

## **A Glimpse from the Past – Co-operation**

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When you think about The Salvation Army, investigators and detectives don't readily come to mind. Interestingly enough however, one of our longest-standing programs is exactly that. Now known as the Family Tracing Program, the "Help and Enquiry Department" was established in 1885 to assist parents find their missing daughters – an outreach initiated during the Army's campaign to raise the age of consent in England. An 1891 *War Cry* article describes the work in colourful prose

"One-third of the cases being foreign, a vast amount of correspondence has to be attended to as soon as possible after receipt, entailing communications with agents abroad, etc. And this part of the work is daily increasing, owing, not only to a certain amount of publicity having been given by various successful cases to the existence of this special Department, but doubles also in a great measure by the publication of "In Darkest England."

To show what effect these two causes have had upon the Department, it is necessary to go somewhat into statistics. For example, in August, September and October of last year, the three months preceding the appearance of the work referred to, 486 new cases were investigated, and 115 people were found. For November, December and January last, the three months following the publication of "Darkest England," 594 new cases were received by the department, and of these 132 were traced. This points to an average of about one in every four cases investigated being successful. In the course of investigation, no less than 2,490 interviews with different people were conducted by representatives of the Department which interview apply to London and provincial cases alone. "

It is evident that cooperation – working with families, authorities and other agencies – was a founding principle of this 'Salvation Army Detective Department'.

In fact today in Canada & Bermuda it's not only our family tracing services that are continuing this important work. The Salvation Army Atlantic Immigrant and Refugee Services program operates year-round out of the Spryfield Community Church and Family Resource Centre. It works to reunite refugees and immigrants with their families. They assist over 300 clients annually, and open approximately 50 files each year, with many cases taking up to three years to be completed. The success of this far-reaching ministry could not happen without teamwork and ongoing partnerships, with co-operation at the core.

