



Heroism

The Boys' Brigade Gazette Vol.11 No.1 Dated September 1902 records:

...the Brigade Executive have instituted a Boys' Brigade Cross for Heroism. It is made of bronze, so it is not for its intrinsic value that it will be appreciated, but because it is to be awarded only to a Boy who has performed a really brave act, or a signal act of self-sacrifice. The following are the Regulations under which it will be awarded :

The Cross may be awarded to any Boy who, being a member of The Boys' Brigade, has performed a signal act of self-sacrifice for others, shown heroism in saving life or attempting to save life, or displayed marked courage in the face of danger.

The Cross shall be of bronze, and the ribbon of the clasp shall be royal blue and white. The name of the holder, together with the date of the act of heroism, shall be engraved on the Cross.

A duly attested narrative of the act of heroism which is deemed worthy of the award shall be lodged with the Brigade Secretary by the Officer commanding the Company to which the Boy belongs.

The Brigade Executive shall be the sole judges as to the awarding of the Cross, and their decision shall be final.

For the design of the Cross,we are indebted to Mr. G. G. Urquhart, Lieutenant, 115th Glasgow Company.

In October 1904, the Cross for Heroism was awarded for the first time to Corporal James Morris of the 14th Cape Town Company, South Africa. In the same year that the first Cross for Heroism was awarded the Boys' Life Brigade instituted the Distinguished service diploma, awarded along similar lines to that of the Cross. In 1915, The Boys' Brigade instituted the Diploma for Gallant conduct for a brave act which did not meet the requirements of the Cross for Heroism. The Boys' Life Brigade instituted The Cross for Courage in 1922, with the first award going to C. V. Hart, a Warrant Officer in the 1st Westcliff Coy. For a rescue carried out in 1921. There were 10 recipients of the Cross for Courage prior to the Union with The Boys' Brigade.

In 1973 Richard Simpson (11) of the 1st Shepshed became the first Junior Section boy to receive the Cross. He rescued a friend, who was unconscious, from drowning in the Blackbrook reservoir in Loughborough. Since then, two further crosses have been awarded to Junior Section boys.

Two boys stand out particularly in the awards as they have the distinction of gaining both the Cross for Heroism and the Diploma for Gallant Conduct - a very notable achievement indeed. Andrew Bruce of 1st Falkirk won the Cross in 1926 when he was 13 by saving someone from drowning. Then in 1928 he saved another person from drowning this time being awarded the Diploma. Private Charles Barff (14) of 4th Leeds achieved the distinction in the reverse order but in the same year. In May 1931 he saved a person from drowning, was awarded the Diploma and then in July saved a second person from drowning gaining the Cross for Heroism.