

Prologue

WHEN LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROYSTON BARTLETT tapped on the doors, General Paul and Commissioner Kay Rader exited their London offices and moved together toward the stairs. Tall, silver-haired, and faultlessly dressed in Salvation Army uniforms, they exchanged a momentary glance, one that carried experience, mutual respect, and acknowledgment that one of life's turning points was upon them.

Both Raders moved briskly down the stairs toward Bramwell Booth Hall on the lowest level of the Salvation Army's International Headquarters at 101 Queen Victoria Street, between Saint Paul's Cathedral and the Thames River. The General talked with other officers who fell in beside him, while Commissioner Kay walked with Royston, the General's aide-de-camp and friend to them both.

Kay murmured to Royston "I've got a sharp pain in my middle."

"I can understand that," he responded.

"Lord, help me," Kay prayed silently.

Kay was suffering from apprehension and misgivings about the upcoming ceremony. The Rader generalship was at an end, and on this July day in London they had but one final task to fulfill. She worried about that task, about the kind of reaction they might foment with yet another break with tradition. Would the disapprovers blame her? After all, ever since the days of Adam and Eve, those perceived as pushy women have been cited as culprits for everything from disobeying God to curdling the milk.

Nearing the hall, they could hear music. An ensemble from the Army's International Staff Band was playing, creating an upbeat, festive feeling, and the buzz of many voices let them know the auditorium was filled with expectant people. Headquarters officers and employees plus a number of people from the National Headquarters of the United Kingdom gathered for the unveiling of the portrait of General Paul Alexander Rader, first United

States-born General of The Salvation Army, who was now retiring after five years in office.

This unveiling of generals' portraits is an Army tradition of long standing, and a procession of oil paintings marches around the perimeter of the auditorium. Generals standing and sitting, holding Bibles, flanked with flags, one even with a coat over his arm, all solemn and wise and purposeful, all known, remembered, revered. There were 14 of them from founder William Booth to Rader's predecessor, Canadian Bramwell Tillsley.

And now on an easel to the left of the platform and veiled by the red, blue and gold of the Salvation Army flag stood another portrait ready to take its place on the walls with the others.

The Commissioner and the General entered the hall and took seats on the platform facing the crowd. The General felt calm, free from anxiety as his fingers sought again in his pocket the notes that outlined his remarks to be made before the unveiling.

Commissioner Kay, on the other hand, confronted the plague of butterflies within as her gaze swept the murmuring crowd, gauging their mood and spirit. Both Raders, after all, were no strangers to innovation, to change, to challenging tradition in the face of protest and disagreement. This moment was no exception, for prodded, they knew, by the Holy Spirit, they were again side-stepping tradition in pursuit of what they felt persuaded was the greater good. So some questions awaited resolution; Commissioner Kay knew this well as her eyes moved across the auditorium.

How would this crowd of fellow officers—coworkers, critics, and friends—react to this final gesture of their leadership?

Kay found encouragement in the smiles she encountered as she scanned the crowd. Even a couple of thumbs-up signals flashed her way, which helped to soothe the pain that attacked her on the way down the stairs.

General Rader rose to speak. He told the waiting crowd that they were about to see not an oil painting, but a photograph, a departure from more than 100 years of tradition. He explained that as other generals symbolized their leadership by what appeared with them in their portraits, the same was true for him.

“After all we did together, it would be inappropriate for me to

appear alone.” With this comment he signaled what everyone was about to see.

Both Raders moved off the platform and walked to the easel where the portrait stood, still covered and invisible. Time for the unveiling. Five years of leadership at an end. The generalship of The Salvation Army and the World Presidency of Women’s Organizations were being handed into other, already designated, hands. Paul and Kay Rader were leaving their leadership of The Salvation Army with the imprint of what they, before God, believed to be major priorities for the 21st century.

Paul pulled the cord, and the flag slid off to the side, revealing the General and the Commissioner pictured together before a global map of the world that filled the portrait edge to edge.

It was not an oil painting, but a digitally produced photograph; not a portrait of the General alone, but of husband and wife together, a pair of partners, against the backdrop of God’s beloved waiting world, reinforcing the underlying motif of their leadership. “We are partners in mission; coworkers under God.” The message of the portrait, then, is global mission. Coupled with that, as in the Raders’ lives and ministry, is partnership, emphasizing the role of women equal with men in responsibility to take the gospel to the world.

Created by Nick Clark, one of London’s most prominent photographers, the portrait shows both the Commissioner and the General before the world to which they dedicated themselves in answer to God’s call to each of them individually more than 40 years before.

But why partnership? Doesn’t everybody already know that of course wives and husbands in Christian ministry work together? What are the practical and spiritual ramifications of this term? What is so different here from what already goes on in The Salvation Army, or in other denominations and Christian agencies, for that matter? Why partnership?

“You can’t run an army on half its soldiers.” That’s why.

Both Raders—through 25 years of both training and experience within The Salvation Army—developed the belief that men and women on every ministry team should share equally in the op-

portunities and responsibilities confronting that team wherever in the world it was assigned. Too often, they learned, women, called by God as were the men, rode the pack mules into battle, although they were as equipped and trained and capable as the front-line special forces to whose ranks they were denied admission.

The Army has as one of its oldest traditions, originated by founders Catherine and William Booth, that God expects His called ones, women and men, to preach, to serve, to nurture, to rescue without respect to the gender of the rescuer or the preacher, nor in deference to whatever cultural prejudices might impinge on strategy choices.

As missionaries in Korea right out of officer training, the Raders began to discover their conviction that wives and husbands as Army officers must work together as equals. Added to that was General Rader's conviction, built upon 30-plus years of study and experience, that partnership with other members of the Christian community enhances and strengthens the social aid and evangelistic efforts of each participant. The practical ramifications of these convictions transferred, in part, from Asia to the West as their assignments shifted and their responsibilities increased—from New York to Pennsylvania to California, wherever their assignments took them; from officer training to welfare project supervision, from evangelism to rehabilitation, responsibilities for divisions and territories, people and projects.

“You can't run an army on half its soldiers.” Commissioner Kay said it, and they both believe it without equivocation, so they modeled partnership through shared preaching duties, through equally responsible assignments. Neither rode the other's coat-tails. They strode together through their work and their days, modeling principles upon which The Salvation Army was begun a century and a half before. And whenever it proved appropriate, General Rader, as he had done since student days, sought cooperation, shared expertise, and participated with other Evangelical organizations in spiritual cross-pollenization of the things of God.

Looking back across the years and examining the roots, the beginnings, and the formation of Paul Rader and Kay Fuller, one can spot some sprouting seeds of promise, a few twigs bent toward the light that suggest what was to come.