



## Source 9

**A letter from Margaret Greg, a British Red Cross nurse who served near the front line in France, 1915**

(Cheshire and Chester Archives, DDX 511/18 vol.1)

### How to use this source:

Study this source carefully. It contains information that could be useful in your presentation on life in the trenches. As you study the source, ask yourself:

- Do you think the average British or French soldier would have been surprised to see women near the front line?
- What were the women doing?
- What were Margaret's living conditions like?
- Which aspects of trench warfare does this source provide information on?
- How could this source be used in your final presentation?



## Source 9

ST. JAMES'S GAZETTE. *Apr. 1915* 9

“ They used to have a lot to do in the dispensary where there is always a sister on duty. One of our members, Miss Preston, drives a motor ambulance and meets all the trains that evacuate besides others transporting to the ships, etc. Boulogne is a very interesting place now and very like the description in the “ Times ” about a month ago. There is an article on the Rest Station in several papers. I may say nothing about the wounded or number of trains or ships or troops, or criticise anything, etc., so that I very much regret that I can tell you nothing interesting.

“ We don't really hear much more about the war than you do, only now and again from some man going on leave, but one cannot say much here. The other night we had a trainful of French wounded in, they were very grateful for cocoa and bread and butter as they had been a long time on the train. All our cupboards, etc., are manufactured out of packing cases, one member is very good at carpentering. Our mugs are made from the tins of tinned milk, plus a handle, and are quite strong and nice. We all live in one house up in the town and one of our members does ‘ Home Sister. ’ I am sleeping at a place called the ‘ Granary, ’ with three others; it has a high roof, just beams and rough mortar, with lots of little air-holes, but it has become quite a civilized dormitory with curtained cubicles. The good folks who own the house used to hang clothes out to dry on the wires our curtains now run along. We have made ourselves wash-stands, etc with packing-cases; we have camp bedsteads and sheets and blankets if we wish, but I am using my sleeping bag to be ready if I join the others or go under canvas, or anything else.

“ We work a fortnight on day and night alternately, as the trains come as often as not at night. There are some of my brother's men on one in now, and I am going to ask them if they have seen him lately, when they wake, as I have not heard from him for a month. There are hardly any English civilians here and church is all full of nurses and soldiers—khaki I should say, they are not all soldiers. I believe Helen is busy as our detachment at home is now being mobilized. I shall be out six months I expect, I signed a contract anyhow for six months or till not wanted.”