

Shortly after the King and Queen of Denmark had left Buckingham Palace to attend luncheon at Guildhall, members of The Boys' Brigade assembled in the Palace Quadrangle where they presented batons containing messages of loyal greeting to His Majesty the King - the Patron of The Boys' Brigade. The batons have travelled by relays of boy runners from John o' Groats, Londonderry, Lands End, Llanelli and Cromer, a total of 2,537 miles by 2,190 boys. Douglas Willis was there. Here is his report.

The Boys' Brigade, as they've a habit of doing, brought an extra touch of pageantry to the London scene this morning as they marched smartly from Wellington Barracks and swung smoothly and precisely into the forecourt of Buckingham Palace. They were watched by a crowd of about 2,000 people, most of whom had gathered to cheer the King and Queen of Denmark, but who stayed on to cast a benevolent and approving glance on the boys in the pillbox hats.

Their band played as they marched; the kettle drums and the fifes and the bugles and the horns and the boy with the big bass drum. And one little boy - much smaller than all the others - who was armed with the triangle and tapped his proper accompaniment with the same vigour as the rest.

They formed up in two ranks with the band behind them and the standard bearers in front in the Quadrangle of the Palace while their officers gazed at them with a critical eye and the Royal Standard flew in the stiff breeze above. The staff of Buckingham Palace paused in their various duties and looked discreetly from behind closed windows. The King came smiling into the Quadrangle and took his place on a red carpeted dais and stood hatless as the band played the National Anthem.

The King inspected the boys who stood to attention and looked a picture in their navy blue uniforms, their white haversacks with their pillbox hats at perilous angles; with their sergeants in peaked caps and their officers in Glengarrys - better known perhaps to servicemen as fore and afts. Then the King took his place again on the dais as the first three of the fifteen runners came running in their white singlets, shorts and shoes into the Quadrangle. They stopped before the King as one of them, Sergeant Puddefoot, stepped forward, held out his silver cylinder containing the loyal address and said in a clear voice: "Your Majesty, I have the honour to present the Northern message from John o' Groats". Then followed more runners and messages from the North West, Western, and Southern and Eastern Britain.

The King unscrewed one of the batons and read the message, an expression of the Loyal Hodge of 166,283 members of the Boys' Brigade and Life Boys in this country and the many thousands more in the Dominions and Colonies overseas.

And so the band played again; the boys formed up and marched jauntily from the Quadrangle into the forecourt and back to Wellington Barracks while the policeman held up the traffic and the crowd gave them another cheer.

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