

## FOREWORD

by Major Brindley Boon, Secretary for Bands and Songster Brigades. The Salvation Army National Headquarters, London.

It was the evening of February 24th, 1964. The scene was outside the E.M.I. studios in London's West End. The crowd of teenagers hoping for admission, although they had been unsuccessful in securing tickets, could not believe their eyes as they saw a group of eight young people in Salvation Army uniform approaching. 'Are you playing here tonight?' they asked incredulously as the Salvationists made a way through.

Inside the low-roofed theatre-studio some 100 young 'pop' enthusiasts prepared to enjoy and participate in the sixty-minute recording of 'Friday Spectacular', to be broadcast from Radio Luxembourg that week.

Toward the end of the show the Joystings-you will have guessed their identity by now-were generously introduced by the compère, Shaw Taylor, and were listened to with reservation which soon turned to unqualified approval as 'It's an Open Secret' proceeded. The storm of applause which greeted the group at the record's conclusion was quite overwhelming, prompting a 'Wow! Wow!' from the compère.

That night I saw and heard the Joystings 'arrive'. As Editor of Vanguard, The Salvation Army's youth magazine, I had received a special invitation to be present and mingled with the audience to observe the reaction. The sight of the uniform caused a ripple of laughter at first but this turned to respect as it dawned upon the listeners that this was a new Army image, one so much removed from the traditional impression of a brass band on the street corner.

The Salvationists could hold their heads high. That day their first disc had reached sixteenth place on the national charts. They had invaded the 'pop' empire and conquered. A double success! The title, 'Joystings', was taboo in those early days. In Salvation Army periodicals we were required to refer merely to 'The International Training College Rhythm Group'. In bolder moments of inspiration we were courageous enough to add 'for recording purposes known as the Joystings'.

Nor were we permitted to drop ranks when referring to members of the group. The official ruling made this perfectly clear. Captain Joy Webb and Captain Handel Everett were officers on the Training College staff. Five others in the group were training to become Salvation Army officers, among them Cadets Peter Dalziel and William Davidson. The co-opted drummer was Bandsman Wycliffe Noble, of the Kingston-upon-Thames Corps.

It was not envisaged that the life of the group would last five years. Their days were, in fact, officially numbered at the time of the Army's Centenary Celebrations in the summer of 1965. Commissioner William F. Cooper, the leader of Salvation Army evangelical forces in the British Isles, had other ideas. A 'reprieve' was granted. Following the commissioning of Cadets Dalziel and Davidson the group was transformed to serve under the Commissioner's jurisdiction at National Headquarters.

In the three ensuing years the Joystings reached their finest hour. When in 1966 I was appointed to take charge of all instrumental and vocal activity in Britain I inherited these talented young people as part of my administrative responsibilities. They were passing through a bad patch. The opposition to which Captain Joy Webb fleetingly makes reference in these pages was at its strongest. Sonic Salvationists and other Christian friends were not wholly convinced of the rightness of the group's activity. One minister thought it necessary to re-dedicate his church after it had been 'desecrated' by Joystings music the night before.

Such experiences were frustrating and discouraging to these sensitive young Christians whose sincerity has been a feature of their service. They were not professional musicians, although it has been stated more than once that each member could have earned a fortune under different and less committed circumstances. Captain Dalziel was attached to the Candidates Department and here his gifts were utilized to encourage young people to give themselves for full-time service in the cause of Christ. Captain Davidson was seconded to the Youth Department, where he assisted with the preparation and marking of educational studies of young Salvationists, and later gave invaluable help to pioneering work among youthful drug addicts.

In those 'black' days we met quite frequently to talk, plan and pray. I accompanied the group on a tour of Suffolk and Norfolk, mainly to substitute for Captain Webb, who had been taken suddenly ill, as leader of the evangelical campaign, but also to observe the group in action and to help formulate a policy for the future.

From this valuable contact it was evident that members of the group were working out their own salvation. They never looked back. Programmes were planned to take an impact upon both Salvationist audiences and in secular settings. Although the group rightly felt that their main ministry was to unchurched youth, they recognized that they had a function to fulfill so far as committed young Christians were concerned. The twin spearhead of attack worked-and worked miraculously, as their record of spiritual success shows.

There is no doubt that experience with the Joystings has brought these Young Salvationists to early Christian maturity. This experience will not be lost. It has already been carried into their present appointments. Major Handel Everett, the 'bass fiddler' referred to in this book, with his wife is in charge of the thriving evangelical and welfare centre at Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. Captain and Mrs. Peter Dalziel (as Lieutenant Sylvia Gair, Mrs. Dalziel was a valued member of the group) are leaders of Salvation Army work at Wokingham, Berkshire. Captain and Mrs. Bill Davidson (they were married in June, 1968) are responsible for the corps at Streatham Vale, South-West London. Wycliffe Noble, who throughout the group's existence remained its only permanent layman, will be able to devote more time to his professional architectural interests and attend to his duties as a bandsman of the Kingston-upon-Thames Corps.

Major Peter Hawkins, who gave appreciated service as Liaison Officer during the last eighteen months of the group's life, is the National Auditor of Salvation Army finances affecting evangelical work in Great Britain.

That leaves Joy. This gifted officer, whose book will be read and re-read with much relish and inspiration, is remaining on the staff of the Bands Department at National Headquarters. Her

appointment as Officer Responsible for Rhythm Group Evangelism will enable her to visit and advise groups in the British Isles-and possibly overseas from time to time-that have come into being through the influence of the Joystings. There are more than a hundred in Britain.

The name of Captain Webb is widely known and respected and it is confidently hoped that her experience and ability will encourage youthful music-makers not only in the art of playing and singing songs designed to stimulate the Christian way of life, but also have the effect of communicating the message of God's love so that her listeners will desire to live better lives through the impact of her dedicated personality.

### 'ALL THINGS'

The shoes caused all the trouble. A beautiful, brand-new pair of shiny patent leather ankle straps. At four years of age, I thought they were the most glorious things I had ever seen, let alone had. They were the most important factor in my life at the time, and the irritation of my being kept out of sight crouched down behind an old harmonium, together with the bouquet I was about to Present to the Mayoress, was made bearable because I had them on. I don't remember ever being asked to present another bouquet, which is not surprising, because when, prompted from behind by my mother, I emerged from my hiding-place clutching the flowers and ran toward the platform steps, I tripped smartly on the top stair and skidded my way toward the Mayoress, the flowers making a high arc through the air and landing with a thump— on her chest. I was withdrawn, protesting loudly that I had stubbed the toes of my new shoes! Thus my first real public appearance.

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I could not have known then that on a sunny July afternoon in 1967 I would be standing, bonneted, uniformed and gloved, waiting to present the Joystings to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; or that my worry this time would be, not my shoes, but panic in case I should forget the names of my group and make a hash of the presentation. After all I'd known them, lived with them and worked with them only for four years!

Happily all went well. Her Majesty was, as always, most gracious—and I didn't forget the names. I must confess, though, that, as we pushed our way through the crowds surrounding the refreshment tenting, my legs felt as though they were made of putty rather than flesh and blood.

Looking back on recent years, I honestly wonder how on earth I have coped; and perhaps the answer is that I haven't, but God has. In moments of crisis at home my mother has always quoted the old 'All things work together for good . . . ' text. It's nearly become the family motto, except that we are not the type to have pokerwork all over the walls. Nevertheless, it's one part of the Bible that I do know off by heart, and when I look back on the incredible kaleidoscope of my early life it is amazing what can be covered by that 'all things'.

For instance, because of the Salvation Army work being done by my parents, I remember seven schools. Most people would say one was more than enough! I can remember having lived in twelve houses while at home with my 'folk' and, of course, several more since I became a Salvation Army officer myself. One thing—life has never been dull.

I've been told I disgraced myself, the family, and the 'Army' on my first day at school when, after being given a desk at which to sit and having received a small exercise book for my first scribblings, I shouted merrily 'Oh, well, we're all right; we've got a cash book!'

Further evidence was apparently given of embryo 'Militant Salvationism' when, several days later, my father arrived home in the afternoon to find me putting my fists up to a small crowd of my newly made school 'friends' and shouting, 'I'll bash you all! I'll bash you all!' I have certainly learned to live and mix well with people. Music is a part of my life. Perhaps it's wrong to say I couldn't live without it; but I wonder if I could. Certainly the release, the relaxation, the exhilaration and comfort it brings to me are things I would find it hard to do without. For me, it is certainly a further link to God, and it has become itty best way of expressing what I feel about Him to other folk.

When I was small our house was full of odd kinds of musical instruments—drums, an old cornet, a concertina, a vibraphone and (most painful of all) a phono fiddle. For the uninitiated this latter instrument is a type of one-string Japanese fiddle. And, of course, when we moved house, we nearly always inherited two or three ancient harmoniums—usually left to the local Salvation Army corps by some well-meaning friend. Sometimes there was an old piano too. My great delight was to be allowed to help my father put resin on the bow that he used for the phono-fiddle and then watch and listen as he wrested some kind of musical notes from it. (It was never very popular with my mother.) We had an ancient radio, whose accumulators had to be charged every three or four days, and with it we searched the programmes to listen to every brass band programme going. And in addition to this someone gave me an old 'wind-up' gramophone, and with the help of father's old 78s I could soon sing the whole way through such immortal brass band favourites as 'Poet and Peasant' and 'Zelda' cornet solo.

It is said that singing comes naturally. I could sing clearly and tunefully from the first. My debut was short but significant, in that I had recently come from Cardiff and it was thought appropriate to dress me in my diminutive Welsh costume—red shawl, white lace apron and Pall chimney-pot hat. My abiding memory is that the hat smelt—I think of strong black shoe dye—and after I had piped out a current primary chorus—'The birds upon the tree-tops'—I was only too glad to clamber down from the chair.

I shall always be grateful that my parents decided that the piano should be one of my instruments, although at the age of nine I felt anything but graceful. At first I was quite intrigued. I went along to the house of my teacher in Plymouth and was fascinated to see boys and girls of my own age gaily strumming away at the old five-finger exercises. The names of the notes were written on the piano keys to help us and at first all went well. But soon five fingers were itching with the desire to explore the notes and make up tunes and rhythmic patterns of my own and this spelt trouble with a capital 'T'.

Then began a ding-dong battle of wits and sheer physical strength. I had to be dragged to practice (we hadn't a piano of our own, at the time) and someone had to sit over me to make sure I was playing the proper exercises. A battle of wills—and I was tough. I then graduated to a teacher who would set me off on a piece of music and then disappear into her kitchen to cook her husband's 'egg and bacon'. I soon found that skipping three or four pages in the middle of a Clementi

Sonatina was not noticed. More and more I was extemporizing at the piano and now no one was stopping me, so my serious technique was being greatly impaired, but the kind of ability I was going to need so much in my later life was running riot.

My one and only professional audition was a miserable failure. It was decided that I might stand a chance for the B.B.C.'s Children's Hour Programme. So we packed the vibraphone up into its box, stowed it in the boot of a friend's car, and off we went to the regional studios. Once there, I played the vibraphone, which was worked by a clockwork motor and had to be wound up a number of times in order to complete a piece of music, a procedure that had been known to let us down. I also sang and played the pianoforte. I'll never know whether the authorities thought three performances was too much to take from a child of my age, or whether my standard was so 'grotty' as to be impossible. However, I was not accepted and I was greatly relieved. I have never taken part in any kind of audition since.

Strangely enough, although my father is well known as a drummer in The Salvation Army, I never evidenced a scrap of interest in learning to play the 'skins' whilst a child, although I could demonstrate the proverbial 'parradiddle' when quite small, and my mother's patience was sorely tried on many occasions at the dinner table when my father would teach me yet another standard drum pattern with a pair of knives on a turned-over plate, or even a table mat. Using the teapot lid, or tiered cake plate, as his cymbals he would let rip on a full scale 'drumbreak' using all the cutlery and kitchen utensils within his reach—much to my great delight, and all while we waited for the pudding!

I began to accompany my father around the country to his evangelical drumming performances. But I was what he would call a 'contrast artist'. I would sing, or perhaps play an arrangement for pianoforte of a famous Salvation Army brass band composition, transcribed and arranged for my father. Some of these were incredibly difficult and, my father not being a pianist, I sometimes found myself trying to play music that would have required about fifteen fingers to cope with successfully. He never did quite get the point that one has only ten!

Eventually I asked to play the side drum, but not in the traditional way. I wanted to swing the sticks and do the hundred and one exhibition tricks that my father could do so successfully. We began to play together and I really learned how to handle a pair of drum sticks. Little did I realise that this was to stand me in such good stead in the early life of the Joystings, when Wycliffe had to visit Japan to lecture in a university, and we had to tackle a six-week tour, knowing he would not be with us for three of those weeks. I'll never forget rattling out the drum backing to our version of 'Joshua', a roof-raiser in our performances.

The climax to my teenage came when I began to experience a nagging sense of something I couldn't quite put my mental finger upon. Looking back now, it seems as though I was waiting for a sense of direction, a kind of holy 'shove' that would set me in the right groove. Admittedly I was fully occupied in working within the structure of The Salvation Army, and I had been fully conscious of the extent to which Christian leaders are involved with the men and women with whom they live and work. In our house it had always been 'the people' first, last, and in between, and to me that old bogey of a word 'sacrifice' was no stranger. But it is possible to live on the fringe of a real 'knowing' of God. Good things, good ways of living, good activities can take the place of

a simple, direct believing Him for oneself and a complete handing over to God of one's whole personality and possibilities.

The only clear way of responding to a compelling 'Something' was to allow the thought of becoming a fulltime minister of the gospel to have 'house-room' in my mind. I had had one or two preliminary skirmishes with this idea and they had left Inc in a state of temporary panic. I just wasn't 'holy' enough. I didn't pray enough. I found all the so-called Christian duties in life difficult to sustain. I set out with great enthusiasm, but I couldn't keep going. I forgot to pray. I was unable to pin my attention to the sermon, or manage any consistent Bible reading, or make the situation tick over. Mind you, I still have difficulty when it comes to praying. I am absolutely certain that this is the secret of everything, but somehow I feel I rarely achieve a real exchange of thought and desire with God. Anyway, I'm learning to approach it naturally and in as relaxed a state as possible. Often my need of something drives me to commit it to God, sometimes in words, sometimes in thoughts far too deep ever to put into the strait-jacket of any language other than the language of my heart.

So I approached the turning point of my teen years— you might even say the turning point of my life—when the compulsion toward this full-time commitment to God and The Salvation Army) became too strong for me. One of the holding factors was that everyone seemed to assume that I would become a Salvation Arms' officer. I was 'cut out for it' they said. They assumed that it was only a matter of time before the gates of the Salvation Army training college would open to me. And so they did, but only because I couldn't help it. The compelling 'Something' was too strong. Without realising why, I had to go.

## BEGINNINGS

THE first time we realized that we had really arrived as a group was when a Press reporter said to Bill, our lead guitarist: 'Well, how does it feel to be in the charts?' I didn't know we were,' replied Bill, much to the amusement of the reporter. I suppose we must have seemed very uncommercial in those early days but we have since learned to use some of the best assets of the business world.

Of course we have never known what it was to hump our demo-discs around recording companies and disc jockeys, because we have never needed to. We have not had to seek T.V. appearances or Press coverage. From the start, our very existence as a group has been in itself a gimmick.

I remember standing on the platform of the underground station at Blackfriars and listening to a West Indian porter whistling as he swept up the debris on the platform. I wasn't really listening, and then, suddenly I was! The tune he was whistling was 'It's an open secret' —our first record—and a hit! Excitement shot through me like an electric shock and it was all I could do to refrain from going over to him and asking if he had the record.

There was no plan to make the little collection of instrumentalists and singers that I gathered together for the 'Tonight' program into a full-scale group. It just happened. When the film we had made was shown there were so many requests that we should appear again that the following week we went to the studio and recorded two more songs. This time, we decided, we must have a drummer. I was the only one who knew a suitable drummer, so it was left to me to provide one. I

knew that Wycliffe Noble had his own set of drums, and a beard, and so I phoned him. We had one rehearsal with him and then off we went to the studio. I remember clearly that we hired an old Mini van to get us there, complete with drums, acoustic guitars and the string bass. Handel drove like the biblical Jehu. Then we rushed back to my flat, pausing only to pick up some chips on the way, to see ourselves in the programme.

It was crazy, that first appearance with drums, as a group proper. We rocked with laughter at ourselves on the screen. It was difficult for Cliff Michelmore to introduce us, because, of course, having no thought of becoming a permanent group, we had no name. The idea had never occurred to us. However, we soon had to think, because that appearance triggered off so much. Unknown to us, sitting watching was one of the directors of the E.M.I. company. Traditionally they record all Salvationist music in Britain. The next morning he was on the phone early to the Army representative at E.M.I. saying 'What are we doing about this little lot? Are we recording them?' 'Well,' came the answer, 'we didn't know they existed.' "Then get them in the studio to make a test recording,' he said.

A day or two later the phone rang in my office and it was suggested that we should go to the studio to make a test recording. At first I roared with laughter and then when it dawned on me that the caller was serious I dug my heels in firmly. It was all right sending for us suddenly to do a snippet on T.V., even to answer a few questions in an interview, but the intricacies of the recording studio, where every slight imperfection is picked up...? Oh no, no one was going to take the mickey out of us in a situation like that. 'Well,' they said, 'think it over and let us know.' I promptly dismissed it from my mind. There was nothing to think about; we were simply not good enough to cope with that.

Before I knew where I was. I was on the carpet in the Principal's office. 'Had I thought about this? Surely it was possible to make an attempt! After all,' he added coaxingly, 'it was a tremendous opportunity for the Army.' I was sunk. I summoned the boys and girls, who made suitable comments, and then settled down to rehearsal.

Our great problem was—songs. We hadn't any, and it was dear, even to my untutored mind, that the chorus routine would soon wear a little thin. None of us was a song-writer. The nearest I had come to it was to set words to already established tunes, and write a few choruses: I searched through Army music, 'ancient and modern', and found two songs that would half-sit in the idiom and then, in desperation wrote a verse section to the 'beat' chorus I had already featured. So armed, we sallied forth to the E.M.I.

To say that we were nervous is not quite the truth, because none of us really thought the idea of producing a record was a serious prospect. We had simply made up our minds to do our best.

The first sight of the studio was impressive, slightly reminiscent of a science fiction set, with the boom 'mikes' jutting out and up at weird angles, the padded walls and ceiling and 'speakers' of all shapes and sizes crazily tilted and looking like sleeping 'robots' that but a touch would waken to hectic activity.

'Where are the amplifiers?' asked the engineer. Quietly I explained that we did not have any. 'Did anyone play single note work on the guitar?' Well, yes, Bill did. 'Right then, would we need a

direct plug-in?' I must have agreed to that because, turning, I was confronted with the man who in the days to come was to be our guide and mentor in the world of recording. 'Can you do an instrumental backing track first?' he asked. 'A what?' I said. 'Well, dear, do you play and sing at the same tune?' 'Of course we do,' I replied, quite unaware that there was any other way to do it!

Looking at the photographs taken in the studio during that first, recording session, we have had some tremendous laughs. What greenhorns we were! But the incredible thing is that in that first disc, despite the technical faults, something of intense sincerity and spontaneity, some of the sheer gaiety of the Christian faith came through. Maybe that is why people liked it and bought it, and helped to bring about the miracle of its making the 'pop' charts in Britain and in other lands.

The song itself had a most unexpected birth. I was sitting on the hack row at a meeting convened for the officer staff of the Denmark Hill College. It was a private gathering, a small celebration of the New Year, with a cup of coffee, some cakes, and a time of shared worship and friendship. The wife of our Principal rose to read from the Scriptures, and told us she had decided to share with us some words from a book of paraphrased New Testament readings. Words of Paul 'Our love for Christ is an open secret.' The word 'secret' impinged itself on my mind, and I was away! I've no idea what she said about it; maybe it was never intended that I should know. But the song idea had been born.

It's an open secret that Jesus is mine,  
It's an open secret, this gladness divine,  
It's an open secret, I want you to know,  
It's an open secret, I love my Saviour so.

Little did I know, as I sat there, that the day would come when as I walked along the Street a crowd of Youngsters, seeing my Army bonnet, would shriek the first line of 'It's an open secret' at me, instead of the more usual 'Salvation Army, saved from sin; all going to heaven in a corn beef tin'.

Well, the song was recorded, and then launched. We were besieged by the Press, not only from our own country, but from all the world—it seemed. Everybody wanted to meet us, talk with us and do a 'piece' for their paper or magazine. It became so bad that our Principal had to instruct the telephone Operator that he was to be personally informed immediately a Press reporter came on the line. We stood up to a barrage of publicity that many folk have since said has rarely been accorded to a group of any sort, or to any other first disc. I was soon affectionately known to the Press as 'Captain Joy' and photos and write. ups of the song and the disc were featured everywhere.

I remember my first radio interview. I was to present myself at Broadcasting House and talk with disc jockey Jimmy Young, who would then play the record. I was more than scared. But he was delightful. He will never know how grateful I was for the way he put me at ease. It was much less painful than I had anticipated; so much so that I was surprised when he said 'Well, that's it. Thank you, Joy.' 'Is that all I said. When he nodded, I gasped, 'Oh, thank God!' 'Oh,' shouted Jimmy, 'keep that on the tape. Did you get it? That's a marvellous finish up.' But, fortunately for me, they hadn't got it!



The name Joystings had been chosen for us by our studio and Army leaders. The 'strings' part was obvious: we certainly were a direct contrast to the more traditional music of the well-loved Salvation Army bands. Contrary to what many people think, the 'joy' part has nothing at all to do with my personal name, although it has been widely used as such, and in our early days was quite a useful link for publicity purposes. I like this name. This word joy is such a strong and warm word. Not surprisingly it was often on the lips of Jesus and it seems to sum up perfectly the conscious state of a really committed Christian. Sometimes the pulse of joy can hardly be felt, but you know it's there. Sometimes it beats so strongly that there seems to be nothing else in life, except this. I suppose I Love this idea so much because I feel it is such an attractive one. And surely, when religion is real, it is attractive. II. streams from the possessor almost invisibly. It brings about a radiance of living that can never be explained away by the most confirmed cynic or suavest sophisticate. It can overcome anything in life.

I think it has been this quality in us as people and in our singing that has reached out arid affected folk for good. One instance of this stands out with great clarity in my mind, and I am sure none of the other members of the group will ever forget it. We had visited a prison in Wales and had had an hilarious afternoon with the men there, We had thumped out 'beat', sung ballads, given personal testimonies; in fact, we had given them the proverbial 'works'. Obviously they had enjoyed it. A man stood up to give the 'thank you's'. 'I don't know,' he said, 'if any of us will run out and buy a Vox guitar (a reference to some fun earlier in the afternoon) or even it anything you have said or done will result in any of our lives being changed. But, I do know this, that no one could sit here this afternoon and fail to be impressed by your sincerity. Thank you for this!'

The quality of joy! After that incident, I wrote a simple four-line stanza that, for me, sums it all up:  
And this is joy, To feel the kick of God inside your soul,  
And know He's using you, To make men whole.

## FIRST NIGHTS

SOMEWHERE amongst our relics and mementoes of the 'Joystings' Years one of us has a tape-recording of the first public performance. It was the first Salvation Army meeting of its kind. Listening to it now, I cringe at the playing. Funnily enough we could always get by on vocals— they have always been our strong point, and even on that ancient tape some of them are good. The tape would have curiosity value for the music alone, but there is another significant sound that is recorded almost at the end of the gathering. As was our custom we were concluding with a short message from the Scriptures and a song intended to make the young folk present think about themselves and God. It is a pattern that we have always followed, and many folk have enjoyed this quieter ending to a 'pop' concert more than all the fun and beat.

On the recording you can hear us start to sing and then, after only a few bars of music, you hear the sharp tapping of stiletto heels coming nearer and nearer to the place where the 'mike' must have been hidden. It conjures up such a tremendous moment in my memory. I can see the young teenage girl, with blonde dyed hair and typical teenage clothes, coming

purposefully down the middle of the building to become the first youngster ever to respond to the Joystings' message. She was the first of so many people, children and older folk, who had found in our songs and ourselves an acceptable introduction to God and the Christian faith. In that moment was brought to us the great possibilities of using this form of music as a means of getting the Christian message across. Something tremendous was done for us as a group. Until then, although we had a natural desire to use our music, we had been carried along by all the razz-ma-tazz that had heralded our appearance on the 'pop' scene, but in that strange moment all our thinking was clarified and our dedication to the ministry of communicating our message in the everyday language of the man in the Street was born. In spite of all that has been written and said about us during the years of our life as a group, the truth is that, unitedly, we have never moved from that dedication, and all our work has been geared to this one overwhelming job of finding ways of making our faith understandable to others.

Following this first pack-out performance, at Camberwell, we received an invitation that made headlines in the Press all over the world. It was the chance to play in the cabaret at the Blue Angel Club. It was decided that we should be allowed to accept and play for three nights. Here was a new world and for the first time we encountered the sharp cut and thrust of show-biz. We were met with the utmost graciousness from our fellow artists—in fact, this has always been the case—and every help was given to us to make our appearance effective. But nothing could have prepared us for that first night. During the day we had been interviewed and filmed for Canadian Television and one of the questions fired at me had been, 'Joy, are you at all nervous about this evening?' 'Yes,' I had replied, 'I'm scared stiff, but I'm still going.' Bill Davidson, my lead singer, had taken me aside and quietly taken me to task for admitting so openly that I was scared. 'Well, it's no good pretending; I am scared,' I replied; 'aren't you?' 'No,' he answered, cheerfully; 'after all, we can only do our best.' At midnight we made our way to the club, and about 3 a.m. were standing in the wings waiting to go on. It was a sight to remember.

One fellow, commenting on the crush, said, 'I've been to some opening nights, but I've never seen so many pressmen in the Blue Angel Club—ever before, for anything!' The club was packed far beyond capacity. Pressmen hung from parts of the structure of the room. Television and film lights beat down mercilessly in an atmosphere already overcharged with heat, and at the other end of the cabaret room the eyes of Marlene Dietrich gazed out of her picture with (was it my imagination?) mild amazement

Compère Noel Harrison gently hustled us together, making sure we had everything and were ready, then, as Hutch's white piano was wheeled off-stage, he strode on to present us. I felt a presence at my side and, turning, saw a green-faced Bill. 'You know what you said this morning,' he asked, 'about being

afraid?' I nodded, incapable of coherent speech. 'Well,' he said 'I am—now!' 'So am I,' I whispered back. 'It's only the thought that there's a load of people praying for us that will get me out there.' My mind recalled the fact that before coming away from the college several students had said that they would set their alarms and get up for ten minutes and think and pray about us. I just hoped those alarms were ringing and clear. And they must have been, for a moment later we were out there 'And now, ladies and gentlemen,' said compère Noel Harrison, 'we are tremendously proud to present, from The Salvation Army — the Joystings.' About fifty cameras flashed and we swung through the first few bars of 'It's an open secret', absolutely unable to see anyone, or anything. Those alarms must have worked overtime! We twanged and Wycliffe thumped so

hard that in the second number he went right through his side drum skin and had to turn it upside down and hope for the best. We found, to our amazement, that when we played an up-tempo number, some of the audience would join in and clap. When we had been there two nights, we discovered that compère Noel Harrison was urging us on, shouting for this number and that number. We found also that when we had given them some beat, they would sit back and listen thoughtfully to a quieter number, and that this was the way to get our message across, far better than by any spoken word.

Talking of spoken words, I guess we did more talking than playing at that club. In fact, that goes for almost every night club we have played in. We would arrive at midnight, be generously given a meal to get our strength up before we started and then, in the three hours or so that elapsed before our 'spot', 'all the world' would come up and chat with us. There was never any difficulty getting them to talk seriously, or about religion. People seem to talk about it naturally with us. I suppose our uniform makes it dear that we're not there just for fun!

What is it that seems to loosen tongues and release thinking powers around 2.30 a.m. To me it was a new experience. The whole tenor of life changes. A 'night' lifer' totters home at about 5 a.m. falls into bed, comes to at about noon, has a meal, and sets about using what is left of that day. Then at about 11 p.m. the whole process starts again. At first we found it almost impossible to keep awake until it was time to go on and play but, surprisingly, the human body seems to adapt and soon we were sleeping well into the afternoon and therefore able to cope much more effectively.

It is impossible even to try to estimate what effect our presence and playing had on the folk in the club. I can pin-point a conversation here and there and hope that everything will eventually be found useful. I remember, for instance, leaving the club, for the last time, in the early hours of the morning. With my guitar slung over my shoulder I was following the others out when I caught up with a blonde girl who was having

trouble with her stiletto heels catching in the lace hem of her evening gown.

She stumbled and caught at my arm to steady herself, and it was then that I realized she was more than a little drunk! She focused on me with some difficulty, then said very clearly something I have not forgotten. 'I'm not a good woman,' she said; 'I never go to church, but I want to tell you that you dig the craziest and most wonderful gospel I've ever heard.' So saying, she lurched up the stairs and tottered out to a waiting taxi

I think of the man who would wait until the cabaret had finished, the last meal had been served, the band had gone home, and the half-lights of the place had turned to even deeper gloom; who then, hoisting his umbrella, would sit at the piano and play—on and on—and on again. He told us he had once been a chapel organist and we wondered what story lay behind his present loneliness.

Then there was the man who brought his menu to be autographed. He chatted about our music and burst out at the end of the conversation, before he rushed off: 'Of course, I used to be a Salvationist and you've made me remember the old days—and a lot more!'

We made friends with two resident bands and found them delightful folk. They were greatly intrigued with us. For one thing, we were not professionals and yet were there taking a 'spot' which would otherwise have been taken by professional musicians. They loved our music and would encourage us with great shouts at the end of a number.

Perhaps our most happy memory is of the last night there, when, in the middle of a join-in blue-beat number, we suddenly became aware that the 'sound' had increased; it was much stronger, the beat much more incessant, the instrumentation much richer. Turning, I realized that the boys in the band had become so excited that they had picked up their instruments and were joining in—giving us the backing that the number so obviously shouted for!

Of course, not everyone felt as happy about the venture as we did, and my postbag contained a volume of correspondence on the subject—some for, some against and others with the middle-of-the-road attitude! From the beginning we had to learn that it is impossible to please everyone, and there will always be someone who sees things in a different light. I must confess, though, that the spate of anonymous letters was a big shock. I don't think one ever gets over the nauseating feeling of reading a coarse attack, usually illogical and in an uneducated hand, on oneself and one's companions. There is natural resentment. It takes a 'big' person to see the need for criticism of even the kindest and most constructive nature, and when it comes in terms of personal attack—and unsigned it is hard to take. I have learned

that the place for unsigned letters is the waste paper basket, but their memory lingers!

There were letters also from folk who just could not see the value of our work in night clubs, folk who felt that we would be needlessly hurt and ridiculed. There were some who felt that physically and nervously we wouldn't stand up to it. And there were the narrow-minded people, who can't see any further than their noses and whose fear for the contamination of the church seems to atrophy their powers of assessment and their ability to break out into new and uncharted ways of spreading the gospel.

In the normal way, letters are taken as they come, the good is extracted and the irrelevant discarded. But when one is in the middle of work which is demanding both physically and spiritually the receiving of letters is apt to become an added drain on one's personal resources and, funnily enough, such letters always seem to arrive when at one's lowest ebb. They rather tend to paralyze me, draining my creative energy. However, we survived. Those alarms must have worked overtime!

As a souvenir of that first venture, Wycliffe has his torn drum skin personally signed by many well-known people to whom we played and who, by their kindness and friendship toward us, helped us to cope with the situation. But the most delightful statement came from the charming Joy Marshall, whose fantastic jazz singing we had all admired so much. She simply wrote: 'To those beautiful people—The Joystings.' Very humbling words, but so heart-warming.

## ON THE ROAD

I SUPPOSE my Joystings years have been the most exciting, frustrating, fulfilling and hard-working years of my life. Our first major tour of the British Isles was a six-week marathon and I don't think we had ever been as tired. At the end of the first fortnight, I thought I was going to have to say that we wouldn't be able to manage the rest—but somehow we made it.

A Minibus was hired for us, a Minibus that would barely take its eight occupants, let alone the luggage, the equipment and all. In order to help with our comfort the string bass was strapped to a specially fitted luggage rack, together with as much luggage as possible—and, as there were four girls in the outfit, it was well stacked. Of course, this was great as long as the weather was fine, but at the first sign of a drop of rain the Minibus screeched to a halt, the men dived out, untied the string bass, and for the rest of the shower we all had to sit with its great bulk resting on our knees, unable to move a muscle and scarcely able to breathe. But the plight of the driver was worse. Because we were unable to take the steel spike off the end of the bass it hovered just behind the driver's neck, a fact that made any sudden jamming on of the brakes a matter of life or death! Unfortunately the string bass had preference when it came to keeping dry and our suitcases had to 'sit it out' up there on the rack, becoming more rain-soaked every minute. One of the great personal

tragedies of the tour was chalked up by Sylvia Gair. When, after a sudden squall, we arrived at our destination, she discovered that not only was her suitcase soaked, but her carefully written three-month' college studies, all ready for posting off, had been entirely obliterated! What desolation!

One of our first engagements on the tour was a garden fête at a large south coast resort, with an attendance of about 6000 people. The crush was enormous and the heat of the day intense. Our presence, anywhere in the grounds, seemed to attract large crowds and as the time for opening drew near we were asked to stand nearby in order to be welcomed by the Mayor. A Pressman chose that moment to decide that he wanted a photo of the Joystings on the miniature railway and carted us off to sit with our guitars in the tiny carriages. The photo was good, but the opening catastrophic, because, as we followed him to the railway the crowd came too and the Mayor opened the fête in the presence of only a handful of people who remained behind. Not our most popular moment!

Event followed event in one long, hectic round of 'one night stands'. We learned, for the first time, what it is like to be 'on the road'. And, of course, not for us the brief twenty-minute 'spot' and then back to the hotel. Our average length of programme was at least two hours. Then in addition to the playing and singing, there were the moments when individual group members had to speak about their personal faith and hopes for the world and I myself gave every epilogue during that long six weeks. Added to this, after the performances there were the young folk with a serious inquiry, and the stage was always full with others wanting autographs. Not for us the gang of 'strong arm chuckers out', keeping the fans from their stars. I felt that the Joystings must be available to any young person with a sincere desire to know about our faith. Mass meetings are fine, but it is the person-to-person contact that brings folks into the Kingdom of God. About this time a phenomenon occurred, one to be repeated regularly in our life as a group. We discovered that, after our epilogue, the finest finish to our evening was to 'play them out'. As the large audience started to leave the building, we would take up again the melody of the last song. This was fine, so long as the crowd made a move; but often the folk would stand, silent, unable to move, as though spellbound by some unseen Presence. Often this has lasted throughout the length of the song, and then, and only then, has someone turned to go. In such moments as these we have realized the magnetic power of our message, and the fantastic, frightening responsibility placed in our hands. This has always been too big for me, for I am a person who likes to feel I am 'captain' of my own destiny. To feel as though I am a piece of hollow piping through which the undiluted essence of God is streaming in an undammable flood, intent on sweeping into the lives of men and women, is a strange and not always easily understood experience.

That first tour seemed to 'cement' us together as a group. We really learned to know each other—and survived! Isolated incidents throw themselves up on the screen of my mind and some seem to run at the pace of an old Charlie Chaplin film—so funny are they. Others can be given their true perspective only now, some time after the events.

I remember our arrival at Oxford and the desperate attempts of our 'manager', Sandy Morrice, to cope with a journalist who had obviously spent far too long at a far too big pint-pot in the midday 'local'. I remember the two desperate hours I spent at Clacton with a mixed-up teenager from a broken home, who had a paralyzing fear of the future. The audience had long gone home, and I was in the dressing room, while the other patient Joystings waited outside, anxious not to disturb our talk by coming in and removing their suitcases. I remember the tranquil afternoon punting up the

'backs' at Cambridge, tranquil, that is, until Peter decided to take a hand at the punting and nearly found himself midstream hanging on a punting pole with the punt neatly sliding away from him on the calm waters of the river.

I remember an excited little man at the theatre in Herne Bay chalking on a blackboard the sign 'House Full', and being reluctant to take it down the following morning because it was the first time he had been able to make such an announcement. I remember too the 'panic stations' when, two minutes before the performance was due to commence, with the rest of us lined up 'on stage' ready to begin, Bill discovered that his tunic was still in the Minibus at the other end of the pier—and the frantic hissings through the curtain at Sandy, who was manfully prolonging his introduction.

I remember Pauline, with whom I always shared a room, sitting on the carpet surrounded by little piles of money, as nightly she counted the proceeds of the photo selling—and refused to go to bed until the book she scrupulously kept had balanced. I remember the day she bought a harmonica—the boys having decided that our sound was incomplete without it. I could cheerfully have told them what to do with the 'sound' at 1 a.m. in the morning.

I remember one occasion when Wycliffe and the boys posed as radio interviewers and squeezed opinions about the Joystrings from members of the queue waiting to be admitted to the hail. I remember Sylvia being taken ill with appendicitis, and Pauline falling in love with the young Captain whom she eventually married. I remember the quietly dramatic moment in Reading Town Hall when a young science graduate was so moved by a song Bill and Peter were singing that he made a decision to commit his entire life to God.

Such memories are endless, gay, exciting, disturbing, and some very poignant. For instance, we were 'billed' to appear at the Methodist Central Hall in Southampton. The place was capacity-packed—as our events usually were—with no spare seats, and folk standing all around the auditorium. During the first half I noticed a youngish man enter the building. He looked around in vain for a seat before settling himself to stand by an exit. I seldom know who is in the audience, especially when the lighting is full on. However, I spotted him and noticed that he was extremely interested in and amazed at the proceedings. We had our usual gay, noisy first half, during which we had a testimony that referred back to the recent Easter-tide. The speaker told of what that Easter had meant for her personally, and expressed her belief that the risen presence of Christ was expressing Himself through her life, even in this new, modern idiom of 'pop' music.

It was a 'straight', simple, sincere word of testimony but the genuineness of feeling somehow shone through and I felt that the audience had understood. At the end of the second half I gave a short message and made an appeal for any young person who wished to accept the Christian message for himself to come forward and kneel at the communion rail. All we could do was to commit the moment to God and try to help an audience sense the value of a quiet moment of contemplation and meditation. Cynics might sneer at this, but I have discovered that it is often quite possible to sense the power that is God, reaching out to touch the lives of ordinary men and women. It was so on this night. I knew that there were young folk present who needed to be given the

opportunity of a moment such as this. And several came forward to kneel. A hush fell on the audience, and then this young man came slowly forward and joined them.

Busily helping with the packing-up of equipment afterwards, I felt a touch on my arm and, turning round, found a local Salvationist with the very young man in tow. 'Captain,' said the Salvationist, 'I felt you would want to meet this young man. He's a Jew.' I turned to greet him, but the words died on my lips. I've heard older folk, particularly veteran Salvationists and Christians talk about seeing such a change in a person, but frankly, until this moment I had never seen it myself. To say he was radiant would be a complete understatement. He stood there, smiling. There was no need for any words; we all knew what had happened. 'I feel,' he said, 'as though I have moved from the Old Testament into the New. When that young lady spoke about the risen presence of Jesus Christ being in her life, I knew that it was completely and utterly true, and that this is what I had been looking for to give meaning to all the teaching of my faith. I feel wonderful!'

It transpired that he had been without a place to stay for the night. There are many such in our great ports. He had been directed to the Salvation Army hostel and the man on the door, when he had booked him in for bed and breakfast, had had the supreme inspiration to ask him what he was going to do for the rest of the evening. 'Nothing much,' he had replied. 'Then why don't you go across the road to the Central Hall?' said the Salvationist. 'Our "pop" group is giving a concert over there. You know, the Joystings.' 'Never heard of them,' said the young man; but he came! The memory of his face has come back to me again and again, especially when I have been tempted to feel that there is no power strong enough to pull men and women back to a rightness of living. I've never seen anything quite so dramatic either before, or since, but I am grateful for that once when the reality upon which I base my life was seen to break through in a way that no one could dispute.

During that first tour, several hundred young men and women, together with some older folk, were helped toward the Christian faith. A few have become Salvationists, some have become church members and workers, and some have even found their way, much to our delight, to the officer-training college at Denmark Hill.

I have always felt that, in an age when folk say the value of the religious meeting is diminishing, the Joystings gatherings, with their capacity crowds, their 'show like' character and cathedral-like dimaxes, have been something of a phenomenon.

#### IN PRISON AND OUT

LOOKING back, it's amazing how much of our time as a group has been spent in prison! We've been to most of the major prisons in the London area and many of the large ones in the provinces. Of course, this has been made possible by the continual work being done by the Salvation Army Correctional Services officers. This is one of the spheres of activity that has been opened to us simply because we are a religious group and The Salvation Army is known and loved throughout the world.

I don't think we ever get used to visiting prisons. Certainly I never see the high wall and double-thick doors without being grateful for my freedom. The sight of the men being exercised in long,



slow-moving files, round and round a playground-like compound, always upsets us, and somehow we always seem to arrive just as this is happening.

We are counted in at the main gate and locked in a grid-like hallway until the van and equipment have been pronounced in order and permission is received to unlock the next iron-barred door. We have always received the utmost help and courtesy from the staff and Governors and we have made real friends with some of the official Chaplains. On our visits there is usually a squad of men allocated to help us with the equipment, and how they enjoy this! Some of them chat a little with us as they do it, but some say nothing at all, and I always find myself wondering why. I think they are surprised to find that we cope with our own equipment, both from the standpoint of the eternal 'humping' of the heavy stuff, and also from the technical standpoint of managing and understanding the electrical side of things. I say 'we', but I really mean the lads in the group, because most of the stuff is far too heavy for either of us girls to manage.

What an audience they present! Some are so young; some are obviously tough, hardened types who have been there many times. Some, in civilian clothes, have just arrived and I often wonder what they must feel like, having the Christian Gospel presented so thoroughly at such a time. Next to playing to ordinary young folk in their own surroundings, we would rather play to the men in prison than any other audience in the world. How they welcome us, with a special big cheer for Sylvia and myself—which I suppose is understandable—and always appreciated by us! There is no other audience in the world that can take and enjoy a joke against themselves like the lads in prison. They are not a scrap touchy and Bill and Peter always have lots of repartee and fun and games in verbal exchanges with them.

Our programmes are always light-hearted in order to present the change of mood and give them the relaxation they need. But our songs are deeply personal and some have great depth of meaning. I can remember countless occasions when my eye has suddenly dropped on, perhaps, an older man sitting with eyes full of tears, and again I've wondered why, what is he remembering, how did he come to be here? We shall never know, but I do know that in most of the prisons we have visited we have played in the chapel and on almost every occasion the Chaplain has told us that the men have decorated the building themselves. Often there has been an altar painting, or sculpture, or mural, done by one of the prisoners, and sometimes, looking at such a piece of work, I've felt comforted by the presence of God. After all, if He is not present there, why should He be present anywhere else? Often the piece of work is a representation of the death of Jesus, and it always seems particularly poignant that they choose such a subject, in preference to the many happier stories of Christ. Maybe they feel that in that moment, which is surely an eternal moment, they can be most identified with Him. When we finish our performance and have packed up our equipment, Sylvia and I always find a moment to give out some photos to the lads who have helped us 'hump' the stuff. There must be hundreds of these pinned up in cells up and down Great Britain, a thought that gives us a queer kind of comfort.

Our next engagement might be a well-known public school. Bill has sung at Harrow, and we have, as a group, spent an overnight at the famous Sherborne public school. As a matter of fact we visited this school in the middle of a tour of prisons and Borstals. So much for the light and shade of Joystings life! At Sherborne we played to 2000 young people in their delightful assembly hall with its overtones of all that is ancient and best in our national heritage of education. We stayed

with the Headmaster, and played in the old abbey at the monthly assembly the following morning before the lads went off to take their 'O' levels, whilst we were shown the vastly interesting old almshouses in the near vicinity.

Later in the week we arrived at the school gates of a South London comprehensive school and almost had to fight our way in through the hordes of children, and during question time survived questions that would have made some heads turn grey. There we found a young R.I. teacher who was the only Christian in a staff of dozens. At least twelve committed atheists worked alongside him. We felt that every beat of the drumsticks, every note from the guitars, every word sung, must be effective, and what's more, must be seen to be effective. Those are tough assignments. I don't think we shall ever know to what extent they are successful, but the opportunity is priceless!

Sometimes we take on the guise of a 'minstrel band' and equipped only with what we can carry in the way of guitars and tambourines we visit hospitals. Of course, Wyc can't take his drum-set, nor would it be appreciated by very ill patients. We have had some happy hours walking up and down hospital wards singing some of the old songs that folk love to hear when they are sick. We move from bed to bed, asking for requests, and even getting the patients to join in. Sometimes after a casual visit in 'minstrel manner' the Matron invites us to return, with all our equipments and give a performance for the staff, their friends, and any patients well enough.

One never-to-be-forgotten occasion was at a well-known London hospital where we had gone to give a Christmas 'show' and the smallish room in which we were working was crammed to capacity. From the beginning we had realized that the electrical situation was, to say the least, a bit 'dodgy', but we were not really prepared for the 'mikes', amplifiers and organ to cut out on us in the middle of a number. However, nothing daunted, the boys grabbed acoustic guitars, I leapt off the stage to the piano and adjusting the vocals by about half a tone to suit the pitch of the piano, we completed the song, without missing so much as a beat. Afterwards we discovered that, although it had been apparent what had happened most folk thought it all 'part of our act'. At One large hospital for nervous illnesses and mentally ill folk we were regular visitors at Christmas. It was a strange experience on that first occasion. We are so used to our music creating an excited response that as the atmosphere became quieter and quieter I began to feel rather concerned. Maybe we were having an adverse effect on the patients; maybe we should cut it short and let them sing some carols. I asked one of the staff. 'Oh, no,' he said, 'it's quite all right! The quieter they get, the more we know they are enjoying it.' As they left at the end of the programme, they came up past the stage and leaned over the footlights to say 'hello', or to shake my hand, or some to bring a little gift like a few humbugs in a bag, two tulips, two or three buttons. It meant so much to them when we took the gift and shook their hands and said 'thank you'. I wonder what our playing and singing did to them. Can this incredible 'heart' music get through where, perhaps, other more conventional types of music-making leave no impact? Or do they sense the truth in our hearts? Who can tell!

A chance to go to a Borstal or detention centre is always welcome. Here we have a ready-made audience of exactly the right age group for our music. Some of these youngsters are incredibly tough, and some have just been caught up in the 'gang', doing the things everybody else does. We've been to many such places and there is no doubt at all in my mind that our way of presenting the Christian truth is attractive and acceptable to them.

The lads are quite the best ‘singers’ in the business. They ‘lift the roof’ when asked to join in. They love a good laugh and yet I always feel that they understand and feel perfectly the impact of some of our more pointed songs. When we go to the detention centre in London where we are regular visitors we always have supper with the lads afterwards. I know that they are quite ‘chuffed’ at the idea of our sitting down with them and having the same ‘nosh’ (as they call it). It is always the same—rock cakes, by name and nature, and cocoa. We each join a group and stay and chat for about twenty minutes. The time spent then is some of the most valuable time in my life. It is extraordinary the range of subjects they will discuss. They speak quite easily and freely about why they are there and about their hopes for the future.

‘Why are you here?’ I asked one fifteen-year-old. ‘Oh, I bashed up an old lady, and took her handbag,’ he replied. I saw him watching for my reaction. He expected me to be shocked. I was shocked. What should I do? Appear nonchalant, so that the moment is not over dramatized, or react as any normal girl would. Quietly I said, ‘I think that’s awful—whatever made you do it?’ ‘Oh, I wouldn’t do it again, Miss,’ he said. ‘I wouldn’t do nothing that would put me in this place again.’ Oh dear; the right answer for the wrong reason.

‘Don’t you believe it, Miss,’ broke in a coloured boy. ‘He’s a bad’n.’ ‘No one’s bad,’ I said; ‘we just get on the wrong track in life sometimes. Your job of work is to get back on to the right track.’ I rose to go, said my goodbyes and turned to leave. I felt a presence at my elbow and, turning, found it was the lad I’d been talking to. ‘I wouldn’t do it again, Miss, honest I wouldn’t,’ he said. ‘I know you won’t,’ I said, smiling. He smiled back at me. There was no need for more words—the right reason this time! We’ve visited only one girls’ Borstal. To go there, or to Holloway Jail, for that matter, is no pleasant experience, especially for us girls in the group. After the performance the person in charge asked me if I would see a girl who had asked to speak to me. ‘I was in your meeting when you came to—(and she mentioned a large city in the North of England). Do you remember?’ I remembered the occasion well. ‘Why on earth are you here?’ I asked. ‘You’re a Salvation Army girl, aren’t you?’ ‘Yes,’ she replied. My heart sank. We talked quietly together, and she cried a little. I felt like it too. Then we prayed together, and I thanked God for the generous wisdom that had permitted me these moments with that lassie, and the rare understanding that had immediately seen that a few moments with a fellow-Salvationist would do more, perhaps, than six months of discipline and training, to bring a simple response from the girl’s heart. Afterwards I talked with the Head Warden. ‘Thank you for sparing that time,’ she said, ‘I hoped you would. She’s not an altogether bad girl—and there are background circumstances that would daunt the best of us. Somehow I felt that someone of her own might get through to her.’

‘Someone of her own’—the phrase haunted me for days. I remembered how I had prayed with her! ‘Lord, we are both your children, and we need you especially just now.’ I hoped she would remember too.

## JOYSTRINGS ABROAD

IF I had money (and it’s safe to say that I shall never have any to speak of) I would do just one thing and one thing alone—travel. There’s nothing I like better than to pack my bags, after weeks of endless poring over

maps and brochures and leaflets and, armed with passport and phrase book—the latter very seldom used—to set off for lands anew. I find equal joy in returning again and again to some of my favourite places. But to travel with the Joystings from country to country, singing to new audiences, meeting new friends, adds a spice of adventure to excitement and interest, and is like putting the cream on an already delectable cake.

You should have seen us as we set off for our first visit to the Continent—instruments, uniforms, cases, clothes, bags and eatables all jammed into our Commer Utilibrake until it nearly burst at the seams. The first thing that happened was that our ‘silencer’ went, and we arrived at Harwich making the most unearthly row and had to make for the nearest garage for a repair. ‘Great!’ I thought. ‘What a start!’ However, it wasn’t a serious mishap and was soon fixed.

Amsterdam in the springtime—I defy anyone to find a place with a greater charm. I have seen Amsterdam in sunshine, in cloud, under cold, drenching rain and I love it every time. But the first visit of the Joystings was perfect. We were to record for Dutch Television a special programme and there with us was the Gospel singer Marion Williams and the Stars of Faith, her backing group. I’d often wondered whether the spontaneity of Negro Gospel singers was the outcome of their natural love and aptitude for this type of music, or whether it was this and more—a sincere belief in the message they sang about. To meet Marion was an experience I treasure. Everything about her is a delight and I’ve never seen a finer embodiment of Christian charm. It was decided that the final number of our programme should be a joint effort with the Joystings backing Marion. To see her ‘float’ down the centre aisle in her ‘nightie-like’ voluminous evening gown, with the audience rising to her, was a sight I shall not easily forget. She and I talked afterwards about her music and ours, and she gave me the finest encouragement I have ever had to persevere in trying to get through to people in this way. I spoke of my disappointments, of the misunderstandings we had to put up with, of the unkind criticism, of the thoughtless comment that seemed never to stop. Kindly she took my arm. ‘Joy, honey,’ she said, in her kindly way, ‘you must keep on. You have something great there. And don’t worry about them. Remember, honey, it’s all in the name of the Lord. It’s all in the name of the Lord!’

In the darkest times—and there have been a few—I have been able to see her again, feel the touch of her hand on mine, and hear that lovely warm voice saying ‘Remember, it’s all in the name of the Lord.’ To see her, to know her, is a privilege.

We drove down through springtime Holland, with its flower garlands and windmills, to Paris. I think the French have an instinctive ‘feel’ for many things in life, and we certainly found this so in their handling of the Joystings’ visit.

Instinctively they knew the kind of people our music was intended for and they went out of their way to give us the right opportunities. Our first engagement was at 'Le Top Ten', a discotheque on the Champs-Élysées, and this appearance had obviously been the subject of first-rate publicity. The place was swarming with pressmen and photographers. Again I was scared stiff. I'm always worried in case they don't accept us. It's so much nicer to be liked than laughed at! The sound was deafening; quite the loudest I had ever heard. It was impossible to converse, even by shouting into people's ears. But, of course, that's a good 'disco' sound.

I gained the impression that our French Salvationist friends were nervous and I discovered afterwards that they were. They were worried in case the young folk didn't receive us well, and even howled us down. They had never heard us play, 'in the flesh', themselves, so they didn't know what to expect. Of course, I soon learned that being a Salvationist in Great Britain, where the 'Army' was born and has grown in the affection of the public, is a vastly different matter from belonging to, what is in France, for instance, very much a minority group. I have friends who have been persistently followed in Paris by curious folk, impatient to find out what these strangely dressed people were. Fortunately for us, our name and reputation had preceded us, and the offers for radio interviews and T.V. appearances flowed in. Within minutes of arriving in Paris, I had given three radio interviews—one, wait for it—partly in French!

Having experienced only the smooth-running, controlled approach of British television studios, I don't think anything could have prepared us for the remarkable experience of being in a studio on the Continent.

In Holland we were made up with some wild purple eye make-up that went stiff within minutes of its application, and I often wondered if the Dutch Salvationists who formed part of the audience thought that we always looked like that! In Paris procedure varied. In one studio we were made up seven hours before the show went 'on the air'; in another the make-up girl noticed that we had not been made up only when the programme had been going out 'live' for about five minutes. She upbraided us soundly, in French, for not having reported to the make-up room, and pulled us down in between two cameras to start dabbing and poking powder and anti-shine all over our faces. I suppose there are millions of French viewers who will go into eternity thinking that we are the most emaciated looking 'pop' group ever to grace their screens.

By far the most bewildering experience of Continental

television was our first— again, in Paris.

We arrived to find the studio floor completely covered with white paper. Apparently no one had given a thought to the tracking of the cameras during seven hours' rehearsal! It soon looked like the whipped-up top of a lemon meringue pie, but no one seemed bothered, so we just stood there trying to look as though we were used to performing in knee-deep paper shavings. It was in this programme that out of about twenty-five acts booked only seventeen actually got 'on', as time ran out! I expected to see wildly voluble scenes as angry performers complained bitterly to the studio manager—but no! —'c'est la vie!' I imagined how I would have felt if I had spent seven hours rehearsing, only to be left off the end of the actual programme.

We had a look round Paris

in our few-and-far-between off-duty moments. It has, as the French say, 'ambiance', more, I think, than any other city I have visited. I love the Sacré Coeur area, with the long ascent of its winding steps, always liberally bestrewn with student musicians with their incessant guitar playing, and the little streets and squares behind, where the artists sit sketching and painting. In the evening, with a full 'harvest moon' glowing over the panorama of Paris, it is like an enchanted land.

In this same Montmartre area I had

one of the 'experiences' of my life. We held a small open-air meeting in the centre of one of the squares and a curious and interested crowd gathered. Now, I am used to marching along a street, but here we marched in twos to the monotonous, hollow-toned sound of a single bass drum; and as our footsteps clattered on the still cobbled streets I felt as though we might have slipped back several centuries and be heading for the 'guillotine'. But, of course, we were not. The hail at which we arrived in due course is historic in Salvation Army life.

As a little girl I had been told about this hail by my

teachers and parents. I knew that it had been one of the most notorious brothels in Paris. Now it was a

Salvation Army hail, capacity packed with the folk who had followed us from our meeting. Above the hall I saw the endless passages with their small rooms opening off—and felt a tremble of horror to think of its former use. In the meeting we had what you might call a 'shifting population'— never still, the doors always open, new folk peeping in, feeling interested and staying for half an hour or so! And I wondered if this is what Church should be like—a door less building, where folk could look on, watch, investigate, and perhaps gradually feel a sense of involvement with whatever was going on. Certainly here in Paris it worked. People felt free to come and go, and some returned several times during the evening. Certainly, as one of the Joy strings' songs says,

The man who shuts the door before the service doesn't realize that Christ is left outside. And the very folk for whom the service is convened are sometimes found outside, instead of inside. The Salvation Army hall at Montmartre is for me a symbol, a symbol of freedom of worship that I wish we could find more often in some of our more sophisticated gatherings.

The young people of Paris took us to their hearts. 'Une autre! une autre!' they would rhythmically chant at the conclusion of one of our songs, and keep it up until we obliged. They had been so proud to see us on their own television, and so furious that the 'sound' had been sabotaged by technicians who felt that we should not be allowed on the programme.

Amongst all the public recognition that has come to the Joystings, and we have welcomed it all in order to use it to further our work, one of the most delightful occasions happened that week in Paris. We were received at the Hotel de Ville by an adjutant representing the civic authority of the City of Paris. It was a moment to remember, and I have in my possession the lovely presentation etching of the building.

While we were inside the Hotel de Ville with all its dignity and civic procedures, our helpers, outside, were battling their way through the various police authorities. It had been decided that we should present one or two numbers outside for the benefit of the crowd that had gathered, and the equipment had been erected in readiness. This task was hardly completed when along came the city police to say it could not stay there. With good-natured remonstrating, the equipment—all one and a half tons of it—was taken down, carted inside the railed perimeter and re-erected. For several minutes it remained then along came the town hall police and stated that it could not remain there. Down it was taken and again set up outside, at which moment we charged out, leaped on to our instruments and started to play, preventing any other police force from removing us again!

Our visits to the Continent will long be remembered by us all. How amazed some of our friends over there have been at our kind of 'evangelism' In Sweden, I gained the impression that the people were amazed that we were evangelical and that the message part of our performance was so important to us. I rather think they had expected us to be merely an entertainment. And of course we are, but so much more! In Sweden we found we had to adapt our message. After all, they have everything: the highest standard of living in the world. Quietly we reminded ourselves that they also have the highest suicide rate! What could we say that would be relevant and would communicate something of the need of men and women in whatever society they find themselves? We were conscious of needing to make an

even bigger effort in our thinking and speaking.

The Swedes are not particularly demonstrative people and we sometimes wondered just what they were thinking. We met F.A.X., the Salvationist Students' Association in Sweden in an exchange of thinking and ideas that was scintillating and informative. We discovered, for instance, that when Sylvia spoke about raising money by jumble sales (a well-known art here in Britain) that they had never heard of such things. When explained that it meant a sale of old clothes—they said 'What are old clothes?' But in spite of blocks in our communication such as this, we sensed in them a real desire to find a way of bringing the Christian truth to their own young countrymen.

I had expected a very conservative approach from our Continental friends; but how open-hearted they were! What a lack of stubborn resistance to new ideas! My personal gratitude to them for their warm-hearted acceptance and encouragement can never be put into words, but the essence of their delightful championing of the Joystings is held in my mind in one vivid moment that happened at 'Le Top Ten', in Paris. As we commenced to play, I saw the short stocky figure of Commissioner Gilbert Abadie, head of The Salvation Army in France and Algeria, move quietly right up to the stage with folded arms. He looked for all the world like some old-time pugilist. As he told me afterwards—'I thought I might have to put my fists up for you I' and I really believe that he might have done just that!

## RECOGNITION

THERE was a time when in the 'pop' world recognition for a group came when an appearance was heralded with piercing screams from the fans. Happily, for those of us who like to hear the music, that more obvious recognition of the 'favorites' has somewhat abated. Today's popularity depends far more upon the ability of the performer, the well-sung and well-played songs, and many fine artists are at last reaching the top.

The word 'recognition' takes on a new meaning when connected with a venture which quickly becomes nationally and internationally known. Within days, even hours, the face of a person in the news is flashed on screens in millions of homes, and people feel they know him. This can be embarrassing. On countless occasions, in buses, in trains, on the tube—because I don't have a car, and have to travel on public transport—I have looked up from my newspaper or magazine, to find all eyes in the carriage on me, drawn first by the bonnet I was wearing. Then I have noticed a slowly dawning realization that they had seen the face before—somewhere. Now confronted with a situation such as this I have discovered there are several things I could do: open the newspaper to its full width and disappear behind its depths, except that this is not too easy in a tightly packed tube train; or stare stonily out of the window, or make an engrossed study of the 'adverts' on the



walls and ceiling of the carriage; or, dragging out all the poise I can muster, gaze boldly into their astonished eyes and perhaps even manage a smile.

Usually the onlookers beat a hasty retreat into newspapers, magazines and a pointed study of shoes. Then, as I rise to disembark at a station, a small voice from the depths of the carriage will be heard to say: 'Excuse me, but you are—aren't you?' Making a hasty mental assessment as to whether this is correct, I have turned a bright smiling face to the inquirer and replied 'Yes, that's right!'—then I've made as graceful an exit as possible under such circumstances.

Children, in their delightful disregard for personal embarrassment, are less inhibited. '00, mummy, look!' a shrill, piping voice will inform the entire train. 'It's one of the Joystings!' My most humorous adventure in this realm happened one morning when running for the 8.25 a.m. of t my local station, dripping wet, trying to furl my umbrella, jump into a slowly moving train and remain unobserved, at the same time fighting my way into an already over packed carriage. I pulled up the door behind me, raised my eyes to chest level of the person against whom I was wedged, only to hear resounding around the train—'Gawd! It's the Joystings!' What the Almighty felt at having that gem of truth shouted at Him we shall never know.

When traveling in the Joystings' van, complete with name in letters a foot high on the outside, it is impossible to remain unobserved. This is fine! Together we can take it; individually, that's a different matter. Of course, I've met some delightful people: who tactfully have asked about the group and myself and have shown a genuine interest, and if interest in us is going to add to the effectiveness of our work, and the chance of putting across our faith, this is something we have to put up with! Hand in hand with the fact of being recognized in the Street, in the trains, comes the ever-present problem of autographs. Now I have had a very strong feeling about this, from the word 'go'. If folk are sufficiently interested to want a signature, then I feel that the least that can be done is to write it personally, and not resort to other folk taking the books and copying the signature or even having a block made. I've written thousands in all their various forms, from signing plaster-of-Paris legs and arms or scraps of toilet paper, to writing on hands and signing visitors' books. Quite the most interesting book of this kind was found in the great Concert Hall at Goteborg, in Sweden, where we followed such names as Toscanini, Menuhin and others of the world of show business and professional music-makers.

'Fans' have been very much a part of our life as a group, as would be expected, but some folk have had qualms about this. Nevertheless I can honestly say that we have never tried to link young folk on to ourselves only, but have hoped that knowing us would become an introduction not only to our faith, but to our Saviour. We have believed that the great power that is God can take all the trappings of a 'pop' group and use them to reach out into the personalities of young folk and change their whole way of thinking. What's more, it has worked I

Sometimes folk have misunderstood our natural desire for a certain degree of anonymity. I was once soundly upbraided on a long-distance train by a fellow traveller who felt that I should use the fact that when I had left the compartment for the dining car folk had been talking about me, as a jumping-off point for a concentrated attack for the remainder of the journey. She could not see that in so doing I would have destroyed completely the ease with which, later, one or two passengers

chatted to me about my work and group. She couldn't see that I was tired and having great difficulty in remaining awake, after a week of non-stop engagements, including a three-day T.V. commitment, and on my way to another. She would have had me arrive completely drained of energy and unable to apply myself fully to the job in hand. I certainly believe that 'unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required', but I think it applies just as certainly to our powers of discretion as to our evangelical fervour.

We have been privileged to receive recognition of our group in the most influential circles of society and opinion. Our invitation to Buckingham Palace and subsequent presentation to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was an honour that we felt happy to accept not only for ourselves, but as recognition of the Army and the work we do amongst the people. We took it as a sign that our method of taking religion to young people in a language they understand was approved and accepted.

At the invitation of an old friend of ours, Father Nicholls at the parish church of Camberwell, we had the privilege of playing before Her Majesty the Queen Mother. I treasure the letter he sent to me afterwards stating how pleased Her Majesty had been to see us in the flesh and how often she had enjoyed watching us on the T.V. As the Queen Mother sat in the front pew of that old church she seemed to become the heart of the gathering, so potent was her presence!

One of the opportunities that has given us greatest satisfaction, as well as a great deal of fun and laughter, is the annual Lord Mayor's Show in which we were invited to appear. We drove an old 1920s charabanc, kindly lent to us by Lord Montague. The old vehicle wheezed and groaned its way around the City streets and we met with a tumultuous welcome. We had been instructed to rise and acknowledge the new Lord Mayor, seated with his retinue outside the Mansion House, and we all prepared to do so. Unfortunately for us, at the precise moment of passing the Lord Mayor our driver decided to change gear and 'the charabanc gave a sudden disastrous lurch, knocking us all off our feet so that the entire group collapsed in an undignified heap at the bottom of the car. From above wafted the delighted laughter of the Lord Mayor and his entourage. I'm sure our cartoon-like passing helped to make his day! We received a most warm letter of thanks!

It seems to me that the world of show business has completely understood and recognized the validity of our existence, right from the beginning of our career. It has never been necessary to explain why we have been there, or to make excuses for our presence on the 'bill'. The steel-like barriers of thought and behaviour that many Christians have expected us to find have just not been there. I love the friends we have made in this interesting world, and they have taught me a lot.

Living so near to the Mermaid Theatre, the City's own centre of drama, we've enjoyed good friendship with its actor-manager, Bernard Miles. I always enjoy meeting him and the conversation always finds its way into a profound theological discussion—losing me en route—so far ahead of me is he in his understanding of the great religions of the world. I love the way he lapses into 'performance' in the middle of a sentence, and often in dialect, and the rich, fruity West Country burr with which he 'dresses up' his anecdotes. In the Mermaid I first sensed the 'feel' of intimate theatre, where the audience is so close as to be able to look right into the actors' eyes. There is an atmosphere all of its own and a sense of tremendous team-work when we are playing there. Here, more than anywhere, I have felt that Christianity can be shown in vivid, relevant terms in a secular idiom. To hear an audience roar with delighted laughter at the humour of some old story from

Scripture, as, in dialect, it is made to 'live again' by someone like Bernard Miles, or John Woodvine, or Bill Kerr, is an experience not to be forgotten, and cannot fail to make a profound impression upon the listener. Our musical performance gained immeasurably by the carefully prepared atmosphere nurtured by the professional actors who handle the precious word of God with such grace and competence.

From the world of live theatre to the world of international cabaret is quite a jump, and our invitation to appear at the Playboy Club in London, in aid of a Salvation Army appeal for funds, was quite a surprise—and challenge. Viewed from any angle this was no easy assignment. Professionally it demanded everything we had to give—and more! From the standpoint of doing some kind of valid religious work, again it was a stiff job. From the angle of publicity, from the word 'go' we knew that there would be many folk who would not understand. After the first night we wanted to give it up! Few people realized this either. But we don't just give up because we feel we are not coping with a situation, at least we don't when we really are there to communicate the gospel. We went back and learned how to cope. And this we did for six nights in the discotheque and the cabaret, in spite of an avalanche of criticism, the like of which we had never known before.

Perhaps it was because we were so absolutely determined to make our appearance there valid that something did get across. After one performance, a Canadian millionaire ran after us, leaving the table at which he was sitting, and said: 'That was simply tremendous! If they did this in church every Sunday, then they'd get me!'

#### COMMUNICATION

I NEVER thought that the word 'communication' would come to have such meaning for me, but it has become one of the most important words in my life, let alone my vocabulary.

I can't remember when I first realized that much of my activity as a Christian was making little or no impact upon the ordinary person. Certainly when I was faced with the commercial world of show-business I soon realized that I spoke a different language. If only the average, delightful, well-meaning, Christian person would realize this! God is expecting us to turn ourselves inside out in an attempt to relate the tremendous truth we know for ourselves to the ordinary man with his everyday problems. It seems to me that the powers of some Christians have become atrophied through lack of really effective use.

Eyes that aren't really open,  
Ears that have never heard,  
Thoughts that ought to be spoken  
Expressed in some simple word;  
Hands content to be folded,  
Neat and out of harm's way,  
Ideas, delightfully moulded,  
But lacking something to say,  
Lacking something to say.

Feet reluctantly treading

In paths that have always been there,  
Minds caught up in the routine  
Of dull and habitual prayer, Hearts that can't find a heartbeat To feel for a world that is lost,  
Lives on the brink of self-giving,  
But halted, through counting the cost,  
Halted, through counting the cost.

Finger of God, finger of God,  
Probing for lives You can choose,  
Touch our souls into consciousness,  
For ours are the lives You must use.

I once remember hearing Lord Reith, one-time controller of the B.B.C., being interviewed on T.V. On being asked what he most wanted to do in life, he replied 'I want to be fully stretched.' I've never forgotten it. This is what we have sought to do and be in our work as a group. Fully stretched! We have found this to be essential when trying to communicate the gospel to modern men and women.

Looking back on the five-year life of the Joystings I can see the emerging of a three-fold pattern of communication: communication through the actual medium of the sound of music, through relevant lyrics, and through the type of people we have tried to become. Nevertheless, it is impossible to please all the people all of the time. 'Too loud!' some have wailed. 'You're not presenting the whole Gospel,' another has complained. Or, more mysteriously still: 'You're too like "them"! Just who are the mythical 'them' is yet to be established.

There is no doubt that any commercial-sounding religious music stands a great chance with the general public of Britain and of most countries I have visited with the Joystings. After all, this is the sound to which our ears have become accustomed—day in and day out—coming over our transistors, out of our 'tellies' and from our record-players. This is today's musical language. Nobody is suggesting that this sound should supplant the massive chordal structure of Brahms' No. I, or the beauty of Handelian oratorio. For many people this sound of the '60s is as acceptable as these established masterpieces; they can exist alongside. So we have deliberately exploited this realm of foot-tapping communication and have hoped that an appreciation of wailing harmonica, tremulo guitar and stomp drumming would create the 'neutral territory' where an exchange of ideas is possible.

Our main stream of communication, of course, has always been in the lyrics of our songs. Now I freely admit that when I first started experimenting in the realm of 'pop' lyrics I was concerned only with expressing what I felt to be true. I had to learn that 'It's an open secret' was so much Greek to some of the young folk who listened to it over Radio Luxembourg, and this lyric was comparatively avant-garde in religious circles at the time. I produced a mass of songs in those first two years. Singable, easy to listen to, and likeable. Nowadays I write fewer because to be meaningful is difficult, and other members of the group have also found this to be true.

The hard, sharp fact has to be faced that many beautiful, holy words, though full of meaning for the average Christian, say less than nothing to the majority of young folk. I have had to learn the art of the 'one idea' song:

one simple, relevant, penetrating phrase that can be repeated over and over again throughout the song and, perhaps, remembered afterwards.

I remember having lunch with a well-known T.V. producer, discussing a coming programme of the Joystrings. In my enthusiasm I was for packing in songs full of message and meaning. 'My dear Joy,' he said, in his kindly, sardonic way, 'let me tell you that you will be lucky if you get one viewer to remember one phrase from even one of your songs. The rest will lead up to, and away from, that moment.' And I have come to realize that the actual chances are as slim as that. How desperately important, then, that I weigh every word I write.

I can never underestimate the tremendous channels of communication that have opened once people have realized that we were ordinary, friendly, intelligent and interesting people. Sometimes I wonder if we Christian folk realize how dull we can become through being wrapped up in our own parochial concerns week in and week out.

I can't remember how many times folk we have met in show-business have said to me—quite genuinely— 'You know, I never realized before that Christians were normal!' I was appalled, at first! But, during the five years I've been taking a hard look at myself and often, so often, I've had to take deliberate steps to keep myself related to life as the average person lives it.

This attitude has had great bearing on the things we have said on stage, in our words of testimony, and the way we have tried to put across the message from God's word in our epilogues. How many times I've seen Wycliffe hold up an evening paper he has purchased during the afternoon and, with all the expertise at his command, make some devastating point about today's society and ethics that not one person in the audience could refute! Then, gently, he has placed it in the context of our belief in Christ and the eventual triumph of good in our world. Impressive? Certainly— but sharply relevant.

Our journeys in our group van have sometimes developed into battlefields of discussion, debate and dialogue, as we have thrashed out amongst ourselves what we felt about some of the current issues in the light of our faith. Whatever else develops from this desire to communicate, it certainly jolts the thinking capacity into action. One can't be asleep and relevant! Sometimes our gatherings have been harshly judged, and sometimes we have disappointed ourselves, and been disappointed. We have never allowed the status quo to develop, and maybe our horror of this eventuality has sometimes driven us to change for change's sake. We have had to take the risks that all pioneers have to take. Sometimes we have been wrong, but I am certain that we have never been dull or boring.

We have been careful not to 'tub-thump' too much. In my experience tact is an essential in any Christian who hopes to affect the lives of others. Sensitivity must be the twin to courage. To have marched into a shared dressing room with the light of religious battle in our eyes would have been

fatal, but to sit, work, rehearse, eat and perform for a couple of days in a normal fashion is calculated to have brought opportunities of explaining ourselves to our fellow artists.

Some folk have said that some places we have visited to communicate our message should have been avoided. I can only say that I have never felt this to be true. Certainly we have played in places that have not been my kind of ground, but I have always felt it to be an opportunity to present our faith. Publicity can sometimes 'blow an occasion up' out of all proportion and give a peculiar impression, but I'm encouraged to believe that most average people are intelligent enough to be aware of this.

Of course there is a tinge of danger in learning to 'get across' to people because of what one is like. So many have commented on the cult of personality that words are not needed from me. However, reading my Salvation Army history books, I discover that 'personalities' were very much to the fore in our formative years, dedicated

'Personalities' who could be relied upon to be a big 'draw'. Advertisement exploited this to the full in the case of such men as Elijah Cadman, 'The Hallelujah Chimney Sweep', and even William Booth himself, who appeared on a theatre bill as an 'act'. The word 'Joystings' has developed a magic that can be exploited in the finest way, in order to bring men and women into contact with something, or should I say Someone, who can change their lives. To me, this exploitation is a valid way of communicating, and I have never felt it to be unwise.

It all boils down to this: most means of communicating are valid, as long as they remain the means, and they do not become an end in themselves. I admit I have found this a necessary point to watch, but I am not frightened of it, nor do I think any other sincere Christian ought to be.

## GOODBYE TO THE CONTINENT

I WAS glad when I heard that we were to do a farewell tour on the Continent: five days in France, two in Belgium and nine in Holland. Who could ask for a more pleasant way of saying goodbye?

It was a dull, cloudy day as we made our way to Dover. Some went by train and some by hired van—our hardworking Utilibrake having decided to leave us stranded near Northallerton seven days earlier, leaving us to tramp to the nearest village, ask for help and finally abandon the road journey we were making back to London from Ireland. We had had to hire a van, and were anticipating picking up a hired car on the 'other side'.

The sun broke through half-way across the Channel. Surely a portent of one of the sunniest and happiest tours we have ever made! We drove from Calais to Lille, near the Belgian border of northern France. Peter Hawkins, our liaison officer, was experiencing his first run through France, and saw what we had noticed on a previous visit—dotted here and there about the countryside, alongside the incredibly bumpy road, the small walled war cemeteries. A grim reminder that this was perfect 'tank country'. One could almost hear the rattle of those great monsters on the cobbled roads. The isolated gun ridges are still there to be viewed from passing tourist cars. We fell silent!

Our arrival at Lille was unfortunate, to say the least. We were to have been met at a roundabout just off the autoroute, but when we arrived no one was there. We decided to search for the house of the local Salvation Army officer. A nearby garage looked interesting, so Bill and I dismounted and prepared to air our 'petit peu' of French. Bill managed to ask for a map of the town and we soon located the spot. Then my eye fell on a handy telephone and, having the number on a piece of paper, I asked to phone. It's almost unbelievable, but until the moment that the ringing tone stopped and an unmistakably French voice said 'L'Armée du Salut', I had completely forgotten that the answering voice would be French—and French only. The resultant pause was comical to both Bill and the garage proprietor as I turned panic-stricken eyes to them and mimed the fact that the instrument in my hand would offer only French! Well, French it had to be! Eventually we found our way and received one of the warmest welcomes of our career.

The Salle de Conservatoire at Lille is one of the most delightful auditoriums we have ever played in. It is circular, graceful and acoustically excellent. During the morning we were taken to view it, before setting up our equipment later in the day—a fact that had not been communicated to the concierge—a small, red-faced man, gesticulating angrily and sending out a barrage of unintelligible French. '11 est furio,' said one of our friends—which exclamation could not have escaped us in any language! In fact, he proved very helpful—which was just as well because into that hail, planned to seat 500 people, over 650 folk were packed—a record audience. That evening, when we gave our epilogue, eighteen young folk came forward to stand with us in a most moving conclusion to the evening.

One incident charmed us as few things before had done. As the young seekers came out of the counselling room the girls all paused as they passed to greet Sylvia and myself with the characteristic Continental 'kiss on both cheeks'. I've never really seen the New Testament 'greeting with a holy kiss' before. It was a delightful gesture.

So on to Paris, that supreme city in the life of the Joystings. The familiar skyline of Paris seemed to welcome us and we felt we had 'come home'. Later, tucking into an artichoke, I knew we had! At the evening performance planned by Michèle Namur, the young Captain in charge of the Army corps at the massive Palais de la Femme for working girls, we had an audience to delight the hearts of any 'pop' group:

300 working girls from the city, boys from the hostel for young men and some lads from the Industrial Colony just outside the city. The resulting noise was indescribable—but terrific how they enjoyed it all! They shouted, shrieked, thumped, stamped and clapped. They raised the roof when they sang and the poor technician of the French T.V. Outside Broadcast Unit, who was trying to take snippets of the evening for putting out in a newscast, sat tapping the headphones on his ears in bewilderment. In the cathedral-like silence of the epilogue forty young folk came to stand with us. Afterwards, signing autographs in the foyer, I was summoned to speak with some of these young folk. I sat around a small table with an interpreter and tried to answer their questions and explain my faith to these girls. Their questions were philosophical in content, very astute and perceptive and were not easy to answer well. We sat there together until the hail was empty and the lights had been extinguished. The interpreter was exhausted and so was I.

The next day we drove to Lyons. The road south was delightful. In May the fields stretch out green and fertile, broken by stretches of bright yellow. 'What is it?' I asked. The answer—the lovely coiza flower, which is cultivated for its oil and, I have a sneaking feeling, for the sunny beauty it bestows upon the countryside. Seen from the autoroute it appears like a carpet of sunlight, stretching into eternity.

To arrive at Lyons on a sunny day is to drive into beauty. Built upon hills and crossed by two rivers, it presents a gracious and delightful sight. We noticed that the people were different from the northerners; they were swarthy and broad with dark flashing eyes and shining black hair. The whole place had a warmer, more exotic atmosphere.

The Palais d'Hiver is an enormous building, seating 2500. We were amazed to find it laid out with small tables as though the audience was to be served with a meal during our performance. However, the chairs were turned around and when the 'tabs' went up the audience looked much like any other audience. There was a seated audience of about 1000 throughout, and a 'shifting population' of teenagers. It was calculated that throughout most of the evening over 2000 people were present. The audience was one of our most challenging occasions, containing Salvationists, folk from Switzerland, students from the local university, and the ordinary dance hail *dientèle* who were used to frequenting the place. We did our best with our message, and hoped that it had been effective. It had! For the next day's papers, both Communist and Roman Catholic, contained glowing reports. They called us 'Interpreters of the Faith'—a telling phrase, especially when we remembered that we were working in a language, other than our own. Full marks to our translator! One cartoon-like picture remains with me: a big, burly French press photographer, animatedly taking photos on stage after the performance, then grabbing Wycliffe, kissing him on both cheeks and saying 'Thank you; you are beautiful!' Passing strange to our Anglo-Saxon minds!

After a final run in Paris, we said goodbye and drove on to Belgium. Our first engagement was an extraordinary interview for a Belgian Radio 'pop' programme. This lasted half an hour and was the most difficult in our experience. The questions were put in French, and demanded a concentration we were almost too tired to supply. From there we drove to Waterloo. I don't know quite what I expected; certainly not the calm, green meadow pastures with cattle grazing peacefully. It was hard to believe that the boom of cannon and clash of steel had sounded to such devastating effect. We dimmed Lion Hill (the results of which lived with me for the next week, in aching muscles) and listened to the taped records of the story of the battle. Underneath our feet lay 45,000 men killed in battle on that spot. Bill was listening avidly and had, as usual, become completely involved. As we drove to the studio he passed on a compact stream of information about the battle, and I wondered again whether we shall ever learn our lesson and understand the full horror of war.

The 'studio' turned out to be a converted barn and the technicians Flemish-speaking. In Flemish we found similarities with ancient English and very understandable—which was just as well—as we proceeded to make a forty. Five minute T.V. show in approximately two and a half hours.

The evening performance was packed and the response warm-hearted, adding up to a most memorable evening. In Holland a press conference was held almost at rooftop level in a hotel in the centre of Rotterdam, where we were still sitting at the top of the Euromast five minutes before



we were due 'on' at the Doelen, where 3500 people were waiting in the vast audience to listen to five lonely figures on a vast stage.

At the end of the programme eighteen young folk stood with us in a moment of commitment. They included a young couple in evening dress, hand in hand. They had been on their way to a show, when the tram they were on passed the mighty Doelen. They had caught sight of Salvationists and others entering the building. They had inquired what was 'on' and had been invited to come and hear the English 'pop' group. They had previously seen us on Dutch T.V. and had already caught something of our message. Chance? Coincidence? A fluke? Some might say so, but I know that this is how God works out His purpose for individual lives. A 'chance' word, the viewing of a T.V. programme, the friendly invitation, all go to make up a final link in a chain of events that can lead a man to God. So often we have been the final link, and only the final link! It is important to remember that, I think! Seats were at a premium that night, even with 3500 to play with! Perhaps someone gave up their tickets. How easily the whole thing could have been wrecked. A harassed official! An unconcerned Salvationist! And how different an ending!

Some quieter moments return to my mind. The strange light of the setting sun on the long rows of white headstones at the Airborne Cemetery at Arnhem. The stillness of this place! Lying between the quiet cornfields and down a country lane it could be a corner of England. The beauty, quaint and calm beauty of enchanting Deift seen for half an hour—between showers! Wycliffe, Bill and I, sitting in front of Vermeer's 'View of Deift' in the Maurtuts House at the Hague trying to absorb, in five minutes, the texture, the incredible blues, the lasting qualities of such a masterpiece.

#### AND WHAT NOW?

Now that we have come to the end of the work of the Joy strings people are constantly asking, 'Well Joy, what now?' In a sense this pleases me very much indeed. It has something of the air of expectancy about it, as though it is natural to assume that this idea will be carried on, and extended into some other sphere.

This 'idea'! Of course, here is the secret! 'The Joystings'—the phrase does not indicate only a group—it indicates an idea, a tremendous, gripping, stimulating idea. We have said many times together that the idea was bigger than us, and now we have to make sure that this is seen to be true. It is interesting to remember that there are more than a hundred Salvation Army 'pop' groups in Great Britain today, and that does not take count of the innumerable groups belonging to other churches and denominations which have been inspired by the Joystings. In fact, local Salvationists often receive the request, 'Have you got a Joystings group, please?' This public goodwill toward us needs to be harnessed and used in the future.

The other young officers in the Joystings group have now gone to do the work they originally hoped to do, the work of evangelizing through the ministry of pastoral work, and I'm sure their pens will still run with music and the guitars vibrate to many a future chord. As for me, it seems that my path and the path of 'religious pop' are to run side by side in the future. For instance, I am going to be allowed to take a real interest in other Salvationist groups in Britain and, I hope, abroad. Of course, I look into the future, and like everyone else—I wonder! I wonder about the destiny of the world in which I live. I see the suffering, the wars, the hate, the intolerance—but somehow, I'm an eternal optimist, and I'm sure I have the answer. A lot of folk shout about

changing the world, but, let's face it, for the majority of us ordinary folk there is little we can do to influence the course of history.

I believe quite simply that the answer is to be found in some words of Jesus, when He spoke about the yeast in the bread: 'A little leaven leavened the whole lump.' I believe that every Christian is a small cell of hope and light and goodness, just where he is, in the environment and context in which he lives, works, and has to do with his fellow men. I believe that it is vital that he is seen to be relevant to that context both in what he is and what he says. One 'changed life' can effect a change in its immediate surroundings, and this activity, multiplied, can eventually change the world. I believe this is the only chance we have, but I'm quite sure it holds the answer to the world's problems.

And so, this is what I am going to do, personally. It is not of the slightest importance where I do it. It can happen anywhere. It can happen with anyone, this loving, caring, relevant, communicating 'changed' quality of life that is stimulating and convincing.

'And this is Joy'— well, there it is. You've shared with me my 'inside' view of the life of the Joystrings, my hopes, my disappointments~ my delights, and you've shared some of my personal hopes. None of this would have been possible were it not for the fact that one day I managed to break through to an awareness and acceptance of the fact of God, and whatever has been achieved is the result of His loving presence in my life; and I'm sure what has happened for me can happen for others.

In my most creative moments I can clearly see a world in which the best in all men is being used for the good of the rest, a world where God is the focal point of life. Too good to be true, you may say, but I think not! Not if we believe in it enough, not if we work for it. The word 'vision' is rather old-fashioned now, but this is what we need. We need to see the world of our frustrations eclipsed by the world that could be if men really were 'born again'. This kind of thinking is mirrored in my song-writing:

Picture a world, such a silent world,  
Where men have forgotten how to sing;  
Picture a world, such a tragic world,  
Invaded by pain and suffering;  
Picture a world where little children cry,  
Picture a world where young men die,  
Picture a world where men have somehow ceased to try.

Picture a world, such a lonely world,  
Where men have forgotten to pray;  
Picture a world, such a dreary world,  
Where the skies of the soul are always grey;  
Picture this world where love is kept in chains,  
Picture this world where selfishness reigns.  
Picture a world where little happiness remains.

But I can see a world where men are strong again,  
I can see a world where hope is new;  
I can see a world where God belongs again  
And the hearts of men are true;  
And I can see a world where children smile again,  
I can see a world where life is free,  
I can see a world where men are born again  
To God and eternity.

We have to build the 'world that we hope for' in the context of the 'world that is', and somewhere along the line the change must begin—in me!

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