

The reverend turned officer: influences in John Dean's transition from Methodist ministry to Salvation Army officership in 1883

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'My ambition is to make all I meet feel that Jesus Christ is worth all we have.'¹ With this lively statement Salvation Army Colonel John Dean aptly summarises the driving determination of his life. In 1883, while a Methodist minister in Ballarat, Dean first encountered the Salvation Army. After a period of introspective wrestling, he sacrificed his Methodist station to take up a post as a Salvation Army Officer. This paper explores the factors involved in John Dean's decision, providing insight into certain distinctive features of the Salvation Army within the church milieu of late 19th century Australia. In particular, it is argued that though the Salvation Army's doctrine of Holiness was an early and important point of contact for Dean, the real impetus for his transfer was their dramatic and sensational evangelistic activism amongst the working class, for which they uniquely faced hostile opposition.

There is an immediate challenge in researching John Dean, for academic publication on the man is entirely lacking. Only recently has the Salvation Army adopted a similar value on education and academia as established church denominations have held for decades. As a result, their publications, though full of life and a joy to read, often lack precision, being written to inspire Salvationists more than present a permanent record for the general populace. At the same time, little has been written on the Salvation Army by outsiders, and Dean has never been recognized as focal enough for any extended treatment, appearing only occasionally as an

¹ Minnie L. Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher* (London: The Epworth Press, 1944), 79.

example of preaching.² The main introduction to the life of John Dean comes through Mrs. General Carpenter, whose husband worked under Dean for a time. Carpenter kept the narrative of Dean alive for two decades through the publication of a short biographical piece in 1925³ that, after two expanded iterations as serial columns in the *War Cry* in 1930⁴ and 1934,⁵ culminated in a 100-page biography published in 1944.⁶ Given the large swathes of overlapping material between these biographical accounts, this paper primarily engages with the final 1944 edition. Carpenter's biography is imprecise, containing false dates and displacing stories from their chronological order. Nevertheless, she draws heavily upon primary sources, providing the researcher with access (albeit selective) to Dean's diary entries and personal letters which appear to have since been lost. Launching from these diary entries, this paper engages with articles written by and about John Dean during his time as a Salvation Army Officer for the weekly *War Cry* newspaper and the monthly *Officer* magazine. These articles assist in crystallising the dominant emphases of Dean's life and ministry. In addition, at certain points of his ministry, articles in the secular press shed light on the man and the fruit of his labour.

John Dean first encountered the Salvation Army in 1883, during his time as a Methodist minister in Ballarat. In 1878, a minister with the Bible Christian Church (a Methodist denomination) travelled some 65 kilometres to the Mallee country to hear the 24-year-old John Dean preach. Dean's family had moved from South Australia to Mallee in 1874 where he took

² Terry Lindvall, 'Sundays in Norfolk: Toward a Protestant Utopia Through Film Exhibition in Norfolk Virginia, 1910-1920', in *Going to the Movies: Hollywood and the Social Experience of Cinema* (ed by. Richard Maltby, Melvyn Stokes, and Robert C. Allen; Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2007), 83.

³ Mrs Colonel Carpenter, *Notable Officers of the Salvation Army* (St Albans: Campfield Press, 1925).

⁴ A six part series, commencing with Minnie L. Carpenter, 'An Australian Firebrand: Glimpses of the Career of Colonel John Dean', *War Cry* (Melbourne, June 7, 1930), 3. See Appendix A for full details.

⁵ A 27 part series, commencing with Mrs. Lt. Commissioner Carpenter, 'John Dean: a Salvation Firebrand', *War Cry* (Melbourne, October 6, 1934), 3. See Appendix A for full details.

⁶ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*.

up a position as a surveyor's assistant, a selector. During the solitude of this work, Dean found himself convicted of truths that he had learned as a child from his Methodist parents, and one afternoon was converted alone under a tree.⁷ He instantly gave himself to preaching in informal 'cottage meetings', gathering coworkers and other scattered locals to urge them to repentance.⁸ These meetings caused such a stir that news reached the distant minister who rode expressly to hear Dean preach. From that first meeting, Dean was offered a position as a circuit rider. After two years on the Wimmera circuit, and another two years in Shepparton, Dean spent a short time as a minister in Bendigo before being invited to a post in the thriving city of Ballarat. Here one night he came across a meeting hall that was so crowded he could not make his way inside. Discovering that a Salvation Army meeting was underway, Dean eventually made his way in, aided by a friend at the back door. The Salvation Army had only opened in Melbourne a few months earlier, in December 1882, so they were still an interesting novelty to Victorians.⁹ Later that week, the Salvationists held a meeting specially targeted at calling people to enter into the second blessing of Holiness (also called Entire Sanctification or Full Salvation). Such meetings were a regular feature of Salvation Army ministry and are termed 'Holiness meetings'. Dean attended 'with considerable interest' to hear Captain Harry 'Ironsides' Edwards preach.¹⁰

In her biography, Carpenter strongly connects John Dean's transition into the ranks of the Salvation Army to the Holiness teaching that he encountered in the preaching of Captain Edwards. Carpenter describes Dean as captivated by the theme of Holiness in his reading of Wesley and Fletcher, such that he asked every ministerial friend he conversed with whether

⁷ John Dean, 'Interviewed at the Last Moment: Major Dean Describes His Career', *War Cry* (Melbourne, October 20, 1894), 11.

⁸ Dean, 'Interviewed', 11.

⁹ Percival Dale, *Salvation Chariot: a Review of the First Seventy-one Years of the Salvation Army in Australia, 1880-1951* (East Melbourne: Salvation Army Press, 1952), 1, 11.

¹⁰ Dean, 'Interviewed', 11.

they knew the experience of holiness, only to find little interest in the subject.¹¹ Heightening the emotional intensity, she describes Edwards' testimony to a personal experience of holiness as the answer to Dean's heart-cry, 'the discovery he had so earnestly and long desired—a man who held the secret of this priceless treasure. He needed it? Oh sorely! Why not seek it?'¹² In an earlier article, Carpenter summarises the string of events thus: 'Led into the experience of Holiness through Salvation Army teaching, and, later called into the ranks, John Dean yielded his spirit to discipline and bent his back to bear burden's for Christ's sake'.¹³ Though here she provides the temporal gap between Dean's experience of Holiness and his entry as an Officer, she describes no other causal factor in his decision.

Certainly, John Dean was impressed by the Salvation Army teaching of Holiness. In his childhood, he connected Christian religion with a steadfast obedience to God. After responding to the call of an evangelist at the age of 10, Dean was taunted at school and grew angry, leading him to conclude that 'it was useless for a child under such circumstances to try to be good...I would wait until I was a man before I again made any efforts to serve God'.¹⁴ His high standards would only have been strengthened as he read Wesley in his early adult life. Recollecting the moment Captain Edwards called his hearers to receive God's blessing of Holiness by faith, Dean writes, 'I cried for deliverance from the inbred sin with which I had struggled for some six and a half years without avail.'¹⁵ After becoming a Salvation Army Officer, Dean regularly and passionately preached at Holiness meetings, calling people to receive this second blessing just as he had. In his later years, Dean still clearly affirmed the

¹¹ Carpenter, *Notable Officers of the Salvation Army*, 84; Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 16.

¹² Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 16.

¹³ Minnie L. Carpenter, 'A Militant Mystic', *War Cry* (Melbourne, April 3, 1926), 14.

¹⁴ Dean, 'Interviewed', 11.

¹⁵ Dean, 'Interviewed', 11.

Salvation Army doctrine, penning an article arguing that ‘There is a sanctification of a justified state...The Bible teaches a Full Salvation.’¹⁶

Nevertheless, to embrace this Salvation Army doctrine did not necessitate a transition out of Methodist ministry. The Salvation Army viewed itself as a renewal of the holiness preaching of Wesley in an era when many of his followers were neglecting this facet of his teaching.¹⁷ *Helps to Holiness*, though written a decade after Dean’s transition, reflects the distinct Salvation Army teaching from the late 19th century. In this work, Holiness is defined as ‘pure love...not a mere sentiment. It is not a happy sensation that passes away in a night. It is a baptism of love that brings every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus.’¹⁸ It is emphasized that men cannot make themselves holy, but that the blessing of a clean heart is only received by faith, and ought to be received by faith now, as soon as a person desires and pursues it.¹⁹ In these aspects, the author Colonel Samuel Brengle echoes Wesley, who spoke of a ‘full salvation’, summarizing this perfection as ‘a heart so all-flaming with the love of God, as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.’²⁰ Wesley too described perfection as a second blessing that is received by faith, and is given instantaneously.²¹ On many levels, therefore, the Salvation Army doctrine was not far removed from classic Methodist teaching typified in Wesley.²² Although many Methodists of late 19th Century Victoria may have departed in some degree from Wesley’s passion for Holiness, there was certainly no cause for John Dean to retire from his

¹⁶ Colonel John Dean, ‘Sin: Its Presence, Effects, Penalties: In Relationship to Other Cardinal Doctrines’, *The Officer*, January 1916, 20.

¹⁷ *The Salvation Army: Its Origin and Development* (Rev.; London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1945), 62.

¹⁸ Colonel Samuel L. Brengle, *Helps to Holiness* (St Albans: Campfield Press, 1896), iv.

¹⁹ Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, 103–104.

²⁰ John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 33, 36.

²¹ Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 51.

²² R. David Rightmire, ‘Samuel Logan Brengle and the Development of the Pneumatology of the Salvation Army’, *Wesley. Theol. J.* 27 (April 1, 1992): 131.

post over this issue. Rather, he could well have incorporated this newfound Sanctification into his teaching and ministry. This is precisely what Dean planned to do. He writes of his conviction at this time that he did not think he would be required to join the Salvation Army, ‘supposing, as I did, at the time, that my sphere of labour would enable me to do all that God required of me.’²³

There is, however, one striking contrast between Wesleyan and Salvationist conceptions of Holiness that accords with the heart of John Dean and indicates the true cause of his transition – namely, the imperative and power that accompanies an experience of Holiness to preach Christ to sinners. Wesley suggested that there might be no difference between the actions of the perfected believer and those of other believers.²⁴ Consider in comparison the rousing words of Bramwell Booth:

The Holiness that we contend for is a fighting Holiness, a suffering Holiness, a soul-saving Holiness; in short Jesus Christ’s Holiness. Any mere ‘enjoyment of religion,’ or ‘waiting on God’ or ‘fullness of blessing’ which has not immediately and indissolubly joined with it, in every expression of it, the most unselfish and aggressive passion for the instant rescue of sinners from their sins, is, in our judgment, a mere caricature of the Higher Life of complete union with Christ.’²⁵

²³ Dean, ‘Interviewed’, 11.

²⁴ Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 61.

²⁵ Bramwell Booth, ‘Preface’, in *Helps to Holiness* (St Albans: Campfield Press, 1896), ii.

Similarly, Brengle describes the fruit of holiness as union with Christ ‘in His toil and travail to bring a lost and rebel world back to God.’²⁶ It is this evangelistic passion that caught the heart of John Dean and prompted him to join the Salvation Army.

Evangelistic passion characterized John Dean prior to his experience of Holiness or his transition to the Salvation Army. From the early days after his conversion, Dean was convinced of the reality of hell and driven to vigorously pursue the salvation of lost souls. Dean’s first ever sermon, preached in a home meeting to invited neighbours, was entitled: ‘Flee from the wrath to come’.²⁷ In his early years as a Methodist circuit rider, he reflects in his diary upon a certain quarterly connexional meeting, ‘There were remarks I was too faithful in portraying the end of the wicked. I delivered my soul; I dare not hide the counsel of God, though I die.’²⁸ Amongst the multiple influences that contributed to Dean’s vivid apprehension of eternal, spiritual realities was Pollok’s *Course of Time* with its poetic depiction of Heaven and Hell, which Dean recommended as a must-read for preachers.²⁹ Dean was compelled by the truth of Heaven and Hell to go to unusual lengths in proclaiming Jesus. A personal letter recalls Dean, at the conclusion of a sermon in Numurka, wiping the dust off his boots as a testimony against the congregation, in response to which ‘people jumped over the seats to get out of the chapel.’³⁰ Nevertheless, eight people, including the author of this letter, came to the front to receive salvation that night. But the most succinct testimony to Dean’s evangelistic passion comes from another diary entry, in which Dean grieves, ‘Another Sunday over, and no souls. What a thing to say: NO SOULS! Lord, what shall I do? O Lord, give me souls for Jesus’ sake!’³¹

²⁶ Brengle, *Helps to Holiness*, iv.

²⁷ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 4.

²⁸ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 12.

²⁹ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 8.

³⁰ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 14.

³¹ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 25.

It was the evangelistic activism of the Salvation Army, rather than his experience of Holiness, that compelled the passionate John Dean to enter their ranks. Conversionism and activism, key markers of Evangelicalism, pervaded the character of the Salvation Army from its foundation.³² Salvationism included ‘definite responsibility for the souls of others’, with Soldiers perceiving themselves as a ‘union of soul-winners.’³³ William Booth, the Founder of the Salvation Army who led a team into the hooliganism of Whitechapel in London, defined a ‘satisfactory meeting’ as ‘a real effort to get the devil out of some soul, young or old, rich or poor, to get God and goodness in’.³⁴ This activism was so ingrained into Salvationism that funerals were regarded as ‘a valuable opportunity for comforting and strengthening the mourners and for urging the unsaved to seek and find salvation.’³⁵ Even Catherine Booth’s headstone issues the gospel call, with the words etched in, ‘Do you also follow Christ?’³⁶ This self-denying urgency to see sinners saved was the striking element in the first Salvation Army meeting John Dean witnessed, prior to Edwards’ Holiness meeting. In his diary after this initial encounter, he exults:

Never shall I forget the strange awe and Divine influence that pervaded that service, and when I saw a crowd of penitents in answer to the invitation come to the penitent-form, I was impressed with the idea that the Army was of apostolic origination, and the thing for which I had looked for years.³⁷

³² David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain : A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 1988), 5–12.

³³ *The Salvation Army*, 62.

³⁴ *The Salvation Army*, 62.

³⁵ *The Salvation Army*, 59.

³⁶ *The Salvation Army*, 59.

³⁷ Dean, ‘Interviewed’, 11.

Dean found in the Salvation Army fitting company to powerfully and creatively take the message of Jesus to the men and women of Australia.

Though the Salvation Army was not the only denomination in late 19th century Australia that sought converts to Christianity, the unique, often violent, hostility leveled against Salvationists provides evidence of the distinctive aspects of their evangelistic practices. This was an era of revivalists, with more than 15 major preachers visiting Australia between 1877 and 1900.³⁸ Australian Christians petitioned Moody and Spurgeon, the figurehead evangelists of the day, to journey to their shores, but to no avail.³⁹ Among the prominent figures of this period in Australia is Reverend Grubb, who spoke at the first Keswick convention in Geelong in 1891.⁴⁰ But none of these revivalists attracted the same kind of opposition as the Salvation Army. Historian Ian Breward comments that opposition to Christian teaching in this era was uncommon, citing only the Salvation Army as an example.⁴¹ The persecution of the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom has been reasonably well documented. In 1882, in the UK, 669 Salvationists were assaulted, including 251 women and 23 children.⁴² In 1884, more than 600 Salvationists were imprisoned for short stints ranging from a single night up to a few months.⁴³ In September 1882, one of William Booth's first converts died from injuries sustained from pelted rocks and severe kicks.⁴⁴ Salvationists in Australia experienced similar persecution. Here too, missiles were thrown and Officers found themselves assaulted in riots.⁴⁵ Up until

³⁸ Stuart Piggin, *Spirit, Word and World: Evangelical Christianity in Australia* (Brunswick East: Acorn Press, 2012), Loc 1530–1548, Kindle.

³⁹ Piggin, *Spirit, Word and World*, Loc 1574.

⁴⁰ Piggin, *Spirit, Word and World*, Loc 1544.

⁴¹ Ian Breward, *A History of the Australian Churches* (St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1993), 76.

⁴² Henry Garipey, *Christianity in Action: The History of the International Salvation Army* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 31.

⁴³ Garipey, *Christianity in Action*, 31.

⁴⁴ Garipey, *Christianity in Action*, 30.

⁴⁵ Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 11.

1907, Officers were being arrested.⁴⁶ This violence came both from individuals, and from organised ‘Skeleton Armies’.⁴⁷ One particularly terrible report of organised violence springs from Brisbane during the late 19th century, when ‘a crowd of about 200 roughs gathered around, and threw lumps of road metal’ hitting a Captain in the face.⁴⁸

The opportunity for such physical persecution arose from the Salvation Army’s insistent practice of preaching to the working class in their own locales. Salvationists would march through a town making loud music to attract attention, before preaching in the open-air in provocative locations. Australian pioneers John Gore and Ed Saunders within their first few weeks held open-air meetings in Light Square, a notoriously wicked part of Adelaide where ‘thieves, rogues, and vagabonds’ were known to rendezvous.⁴⁹ Most street frays centred on alcohol, with the Salvation Army’s position clear, that ‘strong drink is Satan’s chief instrument for keeping the masses of many countries under his power’ so ‘wash your hands of it at once and for ever.’⁵⁰ Such messages were preached at open-air meetings outside pubs and gambling dens, where they were not well received by customers or business owners. Young, drunken men would come outside to pour beer on uniformed Salvationists as they preached, pelt them with rotten vegetables and eggs, or even resort to physical violence.⁵¹ Sometimes Soldiers would even endeavour to enter into pubs and preach.⁵² Perhaps the most colourful story of this era tells of Elijah Cadman preaching at an open-air service at the end of a march ‘loaded down by an armful of dead rats and cats’, since dropping them ‘would give the mob fresh

⁴⁶ Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 37–40.

⁴⁷ Breward, *A History of the Australian Churches*, 76; Ian Breward, *A History of the Churches in Australasia* (Oxford History of the Christian Church; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 187.

⁴⁸ ‘Opposition and Acceptance of The Salvation Army’, *The Salvation Army*, Cited 18 May 2015, Online: <http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/en/Who-We-Are/History-and-heritage/Opposition-and-acceptance-of-The-Salvation-Army/>.

⁴⁹ Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 5.

⁵⁰ *The Salvation Army*, 57.

⁵¹ Pamela J. Walker, *Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom down : the Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 219–220.

⁵² ‘A Champion “Drunk-Catcher”’, *The Officer*, December 1902, 545–546.

ammunition.’⁵³ The commitment to evangelism in the direct public eye through open-air meetings resulted in Soldiers being imprisoned for disturbing the peace.⁵⁴

In addition to the violent opposition, mainline Protestants criticised the Salvation Army for their dramatism and sensationalism. Examining various pamphlets written by clergy in the UK, historian Pamela Walker demonstrates that the established church felt undermined by the Salvation Army’s eschewal of middle-class values.⁵⁵ The Army was presented as a group of ‘notoriety seekers’ who used ‘daily, familiar language to evangelise’ in ‘sensational, dramatic services’ in which ‘they saw nothing wrong with preaching in a barbershop, diving off the platform to dramatise a point, or drawing a parallel between the road to salvation and a ride on a train.’⁵⁶ Similarly in Australia, representatives of established churches were troubled by the ‘emotionalism, sensationalism, and noisy music’ of the Salvationists.⁵⁷ The first Salvation Army Meeting in Australia featured preaching from the tailboard of a greengrocer’s cart under a gum tree in the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide amidst choruses of heckling from ‘larrikins’.⁵⁸ Such practices were in sharp contrast to liturgy that demarcated the spiritual and the mundane.

While other factors contributed to the opposition the Salvation Army faced, including their insistence on ‘the equality of woman with man in warfare for Christ’, the above outline highlights the uniqueness of their evangelistic activism.⁵⁹ Here was a group of believers who so prioritised the salvation of souls from the Devil’s grasp that they were prepared to try creative methods to engage the working class and to face whatever persecution came their way.

⁵³ Garipey, *Christianity in Action*, 31.

⁵⁴ Beward, *A History of the Churches in Australasia*, 187; Walker, *Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom Down*, 206–234.

⁵⁵ Walker, *Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom Down*, 207.

⁵⁶ Walker, *Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom Down*, 211–212, 214.

⁵⁷ Beward, *A History of the Churches in Australasia*, 187.

⁵⁸ This occurred on September 5, 1880. See Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 1–2.

⁵⁹ Walker, *Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom Down*, 214; *The Salvation Army*, 62.

Here was a denomination within which the 27-year-old evangelist John Dean could give full expression to his zeal, which was currently somewhat quashed within middle-class Methodism.

By 1883, when Dean encountered the Salvation Army, his Methodist ministry had been impacted by the church's climb into middle-class comfort. The Methodist church in Victoria had experienced its golden era of revivals from the 1840s through to the start of the 1880s.⁶⁰ However, during the 1880s and 1890s, Methodists became upwardly socially mobile, gravitating to middle class areas of Victoria, including Ballarat where Dean was posted, to form something of a Bible belt.⁶¹ One element of this social climb was a new emphasis on the education of clergy.⁶² Dean records the rigorous study regime he commenced at the behest of his superintendent:

Rise 4.30 a.m., dress, wash and pray; 5 to 6, theology; 6 to 7, grammar. To 7:30, arithmetic. To 8, geography. To 9.30, breakfast, devotions, exercise. To 10.30, read Field and Gregory. To 11, page of dictionary. To 12, write and answer letters. To 1.30, dinner, devotions and exercise if time !

Afternoon to 3, read some good book and review. Visiting and preparation for church till 7. Service till 8.30. Or, alternately theology 3 till 4. Tea and exercise till 5. Grammar till 6. Arithmetic till 7. Geography till 8. English history till 9. Pray and retire. Write sermon and essay on Tuesday when home, one per month at least.⁶³

⁶⁰ Piggin, *Spirit, Word and World*, Loc 1231–1254.

⁶¹ Jim Stebbins, 'Historical Models for Christianity in Australia', in *The Shape of Belief: Christianity in Australia Today* (ed by. Dorothy Harris, Douglas Hynd, and David Millikan; Sydney: Lancer, 1982), 55.

⁶² Stebbins, 'Historical Models', 55.

⁶³ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 9.

Such a daily plan was not palatable for a man who gave up on schooling at a young age and turned to life on the land, aiming simply to be ‘a good shot with the gun and expert in felling trees’.⁶⁴ Dean therefore felt much more at home amongst the working class in the Salvation Army, with the freedom to focus on evangelism and express his dramatic and sensational personality.

As John Dean contemplated transitioning to the Salvation Army, he himself highlighted that it was not a move for the sake of comfort or self-betterment, but for the sake of winning souls for Christ. In a letter to his fiancée, Dean succinctly describes the changes and risks involved in a decision to enter Officership:

I shall have to sacrifice in ministerial status in order to do what I intend doing. I shall have to shift every six months, perhaps oftener. May get brained in a tumult. Must put on a uniform and act as a fool in the eyes of the world. But I am willing for it all, and so are you, are you not?⁶⁵

His quaint expression of getting ‘brained in a tumult’ at the very least implies the risk of a severe head injury, and may even suggest the possibility of martyrdom. The life of the Salvation Army Officer in the late 1880s and 1890s was not the comfortable life, and his fiancée was not enthusiastic, preferring the idea of marriage to a Methodist minister. Yet he implores her at the conclusion of the above letter, ‘I want you to speak for Jesus, and help me to get sinners saved by the score, the hundred, the thousand.’⁶⁶ Dean clearly thought he would more likely see conversions in Salvationist ministry. Thus he eventually convinced his fiancée and became an

⁶⁴ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 3.

⁶⁵ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 27.

⁶⁶ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 27.

Officer, instantly reveling in open-air preaching. Dean rejoices in a diary entry from his first week of Salvationist ministry, ‘Went to the races to hold a meeting; a man threw dust in my face. Hallelujah, the Lord can bless!’⁶⁷

In his time as an Officer, John Dean faced the persecution characteristic of Salvation Army ministry. In his first posting to Beechworth in 1884, Dean writes ‘God’s people are not without persecution here. A young girl only fifteen years old was turned out of home because she came to our meetings and gave her heart to God.’⁶⁸ This girl had been orphaned at age seven and was now kicked out of her adoptive home. Later, Dean’s offsider in pioneering the Salvation Army Corps in Parramatta, was chastised by his father, ‘If you follow those rebels, don’t ever darken my doorstep again.’⁶⁹ In Parramatta, the Salvation Army would have its first Australian martyr. John Dean preached a powerful message on ‘The Judgment to Come’ that ‘so incensed the crowd that an attempt was made to throw him over the bridge into the river. There was a desperate fight, and it was only after a long struggle that the Captain got away safely.’⁷⁰ 21-year-old Cadet Matthew Thompson died on November 6, 1884 from the injuries he sustained in this ruckus.⁷¹

Dean’s particular experience of persecution, even more than in the broader Salvation Army, arose from his dramatic and fearless preaching. One of Dean’s earliest memories is ‘standing on the steps of a Primitive Methodist chapel in imitation of the preacher, with an imaginary congregation, preaching salvation.’⁷² It was his early preaching that attracted the interest of a distant Methodist minister. By 1901, he was a model preacher for the Salvation Army, asked

⁶⁷ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 29.

⁶⁸ Captain John Dean, ‘Beechworth’, *War Cry* (Melbourne, April 12, 1884), 4.

⁶⁹ Alayne Godkin, *The History of Parramatta Corps, 1884-1984* (The Salvation Army, 1984), 14.

⁷⁰ Dale, *Salvation Chariot*, 36.

⁷¹ Godkin, *The History of Parramatta Corps*, 20.

⁷² Dean, ‘Interviewed’, 11.

to contribute tips on the preparation of sermons for the internationally distributed *Officer* magazine.⁷³ This piece demonstrates his use of simple and colourful language as he describes the need for fire in preaching:

As a rule, (texts) first come take hold of me here,' placing his hand over his heart, 'Then I feel at once 'I must nail that!''...'I don't say it is essential that I should have a complete intellectual perception of the truth I am delivering. But it is absolutely necessary that I should have what the prophets call the 'burden' of it on my heart...If it becomes a fire in his bones it will fly in fire-winged words from his lips.⁷⁴

Dean became known for his illustrative, powerful communication, famous even in the secular press as the 'fiery prophet'.⁷⁵ He likely drew inspiration in his communication from John Bunyan, who featured early on in his small library, and whose book, 'The Holy War' is recorded as his favourite book.⁷⁶ Dean engaged hearers with strings of rhetorical questions, challenging believers and unbelievers alike. For example, he concludes a sermon built around a down-to-earth farming analogy: 'Oh, you proud, rebellious souls, how will you suffer that? ... You shall be tossed out of the path of His noble army as worthless creatures, for whom He can do no more...No soul need be cast forth. What is your choice about it?'⁷⁷

⁷³ Lieut-Colonel John Dean, 'My Subject Notes. How I Obtain and Prepare My Platform Topics', *The Officer*, November 1901; Lieut-Colonel John Dean, 'My Subject Notes. How I Obtain and Prepare My Platform Topics (continued)', *The Officer*, December 1901.

⁷⁴ Dean, 'Subject Notes', 493; Dean, 'My Subject Notes (continued)', 533.

⁷⁵ General George L. Carpenter, 'Foreword', in *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher* (London: The Epworth Press, 1944); 'A Disciple of Booth: Colonel John Dean, Salvationist', *Adelaide Advertiser* (Adelaide, May 13, 1916), 17; 'Personal', *Bendigo Advertiser* (Victoria, June 2, 1916), 5.

⁷⁶ Colonel John Dean, 'My Favourite!', *The Officer*, August 1907, 298.

⁷⁷ Colonel John Dean, 'Platform Topics', *The Officer*, August 1915, 578.

Alongside his preaching, Dean's meetings could often be described as 'sensational'. Towards the end of his life, Dean penned an article on 'the need of special efforts to Agitate and awaken interest in the all-important matter of saving the people'.⁷⁸ In this he recounts two stories of his early ministry. At one appointment, he decided that he would fast and pray in the hall between the Sunday afternoon and Sunday evening meetings, inviting any who would like to join him. Over the following weeks the prayer meeting became quite protracted and resulted in a packed hall for the night meeting, without any musical attraction. Though this sounds innocuous, men and women were falling from seats, or from kneeling, or falling from standing to the floor as dead, with some people remaining 'in a strange state for hours and even days.'⁷⁹ At a different Corps, Dean shut people out of the Friday night Holiness meeting, giving entrance only to those who held a special ticket that would be distributed selectively through the week. 'A vigilant guard was kept at the door' to keep people out.⁸⁰ The intended effect of this, which Dean thinks he achieved, was to have sinners awakened to realise 'Come...we may be shut out of Heaven!'⁸¹ James Gilmour, a contemporary of Dean, testifies to another sensational aspect of Dean's services:

People went into trances from which they might not recover for hours...Congregational singing was a remarkable feature of his meetings. A chorus was sung over and over again and would become more and more infectious, until the whole congregation seemed to rock with spiritual delight.⁸²

⁷⁸ Colonel John Dean, 'Agitate! Agitate!! Agitate!!!', *The Officer*, June 1919, 531–538.

⁷⁹ Dean, 'Agitate!', 532.

⁸⁰ Dean, 'Agitate!', 532.

⁸¹ Dean, 'Agitate!', 533.

⁸² Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 33.

Such sensation was never the end in itself, but, as Dean writes, ‘These things were done if by any means we might save some.’⁸³ Dean longed to see people not just know, but ‘feel that Jesus Christ is worth all we have.’⁸⁴

It seems clear then that John Dean made full use of the peculiar evangelistic practices that attracted him to the Salvation Army, taking the gospel to the working class in the open air, and in dramatic and sensational meetings. He was rewarded with the revival he longed for. In his first posting, the Victorian region of Beechworth, open-air meetings became a central attraction, with hundreds gathering to hear the Captain preach.⁸⁵ At one particular high point, Dean reports to the *War Cry*:

The Devil raged furiously on Saturday night at Beechworth. About three thousand people in the streets in a town of about four thousand inhabitants. Eight policemen and a volunteer band over a hundred strong protecting the officers and soldiers. Hall crammed. Hundreds outside. Windows smashed. Complete victory at night. Souls saved.⁸⁶

In a telegram to headquarters, Staff-Captain Coles who was stationed in Beechworth with Dean, reported:

⁸³ Dean, ‘Agitate!’, 533.

⁸⁴ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 79.

⁸⁵ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 30.

⁸⁶ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 31.

The Spirit of God visiting this town in remarkable manner. Extraordinary manifestations. A fearful sense of awe has fallen upon this place. Cannot say how many were out for pardon and purity in Sunday morning meeting. Nine souls at night.⁸⁷

Lest this be thought to be sensationalist internal journalism, building up a false impression of what was happening, these occurrences find a very intriguing correlation in the secular press of the time. In *The Australasian*, within a two-part tourism report on Beechworth, the writer visits the ‘lunatic asylum’ and publishes:

The Salvation Army has lately established a branch in Beechworth, and in the last three weeks four new members of the army, including one woman, have been taken to the asylum. There are several other recent cases of religious mania attributable to the same cause, but about these four there is no mistake.⁸⁸

Carpenter makes reference to ‘a lively discussion on this revival of religion in the religious and secular Press’, but the above article is all that has come to light thus far.⁸⁹ Though Dean’s Beechworth experience was never to be replicated in his ministry, he later reports over 1000 adult converts in a ten month period, 400 of whom became Salvation Army Officers, plus 403 children of whom nearly 200 became Salvation Army Soldiers.⁹⁰ This was the fruit Dean longed for when he decided to leave his Methodist post in favour of Salvation Army Officership.

⁸⁷ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 31.

⁸⁸ The Vagabond, ‘Picturesque Victoria: Beechworth No. 1’, *The Australasian* (Melbourne, August 16, 1884).

⁸⁹ Carpenter, *John Dean: Australian Bush Preacher*, 32.

⁹⁰ Major John Dean, ‘An Interview By Post: Major Dean Reports Progress’, *War Cry* (Melbourne, October 31, 1891), 12; Major John Dean, ‘A Visit to Beechworth’, *War Cry* (Melbourne, April 22, 1893), 12.

In his later life, Dean's evangelistic passion did not dim, as he led the Salvation Army by example of biblical evangelism. After a few years shifting between various Corps as an Officer, Dean was appointed to administrative work in Divisional Commands, before being commissioned on May 28, 1892 as a 'Spiritual Special', the Salvation Army title for an itinerant evangelist.⁹¹ This role suited Dean perfectly, and his passion soared as he toured Australia preaching. He was then promoted to a role in Officer Training in London. In 1916, Dean returned to Australia on a preaching tour that consistently featured in the secular press, most notably when he returned to Bendigo where he received a warm civic welcome from the Mayor.⁹² The fight against liberal theology further fueled Dean's fire. Carpenter is silent on this theme, perhaps not recognizing the gravity of this battleground while writing in the 1940s. But Dean was a thorough biblicist, encouraging the Officers he trained to turn to their Bibles before reading the words of men.⁹³ In particular, he criticised liberal theology for departing from Scripture as regards the doctrine of sin and hell. His striking words are worth full rehearsal:

We must not let any 'higher criticism' with its bombastic claims of increased light through discoveries of science frighten us. Let us keep believing what the Bible says about sin, and pay no attention to the so-called new Christianity.⁹⁴

Dean instantly turned next to the atoning work of Jesus on the cross, combating liberalism with his Evangelical crucicentrism. Thus Dean maintained a vibrant, evangelistic heart through his latter days of ministry.

⁹¹ 'Gazette Promotions', *War Cry* (Melbourne, May 28, 1892), 2.

⁹² 'Salvation Army Visitor: Colonel John Dean, Civic Reception', *Bendigo Advertiser* (Vic., June 5, 1916), 2.

⁹³ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 12–17; Dean, 'Subject Notes', 495.

⁹⁴ Dean, 'Sin: Its Presence, Effects, Penalties', 20.

John Dean died on February 20, 1922, after a long battle with a recurrent illness.⁹⁵ Writing an appreciation of his life, close friend and comrade-in-arms Commissioner William Peart asserts, ‘John Dean is dead. John Dean still lives!’ While in the first place Peart is affirming his theological understanding of life beyond the grave, he is also contending that Dean’s legacy shall live on in the Salvation Army: ‘His powerful influence, his unique character, his remarkable experience, and his faith, will never die.’⁹⁶ Sadly, this has not been the case. Few and far between in the Salvation Army today know of John Dean, in a generation where evangelistic zeal has been quietened under operations of charity.

In conclusion, contra Carpenter, John Dean’s decision to leave the Methodist ministry in favour of Salvation Army Officership was not primarily concerned with a doctrine or experience of Holiness. While Holiness was significant in his life, the real impetus for his transition was the uniquely dramatic and sensational evangelistic activism of the Salvation Army amongst the working class, evidenced in the persecution that Salvationists regularly faced. Further fruitful research could examine the full number of converts that Dean lays claim to throughout his Salvationist ministry and situate this amongst other evangelists of the 1880s–1910s. There is also more to be discovered on the manner of John Dean’s preaching as it compares to other preachers of the era. Then there are matters of Dean’s family life, featuring 11 children who all became stirring Salvationists. It is hoped that this, the first extended piece written on John Dean since Minnie Carpenter’s biography of 1944, will reawaken interest in this remarkable man.

⁹⁵ In Salvationist terminology, he was *Promoted to Glory*.

⁹⁶ Commissioner William Peart, ‘Colonel John Dean: An Appreciation’, *The Officer*, May 1922, 365.

John Dean was a man so convicted of the reality of hell, and so grieved to see large numbers of people heading there, that he poured himself creatively and self-sacrificially into evangelism. His example challenges the pessimism that can result from an Arminian theology and the shift into prioritising a social gospel over the evangelisation of the working class. Thus he charges the Salvation Army of today to muster together and push hard once more for the salvation of souls, perhaps returning to the streets or rethinking the appropriate drama and sensation that will reach Australians today. At the same time, Dean challenges other Evangelical circles in their tendency towards a Hyper-Calvinistic attitude that expects God to play the part in salvation that he has commissioned his people to carry out, resulting in a lack of fiery energy that battles hard against Satan to release captives from his bonds. Are Evangelical Christians today willing, like Dean, to be fools in the eyes of the world? The modern Evangelical church in Australia would well benefit from more like John Dean whose ambition is to make everyone they meet feel that Christ is worth everything they have.

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APPENDIX A – BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS ON JOHN DEAN

‘An Australian Firebrand: Glimpses of the Career of Colonel John Dean’ featured six chapters serialised across six editions of the *Melbourne War Cry*.

Chapter 1 – June 7, 1930: 3.

Chapter 2 – June 14, 1930: 12; June 21, 1930: 6.

Chapters 3 & 4 – June 28, 1930: 4.

Chapter 5 – July 5, 1930: 4.

Chapter 6 – July 12, 1930: 6, 15.

‘John Dean: A Salvation Firebrand’ featured 18 chapters serialised across 27 editions of the *Melbourne War Cry*.

Chapter 1: Beginnings – October 6, 1934: 3.

Chapter 2: A Prophet in the Making – October 13, 1934: 11.

Chapter 3: All for All – October 20, 1934: 11.

Chapter 4: Obeying the Heavenly Calling – October 27, 1934: 11.

Chapter 5: Capt. John Dean – November 3, 1934: 11.

Chapter 6: A Staff Officer – November 10, 1934: 11.

Chapter 7: Transmission – November 17, 1934: 11.

Chapter 8: John Dean at Home – November 24, 1934: 11.

Chapter 9: As a Father – December 1, 1934: 16; December 8, 1934, page 16.

Chapter 10: A Maker of Men – December 15, 1934: 16; December 29, 1934: 16;
January 5, 1935: 16.

Chapter 11: As Preacher – January 12, 1935: 16; January 19, 1935: 16.

Chapter 12: Preparing for the Platform – January 19, 1935: 16; January 26, 1935: 16.

Chapter 13: Comrades – January 26, 1935: 16; February 2, 1935: 16.

Chapter 14: Spiritual Campaigner – February 9, 1935: 16.

Chapter 15: Campaigning Under the Southern Cross – February 16, 1935: 11;
February 23, 1935: 11, 15.

Chapter 16: John Dean and the Devil – March 2, 1935: 11; March 9, 1935: 11, 15.

Chapter 17: The Final Conquest – March 16, 1935: 11, 15.

Chapter 18: All’s Well – March 23, 1935: 11.

APPENDIX B – WAR CRY ARTICLES

In research for this paper, relevant Melbourne War Cry articles were scanned from microfilm stored at the Salvation Army Heritage Centre, Bexley North, New South Wales. The following is a comprehensive list of articles written by or about John Dean. All articles are now stored as .pdf files on a USB drive in Compactus A.5.5 at the Salvation Army Heritage Centre.

Articles by John Dean

<i>Date</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Title</i>
1884 – Mar 1	3	Portarlington report
1884 – Apr 12	4	Beechworth report
1889 - Feb 9	6	But he was a leper
1890 - Jun 28	2	Reflections
1891 - Oct 31	12	Major Dean reports progress
1892 - Aug 27	15	God's lamentations over backsliders
1892 - Sep 17	9–10	Major Dean in Brisbane
1892 - Oct 1	6	Blind Souls
1892 - Oct 8	6	A Burning Question, Are you Saved (No 1.)
1892 - Oct 15	6	Major Dean's Notes on the Queensland Southern
1892 - Oct 22	2	Two Days of power
1892 - Nov 12	11	A Burning Question, Are you Saved (No 2.)
1893 - Feb 11	2–3	The natural & Spiritual man
1893 - Apr 22	12	A Visit to Beechworth
1893 - Aug 12	13	Observations on the Backboneless
1893 - Oct 21	16	Report from Major Dean's Visits
1894 - Mar 24	15–16	Major Dean at Waratah
1894 - Apr 7	1–2	A fisherman's self-denial
1894 - Jul 21	16	The Jubilee Advance - A Trinity of Essentials
1894 - Aug 25	12	Tasmanian Report
1894 - Oct 13	12	Jesus Christ's Self Denial
1894 - Oct 27	12	From the Great Australian Bight
1894 - Nov 17	12	At Sea
1894 - Dec 15	5	Mid Ocean breezes: Major Dean journeys 'home'
1895 - Jan 26	6–7	The Australian Abroad: Rambles in the New Babylon
1895 - Jan 26	13	His Impressions: Major Dean in England
1895 - Mar 9	11	Balaamites
1899 - Jan 14	13	Conquering Faith
1899 - Feb 4	3	Australians Abroad
1901 - Mar 30	8	Brigadier Dean: Thanks to Australian Friends
1902 - Sep 27	5	Australia in London
1921 - Jun 4	3	Salvation and Creation
1927 - May 28	2	Tragic Fate of Mr Ten Minutes
1927 - Aug 13	11	God intervenes in Human Affairs
1929 - Feb 2	2	Is there a hell?

1932 - Feb 13	2	The victory
1932 - Sep 24	11	The peril of the lost opportunities

Articles about John Dean

<i>Date</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Title (and added information)</i>
1883 - Nov 3	3	Ballarat Report (John Dean preached)
1884 - Aug 16	3	Brunswick report (Reverend made Captain)
1885 - Dec 19	2	South Australia (very brief mention of Dean)
1890 - Apr 12	2	Major Dean visits Wallsend
1890 - Aug 30	5	Major Dean Summoned
1892 - Jun 25	3	Unconsidered Trifles.
1892 - Jul 2	15	At Tamworth for a Sunday
1892 - Jul 23	5	Major Dean In Northern Queensland
1892 - Aug 6	5	Major Deans Northern Tour
1893 - Jul 8	13	Soul-saving in the South West: Major Dean's Tour
1894 - Sep 8	7	Ulverstone Exaltations - Major Dean Farewells
1894 - Sep 22	14	Farewelling to Tasmania
1894 - Sep 29	6	Adieu, Tasmania!
1894 - Oct 6	7	Major Dean at Nhill
1894 - Oct 6	3	Line drawing of Major and Mrs John Dean
1894 - Oct 6	2	Staff Send-off to the African C.S. and to Major Dean and Staff-Captain Pearce.
1894 - Oct 13	8	Cabinet Secrets - Major Dean
1894 - Dec 8	15	Australians at Sea
1899 - May 13	11	Australians abroad: a chat with the International Chancellor (Commissioner Pollard)
1901 - Jan 19	11	Mrs Brigadier Dean
1901 - Jun 15	14	Over Death's River: eulogy for J. Sweet, a Sunday School teacher at Dawesley when John was a child.
1902 - Sept 6	2	Wedding of an Old Australian Warrior: Now Lieut Colonel Dean marries Adjutant weeks, his second wife.
1903 - Aug 15	15	Beautiful River Flowing to Sever
1918 - Apr 6	8	Sister Mrs. Maynard, Mildura; "Her early-day fighting in Nhill Corps in the days when Colonel Dean commanded the Corps, is a very worthy one."
1918 - Dec 21	3	Some People we remember: Colonel Dean, England
1921 - Nov 19	7	International Items; Colonel Dean is retiring sue to ill-health to the United States.
1922 - Apr 22	7	Special Memorial at Ballarat
1922 - Apr 22	4	Colonel John Dean
1926 - Apr 3	14	A Militant Mystic
1926 - Oct 9	11	Beautiful River Flowing to Sever
1927 - Jul 2	2	Salvation incidents: Lied to the Last
1933 - Mar 25	2	A Soldiers Jubilee

1933 - Aug 12	10	Mainly About People (Major Dean, John Dean's son, bought a set of 'The Homilist' in a second hand bookshop; they were the previous possession of his father, dated in 1886.)
1933 - Sep 2	11	Field Secretary looks back (includes notice of the persecution faced by Salvationists in the early 1880s, from the 'Skeleton Army')
1936 - Apr 25	10	In his Father's Steps
1936 - Oct 24	2	Adventures in Salvation Warfare (includes memory by a woman who was under John Dean as minister prior to him becoming a Salvationist)
1941 - Jun 14	3	Beneath the Gum Tree

APPENDIX C – OFFICER MAGAZINE ARTICLES

In research for this paper, relevant Officer Magazine articles were scanned from microfilm or photographed from physical copies stored at the Salvation Army Heritage Centre, Bexley North, New South Wales. The following is a comprehensive list of articles written by John Dean. All articles are now stored as .pdf files on a USB drive in Compactus A.5.5 at the Salvation Army Heritage Centre.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Title</i>
1901, Nov	493-495	My Subject Notes. How I obtain and Prepare my Platform Topics
1901, Nov	502-503	More testimonies to the value of 'The training of Children'
1901, Dec	532-533	My Subject Notes. How I obtain and Prepare my Platform Topics
1905, Aug	293-294	Life at the Staff Lodge
1906, Dec	455-456	There was the Hiding of his Power
1907, Aug	297-299	My favourite!
1907, Oct	371	The Editor's Correspondence: Hell a Question of Faith, not Opinion
1911, Nov	401-404, 409	Officers and Apostles
1914, June	385-388	What Can be Done in My Hard Corps? Asks an American Field Officer
1915, July	498-504	Outlines of Addresses
1915, Aug	569-575	Platform Topics
1915, Oct	662-664	The Influence of Truth in Producing an Awakening
1915, Dec	846-848	The Failure of a Leader
1916, Jan	17-21	Sin: Its Presence, Effects, Penalties
1916, June	377-379	Our responsibilities as Overseers of the Work of God.
1916, July	469-471	Our responsibilities as Overseers of the Work of God.
1917, April-May	281-282	Links in God's providential Chain
1918, Jan	35-36	Further Testimonies to the Fact of Divine Healing
1919, June	531-538	Agitate! Agitate!! Agitate!!!
1924, June	492-494	Overseers of God's People