

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Further to my letter in the last Twinspire magazine, the following quotation is very apt. I'm sorry I do not know the writer of it, but it fits in very well.

“Go in my name, the call is to all:  
Go in my name, in my strength, and my truth.  
Leave behind all thoughts of thanks or glory or fame.  
But go, for I have called you, strengthened,  
enabled and encouraged you.  
Obedience is what I ask – obedience wholehearted  
and true.  
But go – you'll take my presence with you;  
Go, and you'll prove me – the God of all  
graciousness, mercy and love.”

*Henry Munroe*

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My attention has been drawn to the letter by Lyn McQaker in the autumn issue of Twinspire in which she seeks information in respect of the Boys' Brigade Colour displayed within Polmont Old Parish Church. As Captain of the 2nd Polmont Company, The Boys' Brigade, at the time the Colour was laid up I am happy to oblige.

To do so I have to provide a brief history of the Company, which was formed way back in 1899. At that time Boys' Brigade headquarters in Glasgow styled the Company "the 1st Polmont Company, The Boys' Brigade". Some years earlier a Company attached to the then Brightons Free Church (now Brightons Parish Church) was formed with the nomenclature 1st Polmont Company.

It folded within a few years, however, which explains why, when the infant Company in Polmont village was raised by the minister and Kirk Session of Polmont Parish Church, as it was at that time, 1899, it was known as 1st Polmont. Then it too folded, the Brightons Company was resurrected some time later, and regained its former number which it has retained ever since.

Move forward to 1928 when, with the blessing of the Rev. James M. Williamson, another attempt, successful at that, was made to form a Boys' Brigade Company attached to Polmont Parish Church. Since then it has gone from strength to strength.

But getting back to that Colour. A few years after the 2nd Polmont Company had established itself second time around, it received the Colour which was borne proudly on parade for upwards of 40 years.

Come 1974, by which time I had been Captain for seven years, plans were made to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Company's inception. An extremely hard-working parents' committee was formed which raised funds to send a party of 45 officers, boys and spouses on a never-to-be-forgotten 10-day camp at Elsinore, Denmark.

A few weeks earlier, the Company mounted an anniversary exhibition in the church hall, hosted not one, but two afternoon church services - one for Old Boys and one for Falkirk and District Battalion, and enjoyed a well-attended dinner-dance at the Cladhan Hotel in Falkirk to round off what it thought was the anniversary celebrations in style before the Company Section headed for Denmark.

Imagine my surprise, however, when, that summer, a former member of the Company, along with his wife, called upon me and intimated they wished to present the Company with new Colours to mark the Company's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Colours, the Queen's Colour and the Company Colour, both in full silk, were the most expensive available.

Thus, on a very wet Sunday on November 3, 1974, from Berkshire, Argyll and Angus came former members of the Company to attend a service unique in the annals of the Company, by now 75 years old. From Berkshire, where he was stationed with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, came former Staff-Sergeant Billy Henderson, incidentally the very first Boy in Falkirk and District Battalion to be awarded the "new" Queen's Badge two years earlier; from Lochgilphead in Argyll came former Lieutenant Stewart Taylor; from Angus came former Captain Jim Boyd, and from no further than Polmont village itself came another former Captain, Jimmy Murray.

For Messrs Taylor, Boyd and Murray the laying-up of the old Colour was particularly poignant as they had been on parade when it was consecrated some 40-odd years earlier.

Mr Taylor, whose nephew by marriage (Lieutenant Bill Japp) carried the Colour into church for the last time, had been a member of the Colour Party when it was carried into church to be

consecrated all those years earlier, and he, along with former Captain Jimmy Murray, was invited to escort the Colour, as it was borne through the church for the laying-up ceremony.

The Colour was handed over "for safe custody and permanent display within these walls" by me, as Company Captain.

Then the new Colours, cased, were carried into church, the Queen's Colour by Staff-Sergeant Laurence Crawford, and the Company Colour by Staff-Sergeant Mungo Gillespie. Once uncased by me and laid on the Communion Table, the Colours were consecrated and dedicated by the Rev. Hugh Talman.

At the close of the service, the Queen's Colour was accepted by Lieutenant Bill Japp, escorted by Staff-Sergeant Laurence Crawford, with Lieutenant John Laing, escorted by Staff-Sergeant Mungo Gillespie, receiving the Company Colour. En route to the church the old Colour, carried by Lieutenant Japp, had been escorted by Corporals Brian Crawford and Graham Smith.

Although the silver band of the Falkirk Corps of the Salvation Army had been unable to lead the parade to church, owing to torrential rain, the bandsmen led the march-past afterwards when the rain abated - and the new Colours were paraded for the first time.

I too, along with former officers and boys, would like to think the old Colour can be accommodated -and seen - possibly higher yet, say at the side of the gallery. The Boys' Brigade crest displays an anchor. Any anchor, whether for a rowing boat or the QE2, is similar in style with an upright staff and a bar running at right angles across it. Without the Cross/cross there is no anchor. That's what The Boys' Brigade is about, and that's why I thank Lyn McQuaker for her concern, some 110 years after the Boys' Brigade was formed in Polmont village.

And I thank the late Mr Laurence Crawford, and his wife Una, for their generosity in presenting the new Colours in 1974. At the time of Mr Crawford's funeral some years ago, I asked his wife to release me from the vow of confidentiality I had willingly undertaken all those years earlier. She did so and I remain grateful for all she and her husband and family did for 2nd Polmont Company.

*Colin Mailer (Rev.)*

Ceilidh Thanks

What a wonderful ceilidh in the Greenpark Centre. Thank you to all who organised this super event. We went along with our friends and had a fantastic night. Great dancing, marvellous music and not forgetting, a lovely supper too. Our friends commented on how welcome they were made to feel and want to know when the next one is! Thank you to all who made our friends so welcome, and to all of the people who helped and organised the ceilidh. Well done – it was fabulous!

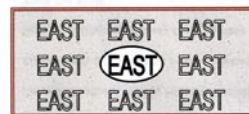
*Gordon and Jacqueline Milne*

**DID YOU GET THEM RIGHT?**

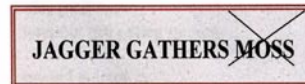
**LATERAL THINKING PUZZLES ANSWERS**

Here are the answers to the puzzles posed in the last edition of Twinspire.

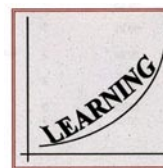
Look out for more in the next edition.



**MIDDLE EAST**



**A ROLLING STONE GATHERS NO MOSS**



**LEARNING CURVE**



**UPHILL STRUGGLE**

