

# VOICES FROM THE ARCHIVES

## 1946 - 2015

### ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS OF HELPING CHILDREN

A journey of generosity and giving through the generations



*"I must thank you very much indeed, for the nice Christmas gift which you sent me for the family. It was a great help to us around the Christmas time, as it was a very lonely time for me and the family; it is a great comfort to see that someone is thinking for us all."*

*(Mother, 1953)*

*"I feel I must thank you for the money I receive each quarter, and especially for the extra which I received last year. My son started Technical College last September and needed a uniform and my daughter who is growing up fast needed a new coat for school. Through your help I was able to get these, together with other necessities."*

*(Mother, 1965)*

*"Just a note to express my grateful thanks for the increase in my allowance; I cannot tell you just how much this means to me. I have been receiving benefit now for nearly sixteen years and would have been at a complete loss without it all that time. God has done for me exceedingly abundantly above all I could ask or even think."*

*(Mother, 1969)*

*"Words cannot express how grateful I am, especially for the clothing grant for the children."*

*(Recipient, 1973)*

*"Mum, the Church did not fail us when we needed them."*

*(A child, 1987)*

*"I am writing to thank the Presbyterian Orphan Society for the financial assistance offered to myself since the death of my father. I have now reached the end of my academic career, having recently graduated. Had my family not had the benefit of your generosity, it would not have been possible for me to have had such a rewarding university career. Not only did the monies help our situation in the most practical of ways, they also offered an element of security, hence alleviating the constant burden of worrying about finances."*

*(A young person, 1996)*

*"I would like to thank you for your support towards me and my son. Times have been hard and it's encouraging to know that there are people who care for those that are not so well off. Your kindness has helped us along so much."*

*(Mother, 1997)*

*"May I take this opportunity to thank you for the financial assistance you have given me for the children. My daughter has now finished her four year degree course in Oxford. You made that possible as her work load was too great to allow her to work and earn her keep."*

*(Mother, 2001)*

*"I would like to thank the Society for all the financial help given to my children over the past 10 years. My youngest child is at an end of her higher education. She will be receiving her first wage as a qualified Staff Nurse. Once again, thank you for your support which was gratefully received and made a great difference to our family."*

*(Mother, 2003)*

*"I wish to say thank you from the bottom of my heart for the money. I was so worried and stressed about the fact that I had no money. Your kind donations have helped reduce my anxiety at this time and I would be lost without them."*

*(Mother, 2008)*

*"Just a little note. Thank you very much for helping out when we needed help, you have helped more than you know with the much needed money."*

*(Mother, 2011)*

*"Thank you for your efficient and compassionate ministry. I am very grateful for all your help, advice and support. Thank you for partnering in our gospel work here. Needy people helped, God glorified and the church showing the love of Jesus. God bless."*

*(Minister 2015)*

## Past Voices

All these voices are a response to the Society's help as families faced financial crises and difficulties. For many families through the years it has been the possibility of financial ruin, destitution or poverty that has shaped their experience. One mother receiving help from the Society and grateful for that help articulated what poverty meant for her. It is a poignant reminder of why the Society is still required today.

*"POVERTY – what does it mean.....*

*It means – counting every penny, every week, every month, every year....always worrying about unexpected bills.*

*It means – adding up the groceries in your head as they are added to the basket to make sure you can afford it.*

*It means – buying basic food – no chocolate biscuits, no lemonade/juice, no fancy cereal, no frozen chips, no steak, buying tinned milk to last four weeks...no fresh milk.*

*It means – electric cards to help with the bills.....stamps for T.V. Licence.*

*It means – second hand clothes.*

*It means – buying children's clothes out of club books – so they can wear the same clothes as friends.*

*It means – no holidays*

*It means – arguments with the children as they don't get the same as other children. They grow up before their time.*

*It means – few treats e.g. school outings/Sunday School outings.*

*It means – loneliness – isolation – parent can't go out, maybe can't afford babysitter or can't afford bus fares etc.*

*It means – putting up a front for the rest of the world- so they don't see the real need.*

*It means – anxiety, worry, not letting the children get music lessons even though they've a gift. Worry about BB/GB uniforms – how do you encourage your children to get involved in church without the right items?"*

*(Mother early 2000's)*

