

## South Manchester Corps History 1887 - 1937



South Manchester Corps 1887

The Nina, Pinta, Santa Maria and the Mayflower, by furrowing the broad Atlantic, changed the history of nations and carved for their doughty passengers, niches in the Hall of Fame. But when the six hundred-horse-powered Anchor liner, The S.S. Circassia, landed at the West 24th Street pier in New York on March 23, 1886 with three Scotch- Irish immigrants after a harrowing thirteen-day trip, she had unwittingly made a vital contribution to the town of South Manchester in particular, and to The Salvation Army in general.

John Thompson and James Bennison had displayed sagacity, and the aptitude to make wise decisions by volunteering to peel potatoes in the scullery on the way over. As a consequence, they were well fed and given warmth against the cold March winds, while their fellow passengers were frozen and almost famished. From New York City they took the Hartford boat, but were stopped at Saybrook by the frozen condition of the Connecticut River. They grouped themselves around the red-hot stove in the depot, and thawed their limbs out until three o'clock in the morning. They were transferred to a train on the Valley Railroad and landed at Depot Square at five A.M. The last lap on the train was made on Cheney's Goat on America's shortest railroad which landed the thirteen immigrants near Cheney Hall where the mill workers were gathering by hundreds.

After the cold, fatigue and sea sickness of the journey this new place seemed to them like Canaan. But just as in Canaan there were Hittites and Jebusites, so they found here sinners and sin, wicked and rampant, which constituted a challenge to at least two of the party.

John Thompson and James Bennison were born and brought up in Ulster and in the ways of religion, but moved to Scotland to make their fortunes. There John Thompson delved deeply into sin, and he and Bennison got converted, joining The Salvation Army as active workers. But a lull came in the ship building trade and they decided to better their conditions by coming to America. And thus we find them after that thirteen day trip, in South Manchester on that 24th of March, 1886.

Soon they obtained work as plush weavers in Cheney Brothers, and in a short time by their exemplary lives had made a deep impression on the three Jackson Brothers, Edward Elliott, Rudolph Wirtalla and many others who soon were under conviction, One month after landing, these two were granted the use of the home of George Rogers on School Street. That was in April 1886. Amongst others who gave the use of their homes were: George Tedford, Henderson Chambers, Harry Saunderson and Rudolph Wirtalla. The first convert in those meetings was James Jackson who has since died in Ireland.

There was at this time a flourishing Corps in Rockville, and John Thompson and his comrades walked there frequently for the services, There was in that Corps a cadet-sergeant named John Fletcher. He was about five feet-two and weighed about one hundred pounds, but was possessed with unbounded energy, and a voice like a clarion. At times he was sent down to South Manchester to lead meetings. One of these occasions stands out as a mile=stone in this Corps, for it marked the first march and outdoor service.

The march started from the home of Harry Saunderson above McDonald's saloon at Myrtle and Main street on a spring day in 1887 and proceeded to the Center, headed by John Fletcher. They formed a circle around a large oak tree where now is located the isle of safety and the World War cannon. In that service Sister Sophie Isenberg got saved.

About this time representations were made to Headquarters to send Commanding Officers, but to these, evasive answers were made. Persistency won out, and the New York Headquarters gave the little band permission to go about the acquisition of a suitable building, So on May 17, 1887 the South Manchester Corps in the name of Ballington Booth purchased from Charles O, Treat a parcel of land, 70 x 175 feet, on Spruce Street which now forms part of the Nathan Hale School lawn.

Thomas McRoberts was then living in Partick, Scotland, John Thompson's home Corps, and was prevailed upon to come out and superintend the building of the first hall. He was the only one among the group who could handle a hammer and saw in a business-like manner. But these comrades after their ten hour stretch in the mills spent their energy and spare time in clearing the trees, grading, and assisting the builder in every possible way.

It was in May 1887 that Captain Alice Estis was sent by Headquarters to be the first Commanding Officer. This was before the building was completed. She was young and tall, wearing a red jersey, blue uniform and bonnet. She was well educated and evidently a college graduate. As a pioneer officer working against adverse conditions, she is entitled to premier honors,

In the home of Rudolph Wirtalla on Brainard Place she accepted thirteen soldiers into the ranks and gave them their soldiers' passes. In a short time the new hall was completed and Staff-Captain Palmer officially swore them in there. They were: Draper Benson, John Forsythe, James Gordon, Isaac Jackson, James Jackson, Annie Sebastian, Hattie Sebastian, Mary Sebastian, Arinie Tedford, George Tedford, Rudolph Wirtalla, Mrs. Rudolph Wirtalla and Robert Warnock, J. Thompson and J. Behnison had been sworn in in Scotland.

Brothers Thompson and Bennison were among that party of thirteen immigrants who landed at this earthly Canaan; now we see them acting as Godfathers to another group of thirteen bound for the heavenly Canaan. The fact that some of that group have since reached that haven gives the lie to the theory of the unlucky thirteen. Sister Annie Tedford - now Mrs. Alex Hanna, Draper Benson and George Tedford are the only living members of that group.

Andrew Ellison joined later on. Shortly after that he was in Hartford, and seeing a cornet for sale he bought it for \$10.00 though he couldn't play a note. He took lessons for two months but with poor results. Then suddenly the knack of playing came to him, and in a short time he was playing in the meetings and on the march. The first tune he remembers playing on the march - "Soldiers Fighting Round the Cross". On one of these marches a stone whizzed past his cornet and struck Robert Warnock who was carrying the flag. Though a heavily built man he fell from the stone that hit him.

Andrew's friends used to listen for the sound of his cornet during the period of the open-air, and if they heard it they knew that the Army had not been entirely annihilated, just as the Jews listened for the tinkling of the bell of the High Priest in the Holiest of Holies. Andrew then taught the rudiments of cornet playing to William Arnott, and when the band was eventually formed, Arnott was on account of his age, appointed Bandmaster.

The only two living active soldiers of that period are Mrs. Hanna and Mrs. Thomas Jackson - then Maria Leggett. Sister Leggett was not included in the original group sworn in but that same day made up her mind to join at the first opportunity. She did, and for many months she and sister Tedford were the only two girls in the open-air. Captain Estes would usually call for them and together they would start the meeting, being joined later by the men who had gone home after work to clean up.

## **Opposition Period**

Sister Tedford was badly hurt by a missile in one of those open-air. She was on the point of crying when sister Leggett said "Don't cry. I wouldn't please them by seeing me cry." In those days sister Leggett was herself cut by falling glass when a window in the hall was smashed in.

About that time she wore a highly prized feather in her hat, which she was advised to remove as it was too gaudy. It had cost a lot of money and she refused to part with it. Mile on the march back to the hall one day, she felt something strike and run. A comrade marching behind told her not to look around but march bravely on. At the hall she examined her hat; it was covered with rotten egg, so was her feather and her clothes. They were past redemption and were cast into the fire.

Thomas Hopper was knocked down in those early days but got up, and knocking off the dirt he said to his tormentor, "God bless you." One young man drove his horse and buggy through the ranks one day, and in the mix-up was badly handled, and his buggy overturned. He hailed the Army into court and claimed damages. John Forsythe, the treasurer and a well read man, presented the case for the Army so well that they were exonerated. Another man, a foreman at the mills had a Shetland pony which shied at the Army march and bolted. This man also took action against them. Olin Wood, then a young lawyer, took up the Army's defense in such a convincing way that the judge told the young buggy driver to take a different street when the Army was on the march.

Then the rowdies ganged up, forcing the soldiers also to come and go in groups for mutual protection. It was then that a large group of young men of the same racial stock as these Salvationists became justly incensed at the treatment accorded their compatriots. So, armed with blackthorns and with blackjacks and pieces of pipe up their sleeves, they formed a protective guard around the ring, and an armed escort on the march. These men would sit at the back of the hall in order to make a quick sally after the disturbers.

On one such occasion they thought they discerned the sounds of the mob and rushed out to meet them, whereupon Captain McAbee said, "There goes the devil to meet the devil". She was opposed to physical resistance. Not so her soldiers. When she upbraided one for his too aggressive defense he said "Well, that's the way we did it in Ballinagone."

A group of young men, some of them converts were making their way from the West side to the hall when they were met by a body of the opposition on School Street near the present fire house. It was a dark night and a cellar was being dug near by. The fight see sawed back and forth till at last they all landed in the cellar. They fought blindly and savagely and one man emerged minus an eye. He longed

for retribution but did not know whom to blame. In order to find out he came to the penitent form and professed conversion. His eye is still out but the secret is not. Even the legally constituted authorities were against the Array. A town ordinance prohibited the standing still of groups in the streets, so the open-air circle was like ring-around-the-rosy, always rotating, the persons testifying or singing likewise had to keep moving.



South Manchester Band 1890

In the War Cry of January 7, 1888 there is a recapitulation of the battles and victories of the first seven months of the corps. It says: "South Manchester for Jesus. The Lord has been wonderfully blessing us this week in the salvation of souls. Our meetings are simply indescribable, and the marches are grand. Waves of power sweep over the people. Thirty-four souls have been saved, and the whole town is in commotion. The end is not yet, for we are believing for still greater things. The faithful labors of the few who stood so patiently and steadfastly for the past seven months are being rewarded. Lord keep us ever low down at the foot of the cross. Holy living and faith in God are sure to bring results. Among the numbers who have been saved are six out of the flute band, and a violin player. Some desperate drunkards and swearers, card players and Sabbath breakers have come and made a full surrender of all, including the pipe. Hallelujah. Amen. Captain McAbee and Lieut. Harris."

That was the beginning of the great revival of the winter of 1887-8. From the commencement of the Corps, very few had been saved. There were only about twenty members in all including Sister Maria Atkinson, a girl of thirteen who was saved in October 1887. The work had become stalemated. It was then on a Sunday afternoon, December 11, 1887 that the Spirit gained control.

Edward Elliott became so possessed by the Spirit that he climbed over several seats to the penitent form. One hundred others followed in the course of a few weeks, increasing the little band to an active force of one hundred thirty. Thus in the first year the first hall became a veritable gloryshop.

The next report to the War Cry three weeks later, on January 28, 1888 tells of the progress of the revival. It states: "The opening of the new year found four souls at the penitent form at the close of a glorious meeting. Sunday, two good marches in the rain, and good meetings. Night, as soon as the invitation was given, a young man (Edward Atkinson) came forward, followed by a sister, making seven souls for the weekend. The moment this young man found peace, he jumped to his feet, his face shone with the joy that he had found. Bless the Lord for instant conversion.

"The second week in the new year we had five souls from North Manchester, where we hope to open an outpost. Five out at the form in the holiness meeting; forty present at knee-drill; fifty-six in the

afternoon march; and forty-four in the evening (march,) Our Cry went like hot cakes as we sang, 'We belong to the you-know-who'. - McAbee and Harris."

Lieutenant Maud Harris was formerly a member of a circus troupe, having performed many times to European audiences. When shaking her hand, one felt that it was devoid of bones. The normal, growth of her hands and feet had been retarded to fit her for circus life as a contortionist and bare back rider.

Captain Samuel L. Brengle had been an officer but five months and was stationed at Taunton, Mass, when he agreed with Captain McAbee to swap over for two weeks, each taking the other's corps. That accounts for his stay in South Manchester, he never being appointed to command this corps. Writing from here he describes the corps: "South Manchester is, I think, the prettiest town I ever saw, and I believe this is about the best corps I ever saw. More than sixty soldiers were in the march yesterday; it was a sight to see them. Most of the women had on plain, blue dresses and most of the men were in uniform, so that it was really a beautiful sight. They are a nice looking lot - most all North of Ireland people, and a few Germans. They need holiness very much. Some of them have stood just as long as they can stand without it. I think I can see how some of them have begun to lose power through the lack of it. I trust God has sent me here just in time, to show them the hissing link. As I have but a short time to stay, I would much rather spend it in getting the soldiers sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, than to try to get sinners saved. I am not indifferent to sinners, - God forbid. But my heart yearns for the soldiers, that they may be rooted and grounded in love and established in the faith. - Brengle". (Portrait of a Prophet).

A band was in process of formation then (June 1888) and as a consequence of Captain Brengle's visit a rule was made that no member could play in the band unless he had received the blessing of sanctification. During those two weeks nearly all the soldiery, including Joseph Atkinson, received the blessing of holiness. Upon that foundation was the corps built. The fruits of those meetings and the labors of Captain Brengle are seen in the sanctified lives of many of the second and third generation.

Captain McAbee resumed her command and shortly after farewelled, being succeeded by Captain and Mrs. Lampton. Then came Captain Mary Hartelius, a Swedish lady and a fine officer who only stayed two weeks, but still lives in the memory of some of the old soldiers. She is today in the S. A. in Brooklyn.

In the spring of 1888 the Fall River S.A. Band visited So. Manchester arrayed in bright tunics and helmets. They were a snappy outfit and created in the men converts a desire to have a band like that. The old Cheney Band had ceased to exist, and the instruments were under the guardianship of John Campbell. Andrew Ellison and George McCormack were delegated to go and inspect them with a view to purchasing. John Campbell had them all shined up, and being a good baritone player, he demonstrated to them the superb quality of the horns, with the result that about twelve horns were purchased by the S.M. corps. They paid \$1.50 per night for instruction from Mr. Hall, an uncle of James Hall of Wadsworth Street. All the summer of 1888 they practiced and played in the indoor meetings. They made their first outdoor appearance on Christmas day of that year. It was a mild day, as remembered by some of the men yet, and conducive to outside playing, so they marched all around the town.

In the War Cry of January 19, 1889 Captain Alice Dixon reports thus: "We aroused the natives on Christmas day with a great march around the town, with our brass band to the front. This was the first appearance of our band on the street, and how those lads did play!

It was under Captain Dixon's command that the band was commissioned. Previous to this she had strapped the bass drum and beaten it herself, the men soldiers not wishing to be made spectacles. When William Atkinson saw her marching thus up the street, the fine sensitiveness of his nature revolted and he volunteered to beat the drum. Then and there it was transferred to him and he became the first drummer in the corps. Captain Dixon (now Mrs. Alice Dixon Florry) is now slowly dying of cancer in the Hartford Isolation Hospital.

The band at that time numbered thirteen, and Joseph Atkinson played a Slater trombone. Joseph Atkinson had by this time become corps secretary and correspondent. In a report to the War Cry of July 27, 1889 he writes concerning the band and says that the cymbalist played in a very artistic manner. That celebrated cymbalist was his brother William.

Six months previous to this report was one signed by Dixon which reads: "God is saving souls, reclaiming backsliders and sanctifying the people. a glorious watch night service and half night of prayer. One precious sister who had long felt her need got the blessing of sanctification". In another report the same year, Captain Dixon says that an order for \$40.00 worth of Blood and Fire duds has been placed with headquarters. That was an eventful year, for it was in November that the first comrade was promoted to Glory. She was Elizabeth Twinem, and died from the effects of a cold contracted during the blizzard of the previous year. The War Cry also reports that year that when efforts were made in a certain meeting to raise money to buy a bass horn that Edward Elliott says, 'Captain I'll give you a dollar".

The first song from this corps was written by Joseph Atkinson and published in the War Cry of Feb. 23, 1889. Thus encouraged, Alec. McDonald wrote and had one printed in the issue of June 8th. Not to be outdone, Thomas Hopper contributed one to the War Cry of July 27. These songs are given in the addenda to this history. The War Cry of October 1889 states that Cadet Minnie McIntosh, a former Sergeant Major of Rockville, farewelled to enter training college but she did not finish training and was not commissioned. Afterwards she married Bandsman Richard Armstrong.

Captain Dixon farewelled in 1889 and was succeeded by Captain and Mrs. Cunningham, then next by Captain Annie Sykes, then Captain J. Norris, a man officer. The year ended with Captain Mamie Craft and her sister in charge. The condition of the Corps at that time can be gleaned from the following report in the War Cry of Feb. 22, 1890: "The battle waxes hot in this little town; the enemy is being defeated, and since we last reported for the War Cry souls have been rescued from the hellish power, and are now praising God for deliverance.

"We have had with us during the past two weeks our Captain's father (Brother Craft of Worcester) whom God has blessed and used in a mighty manner. In the week previous and the one just ended, nine souls sought, and we believe found Salvation. This week on Tuesday night five more came to Jesus. Wednesday three; Thursday two; Friday two; Saturday one.

"Sunday all day blessed times with God. Knee-drill at seven A.M. preceded by a march. Holiness meeting at 10:30, one soul found salvation. Afternoon meeting and open-air ninety soldiers and converts marched for Jesus. Barracks packed and platform .so crowded that bandsmen had to sit on penitent form. Glorious meeting, one soul. At night our dear Captain who has labored successfully here, farewelled for another part of the field. Her sister farewelled to go to the training garrison. Brother Craft said goodbye too. Three souls bid farewell to sin and the devil. Glory to God forever. Grand total of souls for the two weeks twenty-seven, besides several for the blessing of a clean heart.

'Our King shall reign. Converts coming along splendidly. Believe they than all become blood and fire S.A. soldiers.- God grant it. - Joseph Atkinson for Captain Mamie Craft"

The present Treasurer, Isaac Proctor was one of those converts. Captain Craft is now Mrs. Major H. White (R). She was succeeded by Captain Alice Aldred and Lieutenant Gardner. A War Cry dispatch of March 29, 1890 says: "South Manchester for Jesus, On Saturday we had Major Brewer and two Adjutants with us. Fifty-one souls were sworn in. Bless the Lord. We had a good day Sunday and saw two come to Jesus, making four for the week. "We are sending large orders for uniform, and we expect soon to see the whole corps wearing it. Ten more Crys this week, if you please. - Capt. A. Aldred." Captain Aldred is now Mrs. Captain Longland.

During the stay of the next officers, girls, Captain Hancock and Lieut. Gregory, the funeral of baby Annie Hutton was held on Sunday, July 27, with 130 in the funeral procession. They were farewelled in the late summer of 1890 and were succeeded by Ensign and Mrs. John Allan. It was Mrs. Allan who as Phoebe Strong, had previously helped to open the Army in Ireland. She is now Mrs. Major J. Allan (R). She remained only two months, giving place to Captain and Mrs. Joseph Faulkner, now Brigadier (R). Captain and Mrs. Faulkner remained for one year. During their command Cadets Edward McAllen and Joseph Atkinson were farewelled as the Corps' contribution to the field. Their farewell meeting on Sunday, October 12th finished with one soul - Robert Hughes - at the altar and 150 consecrations.

The railroad station next day was the scene of weeping, the Salvationists weeping at the departure of their two comrades mingled their tears with those of their Roman Catholic neighbors who were waiting for the train that was to bring back the dead body of their pastor, Father James Campbell whose grave stone now adorns the lawn of St. James' Church. He was buried on October 15th. Father Campbell had been feeling ill and had gone to Providence to rest up at his mother's home where he died.

An item in the Boston Training Garrison records for Wednesday, October 15, 1890 says ",Cadets Edward McAllen and Joseph Atkinson arrived from South Manchester".

The year 1890 appears to have been the banner year in the history of the corps, for in that year more important happenings are recorded than in any other. She who had been the first open air convert, and the first War Cry sergeant now became the first bride. For it was on Friday, December 5, 1890 that sister Sophie Eisenberg was united in marriage to brother John Orr by Adjutant Sammons. The legal part of the ceremony was performed by Rev. Leavitt of the South Methodist Church. In this year sister Rebecca J. Crockett was sworn in as a soldier. She was not sworn in publicly, as her father had strong objections. The officer, however, was very accommodating and enrolled her privately. Having recently come from Ireland she saw the need of a Sunday School. She volunteered her services and was accordingly next spring appointed the first Y.P.S.M.

It was about 1890 that the corps had outgrown the first hall and it was deemed necessary to move to more commodious barracks. Mr. Childs, a director of the Bon Ami firm, deeded to the Army the lot on Spruce and Pearl Streets where now stands the Porterfield tire works. John Forsythe was the agent for Mr. Childs for the real estate known as the Foster farm, and it was through his efforts that the land was donated. It was given on condition that a hall would be built thereon. At that time Captain Brengle was visiting the corps (1891) so on a Sunday afternoon he led 100 soldiers to the lot and dedicated it to the glory of God.

A committee composed of Edward Elliott, Stephen Turkington and Treasurer John Forsythe was appointed to inspect the lumber from the old North Congregational Church which was being torn

down, and to see if it was suitable to use in the erection of a hall. Edward Elliott and Stephen Turkington condemned it as unfit, but later Elliott, in deference to Mr. Forsythe's more mature judgment agreed with him, and also lent him \$500. with which to buy the lumber. It was carted to Pearl Street lot, but before it was used trouble started. Some of the young soldiers had yet to learn that they were subject to authority and the rulings of Headquarters. They wanted to be almost independent, as apart from the national body. Headquarters was apprized of the local situation by William Perrett.

Captain John Longland was then sent to town to begin his sixteen months stay and to unravel the building tangle. Major Brewer, Adjutant Sammons and Ensign Perry, the property expert of the Army came and met with the local comrades. They brought with them from Boston an architect who condemned the lumber as unable to meet the Army's requirements. That was a hectic session, and lasted till two in the morning. As a result many soldiers resigned. The treasurer had in his custody \$1700.00 donated toward the new building. He was left with the old lumber on his hands, as headquarters had not approved of the purchase; therefore, he refused to give up the money. An attachment was placed on his Spruce St. property by Ballington Booth on November 25, 1891. It remained in force till January 22, 1892 when the treasurer paid up. He was relieved of his position, and Wallace Thompsonj the father of Mrs. Commissioner Parker, became treasurer.

The title to the property reverted to Mr. Childs, and the soldiers decided to build on the original site. The old hall was sold to William Eneman, who moved it across the street where it still stands as a tic-family house. The old hall never had boasted of a cellar, so Edward Turkington with his horse and scoop dug one for the new building. The other soldiers worked with a will to assist Captain Longland in the building. He did most of the carpentry work, the more particular trim work being done by a builder named Andrews. Headquarters had set \$2000.00 as the limit of expense, so with the free labor of the soldiers and the work of the Captain the building was kept within that figure. Mr. Gregston of North Manchester assumed a mortgage of \$600.00 on Septa, 1892.

In the fall of that year two women officers, Captain E. McFerren and Lieut. Gray came and remained until the next spring.

It was about this time that George McCormack succeeded William Arnott as bandmaster. Two lassies, Capt. E. Ticknor and Lieut. Watson came early in 1893. During their stay Company meetings under Rebecca Crocket were formed. Teachers were, Rebecca Crocket (Mrs. Wm. Wright), Sarah Smyth (Mrs. Kennedy) and Martha Kennedy (Mrs. Bryan). These were followed by a team of men, Captain Noble and Lieut. McDowell. McDowell was replaced by Lieut. Rutherford. The year ended with Captain and Mrs. Connett in charge. In 1894 Captain and Mrs. Walter Jenkins, next two lassies - Captain A. Lottner and Lieut. Taylor. Then Captain Jack Peake, and lastly Capt. and Mrs. Lindsay were appointed to command the corps. Capt. Lindsay carried over till next spring.

In 1895 came Capt. John Yorke and Lieut.Kunzelman. Captain Yorke was a fine singer and preacher. He would go over North to pray with and encourage the converts before they would go to work in the mornings. Next came Captain and Mrs. W. Oliver, in whose time the mortgage held by Mr. Gregston was released (August 26, 1895), Captain and Mrs. E. Snider completed the year and farewelled the following spring.

Captain and Mrs. I. Booth and Captain and Mrs. W. Parsons were in charge during 1896, the latter carrying over till next spring, when Ensign and Mrs. McLean arrived. Ensign and Mrs. J. H. Henderson, with Lieut. Holmes took command in 1897. It was during their stay that the corps observed its tenth anniversary. There had been a small mortgage of \$200:00 outstanding. This they liquidated



and the incriminating paper was burned during the celebration. Thus in a decade the corps was free of encumbrance.

The Hendersons were succeeded in the year 1898 by two lassies, Capt. E. Allister and Lieut. Bjuberg, and they in turn by Adjutant and Mrs. J.M.Richards who remained till 1900. In 1900 came Adjutant and Mrs. John Bree, followed by Ensign and Mrs. Cary who remained over till early 1901. It was then that Ensign and Mrs. Henry M. Taylor with Captain Hill started their memorable stay. Ensign Taylor was a fine physical specimen, having been a sailor and prize fighter. Many a man who came to disturb his meetings was deposited bodily on the outside, but many were impelled by his life and preaching to come to the penitent form. He was farewelled in 1902, and was followed by Adjutant and Mrs.Gale.

Adjutant Gale was succeeded in 1903 by two women officers, Adjutant Derrick and Ensign Eastwood. During the Jubilee exercises Adj. Derrick recounted how she begged twelve tons of coal from Mr. Cheney to heat the hall. She wanted two tons of this to be sent to heat the quarters, but William Atkinson, the treasurer, said that the coal was given only to heat the hall, and to the hall it was sent. Not to be outdone by any Irishman this English girl took a shopping basket every morning and filling it from the coal bin in the hall she covered it with a cloth and carried it to heat her dwelling during the winter of 1903-14. This confession she made after 34 years.

In 1904 the Songster Brigade was started with Albert Turkington as leader. In 1904 Ensign Antrim and two young men Lieutenants were assigned to command. They were Lieuts. Cummings and Arnold. In 1905 they were followed by Staff-Captain and Mrs. Morton. These officers were very successful with the young people, many of whom got converted during their stay. At one time a double row of Junior Soldiers reached across the platform as they were being sworn in. Many of that group are active soldiers today. They also inaugurated the Saturday afternoon junior meeting. In the same year came Captain and Mrs.J. H. Taylor, known as Cowboy Taylor. Cowboy Taylor was a well informed man on the Bible. Later Edwin Perrett who went out from S. Manchester was his Lieutenant and attributes any success he has had to the teaching and example of Captain Taylor.

In 1905 also came Adj. and Mrs. Joseph Hughes who remained until 1906. In that first welcome open-air there were 60 bonnets. While proceeding from the openair to the hall the newly appointed officer asked the soldiers where they were taking him, and if they were taking him to the right place. They replied we are taking you to the right place all right, we've been here 18 years". He answered that this was no place for a corps and that he would do everything possible to get them on Main Street.

Shortly afterward the officer found that the Brainard lot was for sale for \$4000.00. He called a meeting of the soldiers one Sunday afternoon in an effort to raise \$1000.00 as down payment. That was a memorable conclave, and the slogan as formulated by sister Rebecca Wright was, according to the War Cry records - "No supper till we get it." Over twenty of the soldiers that day pledged in units of Twenty-five to Fifty Dollars and the Army was assured a place on Main Street. A poem by the then Y.P.S.M. is appended. It is entitled "Up on Main Street". Adjutant and Mrs. Hughes remained until Sept.1906.

On September 9, 1906 Adjutant and Mrs. Samuel Blackman were appointed to command the corps in what proved to be the longest term heretofore of any officer. They were to remain for twenty-eight months in what also proved to be an epoch making period of the corps' life. It was during their administration that the new Citadel was built and dedicated. The building and furnishings cost \$14,000. Colonel Adam Gifford of Boston in 1908 laid the cornerstone. It was necessary to obtain \$10,000. on mortgages, \$4,000. of this being on second mortgage. Mrs. Adjutant Blackman organized

a sewing brigade, the forerunner of the Home League to help pay off the debt on the building. She had much success. During the period of alterations the corps held services in the old Town Hall, and also made use of a tent on the Army lot. During their stay a healthy Y.P. Legion was a vital part of the corps, with William Atkinson as leader and Harriet Blackman taking a prominent part as vocalist and speaker. Harriet - which name means "head of the house", was well named, her dominant personality asserted itself not only in the corps but in High School.

Fred Clough was bandmaster for a few months at this time. It was during this period that Bandmaster Harry Turkington came from Portadown and was appointed local bandmaster. Being an expert cornetist and a strict martinet, he evoked emulation and enthusiasm from the members of the Band. It was under his direction that the band became modernized. On January 19, 1909 Adjutant and Mrs. Abraham Tilley came in charge, officers of vision and progressive ideas. Many changes in department leaders were made by them. A sale of work under their leadership realized \$900. toward reduction of the mortgage. They were succeeded in 1910 by Adjutant and Mrs. David Main, pioneer officers who preached the gospel with no uncertain sound. Mrs. Main will be ever remembered for her sweet singing of "I have loved and lived with Jesus for many a happy year; he has carried my every burden and banished my every fear".

Many young people, just arrived from Ireland, got converted at this time and were added to the roll. Early in 1911 T. Harry Turkington moved to Niagara Falls and was succeeded as Bandmaster by Frederick Clough. About that time Ensign and Mrs. Wm. Brookman came as commanding officers. Ensign Brookman, before joining the Army was a newspaperman and consequently well read. He and his wife are remembered for the duets they sang, especially "Come back my boy, come back I say, and walk thou in thy mother's way." In 1912 the second mortgage of \$4000. was paid.

Terms of command now began to lengthen, two years being the average. So in 1912 came Adjutant and Mrs. Edward Clark. Mrs. Clark was like a mother in Israel, chastening and reproving and encouraging as often as was deemed necessary. Adjutant Clark was of the militant type, not above wearing a sandwich board to advertise his master's work. He had an uncanny way of appealing to the drunkards, many of whom got saved under him. He would see them going to work in the mornings and give them a word of encouragement. Brother John Gibson, now in glory, was one of those men. In 1914, \$600. was paid on the first mortgage, leaving a balance of \$5,400.

Next to command were Adjutant and Mrs. Llewellyn Larder. They arrived in town in September 1914, on the night that the Great White Way - Main Street's new lighting system was opened. They won their way into the hearts of the families, and their children married into the soldiers' families, Mrs. Larder, after the death of her husband and since retirement has made her home in Manchester, the first retired commanding officer to do so.

During the hectic days of the World War Adjutant and Mrs. Julius Abrams were in charge, coming in 1916. The Adjutant was a German Jew and a pacifist, two obstacles he had to surmount. He was evidently sincere and commanded respect. His lectures on Jewish ritual and history with which he was familiar, will never be forgotten by those who heard them. Mrs. Abrams, who before her Army connection was a California school teacher, was a most diligent worker, stressing the claims of God on the lives, and the need of holiness in the hearts of the young people.



South Manchester Band 1917

Commandant and Mrs. Frederick Bartlett came to captain the corps in the latter period of the war, arriving in June 1918 and remaining until the boys came home. The Commandant with his guitar accompaniment was a familiar figure on the street corner as he sang "Keep the home fires burning" or "You're going to leave the old home, Jim" or "He's the Lily of the Valley". He was very human, and would laugh with those that laugh and weep with those that weep. Mrs. Bartlett was highly educated and refined, a model officer's wife.

The band during the latter part of their stay numbered 38 players and looked as if it might become unwieldy, upsetting the balance of the corps. The census board, therefore, at that time made a ruling that the band must not exceed forty players. That law has never been broken. There were in the band at that time six girls used as replacements for the boys who went to war. They were Mrs. Emma Taggart, Rachel Symington, Sophia Robinson, Hilda Jones, Bertha Elliot and Alice McCabe.

Eldred McCabe enlisted with the Salvation Army service group for post war work as a driver in France and with the Army of Occupation.

The two Turkington cousins, Myrtle and Florence, known to the boys as Big Turk and Little Turk, ably upheld the traditions of the corps by their ministrations to the boys in the trenches. They had been only four months in Training College when the call came for overseas duty. Their worth was attested to by the wonderful civic reception that was tendered them on their arrival home at the north end depot. On November 11, 1919 Fred Clough resigned and his place as bandmaster was given to David Addy. Also during Comdt. Bartlett's term of office a junior band was organized by the bandmaster. When Charles Hall arrived back in town he was given the leadership. He was superseded next year by Deputy Bandmaster William Hanna as Y.P. Band leader.

During the Bartlett administration in 1920 the Main Street property was free of encumbrance. The last payment of \$1,000. was made possible through the interest of Colonel Joseph Atkinson, the General Secretary at Boston. To the first Sergeant Major, John Thompson, went the honor of setting the match to the incriminating document. In June 1920 Adjutant and Mrs. Alfred Ayers initiated their two year stay. She was a fine holiness preacher. At that time black shoes became uniform for the band. The junior band was a big asset to the Company. Meeting then and also a big help to the Y.P.L.

In 1924 there was reappointed to the corps Captain Mamie Craft, but this time she came as the wife and co-worker of Commandant Harry White. Thirty-five years had made her seem somewhat older but her sweet smile and genial personality had only been intensified. One of the few corps financial drives was made by Comdt. White, which netted \$26,000. with no expense.

The next officers, Comdt. and Mrs. Charles M. Abbott have a unique record, in that they have remained in charge of the corps longer than any other officers in the fifty year period. They commenced their three year term in June 1924. That was one reason why they were the guest speakers at the Former Officers' Night of the Jubilee celebrations. The Commandant was remarkably shrewd as well as a splendid speaker. This period marked the beginning of radio broadcasting. In March 1924 the band gave its initial radio concert over W.B.Z. which elicited letters from ten Eastern States and three Provinces in Canada. On Friday, Nov. 6th of the same year the band gave a forty minute program over W.T.I.C. in connection with the Manchester broadcast night, the second band ever to play over that station, the first being the Governor's Footguard Band. Since then they have been heard over many New England stations. During the incumbency of Comdt. Abbott, Willie Morton died and his will as entered in the Probate Court of May 2, 1925 left \$10,000 to the Army, the interest of which was to be used by the local corps.

Comdt. and Mrs. John Spohn commanded the corps from 1927 until 1928. Mrs. Spohn was the daughter of Colonel John Dean. The Commandant was neat and soldierly in his bearing and was very reserved. He was a good speaker, and a Christian gentleman. The next two and one half years saw Adjutant and Mrs. Joseph Heard in charge. The Adjutant was just the opposite of his predecessor in bearing, and was of a genial type. He found diversion in fishing and hunting. Mrs. Heard was beloved by the women soldiers for her work among them. During their term David Addy relinquished the band for six months, during which period it was led by Harold Turkington. William Hanna terminated a nine and one half year period as Deputy Bandmaster and Y.P. Band leader. Harold Turkington became Deputy Bandmaster.

Sister Maria Turkington died and at the grave Adjutant Heard for his committal topic took "The King's Daughter lies all glorious within." In 1930 the band started its yearly concerts in the Park.

1931 came, and with it our new officers, Adjutant and Mrs. George Williams. Young and forceful, the Adjutant soon had great numbers listening to his addresses delivered from a step ladder in the open-air. His Sunday afternoon Bible lectures drew large crowds as he was thoroughly conversant with his subject. He had a remarkable memory. It was he who planned the mass meeting in the high school hall with Governor Wilbur L. Cross as the speaker during the forty-fifth anniversary.

In 1933 he was replaced by Adjutant and Mrs. Reginald Martin who led on for one year. Mrs. Martin was a good singer and the Adjutant a capable officer whose talents were recognized by the Training College, on whose faculty he was placed when he farewelled.

Captain and Mrs. Newman John Curtis were the first officers of that low rank in twenty-nine years to have this important command, coming here for their one year leadership in August 1934. The Captain was a good mixer, making many friends for the Army. While here he tore down the tiers on the platform, making a more serviceable stage.

For a year and a half, starting in August 1935, Adj. and Mrs. William L. Valentine were in command. Sergeant Major Wm. Atkinson was succeeded by John Lyons. Recruiting Sergeant Ralph Jones gave place to William Leggett. David Addy resigned as bandmaster and was followed by Harold Turkington. A quartette of girl cadets left for Training College. The honor of being the Jubilee Officers falls to the lot of Adjutant and Mrs. George E. Anscombe, who came early in the present year - 1937. Both have proved their worth and are living up to the expectations of the soldiers and the trust reposed in them by Headquarters.

The previous narrative has been in sequence. Now we will give group treatment of local officers and some branches of the corps not fully covered in the narrative.

Sister Rebecca Crockett was the first Y.P.S.M. in 1893 with a company meeting enrollment of thirty-five. In 1912 it had increased to one hundred eighty, and now it has one hundred fifty. Subsequent Y.P.S. Mts have been in rotation: William Perrett, Hamilton Metcalf, Ralph Jones, Cecil Kittle, William Leggett, Harold Turkington. The present incumbent is James V. Munsie.

The Y.P. Legion has been led, also in rotation, by: Elizabeth Wilson (1902), William Atkinson, Hanna Humphries, Nora Addy, Ellen Lyons, David Samuelson, Luella Larder, and William Hall.

The Corps Cadet Brigade leaders have been: Mrs. R. Wright, Mrs. Robert Hall, Mrs. Maria Turkington, Edith Jackson and now Mrs. Edward Harris.

Corps treasurers in their order are: John Forsythe, Wallace Thompson, Edward Turkington, William Perrett, Thomas Hopper, William J. Atkinson, Robert E. Richardson, Harold A. Turkington, and Isaac Proctor the present treasurer.

Corps secretaries have been: George Tedford, Joseph Atkinson, Thomas Wilson, Edward Atkinson, William Wright, Maria Turkington, Rebecca J. Wright. The present secretary is Mrs. Robert Wilson.

Sergeant Majors in between John Thompson the first, and John Lyons, the present have been: Alexander McDonald, Thomas Bartley, Fred J. Buzzell, Fred Clough, Jr., Thomas Hopper and William J. Atkinson.

Women's Home League Treasurers and Secretaries have been: R. J. Wright, Mrs. Robina Larder, Mrs. Lily Clough, Mrs. Arthur Kittle, Mrs. Ella ulla, and Mrs. James Munsie.

Songster Leaders: Albert Turkington, Maria Turkington, Ernest Clough, Thomas Maxwell and Fred Clough.

Band Secretaries: Fred Clough, Jr., Ernest Clough, Thomas Maxwell, Robert Richardson, David Wilson, Maynard Clough and William P. Hall.

Deputy Bandmasters: Fred Clough, William Smith, David Addy, William Hanna, Harold Turkington and Robert Lyons.

John Thompson and James Bennison braved the treacherous ocean on the baneful "Ides of March". They were in a party of thirteen immigrants which took thirteen days to get to South Manchester. The first group of soldiers sworn in in that home on Brainard Place numbered thirteen. Also, thirteen players comprised the first band.

Yet in spite of the ill luck attending these unlucky days and number, the power of the Holy Spirit has prevailed and the local corps has been a mighty power for the cause of Christ. "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony".

So after fifty years we find them firmly entrenched, almost where they started - on one of the Brainard lots, but not in a borrowed room. The Citadel is theirs.

## **Sixth Decade History 1937-1947**

Adj. and Mrs. George E. Anscombe served as Corps Officers from February 1937 to January 1939. It was during their stay that the 50th Jubilee was celebrated. The quiet, sincere manner of Adj. Anscombe and the willingness with which Mrs. Anscombe entered all Home League activities are remembered with appreciation by this corps. The dark clouds of war were gathering over Europe at this time and each Sunday brought earnest prayers for peace.

Major and Mrs. James Beach were assigned to Manchester in February 1939. Mrs. Beach had little opportunity to enjoy her sojourn at this corps as she was in ill health during her entire stay. It was during the stay of Major and Mrs. Beach that the Junior Band under Joseph Kittle was reorganized and the Y.P. Singing Company with Lillian Kittle as leader, were given much encouragement. Lillian, now Mrs. Alton Perrett is still leader, and Joe is Captain of Houlton, Maine.

In September 1940 Adj. and Mrs. Newman J. Curtis and family were assigned to Manchester for their second period, their previous stay having been from August 1934 to August 1935. The family was now grown up. In 1934 the two younger boys, Carson and Reggie, had amused those on the platform by sitting in the front row and singing every chorus with all the volume their vocal chords could muster. Now these two fine physical specimens were playing high school football and their eldest brother, John - the biggest of the three - was a sideline spectator, squelching any would-be critics. The band was greatly strengthened by these three additional members. It was during this period that the United States entered World War II, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7th, 1941. It was the sad duty of Adj. and Mrs. Curtis to bid "God speed" to their own three sons while here, and to many others who left for military service from this Corps.

These were the black days of the War when prayer was sorely needed. Victory seemed very far away and at times a definite spirit of melancholy and sorrow held sway. Mrs. and Mrs. Walter Perrett had also given three sons to the service and Mrs. Eldred McCabe gave two sons, with her husband joining the Red Cross for foreign service. The Citadel services reflected the day in which we lived and the prayers of those remaining were most fervent. The corps kept on, however, and those remaining pitched in with renewed vigor. The interior of the Main Auditorium was completely painted by Adj. Curtis and several of the soldiers. Such men as Arthur Kittle, Robert Richardson, William Leggett, James Taggart, Cecil Kittle, George Proctor, John Proctor, Herbert Metcalfe, William Hall, William Hanna, Russell Clough and many others have for many years given of their time and talents for Corps maintenance.

Adj. and Mrs. Curtis farewelled in September 1943 and were succeeded by Major and Mrs. Jeremiah Sweet. Major Sweet was a very cheery person and his jovial personality was welcome during this war period. For the second time in the history of this Corps, girls were admitted to membership in the band. The war had taken many of the band members and after much discussion the band officials decided to invite the ladies to lend their talents. Those admitted were Ethel Perrett, Ruth Turkington, Ruby Leggett, Beverly Russell, Lillian Kittle, Jean Clough. These young ladies were of much assistance to the Corps Band and enabled the organization to maintain a creditable standard.

Major and Mrs. Sweet were stationed at this Corps when peace was declared. As in the first War, our band took part in the Victory Celebration. However, Manchester Salvationists met V-J Day with prayer and thankfulness to our Lord. Certainly that is as it should have been for God had answered the petitions of his followers - not one Manchester Salvationist had died in service. This in spite of the fact

that nearly all had served overseas and many saw action. Surely it was fitting that God should receive all honor for this wonderful fact.

Major and Mrs. Sweet farewelled in September 1945 and were succeeded by Adjt. and Mrs. Richard Atwell, the youngest officers that have been stationed here for many years. It was on Sept. 14, 1946 that the Welcome Home Supper for the Veterans of World War II was held. This was a happy occasion with approximately 125 in attendance. Much maintenance work has been accomplished during the tenure of Adjt. and Mrs. Atwell. The exterior brickwork has been re-pointed, Officer's Quarters have been refinished and new Wash Rooms have been installed in the basement of the building. Much of this has been made possible by a financial drive held in November 1946. This was part of a national campaign by The Salvation Army to rebuild property demolished during the war. The fine response of the Manchester citizens enabled us to more than meet our quota and to retain enough locally to meet most of the maintenance needs.

Adjt. and Mrs. Atwell have inherited a most difficult job in these first post-war years. Of the many bandsmen who entered military service, just two are at present back playing in the band. Many of the others have taken advantage of GI educational privileges and have moved out of town to attend universities; others have married and are making their home elsewhere. Several of the finest Salvationists in the land have been called to their eternal reward since the War and their loss is likewise keenly felt. So, as we approach our 60th Anniversary we find a shifting of responsibility within the Corps itself. Many valiant members have given to the maximum of their ability and find themselves no longer physically able to carry on. The challenge is to Youth and the prayer is that they may not be found wanting.

May we all, looking back over the pages of this history, realize the job that has been done before us by men and women of God, think of the battles that have been fought and won for us and may we then determine that this Anniversary period shall mark the beginning of an era in which we who are in good health will grasp the reins of responsibility and endeavor to carry on in the building of the Kingdom.

Posted by David Miller at [Thursday, September 01, 2011](#) 