

key stage 1 story script

William Booth was born nearly 200 years ago in 1829. Life was very different then. There were no aeroplanes, computers, CD players or televisions. These things hadn't been invented yet.

When Booth was a boy his father got him a job so he could earn some money. He became a pawnbroker's apprentice. The word 'apprentice' means he was learning to become a pawnbroker. People who were poor and had no money would visit the pawnbroker's and sell their most valuable belongings, just so they had food to eat.

Booth found this job very difficult. He wanted to do more for the poor and needy people that he met. He wasn't happy that the poor were having to part with their most precious things. The money they got for them didn't last very long. He hoped that one day he would be able to help them more.

Booth became a Christian when he was a teenager. He wanted to do everything he could to please God. When he grew older he gave up his job as a pawnbroker and started to preach and tell others about God.

It was while he was preaching that he met Catherine. Catherine was very impressed with what Booth was saying and couldn't wait to meet him. Later, Catherine and William were married and they had eight children. Catherine also enjoyed preaching and telling others about God. William and Catherine found that preaching wasn't enough. They needed to help those who were poor and had nothing.

William and Catherine Booth later went on to form The Salvation Army. Booth became the first General of The Salvation Army and Catherine became known as the 'Army Mother'.

One night Booth was travelling through a poor part of London. He was crossing London Bridge when he saw strange bundles of old clothes and newspapers in the street. Suddenly one of the strange bundles caught his eye. It was moving. As Booth got closer a wary pair of eyes peeped out of the grubby mess of blankets and boxes. It was a person. This came as a great shock to Booth. He charged home and next morning spoke to his son, Bramwell. He ordered him to 'go and do something'. Following in his father's footsteps Bramwell wanted to help. He found an old tram shed and made it into a place for men to sleep and take shelter from the cold.

Booth wanted to make life better for the poor. The people he had seen in the streets needed food, drink, clothing and work. The Salvation Army tried to give them these things.

William Booth did lots of other things to help the poor and needy. He started farthing breakfasts where poor, hungry children could get a cheap breakfast before they went to school.

He also opened his own match factory. All the other match factories treated the girls who worked there very badly. They got sick and had to work long hours with no breaks for lunch or tea. Booth's factory was safe and clean and the girls who worked there were treated fairly. His matches were called 'Lights in Darkest England.'

When William Booth died, thousands of people came to his funeral. He had helped so many poor people, and they wanted to show how much they respected him. The work of The Salvation Army grew and grew and today The Salvation Army works in many countries all over the world.

William Booth

Catherine Booth

poor

pawnbroker

money

match

The Salvation Army