

# **JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**

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**In This Issue**  
**JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**  
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**Editorial Introduction – The Harris Issue page 3**

**Major Stephen Court**

**Holiness Hymns page 4**

**Major Melvyn Jones**

**Turning Negatives into Positives page 6**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**Change and Challenge page 8**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**The Lord said... Write page 10**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**“For This Cause...” page 11**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**Tradition and Innovation page 13**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**‘De-Armifying’ the Army page 15**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**My Dreams for the Army page 17**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**Booth’s Army page 20**

**Commissioner Wesley Harris**

**A Higher Up Religion (part 3) page 23**

**General William Booth**

**We’ll Be Heroes page 26**

**Major Stephen Court**

## **Editorial Introduction – The Harris Issue**

by Major Stephen Court

Greetings in Jesus' name. Welcome to JAC71 - the Harris Issue.

On the release date of this issue - February 1 - the High Council will just be wrapping up its deliberations and choosing the 19th General of The Salvation Army. Commissioner Wesley Harris is the first colonel to be nominated for that office, more than 20 years ago. He served with distinction in corps and editorial work and in leadership roles in Australia, Scotland, New Zealand, and Canada and Bermuda, before retiring in Melbourne Australia.

Just before his retirement he published his first book - BATTLE LINES.

And that title was to be followed by nine more over the past 16 years. During 15 of those years he plunged himself into a teaching role in religious education and served in various capacities with historical societies, temporary appointments, and The War College.

Why a Harris Issue? His tenth book is being launched this month and we wanted in on the blessings - and we wanted to let you in, too!

He has been writing for Army publications since 1949 - about 62 years!

And he has been JAC's longest serving and most consistent contributor, writing for JAC since its inception. This new book - the author's tenth - is called, 'Writing the vision' (from Hab.2.2). It includes a section called, 'Sanctified aggression' that contains selected articles from JAC. But he has so many JAC contributions we thought it appropriate to highlight some more of them in JAC71. The rest of the book includes articles and poems published in other books and periodicals. You can order WRITING THE VISION through TRADE or direct from Salvo Publishing, 95-99 Railway Road, Blackburn, Vic.3130, Australia. Email:Salvoaus@aus.salvationarmy.org

The Commissioner is joined by two series and a final word in this issue. The Higher Up Religion Series by William Booth is finishing up in the issue. And Major Melvyn Jones's is starting a series called The Songs Of Holiness. It is a fascinating study of holiness and music in The Salvation Army - a significant contribution to the movement. You will want to dig in at the beginning and plan to stay with JAC through all five parts. The final word is a reprint and a hat tip to Commissioner Harris. Hallelujah.

## **Holiness Hymns** by Major Melvyn Jones

*Major Mel Jones is a Divisional Commander in the United Kingdom Territory and a former Principal of the William Booth College. The Major is writing a book in which he explores the prominent place given to holiness within the early Salvation Army.*

*Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.  
Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord. (Eph.5:19)*

The importance of this scriptural verse was fully appreciated by John and Charles Wesley. These two key figures in Methodism also understood the effectiveness of using songs to teach scriptural truth. The majority if not all of the readers of this article will have imbibed some of the great truths of scripture by means of singing the biblically rich songs of Charles Wesley. Amongst the countless admirers and spiritual descendants of John and Charles, William Booth stands out as a great Christian leader in his own right. Many of the things that Salvationists would claim are “Army” can actually be traced back to Methodism: not least our doctrines in general and our doctrine of holiness in particular. Booth was not a prolific songwriter like Charles but he was a prolific song publisher; he understood the importance of songs. One of his many publications was significantly entitled “Holiness Hymns”. The title is evidence of the priority given to the doctrine of holiness right from the early days of The Salvation Army. In this series of five articles I am going to briefly explore this theme of Holiness Hymns.

I begin with a holiness hymn written by a woman: Mary James. It is fitting that I begin in this way. The door of ministry opportunity for women was opened in the early years of Methodism but then began to close again. The Salvation Army took over where early Methodism had led the way and flung open this door. Two of the main reasons for this emancipation were revival and holiness. The urgent need for revival meant that no one – not even a woman! – should be barred from ministry. Holiness, the second reason, was seen as the one essential qualification for ministry. Whoever had received ‘the blessing’ – male or female – was qualified of God for ministry. The early Salvation Army – The Christian Mission – was all out for revival and for holiness: thus women found ample opportunity for ministry within its ranks. But let us return to the words of the holiness hymn I mentioned earlier:

My body, soul and spirit,  
Jesus, I give to thee,  
A consecrated offering,  
Thine evermore to be

*My all is on the altar,  
I'm waiting for the fire;  
Waiting, waiting, waiting,  
I'm waiting for the fire.*

O Jesus, mighty Saviour,  
I trust in thy great name;  
I look for thy salvation,  
Thy promise now I claim.

O let the fire, descending  
Just now upon my soul,  
Consume my humble offering,  
And cleanse and make me whole!

I'm thine, O blessèd Jesus,  
Washed by thy precious blood;  
Now seal me by thy Spirit  
A sacrifice to God

The American author Mary James was involved in the vibrant holiness-revival scene of the USA that strongly influenced British Evangelical Christianity during the 19th century. She was a friend of the now forgotten – but in her day Methodist superstar – Phoebe Palmer: Catherine Booth was on friendly terms with Phoebe Palmer. Palmer both impressed and influenced Catherine, not least by her particular understanding and promotion of holiness. Her altar theology had three parts. First the believer must bring everything, absolutely everything to the altar. Secondly the altar makes the gift – the believer – holy. Finally the altar is Jesus. This three-step understanding of holiness has been preached from Salvation Army platforms in various forms over the years. Catherine Booth describes her own 'crisis of sanctification' in these very words. Look again at the words of this holiness hymn by Mary James and see how she uses this song to teach the three-step altar theology of Phoebe Palmer.

*Now seal me by thy Spirit  
A sacrifice to God*

## Turning Negatives into Positives

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

IN THE sixty two years of my service as an officer the Army has seen remarkable advances in some third world countries. But declines in some first world territories indicate that the good seed sometimes struggles to survive in affluent soil despite strenuous attempts to cultivate it.

Declining numbers of seekers and soldiers may be put down to the fact that we live in a largely uncommitted generation where secularization is increasingly evident. But whatever their cause our losses are a challenge for they are not 'just statistics'; they represent 'never dying souls' and that means that even the smallest decline matters.

I remember General Frederick Couatts speaking eloquently about 'watching the drip' and pointing out that if in our home we have a burst pipe and a rushing leak of water we call a plumber as a matter of urgency but we may not be alarmed by a small but steady drip of a tap which can, nevertheless, cause much waste if it is allowed to persist.

We shouldn't waste our strength on internal blame games or spread discouraging despair but we do need to challenge ourselves and our comrades to search for ways and means of turning our negatives into positives. If rigorous inspection is called for there should be no flinching by leaders or led – anything that will further the cause which is ours. This is a battle we can't afford to lose. We mustn't allow ourselves to be conditioned by failure or let the world write our agenda. God is with us and we need to be in step with His Spirit.

In some ways conditions are a lot easier than when I began as an officer but in other respects the challenges are greater. Still, I confess to some 'sanctified envy' of those newly commissioned as officers. The past has been great but the future can be better and I keep hearing of developments which cause me to tingle with a longing to be in the fray.

There *is* a future for the Army to explore and we should relish it. The use of the internet would have led William Booth to explore it 'big time' and the possibilities are immense. The late and great Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth agreed that modern means of communication had enabled her to reach out to more people *after* she was ninety than in all the years before!

In Australia "Mainly music" is a programme for parents and young children which is attracting people to the Army in great numbers. Myriad other forms of community service are also bringing new people to us and the need now is to seize the evangelical opportunities which are afforded.

A newly commissioned officer is pioneering a movement under the title, "Go for souls" and I would not be surprised if our Founder is calling upon the saints in Heaven to 'fire a volley' and wanting us to join in!

Young and old have a part to play in the great Salvation war. One of my heroes is Caleb who, old as he was, heard of a hot spot in Canaan needing to be conquered and volunteered to tackle it with the words, "Give me this mountain" (Joshua 14.12). That's the spirit for us as well!

## **Change and Challenge**

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

As a corps officer I once had a songster leader who was a dentist by profession. With a wry smile he used to quote a line of a hymn: "Change and decay in all around I see".

He could say that again! A humorist has remarked that the moment Adam and Eve were turned out of the Garden of Eden, Eve may have remarked, "My dear, we live in changing times!" In fact, of course, all times are changing. Where there is life there is change; that has always been the case and always will be so. What is new is the rate of change which has been accelerated by many factors including scientific and technological advances.

During my lifetime the world has been affected by the introduction of television, computers, space travel and many other developments which have had far-reaching effects. H. C. N. Williams, a former provost of Coventry Cathedral, England, has said that history may be seen to flow like a great river carrying the commerce and communication of human society and providing the means for cleansing and refreshing humanity as it flows on its course. Then from time to time the river changes its level and flows in confusion and at a greater speed down the rapids from one level to another. Its course is broken by jagged rocks and there are whirl pools and a great deal of froth.

The period through which we are living is like the river flowing down the rapids. Whereas in the past there may have been times when change was gradual and predictable now it is speedy and unpredictable. Some find change intimidating and, so to speak, are liable to clutch the bank and try to avoid the rapids. Others face the challenge of change and determine to ride the rough water, keep their balance and avoid the rocks that would wreck their best intentions. Not every change may be for the best but the trick is to find the best in every change.

In the midst of change, in some parts of the Army a lot of people seem to have an identity crisis and are unsure about the mission of our movement. But in our history we may discover 'His story' and abundant evidence of God working through his people. It appears that God has not made us just another religious denomination but something else as well. Our social and evangelical work are two sides of the same coin of caring. Our mission is not only to the soul of a person but the whole of a person - and indeed the whole of society. Church growth need not be 'churchy growth'. It may incorporate our 'distinctives' and can and should embrace our social as well as our corps work.

Loren B. Mead in, *The once and future Church*, describes the polarity in the Church's understanding of its mission. Is it the conversion of the world or the serving of the world? Part of the glory of the Army is that it has embodied both of these concepts as contained in the teaching of Jesus. We are out to save and serve the world and whatever happens we must maintain that critical balance through all the changes taking place in and around our movement.



Some changes will come whatever we may or may not do and we must be ready to adapt and adopt accordingly. In other cases we should have the courage to be agents of change, moving ahead with cautious courage and prayerfully seeking for insight and foresight - knowing that one day people will judge our actions with the advantage of hindsight! But in all this we should not become addicted to change for the sake of change. There is wisdom in the old adage, "If it ain't broke don't fix it" and it may help to sober some who have become high on change and can't resist altering any thing which has been even when it is perfectly all right!

As we face new situations our attitude will make all the difference. The founder of the Bata shoe company spoke of sending two representatives to different parts of Africa to check out possibilities for business development. After a couple of weeks one wired back to say that there were no prospects because no one wore shoes anyway. The other representative said that the market was wide open. Nobody had shoes therefore they all need what the firm had to offer!

Turning out an old trunk I came across a plaque bearing some words I wrote years ago: "Think positively, act decisively, live creatively". As I 'ate my own words' I found that they didn't taste too bad and were not unrelated to what may be required in these days.

It is natural that we will sometimes fear change because it leads into the unknown. But there is no need to think that the bend of the road is the end of the road or that God who has helped us in the past will fail to undertake for us in the future. We have his promise that he will not let us down, so why worry? We might well make our own the prayer of Reinhold Niebuhr, "Give us the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, the courage to change what should be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference".

## **The Lord said... Write** by Commissioner Wesley Harris

*In the book of Habakkuk it says, "The Lord...said, write..." Habakkuk 2.2)*

Like us, perhaps, the prophet was perplexed by the extent of evil in the world. Why did God allow wicked people to prosper? If punishment was to come at the hands of the threatening Babylonians that would not make sense for if anything they were more wicked than the prophet's fellow Jews! So what should be said or done?

There was no quick or easy answer to the problem of evil but the prophet could be quietly assured that God in his good time would do what was right and the immediate task was to write this conviction clearly so that others might share the vision.

I believe that a similar command comes to many believers in these days. Devil possessed pens may be employed to fill some pages of the secular press and the power of the written word may be greater than ever before but so is the need for those who will write for righteousness and truth.

Habakkuk said that he would stand at the watch and station himself on the ramparts and see what God would say to him. And the Lord said, "Write!" In the same way some who are 'tuned in' to what God has to say to them may also be led to write in order to spread the good news of the gospel.

When I feel led to encourage some people to take up their pens in this way they say that they are not sufficiently gifted and I urge them to put their modesty on the altar and perhaps undertake study to equip themselves for a writing ministry.

For many people the biggest difficulty about writing is getting started. 'Some time' so easily becomes 'no time' – and I speak from experience! But the Lord is calling for more writers, people who could be word merchants for Jesus and help to extend his glorious kingdom.

**“For This Cause...”**  
by Commissioner Wesley Harris

A SENTENCE in a Salvation Army periodical triggered a train of thought in my mind. It suggested that a corps should not merely offer a culture to die in but a cause to die for. Now I like the Salvation Army culture; it is my comfort zone. Bands, banners (and bonnets?) are all right by me. Wearing the appropriate uniform suits me - and most other people - better than anything else. While not averse to some of the new, so-called ‘plastic choruses’, I also love many of the good, old Army songs and value them not merely for their literary merit but for their theological substance as well.

There are idiosyncrasies which are part of our culture too - funny expressions which are peculiarly Army - like ‘going to the open-air’ or ‘being promoted to Glory’ - and I love them. Other people may scratch their heads or give superior smiles or want to exchange our terms for others which sound more ‘churchy’. So be it. The Army culture suits me and probably it always will. Hopefully I will die in it, although not too soon, I trust!

But the writer said that our corps should not merely offer a culture to die in but a cause to die for - and he was right! The cause is more important than the culture. The ‘why’ matters more than the ‘how’ and it is encouraging that many Salvationists are rediscovering the reason for which The Salvation Army was brought into being in the first place. Our cause is to honour God, win people for Jesus Christ and serve the needy. If we lose sight of those aims we will have lost the plot and will deserve to be consigned to a museum for religious relics.

As an Army editor I interviewed the late Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth (a granddaughter of the Army’s founders) when she was approaching a hundred years of age. She surprised me by saying that she was all in favour of Army pop groups adding ‘as long as they do what they do for Jesus and not just to show off’. So far as she was concerned it was the cause which mattered most.

It has been said that there is not such thing as sacrifice if the cause is big enough. Recently, when conducting meetings in the Philippines I met officers living and working in terrible districts and exulting in the challenges which they faced. Similarly, in Brazil I saw women officers who wanted nothing more than to be allowed to work in appalling shanty towns where drugs and violence were the order of the day - every day.

Years ago my wife and I were appointed to an English corps and I took an early opportunity of speaking to members of the youth fellowship. What a crowd of spoilt kids they were! They grumbled about everything! They had a catalogue of things which the corps did not provide for them. Eventually I could take no more and suggested that they should try to forget about themselves and do something for other people. “Like what?” they asked glumly. Off the cuff, I suggested that they might organise a dinner and entertainment on Christmas Day for people who would otherwise be on their own.

Remarkably, those youngsters took the idea hook, line and sinker. With a bit of help they organised the meal, the entertainment and the transport and had the time of their lives doing something for others. As a group they found themselves through finding a cause.

That was the secret of the verve and vitality which characterised the early Salvationists. They may have been as poor as church mice but they had a great cause and a mighty God and simply had no time to be bored or sorry for themselves. Literally, they were ready to live and die in order to fulfil their mission which, of course, was the case with Jesus himself. On trial before Pontius Pilate he said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth..." (John 18.37 - KJV).

During the civil war in China a communist was about to be executed by nationalist forces. Somehow he managed to tear the bandage from his eyes and, just before he was riddled with bullets, he shouted, "I'm dying for an ideal. What are you living for?" That is a challenge for all of us, whatever our age or stage.

## **Tradition and Innovation** by Commissioner Wesley Harris

The Salvation Army began with a happy mixture of tradition and innovation. There was an acceptance of traditions of Christian faith and conduct going back to the early Church. There were also some traditions from the particular church background which appealed to the Booths such as the practice of inviting people to kneel at the mourners' bench or penitents' form as in Methodist camp meetings. But with the traditions there were innovations, not the least being a willingness to take on quasi-military structures in order to further the essential mission.

American writer George Weigel contends that 'tradition which in its Latin root (*traditio*) means handing on begins not with human invention but inside the very life of God, the Holy Trinity...Tradition and innovation (are) the table and the dynamic in the Church'.

Tradition is the offspring of history and while in earlier times Salvationists were sometimes too busy making history to record it adequately we are now more aware of the value of our historical heritage. General Frederick Couetts wrote, History is to a community what memory is to an individual. Without a memory I would be an 'unperson' unable to say whence I came or whither I was bound. History enables a community - whether an entire nation or a section of a nation - to place itself in relation to its own past, its present opportunities and the future prospects.

Devoid of a sense of history the Army could suffer from a kind of corporate Alzheimer's disease and be unsure about its identity, confused about its role and largely ineffective. Traditions are important for our continuing life and self-awareness; without them we will hardly know what we are or where we are going. If tradition can be a dead hand it can also be a guiding hand. (In a corps or headquarters situation we may sometimes be impatient with those who say, "We have always done it this way" but it may be even worse when changes in personnel have been so frequent that there is little corporate memory and no-one to point to precedents which should be noted!) Wisdom was not born with our generation and all who went before us were certainly not fools. (If we get as many runs on the board as some of them did we may have reason to be grateful!)

Much that obtained in the past will obtain in the present. Not all old methods are broken tools to be cast aside. Some things are timely because they are timeless and to regard anything traditional as necessarily useless would be plainly silly. Yet, while appreciating the value of tradition, we should also recognise the danger of being petrified in the patterns of the past. To quote George Weigel again, "Tradition, the living faith of the dead, must always be distinguished from traditionalism, the dead faith of the living".

James Russell Lowell wrote,

New occasions teach new duties  
Time makes ancient good uncouth;  
They must upward still and onward,  
Who would keep abreast of truth.

Paradoxically, the Army tradition is to be innovative. To be really 'Army' is to dare to be different sometimes. I remember when I was a young officer at a small south London corps a procession with fiery torches was organised through the darkened streets as a prelude to an evangelical campaign. An urchin boy said to me, "The thing I like about the Army is that you never know what is going to happen next!"

Half a century later that could still be said in many places where there is a willingness to do anything in order to win people for Christ. In New Zealand recently I saw a corps hall dubbed 'the Shed' which had on its outside wall a huge, well-painted mural depicting the various activities of the corps - sport, counselling, children's meetings and so on. The idea was to make the place appear jolly and 'user friendly' and on enquiry I found that new people were being attracted and were getting saved which was what mattered.

Of course, what may be appropriate in one situation may not be advisable in another, but an openness to new approaches is needed everywhere. If we don't innovate we are likely to enervate. William Booth is credited with the saying, "There should be continuity of principle but adaptation of method". It is certainly a good maxim to bear in mind.

As an Army we began with a happy blend of the traditional and the innovative. Our forebears used the great hymns of the Church and they adapted some of the pop songs of the day. They were too smart to do otherwise. Breadth of expression may still be needed today. Take the sometimes contentious issue of the Army song book versus the use of projected 'Scripture choruses'. Christian toleration might indicate a judicious blend of the ancient and modern. But I have known cases where there has been a threatened walk-out by older comrades if any chorus not in the song book was used and other places where people have been denied any of the Army songs which have been their means of grace through the years.

There must be more than one contemporary application of the saying of Jesus, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old" (Matthew 13.52).

## **'De-Armifying' the Army** by Commissioner Wesley Harris

MUST we 'de-armify' the Army in order to fulfill the Army's mission?

The question - spoken or unspoken - is being raised in many places. A report from India would provide an extreme example as the following extract from an article in Salvationist illustrates:

*'The Evangelical Fellowship of India has issued a statement urging Christians leaders to tone down 'spiritual battle' language in a bid to prevent Hindu fundamental groups taking advantage of inflammatory words to paint Christians in India as anti-national. EFI cautions against using military metaphors from the Bible because to do so is 'unloving, inappropriate and counterproductive'. It says that 'warfare vocabulary' such as army, attack, battle, campaign, conquer, enemy, foes, forces, soldier, victory and weapons have been used wrongly as motivational tools for mission.'*

Now I am not qualified to provide detailed comment on the situation in India although I would hope that our movement may be helped by the fact that in that country we have been translating the military metaphor into the language of love for nearly 120 years. Furthermore, it may be wondered whether the prejudices of some extremist groups will ever be accommodated whatever terms are employed. It is also regrettable if the representatives of some other faiths do not show to Christians the tolerance and understanding which their devotees expect to find when they migrate to western countries.

But is the military metaphor which has served us well since 1878 now past its use-by date? Is that the reason why in some corps - and even some territories - there is a tendency to change traditional Army terms and substitute others, sometimes ones borrowed from the churches?

Adaptation is a law of nature and certainly the Army has been able to adapt to many cultures and conditions around the world. We need the courage to change but prudence may require it to be cautious courage.

Sometimes we have been too ready to exchange the dynamic terms of Salvationism for the tired terms of other groups with little evidence that this has made us more comprehensible or acceptable to secular men and women.

Commissioner Bill Luttrell has written, 'We are a church like no other church and an army like no other army'. I agree. The Church Universal is not to be characterized by dull sameness. We can dare to be different. We don't have to ape other bodies; we can be ourselves.

With unity there can be diversity. The Army may not suit everybody but, for all its faults, many of us feel that it is the best thing we know.

A few among us are like someone joining a rugby football club and then complaining about the shape of the ball. They should have joined a soccer club in the first place!

Our name - and the quasi-military forms that go with it - brings instant recognition in many parts of the world. The devoted service of those who have gone before us makes our name a passport to acceptance with many. That is certainly true where I live in Australia. Our name stands so high that I can only pray that we may be as good as people think we are!

Multi-national companies are often ready to guard their name with expensive law suits, if necessary. I am confident that if the holder of a McDonald's franchise decided to change the name to McTaggart there would be a swift response. A good name is something to be prized!

It may be said that our quasi-military forms are no more than a metaphor but metaphors matter. The name The Salvation Army defines what we are as a movement, or at least what, under God, we were meant to be. It points to our uniqueness, our message and our mode. History would indicate that the change of name from the Christian Mission to The Salvation Army helped to bring cohesion and effectiveness to the work without changing what we were essentially, namely a Christian mission.

Our ethos is closely related to our quasi military form as is our solidarity as a far flung movement and yet a close knit community around the world. I do not believe that we need sacrifice our identity in order to fulfill our destiny as a lively limb of the Body of Christ. History would testify to the contrary and there is plenty of current experience to verify that we can 'do the Army thing' and still be sensitive to the feelings of modern men and women.

Our 'goodly heritage' is one of aggressive Christianity which has always been offensive to some but nevertheless effective with many.

Our call is not merely to passive membership but active soldiership. I remind myself that at the center of the title bestowed on me by the Army is the word 'mission'. A commissioner without a mission would be a contradiction in terms and an offence to Almighty God. But then, so would any 'Salvationist' without salvation and a desire to share it!

As one of our songs puts it, 'We are an army mobilized by God' and we had better believe it!



## **My Dreams for the Army** by Commissioner Wesley Harris

Walt Disney said of the enterprise which bears his name, 'If you can dream it you can do it. This whole thing was started by a mouse'. The Salvation Army was another great enterprise which started with a dream and under the blessing of God, with prayer and passion and hard work, the dream came true.

Many of us have shared the dream of our founders and have been concerned that no-one should steal it from us. Now it may be important to do a little dreaming of our own and consider the shape of things to come.

I have been asked to write about my own dreams for the Army and I respond on the strength of the Scriptural promise that if young men can have visions old men can have dreams! In brief, my dream for the Army is that it should be what it is at its passionate, innovative and effective best. Of course, because it is comprised of people like the writer and readers of this article, the Army is not always at its best. Sometimes it seems to have lost the plot.

But my dream is of an Army that is true to its history and true to its destiny. I want this movement to be actually what it already is potentially for I am an incurable Salvationist and believe passionately in what the real Army is all about and feel that its best days may be yet to come.

Memories can contribute to dreams so allow me to share a few of mine...

I think of a retired woman officer I am proud to call a friend. She pioneered innovative social work in the red light district of Amsterdam and I have in mind a picture of her in that place conducting an open-air meeting in pouring rain. One of her arms is crooked around an Army flag; a very drunken man is trying to drape himself around her neck and rivulets of rain run down her radiant face as she proclaims her joyous gospel to people sheltering in nearby doorways. As an observer I can only murmur to myself, 'This is the army!'

My wife and I visited a clinic for about thirty very young, dark skinned children in Swaziland. In charge was a single Australian officer - the only white woman in a huge area. All her little charges were doomed to die from AIDS, but far from her homeland, that woman was sacrificing her years and her health in order to make their short lives a little happier. She too represented the Army at its best.

Another vignette is of a scene in Toronto. Zealous young Salvationists had scoured the city streets and brought to the Army hall a great crowd of street kids and other young people for what was billed as 'Soul busters'. As the speaker I rejoiced in the attendance but wondered what kind of reception might be expected! However, when the appeal was given there was a steady response to the Mercy Seat and glory shone on the young

Salvationists as they sought to point their peers to the Saviour. That scene too contributed to my dreams and my hopes for the future.

The shanty towns or 'favelas' in Brazil are places of indescribable corruption and filth where children play in open sewers and violence is the order of the day. As congress leaders my wife and I paid a fleeting visit but the territorial commander introduced us to some radiant young European women officers who were there to stay. He said, 'These girls beg to be allowed to live in these places and love the people for Jesus' sake'. I was humbled and yet filled with hope for a movement which included people like that.

The Army has been called 'a mosaic of grace' and one of my dreams could be that larger numbers of Salvationists will discover more of the movement in which they serve and, of course, the Spirit without whose gracious presence all we do could be empty show.

Sometimes there is a predisposition on the part of Salvationists to think that the grass is greener on the other side of the denominational fence. Now of course, we should always be ready to learn any better means of cultivation practised by the neighbours but it may also be good if we could rediscover the charm of our own garden and then bend our backs (and our knees) to make it even more fruitful. That means not only having a dream but being down to earth.

Sometimes the notion is that if the Army is to improve they will have to fix it - 'they' being people at headquarters. But without taking anything away from the influence or responsibility of those engaged in Army administration (of whose number I was one for many years) the 'Army' is not merely some vague body at Queen Victoria Street, London or wherever. The 'Army' is us and if progress doesn't take place where we are it is unlikely to take place at all. Only team work can make the dream work and so I don't merely look forward to bigger and better buildings with more and more pew sitters but 'an Army mobilised by God' with 'every soldier a soul winner'.

It is sometimes felt that if we changed our structures and altered our systems our problems would be at an end. Certainly our structures and systems should facilitate not obstruct our essential mission and as an Army leader I have played a small part in some fairly big administrative changes. But my dreams now would transcend these things. I would hope that in some ways we may go back in order to go forward!

Of course we cannot relive our past either personally or corporately. Nor can we ignore the fact that times are changing. But my dream would be that more of our people might rediscover some of the timeless principles which characterised primitive Salvationism. Our forebears in the faith had tremendous conviction, compassion and commitment which is why, under God, a lot of quite ordinary folk helped to make an extraordinary branch of the Christian Church.

The late Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth said to me, 'The things which made the Army will go on making the Army'. She was right Fervent prayer, boundless love, holy joy and an entrepreneurial spirit cannot fail to be effective. Numerically, the Army in the world is larger than ever but to employ an Americanism, 'We 'aint seen nothing yet!' The best is yet to be. The dreams of God[s people will surely come true - in God's time and in his way.

## **Booth's Army**

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

Some of the evangelical missions which began in Victorian England were short-lived. So what gave permanence to that led by William Booth? It may have been the fact that in addition to a focus on personal spiritual renewal there was the aim of achieving social salvation, caring for body as well as soul. A growing social work won acceptance and that has been the case throughout our history. People who would not join the Army supported it for the sake of its good works. Then there was the adoption of a strikingly different mode. In 1878 William, his son Bramwell and George Scott Railton were discussing a Christian Mission Report. It stated that the mission was a 'volunteer army'. At the time in England the 'volunteers' were a part-time militia, a kind of 'dad's army' and Bramwell objected that did not want to be a 'volunteer' but a 'regular' or nothing. Thereupon, William crossed out 'volunteer' and substituted 'salvation' and at a stroke of the pen made a huge difference.

In essence nothing changed. We were – and still are – a Christian mission. But we were also an army mobilized by God. Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth – a granddaughter of the Founders - told me that the introduction of uniforms was not the result of an edict from headquarters but the desire of Salvationists to show whose side they were on. The army was out to win the world for Jesus. World conquest was the aim.

In 1890 the Army Mother was promoted to Glory after a long and painful battle with cancer leaving William sorely affected. His daughter Emma was killed in a train crash in the USA. His daughter Catherine and sons Ballington and Herbert were lost to the Army perhaps because the pacifying influence of their mother was no more. William's health was poor but his passion was unabated. Hostels for the homeless, work for unmarried mothers and addicts and migration schemes multiplied

Salvationists were meant to be warriors not wimps. Although infinitely compassionate towards the needy William was demanding on himself and also on his comrades in arms. When I was a young officer my mentor was retired Commissioner George Jolliffe who as a young officer had been private secretary to the Founder and actually lived in his house. He told me that, after the promotion to Glory of the Army Mother, he would sometimes hear the tinkling of a bell in the Founder's bedroom and an urgent voice would call, "Jolliffe, I can't sleep, let's work". Then, notebook in hand he would go and take down a letter or an article for an Army paper. (William was a prolific writer so that from the first English edition of *The War Cry* in December 1879 until he was promoted glory in December 1912 one or more of his writings appeared in every issue.)

The Founder was completely focused on mission and was not seeking worldly honours. When offered the freedom of the city of London he said, "Jolliffe, go and tell them I don't want it" - not an easy thing for him to do! Later however, William was persuaded to accept the honour and a cheque with it which went straight into Army funds.

William Booth had a holy expectation that at an early date the world would be won for Jesus and that the Army would have a major role in that. Certainly, the global spread of the movement was remarkable. Country after country was invaded. European countries, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India all were added to the Army roll-call and in times when travel was much more arduous than today the General visited even remote parts of the growing Army empire.. As he got older the pace of his life seemed to increase; he was not only called but driven. The flame of his passion grew ever brighter.

I asked George Jolliffe the secret of the Founder's drive. He told me that it was his belief in hell. He really believed that if people were not saved they would go to a lost eternity. For that reason he would feel personally bound to challenge his cab or train driver about their need for salvation. And he would feel that the spread of his army of Salvation was a matter of urgency because millions were going to hell. He received an honorary doctorate from Oxford University not in recognition of what he had achieved as a social reformer but for his achievements as a spiritual leader. Fair enough!

For twenty two years after the passing of his beloved wife William was the inspiration of his growing Army and travelled tirelessly to inspect the rapidly growing work around the world, conducting crowded meetings and discussing his social schemes with heads of government. Where he had once been ridiculed he was now honoured as a 'citizen of the world'. But the first and last passion of William Booth's life was to get people saved and his followers caught something of his magnificent obsession so that all they met expected them to issue a spiritual challenge. It went with the uniform!

While he would rejoice that his Army is now larger than ever he would be disappointed at a dearth of soul saving, particularly in western countries. A Salvation Army without salvation meetings would have struck him as unthinkable and empty Mercy Seats reason to redouble prayer and effort.

In 1912 William Booth made his last public appearance in London's Royal Albert Hall and declared that although he was going into dry dock for repairs he was still determined to fight to the very end. By this time he was blind and needed a wooden hand rest to enable him to write straight across a page. (I have a cheque for fifty pounds he received for his work that same week, duly endorsed with the Founder's distinctive signature. It must have been among the last cheques he endorsed.)

His fighting spirit was maintained to the last when on the 20th of August he was promoted to Glory and no doubt received his Master's 'well done' . According to Richard Collier in *The General next to God*, at the last minute Queen Mary unexpectedly decided to attend the huge memorial service in the Olympia building. She was shown to a seat next to a woman who had once been a prostitute. The woman had brought two roses which she had placed on the coffin as it was carried

down the aisle. Possibly not recognizing the person to whom she was speaking, she told the Queen, "He cared for the likes of us!" It was a worthy epitaph.

## A Higher Up Religion – part 3

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

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### How Far Can I Be Saved?

This is a question, as we have already intimated, of thrilling interest to every really converted soul. Hunger and thirst after all inward and outward rightness with God and before Him is *natural* to the spiritual man. And the possibility of complete deliverance must, whatever be his opinion, interest him, and deserve his most careful attention.

Can I be saved from sinning and from sin *here*?

I know, you know, we all know, that we shall have deliverance there, in the new heavens and the new earth, but what about this very earth in which we are compelled to live for the present, can I love God with all my heart here in this town, in this house? Aye, in this poor body, with all its aches, and pains, and infirmities, with devils tempting me and men opposing me, and the mighty work of winning souls to Jesus on my hands, is it my Father's good pleasure to give me NOW that inner hidden kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? That is the question; and that is a question of surpassing importance to every redeemed soul whose eyes shall rest on this paper.

IT MEANS HAPPINESS! Sin is the great evil of your existence. Perhaps you have thought other-wise. The Devil's great interest is to delude you by making you feel that your happiness is dependent on your circumstances. You used to think so in an unsaved state. You said then, if you could only secure some for or other of earthly treasure you should be blessed. And now, you say, with Christ *and something else* you will be happy. Give me *this or that and Jesus*, and it will be all right. But it was not so then, and it is not so now. God is your great good. You were made to enjoy Him. He, and He only, can fill and satisfy your soul. Sin separated you from God before conversion, and now sin dulls your senses and clouds your vision, and prevents God manifesting Himself in all His glorious power within you.

Peter told the Jews that God, having raised up His Son Jesus, had sent Him to bless them. But how? By destroying the Roman yoke, and making them again a great, free, powerful nation? No! By the completion of their beautiful temple, and the revival, in all its pomp and magnificence, of that temple's ritual and service? No! By sending them trade, and commerce, and plenty, and health, and friendships, and all the desired relationships of family life? No? How then? Oh, Hallelujah! By turning every one of them away from his iniquities. That was the Lord's plan for making the Jews blessed; but they would not have it, and rejected it and Him who brought it, and the great bulk of them clung to their iniquity, although it was the deadly poison which drank up their life's

joy, and shut out from them the great Healer, and Saviour, and Joy Giver, and died and were damned in it. And so with you, dear reader. God has sent Jesus to you on the same heavenly, benevolent errand. He comes to your heart to bless, and gladden, and satisfy; but he comes to do it in this very way. *He cannot do it in any other*, and that is by turning you away from your iniquities. They are the asps whose venom poisons the springs of gladness in your soul. He has come to destroy them, the works of the devil,-all of them, big and little; and the little-if any of them can with propriety be so called-no less than the big; to destroy them root and branch, fruit and flower, and leaves and branches, and stem and root,-the whole Upas tree must go! His mission to you,-His mission of mercy, and blood, and sacrifice,-is to make and end-a complete end-of sin in your soul. So shall ye have a peace and abiding joy, and in no other way.

IT MEANS USEFULNESS. You want to be of some service to the Master, and to your brethren, and to poor perishing sinners. Very good. This, too, is a never absent instinct of a divine nature. To win souls to Christ, and to nurse and strengthen them when they are won. To be a saviour of men. Hallelujah. You are such in some measure already. You have His Spirit, and are ever and anon about His business. But you are feeble and inconstant. The fire burns low, and often seems ready to expire. It take you almost all your time to keep yourself saved. Well, you want a higher up religion. You need to be holy, because holiness means strength, and faithfulness, and power. It removes doubts by bringing in assurance of personal salvation, and doubts, you know, mean always weakness; and it also removes all the hindrances to perpetual indwelling of Jehovah. As sin goes out, God comes in; and with Christ fully dwelling in the vessel, in the temple, in the body, you will be fully equipped and qualifies for every good work. Holiness means usefulness. Come, then, let us pursue this interesting and importance inquiry. How far can God save from sin here? And we are sure our readers will agree with us-at least, we can only be satisfactorily answered by hearing what the Lord says on the subject; and, having listened to the Scriptures, you may then with propriety and advantage listen to the testimony of those who boldly profess to have an experience on the subject.

What says the Word of the Lord? What people say-whether they be learned or unlearned, official or unofficial, or anything else-if they speak no in harmony with the direct and plain teaching of the Word of God, they speak not the truth on this subject, whatever they may do on any other. And as the opinions of other men are not our standard, neither are their lives. If A and B say I cannot be saved from sinning,-if they say I must go on in unbelief, and unfaithfulness, and evil tempers, unto the end of my earthly days; if they say I cannot love God with all my heart, and be loyal with simple obedience to my heavenly King,-I ask A and B for their authority; and if they confess that, after some two or three disjointed, misapprehended texts of Scripture, they rely upon the fact that this unholy, inconsistent, spirit-grieving life is the common confessed experience of the bulk of Christians, and therefore nothing better is possible to me,-I reject their authority. I won't accept the backsliding experience of any number of people as the standard of religious attainment for me. It is not what men are, but what God wants them to be; not what they actually possess and enjoy of purity, and peace, and



power, but what Christ, the blessed Christ, with his agony and blood bought for them; what the Father freely offers, and what the pleading, long-suffering Holy Spirit waits to bestow. If I live at Ephesus, am I to conclude that it is impossible for me to keep my first love with its self-consuming, soul-saving power? or if my lot is cast in Laodicea, am I to teach that it is the right and acceptable thing before God and men not to be enthusiastic, not to be eaten up with the zeal of God's house, not to be burning hot; but to be miserable, contemptibly lukewarm in His service?

Oh, my brethren, my comrades in The Salvation Army, to you I write, Beware of measuring yourselves with yourselves. It is not wise. Endless loss, and sorrow, and backsliding have been caused by it,-contenting ourselves with being as good as other people. And yet many will do it, no matter how warned or cautioned they may be; and therefore let us burry up to the high levels of attainment, so that instead of dragging men down to Ephesus and Laodicea we may life them up to Mount Beulah, and draw them on to that blessed highway, the highway of holiness.

## **We'll Be Heroes**

by Major Stephen Court

A CAPACITY crowd bustles in the stadium. Generations of saints - famous greathearts and unknowns - mingle. The air is bristling with expectancy. The conflict has intensified since their day. The war is peaking to its eternal climax and the veterans are cheering us on (see Hebrews 12:1). Daniel and Josiah are shoulder-to-shoulder with John Wesley and Charles Grandison Finney, a few rows up from the Army's own Railton and Catherine, all cheering and praying for us to step it up.

As the old song says:  
We'll be heroes, we'll be heroes,  
When the battle is fierce;  
When the raging storm louder grows  
Will our courage increase  
By the cross.

They gave their lives to this cause and left us a legacy of example, inspiration, and instruction. The world was not worthy of many of them (see Hebrews 11:38) and now they are looking to us to seal the victory.

Are we interested in being heroes? 'The shields of his soldiers are red,' says the word of God (Nahum 2:3 New International Version). Red with blood: blood from the enemy and the blood of the Lamb. Faith is our shield. Until we exercise it in confrontation with the enemy we have no defence. We will have no wounds but we will have no victories either.

We shall conquer, we shall conquer  
Through the blood of the Lamb;  
And we ne'er will retreat, though we die,  
Till the conquest we've won  
By the cross.

The Bible gives us our orders: 'Get up, you officers, oil the shields!' (Isaiah 21:5). Who is going to rise up? Who will attack, with polished faith, to demolish the enemy?

We are rising, we are rising,  
And the foe shall be driven;  
As warriors brave let us sing:  
We have victory and Heaven  
By the cross.

Our heroes wished they could be in our place. William Booth prophesied that Heaven's saints dream of being in our situation, willing temporarily to pass up the pleasures of paradise for the glory of one last battle. But they can't. It's up to us.

When we're dying, when we're dying  
In the arms of his love,  
On the wings of faith we'll ascend  
To the palace of God  
By the cross.

There's the battle-cry. It's a call for heroes. An invocation for wholly devoted warriors to engage the enemy in the name of our great commander-in-chief by the power of God, with the weapons of righteousness (see 2 Corinthians 6:7). I don't want to let Daniel and Josiah down. I'm going all out for Wesley and Finney. I'll die to please Railton and Catherine. I'll win for Jesus. Won't you join me? We'll be heroes!