The Boys' Brigade is a Christian organization, so it rightly has a worldwide missionary concern. From the very beginning, Bible Class talks and Church Parade services reminded the Boys in the homeland of less fortunate people all round the globe. Those were the days when they sang:

- From Greenland's icy mountains,
- From India's coral sand
- Where Africa's sunny fountains

Roll down their golden sand.

Their prize award books by R.M. Ballantyne and G.A. Henry fixed the imagination with tales of the outposts of Empire. Magic lantern slides brought faraway scenes before their very eyes. News flowed in from every corner of the world of dedicated missionary doctors, preachers and engineers who spent their lives in healing and helping the millions in distant lands who had as yet no wealth or learning or trained skills of their own. The missionary in his lonely mud hut was as much a hero in those days as the imperial soldier or the jungle trail-blazer. The British Empire has long since gone to the pages of the history books. Today we speak of the commonwealth of nations, the ecumenical Church, and the worldwide family of man. But the missionary interest has never failed in The Boys Brigade. Indeed, it burns today more brightly than ever, if one is to judge by the facts of interest, offerings and volunteers.

Surprisingly enough, one of the first B. B. missionary efforts on record was started by the lively 1st San Francisco Company, which had its own Missionary Society from the start, taking in all its members. 'One hundred dollars each year is fixed as the least amount which the members expect to contribute to Missions.'

Within the British Isles we find the flame of missionary concern alight in every branch of the Church. The Founder said: 'We can imagine nothing more in keeping with our Object,' and at an Officers' Conference in Dublin as early as 1895 there was a discussion on 'The Boys' Brigade as a Missionary Auxiliary.' T.C. Carey Longmore, pioneer in many B.B. ventures, spoke about Boys giving a regular halfpenny a week to the Company missionary box.

The Church Missionary Society has counted on enthusiastic B.B. support for almost a century, particularly in medical work. In the year 1890 the I3th London Company was officered by two brothers, Herbert Lankester, Captain, and Arthur Lankester, Lieutenant. Both were doctors. Two years later, Dr. Arthur Lankester went out as a medical missionary to take charge of the C. M. S. hospital at Amritsar, the legendary holy city of the Sikhs in North India. His letters home fired the Boys to have a share in his work. Their first venture was to pay for 'a Boys' Brigade cot at Â£6 a year.' The news spread and before the year was out other Companies were vying with one another to raise money for other cots and beds. So the B.B. branch of the C.M.S. was born. Yet another Lankester brother, Cecil, became the first Secretary and then followed his two brothers into missionary work. Since their pioneer days the C.M.S. branch has supported hospital beds not only in India, but also in China, Persia (now Iran), Egypt, Palestine and Africa both East and West, and today that work goes on more vigorously than ever before.

During the great missionary era at the turn of the 19th century, the Boys' Brigade played its own part in the work of the London Missionary Society in China, South India, and the Cook Islands of the South Pacific. The Methodist Missionary Society, too, provided a roll call of romantic names: Sarenga, Hankow, Montego Bay, Uzuskoli. In Dichpall in India the B.B. camp was held in a mango grove and every Boy was a leper. At Ijebu in Nigeria, W.F. Meller, a life-long B.B. Boy and Officer, kept up a constant flow of letters to the Methodist Companies at home. His work was a daily witness to the grace of Christ.

The B.B. Boys of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland have given their support to the work of an Indian doctor in a Church hospital in India, a water supply for a hospital in Malawi, and a farming centre in Gujarat.

The B.B. Baptist World Mission Committee has skillful ways of capturing the interest of the Boys year after year. One year they provide radio transceiver sets for to-and-fro communication in Zaire, the next they tackle 'Operation Speedboat' to raise funds for outfboard motors for dug-out canoes on a tropical river. Their Junior Section Christmas gifts down the years have included a boat for Brazil, Landrovers for Zaire, bungalows in Bangladesh and gifts to maintain Christian witness in the Caribbean.

The Republic of Brazil occupies half of South America, an area of more than three and a quarter million square miles, almost as big as the whole of Europe. One of the most unusual B.B. missionary ventures in the world is among the shoeshine boys of Pato Branco in Brazil. The Baptist missionary has formed them into a Company, the first in Brazil, with a T-shirt uniform emblazoned with the anchor emblem. Not an orthodox cap, belt and hasaversack Company; it is true, but they are proud to preserve the letters 'B.B.' in their title: 'Batalhoai de Bandeira,' the Portuguese for 'Brigade of the Flag' and their motto is unmistakable: 'Firma E Seg ura' ('Sure and Steadfast').

Christian missionaries were a Scottish export even before the start of the B.B. century. David Livingston was already a national hero and a legend to every boy by the year 1883. So in the early days of the B.B. we find Scottish Companies contributing to missionary work in Madras, South Africa, and Jaina in the heart of India. But the whole-hearted missionary venture which has surpassed all others in Britain began only forty years ago. In 1943 The Boys' Brigade and Life Boys of Scotland took up the idea of having a missionary of their own in Africa. They chose a primitive district in the forests of Nigenia, West Africa, where the
missionary lived in a mud-brick house on the left bank of the Cross River. The village was called Apiapum. In those days there were no roads in that part of Nigeria, only twisting tracks, a foot wide, winding from village to village through the undergrowth of the forest and along the farm patches the villagers had cleared for their yams and cassava. The only way to get about was on foot or by dug-out canoe on the river highway.

![On the Cross River Nigeria.](image)

That first year the Church of Scotland Companies and Teams raised the modest sum of £685 from the whole of Scotland. Then a splendid team of B.B. men formed a Missionary Committee. They launched a Life Boy Christmas appeal and each Boy took a card round his friends with a sketch of the Cross River on it, divided into thirty squares, worth thrpence each. The donations shot up to a thousand pounds. The missionary sent ‘Letters from a Log Canoe’ several times a year to be circulated to every Company and Team all over Scotland. They told of his daily work and adventures, the hippos and wild life of the river and tropical forest, the needs of Apiapum and many another African village, and the stories of boys like themselves in that part of West Africa. In no time at all the name Apiapum was known to Boys from the Shetlands to the Borders and their givings grew from year to year. It is a proud memory of the writer of this centenary book that he was that pioneer B.B. missionary. Within four years the Foreign Mission Committee decided they could support another missionary, this time the colourful and heroic figure of Dr. Ahmed Affara and his hospital at Sheikh Olthman in Arabia.

The Scottish B.B. venture has grown and grown. Contributions have risen by thousands of pounds, and then by tens of thousands. Every year the B.B. cheque is handed over at a special ceremony to the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the name of all the Boys of Scotland. In 1983, amidst the centenary celebrations, the cheque is for £50,000 to aid medical work, agriculture, education, child welfare and evangelism in the lands of Africa, India, and the palm fringed islands of the West Indies. It is and given, like all B.B. missionary offerings, in the name of the Christ of every clime and coast.