



**FIFTY YEARS**  
**OF THE**  
**“SEVENTIETH”**  
**1908 - 1958**

**70th LONDON COMPANY**  
**THE BOYS' BRIGADE**

**ONE SHILLING**

## FIFTY YEARS OF THE "SEVENTIETH"

This booklet has been prepared as a record of the unbroken service rendered to, and by, Boys of this district over fifty years. Our thanks go to all those who have supplied information, pictures, records, etc., without which the early years would have been impossible to cover. It is necessarily incomplete. If you can fill the gaps or complete the picture in any way, please do so. We are indebted to *Ken Hill*, himself an Old Boy, who has carried the main burden of compilation of this history.

A.B.

### FORMATION

On December 9th, 1908, an application was made by *William E. H. Cotsell*, Manville Road, Tooting Common, to start a Company of The Boys' Brigade, in connection with Tooting Junction Baptist Church. A week later B.B. Headquarters in Paternoster Row, London, E.C., issued the form entitled "Enrolment of Company," "... under the designation of the 70th London Company ... having approved of the Appointment of the undernoted Gentlemen as Officers of the said Company:

Captain :	<i>William E. H. Cotsell.</i>
Chaplain :	<i>Rev. J. Felmingham.</i>
1st Lieut. :	<i>Fredk. W. Taylor.</i>
2nd Lieut. :	<i>Ralph Harrop.</i>
3rd Lieut. :	<i>Clifford A. Blazdell."</i>

On Friday evenings or Sunday mornings, observers in Longley Road can witness the continued work of these men, as many Boys gather for Drill and Club evening, and for Church Parade or Bible Class.

The purpose of this booklet is to recall some of the highlights of the Company's history, and to present some picture of the Boys whom the Company has helped to manhood, and of the men associated with the running of the Company throughout its first half-century.



*One of the last pictures taken of the Company's Founder in uniform, Fareham Station, August, 1938, with LEN ORCHARD.*

### WILLIAM COTSELL

"C.O." as William Cotsell was known, ran the Company—at one time single-handed—from its founding until 1938. His fellow-Officers, and the Boys who served under him, all remember with great affection the undemonstrative and devoted man who spent so much of his time with the Boys of the Company. A Civil Service Officer, his bachelor home was the constant meeting place of Boys, and after Saturday football matches or walks through the countryside, C.O. would often invite some of the Boys home for a scrumptious tea, always including doughnuts, and sometimes followed by music from the gramophone, or readings from the many books in the C.O.'s library. At Easter and Whitsun, parties of Boys, accompanied by C.O., would visit Ryde, Isle of Wight, Ferring-by-Sea or Richmond Park, and spend pleasant days walking over the Downs or through the countryside. A Boy in the Company in the early part of its history writes: "To us of those years there was always C.O., and as the years went by we honoured him more. He knew us, of course, inside out, and to many of us he meant more than can be put into words."

*Captain Cotsell resigned from the Company in August, 1938, and retired to Worthing, where he remained until his death on February 15th, 1958, at the age of 81. The following tribute appeared in the Church*



Newsletter shortly after his death, paid by George Alderman, who, with his brother Percy Alderman, served as Officers of the 70th between 1917 and 1927.

*It is only proper that the Jubilee Year of the 70th London Company of The Boys' Brigade should be fittingly celebrated and that it will be appears certain from all that one hears. It is poignant, therefore, to record that one face will be sadly missed from the celebrations to take place later in the year, for the founder Captain of the Company, W. E. H. COTSELL, passed away on February 15th. As one privileged to serve under him as a Lieutenant for ten years, I gladly pay the following tribute to his sterling character and winsome personality.*

*He was a Civil Servant, a bachelor, and his life interest was the B.B. Through its organisation and constitution he channelled the gifts and abilities with which he was endowed, to the spiritual and moral advantage of hundreds of boys. He had no time for showmanship: all that he did mattered because all he attempted was vital. Nothing less than the best and the highest was worthy of the cause he served, namely, the extension of Christ's Kingdom amongst boys. Punctuality at all times was essential to him and his work. I cannot remember a Bible Class starting a minute late: ten o'clock was ten o'clock, and "fall-in" for Parade was blown on the dot at Franciscan Road School Hall on drill evenings.*

*There must be hundreds of men living today who are the sort of men they are because they came under the gracious influence of W.E.H.C. to whom they owe a debt they can never repay.*

#### **BIBLE CLASS**

Sunday morning Bible Class, around which all B.B. activities revolve, has been a special feature of the 70th ever since its founding. Held in the Church Parlour for many years, the Class has always had a keen Missionary interest. The story is told of one occasion when C.O. was reading a Missionary story about the South Sea Islands. One of the Squads in the Company at the time was composed entirely of Boys living in Pitcairn Road, and the phrase occurred in the story, "The dirty Pitcainers," whereupon there was loud laughter, and the Squad concerned laboured under the name for some time afterwards! In the 1930's, the Class was held in the old tin building, the Squads being seated in a hollow square, and the Missionary stories still "favourite." With the opening of the new Sunday School Halls in 1937, the Junior Hall was used for Bible Class, up until 1940.

The Bible Class since the war has continued its varied programme with many outside speakers, yet all the subjects forming a continuing programme of Bible study and teaching of the Christian Faith.

It is impossible to estimate the value of these weekly gatherings, where so much "ground work" is accomplished, and many Old Boys have paid tribute to the value of the Bible Class in their lives. It must be a great inspiration to the Officers to note how many of the Boys have made the greatest Decision either at Camp or at Evangelistic Meetings as a result of the preparation of the B.B. Bible Class. No account of Bible Class during the years would be complete without record of the work done there by Ministers of our Church, who have always been alive to the potential in such a body of growing Boys. Each has taken part in the Company during his time as Minister of the Church.

As in the past, the Missionary interest is very much alive. At each Bible Class, the offering is devoted to support the work of Mr. Peter Briggs in Africa, who paid an unforgettable visit to a Bible Class in 1957, whilst on furlough in England. He gave the Company a first-hand account of the work being assisted by the gifts, and on this occasion Mr. Briggs was presented with two canvas armchairs, for the use of Mrs. Briggs and himself in their spare moments on the Mission Field.

In recent years a reading desk has been purchased, from which Senior Boys read the Scriptures. The Bible Class cloth, so carefully embroidered with the B.B. Badge in 1939 by Mrs. Porter, still serves today.

### DRILL PARADE

During the early years, Drill Parades were held on Wednesday evenings at Sellincourt Road School, and the Boys used Martini-Henry D.P. Carbines (Drill Purposes). One member of the 70th, Harold Bird, was glad of this instruction when serving in the Army during the First World War, although he had some difficulty persuading his RSM that he hadn't deserted from another Regiment when it was seen how efficiently he wielded his rifle! With the amalgamation of the B.B. and the B.L.B. in 1926 however, Carbines were abolished, and after that date the Company practised the marching and forming in use today. Sellincourt Road School was used for Drill until 1937, when this activity also was transferred to the Sunday School Halls. Pictures show that while the B.B. uniform changed very little during the years, it was worn over very different clothing. Most boys wore very stout boots during the early years, and early Camp pictures reveal leggings and occasional gaiters. The uniform Haversacks, which once upon a time would unfold to contain one's lunch on a Richmond Park expedition, were reduced by the austere years of World War Two, and have not reverted to their original capacity. Special Buttonhole Badges were issued in 1933, for the B.B. Jubilee Year; in 1937 and 1955 for the Coronations, and some of these are still in the possession of Company Officers and Boys. The early lapel badge was a blue disc, with enamelled emblem.

Friday evening Drill Parade continues, and since 1943 the Company has held the Barnsley Colour in two years, 1953 and 1956. This Colour is awarded to the Company of the South-West London Battalion which wins the Annual Drill Competition, and attendance marks at Drill and Bible Class are also taken into consideration. Following the Drill Practice on Friday evenings, the Boys meet for the various instruction classes for badges, and there is also table tennis and other indoor games to bring the evening to a close.

### BAND

The Band, formed early in the Company's life, practised first in the Sellincourt Road School prior to Drill Parades, later being transferred to Franciscan Road School, where it was under the instruction of Sgt. Major O'Dair, a Guards' Drum Major. The original bass-drum is still in use with the Band. Fifes and drums constituted the early Band, bugles being introduced in 1913.

The 70th's Band has led a varied career since 1945. Their drums and bugles regularly lead the Annual Church Parade of the Balham and District Boy Scouts, and also take part in the Mitcham May Queen Procession each year. The Roberts Shield, awarded to the winners of the Mitcham Band Contest, has been in the Company since 1952, when it



was secured in competition with the Mitcham Sea Cadets Band. (There has been no Competition since!) Members of the 70th were in the Band which led the B.B. Guard of Honour to Buckingham Palace on the occasion of the Festival of Britain Parade in 1951, and in the Company Album is to be seen the Royal letter received for that event. Members of the Band have taken part in two Royal Albert Hall Displays.



*The first Camp. Goring, Sussex, 1910. Can anyone supply the names?*

### CAMP

The first 70th Camp was held at Goring, near Worthing, in 1910, and so this, perhaps the greatest event in the B.B. Calendar, has also been very much a part of the 70th's year right from the beginning. A photograph of the first Camp shows 19 Boys and 2 Officers of the 70th, who were camping with the 27th, 37th, and 50th London Companies in that year. The following year at Goring, the 70th joined the 27th, 30th, 50th and 90th, when twenty 70th Boys were in Camp with the two Officers, for the ten-day period during July of 1911. 1912 and 1913 were also combined Camps, and in the following year started a series of partnership Camps with the 37th London Company, under the Captaincy of Henry Cotsell, C.O.'s brother, again at Goring. Following the First World War, the two Companies Camped at Lee-on-Solent, and then for many years at Stubbington, near Fareham, Hampshire. Here, in 1931 and 1932, the Companies were joined by the 47th London Company, making a total of about 70 Boys in Camp. Reports of these Camps by visiting Officers are all high in praise of the way in which the Camps were run. In 1925: "A high standard has been attained. The general impression is that of a first class Camp leaving nothing to be desired in any department and one worthy of the very best in B.B. traditions" Then 1928: "The outstanding feature of this Camp is the exceedingly

good fellowship existing between all ranks. This undoubtedly reflects great credit upon the training received in the Companies whilst at home, and has its result in a very fine Camp Spirit." Many Old Boys remember these Stubbington Camps very well, and F. W. ("Tot") Thomas recalls the time he was nearly arrested, along with other Officers and Staff-Sergeants, for singing hymns very late at night on the village green! E. M. Sutton remembers very well *Captain Rough* of the 37th, who fished him out of the sea with cramp, and further recalls that the following day he was administered a fearful "dose" by the M.O., following 2½ hours of black-berry eating in the Camp field. Camps continued at Stubbington until the outbreak of World War Two.

1945 saw a new Camp partnership spring up between the 70th and the 3rd Mid-Surrey, under the Captaincy of Mr. Len Godfrey, and attached to Cheam Baptist Church. The Goring site was used each year, sometimes as a part-Battalion Camp, until 1951, the Camp in that year being held near Dover, and a further change in 1956, to the present site in Charmouth, Dorset. It is interesting to note the long association of local Companies. The 70th camped with the 37th for 30 years, and even today the two Companies share the same site but on different weeks. Of other Companies who shared our Camps, the 27th, 47th and 90th are still going strong, at Fairlight Hall, Summerstown Mission, and Upper Tooting Methodist Church, while the 50th was reformed as a new Company at Battersea only two years ago, but has recently closed again.

#### CAMP SITES

1910-1914	Goring, Sussex.
1919-1939	Stubbington Hants. (Lee?)
1942	Chinnor, Oxfordshire.
1945-1950	Ferring-by-Sea (near Goring).
1951-1955	Church Hougham (Dover).
1956-1957	Charmouth, Dorset.

1958 Camp will be at Charmouth. If you're near there between August 10th-17th, please drop in and revive happy memories. (The "field near the Recreation Ground.")

Camp holds a very special place in the memory of each Boy and Officer, and it is hard to determine which of the two enjoys Camp most. For the Boy there is the excitement not only of being near the sea and camping, but the opportunity of getting to know better the friends he may only see at home for a few hours each week. Bathing Parades, the keenness of the Tent Competition, sports events during the week, Free Day, Royalists and Rebels, and a hundred and one other activities to stimulate the active interest of each member of the Company present at Camp. For the Officers, the many hours of preparation are more than balanced by the tremendous spirit of brotherhood and unity of purpose among themselves. Evening Prayers, Sunset, Officers' Suppers, and a few clandestine activities, all these memories must surely stay with a man for ever.

#### THE COMPANY COLOURS

The exact date of the presentation of our Company Colour is obscure. A photograph of the Colours at the presentation bears a panel to the memory of 70th Boys killed during World War One, which proves that it was after 1918. The names on that panel are:



*C. A. Blazdell  
Harry Brickell  
John Fletcher  
Neil McLaren  
Rev. A. T. Veryard  
Robert Walker  
William Walker*

A second panel was added in matching style after World War Two, bearing the names:

*D. Coole  
E. Gibbs  
E. Morris  
R. Worby*

A Memorial Service was held at the Hall on Sunday, 5th May, 1946.

### **H. G. PORTER**

When it became known that *Mr. Cotsell* would retire at the end of the 1938 Session, and that the rest of the Staff would also be going, the Church had to cast around for new Officers. The new Captain was *H. G. Porter*, and his Lieutenants were *R. Clark*, *C. Nott* and *J. Mayhew*, the latter two gentlemen being ex-Boys of the Company.

"Skip," as *Mr. Porter* became, had the almost impossible task of taking over from the Company's Founder. The going was hard at first; the new Staff went to Camp 1939 at Stubbington, and by the end of their first Session things were settling down. Skip was still a new boy at the 1939 Camp, and was duly initiated by a bucket of cold water! Then, just when the future looked rosy, there came the one Sunday when there was no Bible Class, September 3rd, 1939. The outbreak of war heralded a trying time for England as a whole, and the 70th indeed had its full share of trial.

### **THE WAR YEARS**

Almost immediately, the Sunday School Halls were requisitioned for the use of the Territorial Army, and the first Drill Parade was held in and around the Church Parlour. *Jack Mayhew* recalls: "The very first night the Boys were lined up for Drill which went out of the door into the Church entrance hall, round the corner. When numbering, the Boys would keep saying '1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Jack, Queen, King, Ace!'" The Officer could only see the first two or three boys in the line, because of the corner. P.T. was also held in the Church Parlour during the months when the Sunday School Hall was not available. By 1940, all the Officers except *Lt. R. Clark* had been called into the Forces, so he ran the Company as Acting Captain, ably assisted by *S/Sgt. P. Sore*, *Sgts. A. Bowbeer* and *G. Ferriman*. Many of the Boys were evacuated, and the Company strength fell steeply. *Ken Collins* recalls a Church Parade about that time comprising *Lt. Clark* and six Boys. Later in 1940, the Company once again had the use of the Sunday School Building, and the Display was staged that year with only eight Boys, and twelve Life Boys. In September, 1940, it was decided that the N.C.O.'s should run the Company under the supervision of Officers, in case the Company should be left without staff, and the 1941 Display was entirely the work of the N.C.O.'s and





1940. FRONT RANK. L. to R.: Wright (now Capt. 7th Mid-Surrey); Hawkins; Stiles; Lemon; Harold; ?. 2nd RANK: Manning; Marsh; Ashley; Tegg. 3rd RANK: Stephens; Worby. R. (killed 1944); Lt. Nott; Lt. Clark; Capt. Porter; Lt. Mayhew; Sore; Ferriman. REAR RANK: Coppin; Orchard, L.; Craddock; Frost, I.; Barton; Pascall; Frost, J. Collins.

Boys, Lt. Clark being engaged six and seven days a week on war damage repairs. In the 1941 Annual Report, Lt. Clark paid tribute to "the untiring energy of Staff Sergeant Percy Sore, Sergeants Bowbeer and Ferriman." The Report also speaks in glowing terms of Mr. (Daddy) Nicholls, who took over the Boys' Bible Class during those anxious months, and was to continue in that capacity for some years. During 1941, Mr. W. Webb, a Police Officer, joined the Company as Band and First Aid Instructor, being promoted in the next year to Lieutenant, and serving as Acting Captain until the return of the original Officers in 1946. The normal activities continued, look-outs being posted during Air Raids, and the Boys doubling down to the Boiler Room when things became too heavy. With the return of some evacuated members of the Company, numbers started to increase again, and the Band also grew. Fifes again entered the 70th Band in 1943, and one of Lt. Webb's Police Colleagues, Mr. Ede, instructed the Boys playing this instrument. Lt. Webb purchased some bugles from lads he saw with them in the streets, and the Ship Halfpenny Fund was started. (The Box used for this fund, with its White Ensign meaningless to most Boys, is used in Bible Class today.) The first purchase made with this Fund was a Side drum for Solo Drummer, first used by Peter Knights. Fifes were not used after 1945.

Camp was held in 1942 after a lapse of two years, and the site was an orchard in Chinnor, Oxfordshire. The Boys of the 70th and 37th were given the freedom of the fruit, and enjoyed swimming in the local waterworks! It was here that a very ingenious Cook produced some "almond flavoured custard," which was devoured eagerly. Not until afterwards did they learn it was actually burnt! In 1943, some members of the 70th attended a Battalion Camp at Eton.

The growth and progress of the Company was such that in 1943 the 70th won the Barnsley Colour for Drill, and the First Aid Team of four Boys, *L. Wright, R. Lansdale, L. Stacey* and *P. Knights*, under the instruction of *Mr. Plummer*, a Police Officer, won the South London Battalion Shield.

### NATIONAL SERVICE

During World War Two there was a new badge available, for "National Service." *Harold Sporle, Ken Collins* and *Peter Knights* are among those who won this badge, the first-mentioned for service in a canteen at Tooting Central Hall, and for bicycle messenger work. Many others laboured, without a badge, at waste-paper collection. This was a Saturday morning activity, fluctuating in popularity in phase with the price paid for the paper collected. At 8/- per hundredweight it was worth doing, but not at 2/6! Many, many tons were collected, sacked and despatched—right up till about 1948, when the demand fell off. Anyone who can remember those paper-bestrewn Saturday mornings, will never forget them as long as they live. (How many thousands of comic papers had to be read before trading-in!) This source of income was very largely responsible for the purchase of further Band instruments.

### DISPLAYS

In the Brigade Manual under the heading "Company Inspection" we find these words: "... nothing is more calculated to give point and purpose to the work of a Company during the Session than the knowledge that the Inspection is to take place at its close. The Inspection cannot be too carefully arranged."

These words have been taken to heart by each succeeding Captain. Each in his own way has led the Company to the close of each Winter Session: has "carefully arranged" the Inspection, and the Display which traditionally follows. All early accounts speak of good plain straightforward Displays, when "quality before quantity" might well have described the items. The old tin building was not entirely suitable as a Display hall, but the atmosphere was friendly: what matter if dust did puff from the cracks in the floorboards as we bounced our way through "agility exercises" (accompanied of course by the playing (and glaring) of *Mr. Stanley Clarke*).

It was during the early 1950's that the Displays underwent a great change. *Mr. Porter* came to a Staff meeting one evening and presented the idea of "a theme running through the whole Display—something to connect up the items—avoid gaps—increase the entertainment value—use those Boys who were otherwise difficult to fit into traditional items." We were somewhat taken aback (writes *Mr. Bowbeer*) when he continued to outline his first rough idea which was to have finished up with some B.B. Boys being wrecked on a cannibal island, etc., etc.! This was turned down flat by the remainder of the Staff, something less radical substituted, but the general idea of a "theme" caught on (and by 1955 we found ourselves quite happily convincing Boys that they *could* be dusky-skinned islanders in "The B.B. go a-cruising.")



From 1951 then, the Annual Inspection and Display was also given a name to fit the theme. To revive memories for those who were in these "Cecil B. de Mille" productions, here are the titles:—

- 1951 "The B.B. on trial."
- 1952 "Willy joins the B.B."
- 1953 "From B.B. to R.A.F."
- 1954 "A Tour of London."
- 1955 "The B.B. go a-cruising."
- 1956 "The B.B. on trial"—for the second time.
- 1957 "Space Pioneers."

—yes, they were still preceded by the Inspection, and all were woven around the bedrock B.B. subjects, Drill, P.T. and Gym, etc., as Displays always will be. Each year Boys are provided with this fine opportunity of showing just what they can do, both "on the floor" and "behind the scenes," and many ingenious ideas have been suggested and carried out by the Boys of the Company. I wonder if we will ever revert to a "straight" Display complete with bugle calls announcing each item?

### AWARDS

There are some very old-established contests held within the Company. The squad challenge medal is still competed for monthly. Marks are awarded for uniform, attendance, punctuality, and (at Bible Class) the bringing of Bible and hymnal.

The Best Drill Private medal is competed for at the end of each winter. No complete list of winners is available before 1948. Since then they are as follows:—

1948: *Vic Earl*; 1949 *Brian Flint*; 1950 ??; 1951 *Tony Stacey*; 1952 *John Cook*; 1953 *John Hillsley*; 1954 *Gordon Macpherson*; 1955 and 1956 *Bernard Matcham*; 1957 *Ron Maxwell*.

In 1949 an anonymous gentleman "put up" a handsome cup for annual award to the Boy who in the opinion of the other Boys and Officers "... did most during that year to improve the *esprit de corps* of the Company." It is thus called the "Esprit de Corps" trophy. Winners to date have been:

1949 *L/Cpl. Owen Clark*; 1950 *Cpl. Owen Clark*; 1951 *Cpl. Alan Smith*; 1952 *Sgt. Brian Flint*; 1952 *Cpl. Tony Stacey*; 1954 *L/Cpl. Martin Nightingale*; 1955 *Cpl. Nightingale*; 1956 *Sgt. Nightingale*; 1957 *Cpl. Alan Bilyard*.

Other internal trophies are the "Best Gymnast" cup sponsored by The Old Boys' Association, and a cup for the "Best Trier" among junior gymnasts, which came into being as a result of a parents' suggestion and was subscribed to by them.

### THE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

On Monday, 16th August, 1948, a meeting of ex-Company members was held and Committee appointments were made as follows:—

- President: *Chris Nott.*
- Secretary: *Peter Knights.*
- Treasurer: *Jack Lemon.*
- Members: *Ken Marsh, John Kensett.*

A draft Constitution had previously been formed, which was approved by the Company Staff. Item 2 in this Constitution defined the

Association's Object as: "*The advancement of Christ's Kingdom through and amongst Old Boys of the Company, the promotion of a suitable body of gentlemen willing to assist the Company and Church in any manner possible, and the provision of a Reserve of Officers for The Boys' Brigade.*"

The Association's programme included from the first, Bible Class and a Social evening. Monday evening has for nearly ten years seen Old Boys and ex-officers of the 70th meeting together for Badminton, Billiards, Table Tennis, etc., while Bible Class is held on the first Sunday of each month. During the Football season a team has played for eight years in the Balham League. *Len Stacey* says: "We've never come top of the table but the spirit has always been terrific." In 1953-54 "Seveno" was awarded the Sportsmanship Cup and the Certificate in 1952-1953.

A Cricket team is fielded during the Summer.

*Will Webb* served for some years as President after his retirement from the Company Staff, and was followed by *Percy Sore*.

Membership, at present over 30, is higher than at any time to date.

One great thing about the Association has always been its readiness to find Instructors to help in specialist ways in the Company. *Len Stacey* and *Len Heath* have instructed on P.T. nights for the past two years, and in earlier sessions *Doug Strachan* and *Fred Munro* have similarly helped. A contribution to the Company's Display programmes on three occasions has taken the form of a parallel bar item.

When asked to say what had caused him to remain in membership with the Association, a long-serving Old Boy recently said: "... it's the fellowship, comradeship, the feeling of oneness ... sometimes we don't do anything much on a Monday evening except sit and talk, yet it still seems very much worthwhile."

Perhaps it is that Boys who become men while serving in the Company have a Christian brotherliness indelibly printed upon them which they never forget.

The present Secretary, to whom Old Boys should apply for membership, is: *Mr. B. Shaw*, 16, Broadway Gardens, Mitcham, Surrey.

### THE LIFE BOY TEAM

The exact date of formation of the Team is unknown, but 1919 is suggested as the year. The leaders likewise are largely "lost" before 1938, when *Jack Mayhew* became leader in charge. One of his leaders at that date was *Mrs. Ivy Clark*, who leads the team today after 20 years' service.

The fortunes of the Team have risen and fallen over the years but at present are rising. Membership stands at nearly 40 Boys. They continue to be "a suitable body of recruits for The Boys' Brigade." Long may it be so.

*Mrs. Clark* writes of the leaders she remembers: "When I first went to the Team in February, 1939, to play the piano, there was *Bert Thomas*, *Tom Godfrey*, and I believe *Doug Coole* ... over 40 Boys, including *Manning*, *Marsh*, *Collins*, *Wallder*, and a noisy crowd of others. I was determined never to go again, but was prevailed upon by *Jack Mayhew* and was enrolled as a leader in May, 1939. *Tom Godfrey*, as a Territorial, was off to the war on September 1st, 1939 ... then we had to use the Church Parlour for all activities ... *Marjorie Harding* joined our ranks and Saturday afternoon became our meeting time (because of black-out). *Stan Blake* came ... then *Jack Mayhew* went to Farnham ... *Doug Coole*



and Blake called up. Marjorie Harding and I carried on until 1942 . . . Marjorie left, then Elsie Morris came . . . Vera Fielden came to assist. 1944 "Doodle Bugs" upset all plans. Tom Godfrey came back . . . later joined by Joan Walton (who became Mrs. Godfrey) . . . Doug Mayo came for a time . . . John Ward and Ethel Bissett worked with us until their marriage in 1953 . . . then Ron Manning helped for a while. Mr. Will Ward came and then Mrs. Bowbeer (née Fielden). Owen Clark now assists."

Out of a host of Mrs. Clark's memories we record one typical of the "risks" of leading Life Boys. The Team were returning from an outing across Wimbledon Common, and learning the famous "peanut" song. On passing a political speaker all the Boys shouted back as one: "don't believe yer." . . . She concludes: ". . . we hurried them down the hill to the station!"

### THE LAST FEW YEARS

1945 saw Mr. Porter' release from the Air Force, and his return to a Company of Boys who did not know him. Gradually the plans Skip had thought out during his war service were put into effect. The Staff settled down as follows: Lts. Clark, Webb, Nott, Godfrey (also a Life Boy Leader), Sore, Bowbeer and Ferriman. Strength increased so as to justify this large Staff. Mr. Webb retired in 1946, after carrying out to the full his original intention of "having a worthwhile Company to hand over the Officers upon their return." He still serves The Brigade as Band Convener, S.W. London Battalion.

One of Skip's quiet hopes was "70 boys for the 70th," and this was realised during the session 1950-1951, when there were 77 Boys in the Company. This followed an intensive recruiting campaign involving the distribution of film show tickets to Boys on Figges Marsh and the surrounding area, producing 20 recruits.

Skip was faced with a "split family" problem as his own children grew up. They attended Morden Baptist Church, near their home, while Skip travelled to Tooting. He eventually decided, reluctantly, that he would have to resign as Captain of the 70th. Mr. A Bowbeer took over in October, 1955, the Staff being completed by (the ever-faithful) Lt. R. Clark, Lts. Sore, Ferriman, Knights and Bateman (ex-9th London). Messrs. Godfrey and Nott had by this time moved out of the district, the former to Eltham, where he Captained the 138th London and latterly, the 126th, while Chris Nott settled at Barnehurst, Kent.

The Fiftieth Year finds the 70th in good hands, and even as we "go to press" comes news that the Band has won the Battalion Competition. The Annual Inspection and Display in this Jubilee Year promises to be another mile-stone in the Company's history, a Display that will compare more than favourably with those epics in the past life of the 70th, which will not be forgotten.

In a world of changing values, let us be thankful that the Aims and Object of The Boys' Brigade remain unchanged; and if it be our field of service, may we strive to see that the "70th" remains "Sure and Stedfast" to . . .

The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Boys, and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect, and all that tends towards a true Christian Manliness.



“ Sure and Stedfast ”

C.R.G. PRINTERS, 68 WEBBS ROAD, S.W.11.