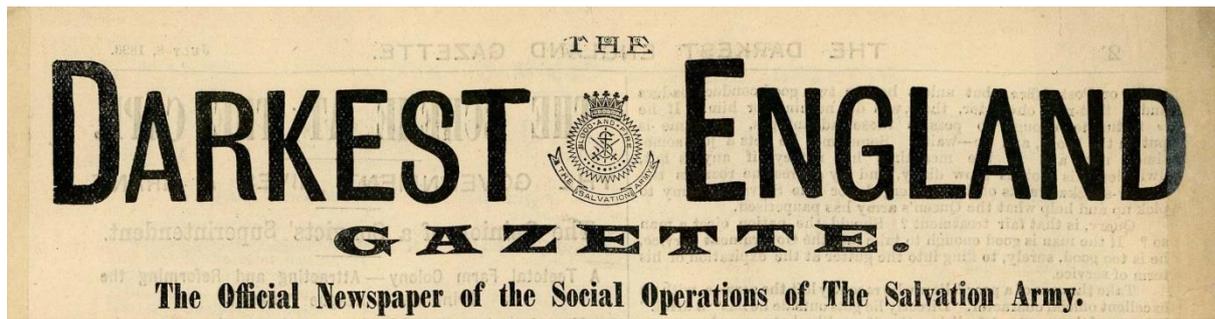




Salvation Army
International Heritage Centre

About the *Darkest England* Gazette





The *Darkest England Gazette*, subtitled 'The Official Newspaper of the Social Operations of The Salvation Army', was a 12-page weekly periodical published in Clerkenwell, London, and priced at one penny. It ran from 1 July 1893 to 16 June 1894, after which it continued under the new name the *Social Gazette*. The *Social Gazette* soon adopted a smaller, cheaper 4-page format, and it continued to be published in this form until 1917.

The purpose of the *Darkest England Gazette* was to report on The Salvation Army's social work as set out by General William Booth, the founder of the organisation, in his 1890 book *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. Practical social engagement and offering support to people in need had been an important part of The Salvation Army's mission since its inception, but following *In Darkest England* the many diverse aspects of its social work were centralised under the name 'the Darkest England Scheme'.

In Darkest England had brought significant success for The Salvation Army and its social work, prompting widespread public support and donations. By 1893, however, the momentum of its publication had begun to recede, and it was decided that a new means of communicating the social scheme's progress to the wider public was needed. This channel of communication was the *Darkest England Gazette*. The editorial leader of **issue 1** described its *raison d'être* as follows:

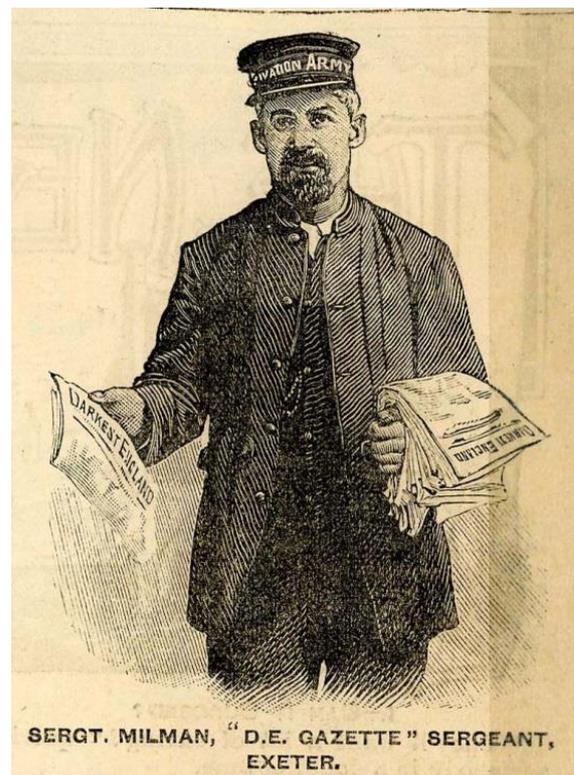
For some time now we have been feeling that our Social Work has suffered in public estimation from a lack of information respecting it. The "War Cry" and the ordinary Publications of The Army, crowded out with news respecting their own special departments, have been unable to supply such particulars of our operations as have been necessary to maintain the interest of the community. Consequently there is a danger of a falling off in public sympathy, some persons having been led to imagine that there has been a great breaking

down in the amount and character of the work done; very few having any adequate idea of its extent and effectiveness. To meet this want—we might say necessity—the present publication has been started.

The *Darkest England Gazette* was outward-facing and intended for a readership that extended beyond the Salvation Army. It offered a comprehensive view of the many different branches of the Social Work around the world, from the Food and Shelter Depots and the Rescue Work to Hadleigh Farm Colony and the promised 'Colony Over-Sea'. Its presentation was engaging: alongside varied reportage it offered plentiful illustrations, poetry, and fiction. A message 'To Our Readers' in **issue 29** stated:

- The "D. E. Gazette" is thoroughly worth buying—
- Because it is the official newspaper of Salvation Army Social operations.
- Because it is profusely illustrated by capable artists.
- Because it is an up-to-date expositor of social wrongs.
- Because it is a non-party journal, devoted entirely to benefiting the poor.
- Because it gives weekly comments on all social matters of interest.
- Because it contains an interesting serial.
- Because it places the needs of women on an equal footing with those of men.

This all-encompassing approach makes the *Darkest England Gazette* a valuable resource not only for the study of the history of The Salvation Army and its Social Work, but also to gain a broader understanding of the social problems that marked the late nineteenth century and the responses of official and charitable bodies, individuals, and the press. On the [Darkest England Gazette page](#) you will find Research Guides on some of the most prominent social themes addressed in the *Gazette* to help you get started with your research.



Further reading

If you would like to explore the Social Work and the context to the *Darkest England Gazette* in more detail, the following titles are good places to start:

- Victor Bailey, “In Darkest England and the Way Out:” The Salvation Army, Social Reform and the Labour Movement, 1885–1910’, in *Order and Disorder in Modern Britain: Essays on Riot, Crime, Policing and Punishment* (2014)
- Jenty Fairbanks, *Booth’s Boots: The Beginnings of Salvation Army Social Work* (1983)
- Matthew Seaman, ed., *Darkness and Deliverance: 125 Years of the Darkest England Scheme* (2016)
- Pamela J. Walker, *Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (2001)

The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre,

July 2019

Accessing the *Darkest England Gazette*:

The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre is currently working to digitise the *Darkest England Gazette* as a fully open access online resource. While we complete the digitisation process, we are able to offer sample scans of some issues and articles as part of our [Digital Collections](#).

If you would like to see an issue or article that is not currently available on the [Darkest England Gazette page](#), please feel free to [contact the Heritage Centre](#) for help. We may be able to send you a scan of the relevant pages, or you would be very welcome to visit our Reading Room in person to view the *Gazette* for yourself.

