grey hair and blue eyes. He is almost 36
years old at the time and married. According to
these documents, George has had some previous
military experience with the 2nd CMR (Canadian
Mounted Rifles) with the 34th Horse (1901 – 1902)
during the South African War. He gave his next of
kin as wife, Charlotte.

George was part of the Chaplain service and given
the rank of Captain.



SS LAPLAND

George embarked Canada on the SS LAPLAND for
England in October 1914. When, in England, he
worked at the Second Canadian Stationary Hospital
and was Senior Chaplain of Shorncliffe, 5th
Division, Witley.

Chaplain Wells went to France with the Second
Canadian Division. Commanding Officer, No. 2
Canadian Stationary Hospital, Le Touquet from 24
January 1915. Then, granted leave to England from
11 September 1915 to 9 October 1915. However,
transferred to England, 8 November 1915.

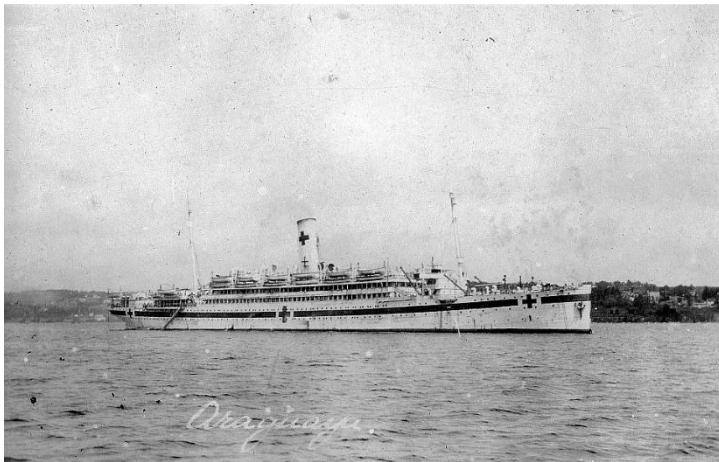
Appointed Honourary Major George Anderson
Wells, 1 March 1916, London Gazette [No. 30065](#).

In addition, Major George Anderson Wells appointed Senior Chaplain, Shorncliffe on the same day. Then, detailed for duty with 53rd Reserve Battalion from 15 June 1916 to 22 June 1916. Major George A Wells, War Office (W.O.) List

Brought to the notice of the Secretary of War for valuable services rendered in connection with the War, W.O. List, 24 February 1917. Then, Major George Anderson Wells appointed Chaplain to the 5th Canadian Division, Witley Camp, 28 May 1917.

Major George Anderson Wells was operated on at Moore Barracks Hospital, 6 July and discharged 11 July 1917, still suffering from the effects of the operation. However, a short leave of absence to recuperate did the trick.

Major Wells proceeded overseas, 31 October 1917. Disembarked SS ARAGUAYA at Boulogne on 14 December 1917. He was then, posted to 2nd Canadian Division HQ as Senior Chaplain on 27 December 1917.



SS ARAGUAYA

A hospital ship leased by the RCN. It made 20 round trips between England and Halifax, carrying a total of 15,324 sick and wounded Canadian soldiers back home.

Major George A Wells CBG

To be a Companion of The Order of St. Michael and St. George, London Gazette, No. 30450, 1 January 1918.

Admitted to No. 4 Canadian Field Ambulance, with Dermatitis of his left leg, 4 February 1918. Placed

on sick leave, 4 – 8 February 1918, UK. And finally admitted No.8 Michelham Convalescent Hospital, Menton, 15 February 1918.

Mentioned in Despatches, London Gazette No. 30612, 12 February 1918. Then, rejoined the 2nd Canadian Division, 8 March 1918. Finally, granted 14 days leave, 6 September 1918, returning 5 November 1918.

Major Wells was attached to the 2nd Canadian Division during the march to the Rhine in December of 1918.

Mentioned in Despatches

Major Wells was Mentioned in Despatches, London Gazette No. 31009, 31 December 1918.



Officers of No. 2 Stationary Hospital, Boulogne. 5 January 1919. MIKAN No. 3404955

Following his participation in the Allied Occupation of Germany, Wells was granted 14 days leave to the UK on 10 January 1919. He returned from leave on 28 February 1919. Wells remained with the 2nd Canadian Division in France until 16 April 1919, when he proceeded to England for the last time. Then, Wells in charge of demobilization of chaplains at Witley Camp, England until September 1919. Then, to be Honourary Lieutenant-Colonel George Anderson Wells, London Gazette No. 31353, 5 April 1919.

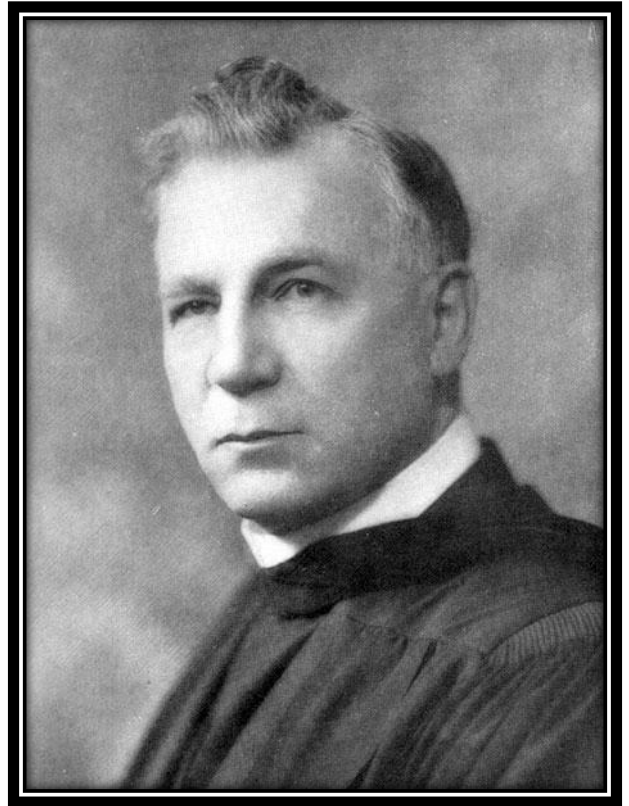
Mentioned in Despatches

Mentioned in Despatches, London Gazette No. 31448, 11 July 1919.

Returning to Canada after his military discharge, he served successively as Rector at Minnedosa, St. Luke's (Victoria). Then, at Saint Margaret's (Winnipeg); Warden of St. John's College. Later, Examining Chaplain to the Archbishop of Rupert's Land (Winnipeg). In addition, Lecturer in religious education and Biblical Greek at St. John's College. Finally, in 1934, he became Bishop of the Cariboo diocese.

Major George Anderson Wells served once again in the Second World War. From his home in Victoria, through high-ranking Militia contacts, Wells offered to serve in any capacity that was needed. In September 1939, he travelled to Ottawa, with his Great War files in hand, in order to re-establish the Chaplain Service. Wells entered the Second World War as Principal Chaplain (P) of the Canadian Forces. But as army regulations required him to retire at age 60, in 1943 he became the Royal Canadian Navy's Chaplain of the Fleet (Church of England) with seniority dated 15 Jun 1944 and served until the end of the war. He was released in 1945. He was the most decorated chaplain in the British Commonwealth and was promoted to Honorary Brigadier.

Brigadier Wells was the Assistant to the Bishop of Toronto from 1946 to 1951. He died at Toronto, Ontario on 10 April 1964. He and his wife Charlotte are buried in St. James Cemetery, Parliament Street, Toronto, ON.





Volunteer Officers Decoration (V.D.) King George V Version

<https://www.saintmargarets.ca/st-margarets-and-the-great-war>

<https://cefrg.ca/blog/george-anderson-wells/>



The Order of Saint Michael and Saint George Medal

From Bay Roberts Guardian 26 Feb 1944

**TALK GIVEN BY
BISHOP WELLS**

**Canadian Prelate Was
Born at Clarke's Beach**

Only 380 of the Royal Canadian Navy's 80,000 men and women are without any religion affiliation, it was announced in St. John's on Feb. 13, by Rt. Rev. G. A. Wells, G.M.G., V.D., M.A., D.D., chief chaplain of the R.C.N.

This clearly shows "the great place which religion hold in the national life of Canada and Newfoundland." Bishop Wells declared in a sermon at a general Protestant service held in the R.C.N. Barracks drill hall for ships and shore establishments of the base.

It was the first visit her in 18 months for the Newfoundland born prelate who was Anglican Bishop of Caribou in northern British Columbia, for five years until he joined the chaplain service in 1939. He was born at Clarke's Beach, Conception Bay, and lived in Newfoundland for 18 years.

The service was the first of its kind held here by naval personnel since last Easter. It was conducted by Rev. J. M. Armstrong, senior Protestant chaplain for H.M.C.S. Avalon. The scriptural lesson was read by Commodore C. R. H. Taylor, R.C.N., Flag Officer, Newfoundland. The commodore was accompanied to the services by Capt S. W. Davis, R.C.N., commanding officer of H.M.C.S. Avalon.

Bishop Wells said Newfoundland remembering the hospitality her own sons have received in Britain, always is especially glad, to welcome Royal Navy men in this country.

The chief chaplain hoped Britain and her Allies never would falter in their resolve to observe "justice and equity" in their treatment of the enemy. "Leave out vengeance" he exhorted. "Vengeance is for the Lord."

Bishop Wells lauded the 26-man R.C.N. Band, which played hymns at the service. The conductor is P.O. Laurence Frayne, RCNVR, of Pine Falls, Man.
