

British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association Magazine

2019 BHC 150 & Remembrance Edition



BHC 150 2019

Special commemorative
edition of the BHCARA newsletter

Marking the 150. year of the
arrival of the first party of BHC to Canada and the
service of the BHC in the Wars



**First party of British Home Children to come to Canada
Maria Rye, November 8, 1869**

The SS Hibernian
The first ship to bring
BHC to Canada

Features

*This newsletter magazine was originally released in hard copy for Canada 150 in 2017.
It has been edited for the BHC 150. Many of the original articles remain.*

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by Lori Oschefski

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The Seymour & the Ward Family by Lori Oschefski with notes and information from the Ward Family.

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by Beryl Young

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From Renowned to Notorious -
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Cecil Bennett
BHC and their Service in
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by Lori Oschefski



TEARS OF A CLOWN

The Life of BHC

Richard Mandeville O'Mahony

Canada's Famous Clown Fifi

By Gwynneth Bennet

Cover photo of the 1869 party of Maria Rye Children courtesy of the Niagara Historical Society & Museum: accession number 984.5.136 Description: Western Home, with first group of children brought out, 1869; Miss Rye, R.N. Ball, H. Paffard, Dr. McMurray, Dr. Morson in group

The Children's Trunks

by Marjorie Kohli



RMS Hibernian postcards Courtesy of Peter Marquis-Kyle, Conservation Architect Australia. Lay out and design of magazine by Lori Oschefski CEO British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association



Photo of the Niagara Falls illumination
by Karen Churchill Bridgman-Acker

Beacons of Light

British Home Children & Child Migrants

International Sesquicentennial Tribute

From Castles to Waterfalls

150 years ago, on the 8th of November 1869, the SS Hibernian quietly slipped onto the shores of Canada. On board were sixty child souls, mostly girls, bound for Our Western Home in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. These children were under the care of Maria Susan Rye, a social reformer and a promoter of female emigration from England. This was the beginning of an unprecedented mass emigration of children from the UK to Canada, children now known as the *British Home Children (BHC)* and *Child Migrants (CM)*. For almost eighty years, these children, who were in need of comfort, protection and love, continued to arrive; and were, for the most part, put to work as a source of cheap labour on Canadian farms. For almost one hundred and fifty years now, their story has been shrouded in secrecy and shame. Now, through the collective efforts of their descendants, their *true* story is now being told. The shroud of secrecy has been lifted, their story is no longer hidden and they are no longer “forgotten”. The shame inflicted upon them is gone. The Home Children are taking their rightful place in our Canadian history and they are known as the resilient children who built Canada. Together we stand proud of these children. Our September 2019 Beacons of Light British Home Child & Child Migrants International Sesquicentennial Tribute show the world just how proud of these children we are, forever removing the stigmatization which was attached to them for decades and decades.

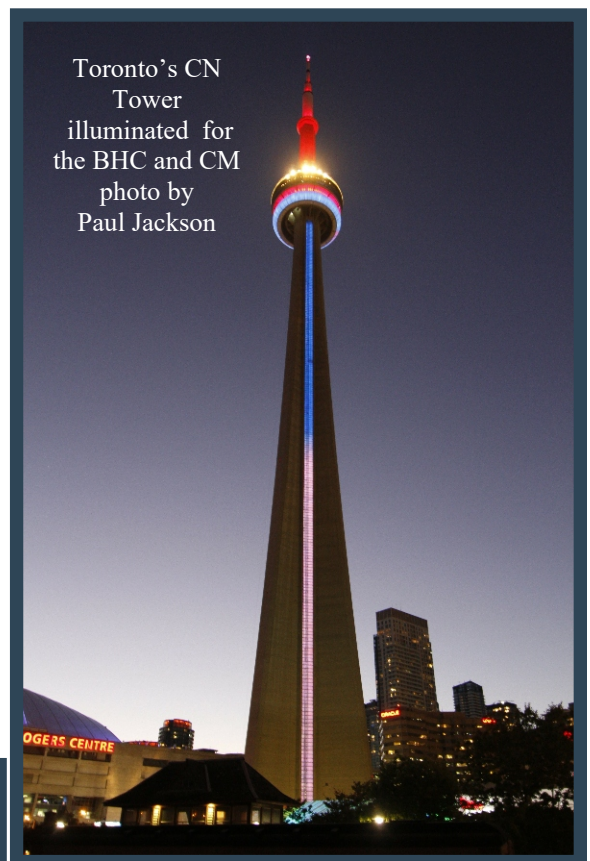
To mark the 150th anniversary the *British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association (BHCARA)* and descendants reached out to hundreds of communities and venues across Canada, Scotland and England, for participation in the Beacons of Light for BHC/CM tribute by illuminating memorials, monuments, buildings or other areas with the colours of the BHCARA. The response was overwhelming with over two-hundred-thirty-five tributes paid to the BHC. Illuminations included the iconic Niagara Fall in Ontario, Toronto's CN Tower, The Northern Lights Display in Vancouver, British Columbia and St Andrews House - Head Quarters of the Scottish Government in Edinburgh, Scotland. Through the efforts of Tracy Smithers, Her Majesty the Queen sent a letter of support for the work of BHCARA and our Beacon tribute. This was followed by a letter from the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The tribute was a symbolic gesture to show the world how proud we are of the resiliency of the BHC, Canada's nation builders, while paying tribute to those who died young.

The beacon tribute started with Kim Crowder, from Edmonton, Alberta, when she reached out to the BHCARA to sponsor the illumination of their *High Level Bridge*. Bruce Skilling in Calgary, Alberta then reached out to the *Reconciliation Bridge* in his community. Lori Oschefski, recognizing the potential of a large tribute, reached out to Niagara Falls, the CN Tower and several venues in Vancouver. The excitement became contagious resulting in many of the BHC/CM's organizations and descendants working together to building the biggest tribute paid to the BHC in history.

We at BHCARA; all of us who work tirelessly just to educate and raise awareness, thank everyone concerned, for their kindness and help in making "Beacons of Light" a resounding success.

It is my great pleasure to acknowledge the amazing success of the "Beacons of Light" tribute. I can't think of a better way to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the start of the British Home Child migration scheme symbolically arranged to coincide with British Home Child day in Canada, September 28th. People from towns, and custodians of landmarks across Canada, England and Scotland, came together and made this a very special event. It was special, not only in remembering the Home Children but also in boosting awareness of who they were and what they endured. Thousands more people will be aware, where before they were not. Many lights, especially of the red, white and blue variety, were shed not only on public buildings, bridges and monuments but on the lives of over 100,000 British Home Children. - Lori Oschefski, Founder and CEO of the British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

To learn more about this historic tribute visit our website: Beacons of Light: From Castles to Waterfalls at www.BritishHomeChildren.com



BHCARA Founder
Lori Oschefski with
BHC Walter Goulding
and George Beardshaw
2014

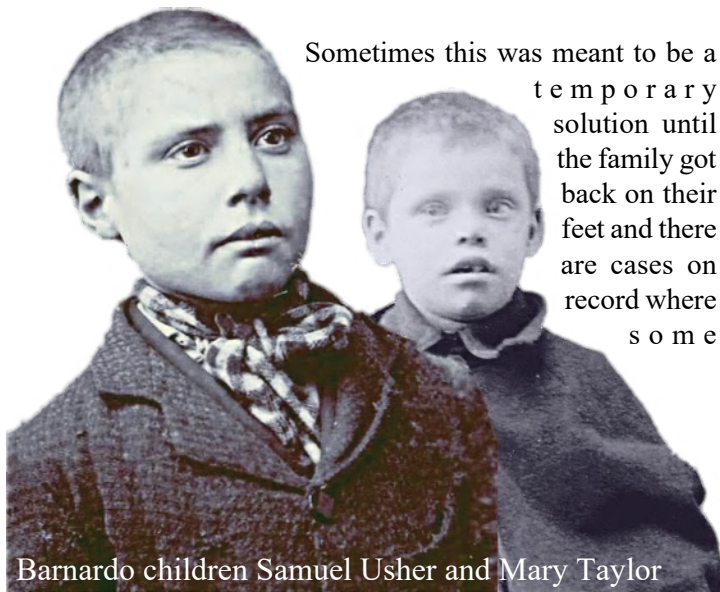
Who are the British Home Children?



From the late 1860s right up to 1948, over 100,000 children of all ages were immigrated right across Canada, from the United Kingdom, to be used as indentured farm workers and domestics. Believed by Canadians to be orphans, only two percent truly were. These children were sent to Canada by over 50 organizations including the well-known and still working charities: Barnardo's, The Salvation Army, Quarrier's and Fegan's to name a few.

CEO and founder of the British Home Child Advocacy and Research Association (BHCARA) Lori Oschefski states, *"Barnardo's sent over thirty thousand children here and was by far the largest organization sending children to Canada. Many BHC became known as Barnardo Home Boys or Girls, despite the fact many came from other organizations"*.

For the most part, these children were not picked up from the streets but came from intact families, who, through sickness, loss of work or even death of one of their parents, had fallen on hard times. Because there was no social system in place to help them get through these difficult circumstances, the family had no other way than to surrender their offspring to the organizations or to place their children in the dreaded workhouse.



Sometimes this was meant to be a temporary solution until the family got back on their feet and there are cases on record where some

parents went back to pick their children up, only to find that they had already been sent away. Sometimes the parents received an 'after sailing' notification, informing that their children had been emigrate and were already headed to Canada.

Once in Canada, the children were sent to receiving homes right across the country until farmers picked them up or they were sent on to their destinations with a cardboard sign around their necks. There were at least seven applicants for every child shipped to this country.

These children are not to be confused with 'Guest Children' who were temporarily sent from evacuation zones in the U.K. to Canada during the Second World War to be kept safe from areas under attack. The British Home Children were sent away to work, some never to see their families again.

The child migration scheme was born during the Industrial Revolution. Traditional extended families were broken up and many moved to urban areas to find work and a better life. And so, if anything happened to one of the parents, there was no immediate family nearby to take them in. Abandoned British children lived and died in the streets and workhouses were overcrowded.

Emigration was seen as a brilliant solution. The children would be sent to Canadian farms under contract. The terms required that children be housed, fed, clothed, and sent to school. A small fee would be paid for fostering younger children, older children would help with chores, and more extended labour would be required from adolescents. At 18, the terms of indenture were to be discharged, 21 for girls. The clean, fresh air of a Canadian farm was seen as a definite better alternative to living in the slums of a large city.

Canada was marketed to the parents and the children as a haven within the storms of their lives where money grew on trees and the adventure of travelling to a land where cowboys and lumberjacks were, sounded appealing.



Many parents were relieved that a way had been found to keep their children be safe and healthy while providing a better future for them.

The harsh truth was that the monitoring of the children's placements was often neglected. Many children found themselves essentially abandoned to new lives which were worse than the old. Their lives were flung back into peril and uncertainty. Siblings were separated. Girls assisted farm wives not only with housework and children but on the fields, as well. Boys became farm workers of whom many, if not most, were grossly overworked.

While some of the children were indeed accepted into the families they worked for and were practically adopted, while many other of these children suffered. Children could be 'returned' and reassigned. Many were moved from one farm to another. Some ran away or simply disappeared; some died from ill-health or injuries resulting from neglect and abuse, and some committed suicide.

The belief in eugenics that was running rampant throughout the U.K. and North America caused children to be considered inferior stock to their Canadian counterparts. They were stigmatized as such, merely because they were poor and needed help. In communities where these children should have been fostered and nurtured, they were often taunted and made to feel shame for being a Home Boy or Home Girl. This shame caused many Home Children to remain silent about their backgrounds their entire lives.

Some influential political voices were raised against bringing the children to Canada in this way, but it was more about the dangerous and filthy 'Street Arabs infecting' Canadian society than it was about the welfare of the children.

During the First World War almost all Home Boys enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces, many just to get back to see any family that they might still have in the 'old' country. Some ran away from their placements and lied about their age to enlist, some to get away from a bad or abusive placement. During the war no children were sent to Canada. Documents found recently in the Heritage Canada index, released by the Library and Archives Canada suggest strongly, that the Canadian Government was effectively bribing the sending organizations to continue

shipping children despite their protests of many like, Barnardo's, acknowledging the war torn waters as too dangerous for the children. To their credit, despite higher bonuses offered, the sending organizations refused to send children throughout the war years.

The scheme began again in earnest following the war. Many households were in dire straits after the loss of so many young men and then the deaths of both men and women during the Spanish Flu pandemic.

It was not until 1924 that the emigration of children under the age of 14, unoccupied by a parent, was discouraged. Even so, some young ones slipped through the cracks. In any case, the majority of children continued to be sent right up until the advent of the Second World War. Heightened social consciousness condemned the sending of any more children to Canada in this way. In spite of this, the Fairbridge Farms were able to send just over three-hundred children after the Second World War to Vancouver, British Columbia.

Over ten percent of the current Canadian population are descendants of the Home Children, although many are still unaware of their heritage. This is one of the many reasons why the Home Children's determination and perseverance deserve to have their huge contribution to the founding of our nation recognized and their stories heard. Canada was built on the backs of these children and that should never, ever be forgotten again. Our 2019 Beacons of Light International tribute has gone a long way to ensure that their story will live on.





Maria Rye and the First British Home Children in Canada

Sean Arthur Joyce

As slavery in Upper Canada was slowly phased out, a void began to develop for cheap farm labour, and a very dark, draconian method for providing this labour came about in the form of immigrant children.

-Exploring Niagara website

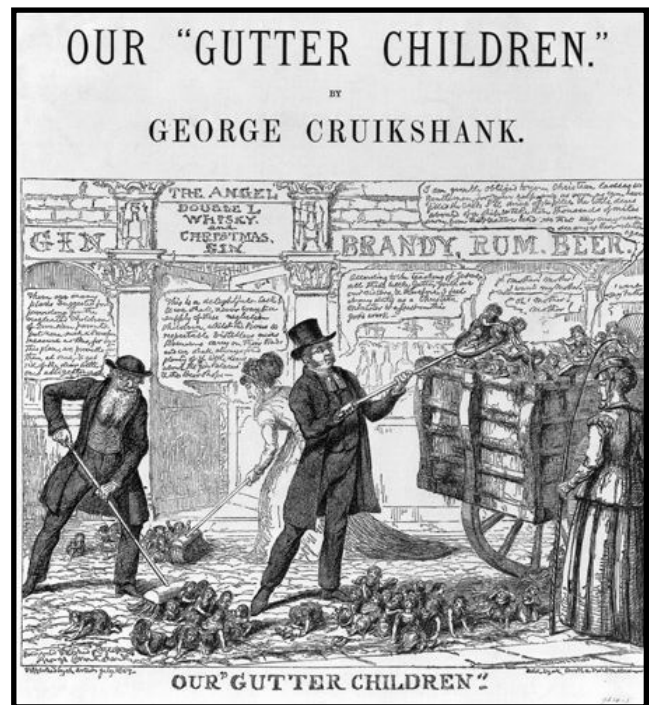
2019 marks the 150th anniversary of the first British Home Children arriving in Canada. On November 8, 1869, English social activist Maria Rye arrived in Niagara (today's Niagara-on-the-Lake) with a party of 65 girls and three boys from England.¹ Their first lodgings in Canada were at a converted jail and courthouse she had dubbed 'Our Western Home,' with the goal of placing them as indentured servants in

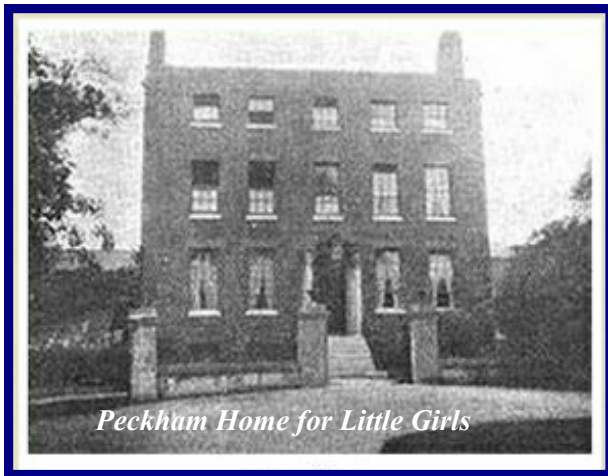
Canadian homes and farms.² "The old courtroom of the building now occupied by the children has been turned into a dormitory for 98 girls," wrote the Buffalo Express in 1894. "When Miss Rye began her work in Niagara 25 years ago, the building was an unattractive structure... and the grounds surrounding it were barren. She bought eight acres, and, with careful tilling she raises all the vegetables and fruit, poultry, etc. used in the Home. The house now stands in a bower of weeping willows. Feathery tamarisk (tamaracks) and broad-leaved catalpas are interspersed with flowing shrubs and beds of fragrant violets, japonica, narcissus and geraniums."³ A beautiful scene, designed to be a welcoming haven. But the 'new lives for old' the children had been promised turned out to be mostly a cruel mirage.

Even Rye's contemporaries were sceptical. Back in Britain, her fundraising efforts for the 1869 emigration party met with opposition from political cartoonist George Cruikshank, who had illustrated some of Dickens' stories. Cruikshank "replied by publishing a pamphlet denouncing her plan," write historians Roger Kershaw and Janet Sacks in *New Lives for Old*. "Entitled *Our Gutter Children*, it featured a stark cartoon depicting street children being carted away like rubbish, their pitiful cries overridden by voices of authority and a Maria Rye-like figure which proclaimed, 'I'll drive off to pitch the little dears aboard of a ship and take them thousands of miles away from their native land so that they may never see any of their relatives again.'"⁴ According to historian Marjorie Kohli, Maria Rye was the first to use the term "'gutter children,' from which the term 'guttersnipes' came."⁵

Rye had begun her child immigration scheme by opening a home for destitute girls in Peckham, South London, about 1867, with the substantial financial support of wealthy patrons like Lord Shaftesbury. The *Penny Illustrated Paper* of June 22, 1872 reports that thanks to Rye, "more than 600 orphans or deserted children have been rescued from an irregular vagabond life, fed, clothed, trained, and taken to Canada... Through the liberality of a friend of the charity, who placed £500 at her disposal, Miss Rye has opened a home at Avenue House, High-street, Peckham, where ten children, lately taken from the streets, are now being fed, clothed, and prepared for a better course of life in the New World. Their ages range from eight to thirteen."⁶ As was common with childcare organizations of the day, Rye's was sectarian, only accepting Protestants.

Tellingly, her speech in 1870 before the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, chaired by Lord Shaftesbury, focused on the *economics* of child poverty rather than any burning desire to alleviate their suffering. "Noting





Peckham Home for Little Girls

that in London alone there were more than 10,000 children in the workhouse and another 46,000 on outdoor relief, she revealed that she could take girls to Canada for £10 a head," write Kershaw and Sacks. In a lecture to the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society, a Dr. Hayward pointed out that Rye had already saved Liverpool ratepayers £5,000, "which would have been the cost of maintaining the children she had taken to Canada from eight years of age to 18." ⁷

Contemporary critics pointed out that she was earning a good profit emigrating children. "Doubts about her work had surfaced as far back as 1868, when William Dixon, a Canadian immigration agent based in Britain, had condemned her organization," write Kershaw and Sacks. "He called Rye a passenger agent of the sharpest

description', explaining his rationale: 'She appeals to the public through the press for contributions to aid her in assisting poor girls to emigrate... She then applies to the registry offices for girls and asks them how much money they can raise towards the price of a passage... she also applies to the unions of factory towns and... *the guardians pay all the expenses*. If the girls have two pounds and Miss Rye's subscriptions come in freely she supplements what is required, retaining what she considers reasonable... it is a profitable business.'"⁸ Historian Roy Parker reveals that this profit amounted to as much as £5 per child. ⁹ Groups of children sailing from Britain often numbered 100 or more and there could be several sailings each year. The *Halifax Morning Chronicle* on November 6, 1871 reported "145 orphan girls, of ages from 9 to 13 years, in charge of Miss Maria S. Rye," arriving on the steamship *Nestorian*. ¹⁰ Assuming three shiploads of 100 children per year multiplied by £5 and adjusted for inflation, Rye today would be earning £177,000 per year (\$288,829 Cdn.).¹¹ The Canadian government subsidized the arrangement by paying for the girls' railway transport. A report in the 1869 Sessional Papers for Parliament by government agent L. Stafford notes that he also presented Rye with a cheque for \$500 to help defray her expenses.¹²

Rye's efforts were not intended to get poor girls adopted into loving Canadian homes. Her contracts have "indenture" written in capitals across the top of the page and the highly legalistic language leaves little room for ambiguity. A copy of one such contract signed by Ann Barton, dated August 1, 1870, states that the girl is to serve a five-year indenture, and is expected to "well, truly and faithfully serve the said party hereto... and shall obey all his lawful and reasonable commands... in all things, *as a good and faithful servant* and apprentice..."¹³ This is clearly a master-servant-or what we today would call an employer-employee-relationship. If a child's work was considered below standard, host families could break the contract at any time and return her to the home. And the consequences for girls who were too weak or rebellious to perform their labours could be dire. "When the children were returned to the Homes, for whatever reason," notes Parker, "proper arrangements were not made for their care and, in Rye's case, they were sometimes punished excessively for alleged or actual misdemeanours." ¹⁴

Rye seems to have been a woman with little feeling for children and a very harsh concept of discipline. Based partly on negative reports coming from Our Western Home, Andrew Doyle was commissioned by Britain's Local Government Board to investigate Canadian receiving homes in 1874. The famous Doyle report of 1875 had been prompted by reports received from Allendale Grainger, who had written the LGB in Islington at various times throughout 1874 complaining about Maria Rye. Aside from pointing out Rye's financial interest in the emigration scheme, he reported that her discipline of children was abusive. "He described in particular the case of Annie Thompson, aged 10, who, he claimed, had been placed in solitary confinement and given only bread and water for several days on being returned to Rye's Home at Niagara," notes Parker. "Rye, he contended, had also beaten the child with the back of a brush and, when she escaped, had allowed her to 'remain out all night during one of the coldest nights in a Canadian winter.' Fortunately, the girl had been sheltered at a nearby house where she had sought refuge." ¹⁵

According to writer Denise Ascenzo, Rye segregated the 'bad' girls from the rest when they were returned. "Rye did not permit these girls to live in Our Western Home as she was concerned they may negatively influence the younger girls.

Instead, she boarded them close to the home in a red brick house at the corner of King and Cottage Streets, so they would be looked after until other arrangements were made." ¹⁶

Parker also relates correspondence between the LGB and a Mrs. Barclay regarding child emigrant Charlotte Williams, then 17, who was brought to Canada by Rye about 1871. She was placed with a wealthy farmer and discovered to be pregnant. Williams said the farmer's son had impregnated her but under pressure from the farmer's wife and Rye, who both threatened her with imprisonment, she recanted her statement.¹⁷ Parker quotes child labour historian Joy Parr as noting that "the Homes were informed in advance of an inspector's approach... representatives of the agencies were allowed to substitute their own reports for submission by government inspectors."¹⁸ Consistently throughout the history of the British Home Children, both the Canadian government and the sending agencies failed to allocate enough staff resources to checking up on the conditions children were billeted in. "The children had no legal or official protection from ill treatment and harsh working conditions, and were frequently lost sight of when they moved from place to place (as they often did)," explains Parker. ¹⁹

There are some events in our history that must be forever marked, both on the landscape and in our hearts. To the great credit of Niagara-on-the-Lake, on the first national British Home Child day in Canada, September 29, 2018, the Niagara Historical Society and Museum, joined by British Home Child International, unveiled a historic plaque on the site of Our Western Home in Rye Street Heritage Park. There is also a plot in St. Mark's Anglican Church graveyard bought by Rye for any child who died in her care, marked by a large Celtic cross. ²⁰ When we think of the first Home Children brought to Canada 150 years ago, let's remember them as they were: veering between excitement and fear, shivering in the foreign cold of a Canadian winter, uncertain of their future, yet ever hopeful of better days to come.

Sources

¹An article in the London Illustrated News of November 6, 1869 states that she "took with her a hundred young girls she has selected- 70 of them, from five to eleven years of age, being from the Liverpool industrial schools." Quoted in *The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939*, Marjorie Kohli, Natural Heritage Books, Toronto, 2003, p.73.

²For more on Our Western Home, see British Home Children in Canada website, article by Lori Oschefski, 'Maria Rye-Our Western Home.' <https://canadianbritishhomechildren.weebly.com/maria-rye-niagara-on-the-lake.html>

³Quoted in *The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939*, Marjorie Kohli, *ibid*, pp.84, 85.

⁴*New Lives for Old*, Roger Kershaw and Janet Sacks, published by The National Archives, UK, 2008, p.22.

⁵*The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939*, Marjorie Kohli, *ibid*, p.74.

⁶Transpontine, Southeast London blogzine, <http://transpont.blogspot.com/2010/03/child-migration-from-peckham.html>

⁷*New Lives for Old*, Roger Kershaw and Janet Sacks, The National Archives, *ibid*, p.24.

⁸*New Lives for Old*, Roger Kershaw and Janet Sacks, The National Archives, UK, 2008, pp.25, 26.

⁹*Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917*, Roy Parker, UBC Press, Vancouver, 2008, pp. 50, 54.

¹⁰'Maria Rye-Our Western Home,' Lori Oschefski, British Home Children in Canada website, newsprint scan.

¹¹Based on an inflation rate of £1 in 1870 being worth £118 in 2019 British pounds.

<https://www.in2013dollars.com/uk/inflation/1870?amount=1>

¹²'Maria Rye-Our Western Home,' Lori Oschefski, British Home Children in Canada website, document scan.

¹³'Maria Rye-Our Western Home,' Lori Oschefski, British Home Children in Canada website, document scan.

¹⁴*Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917*, Roy Parker, *ibid*, p. 50.

¹⁵*Laying the Children's Ghosts to Rest: Canada's British Home Children in the West*, Sean Arthur Joyce, Hagios/Radiant Press, Regina, 2014, p. 22.

¹⁶'Niagara Unveiled: Our Western Home,' Denise Ascenzo, *Niagara Now*, February 4, 2018.

<http://niagaranow.com/entertainment.phtml/375-niagaras-history-unveiled-our-western-home>

¹⁷*Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917*, Roy Parker, *ibid*, p. 51.

¹⁸*Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917*, Roy Parker, *ibid*, p. 53.

¹⁹*Uprooted: The Shipment of Poor Children to Canada, 1867-1917*, Roy Parker, *ibid*, p. 50.

²⁰'Niagara Unveiled: Our Western Home,' Denise Ascenzo, *Niagara Now*, February 4, 2018.

Who was Maria Susan Rye?

Social reformer and pioneer of the British Home Children migration schemes. Article by Lori Oschefski, edited by Ann Griffin



Maria Susan Rye was a social reformer and a pioneer of the British Home

Children migration programs. Born March 31, 1829 she was the eldest of nine children born to solicitor Edward Rye and his wife Maria Tuppen of London, England. Although the Rye family was considerably well off, the children did not profit much from their parents. Their sons were educated at the St. Peters Collegiate in Eaton Square, while their daughters, including Maria, were taught at home by a governess. At sixteen, Maria Rye started teaching Sunday School for Christ Church, Chelsea. When the children were old enough, they were expected to work in their father's law firm for pocket money. Curiously, none of the four Rye sisters married, so their father eventually purchased a home for his unmarried daughters to live in. Rye began writing for the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* for pocket money. By 1856 she was a very successful and widely read contributor. Rye published her work in the earlier years under her initials M. S. R., in keeping with the Victorian thought that women should not be in the public eye, but eventually she ignored this doctrine. Maria Rye made her mark in the world despite being a spinster with no financial security. Her father did not provide for any of his children in his will.

Rye's younger brother Walter Rye carved out an interesting life for himself. Walter became known as a British athlete and antiquary. He wrote over eighty works on the town of Norfolk. Walter became the father of Cross Country Running (originally called paper chasing) and founded the Thames Hare and Hounds, the oldest adult cross country running club in the world.

Rye was described as a "formidable woman, difficult to deal with and advanced for her time." She devoted her early life to the rights and position of women. Rye became secretary to the association which was responsible for the Act of Parliament, Sir Erskine Perry's "*Married Woman's Property Bill*," and became active in the '*Woman's Employment Society*' among other enterprises to forward women's activities. However, she disapproved of the woman's franchise movement which the society supported, so she separated from

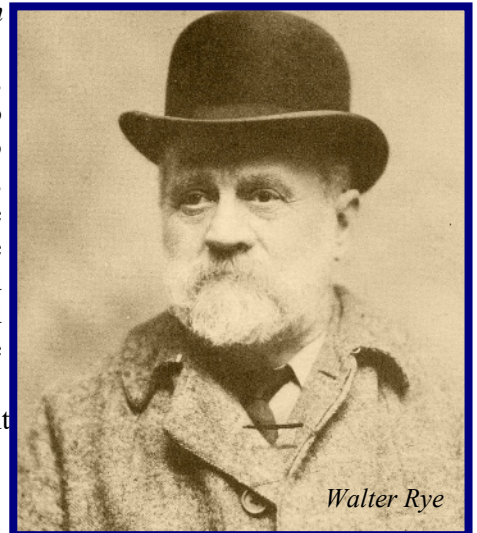
them. Single handedly, she formed a law copying firm using skills she had learned from her father and providing a new source of employment for middle class women of reduced means.

Rye opened her law-copying office at 12 Portugal St., Lincoln's Field. She had to turn down hundreds of women looking for jobs, and became acutely aware of the lack of suitable employment for middle-class women. Rye began to see female emigration as a solution to the problem. She became a founding member of the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women, and in 1861 began assisting women to emigrate. Later that year, she published "Emigration for Educated Women." The following year, she formed the

Female Middle-Class Emigration Society, at which she worked until 1868, assisting women to emigrate mostly to New Zealand, Australia and some to Canada. Rye made several trips abroad to better understand emigration from the settlers' standpoint. The woman she sent were perceived as morally flawed, female immigration to Canada became

controversial. Many children in England were orphaned through disease or poverty and Rye felt that although the conditions in the impoverished parts of larger English cities were bad for boys, conditions for girls were measurably worse. Rye felt help was extended more to the boys, and the girls were being overlooked.

Influenced by the Orphan Trains program in the United States, Where "slum" children were taken by rail from eastern cities to the Midwest and apprenticed to farmers, Rye followed in the footsteps of, Reverend W. C. Van Meter, a Baptist missionary from Ohio who worked with this program. Reverend Van Meter lectured in St. James's Hall in London, in early 1868, on the conditions of the destitute female





orphans in New York and the steps taken for their protection. Through donations from the American public, he established "The Little Wanderers

Home." The children were cleaned up, decently dressed and broken of some of their "street arab" habits. He established an agency in the western USA, through which he found the children homes with farmers. Some were 'adopted' and some were indentured to work. The orphan trains operated between 1854 and 1929, relocating about 200,000 orphaned, abandoned, or homeless children.

At about the time of the lecture, Rye was asked to oversee a group of female emigrants to Canada. She was determined to investigate the Orphan Trains program about which Rev. Van Meter had lectured. After the emigrants were settled in their new country, Rye traveled to Chicago and various places in western America, to inquire about the children the Reverend had relocated. Have received very favourable reports, Rye returned to Canada and then to England, to promote her new plan. She wrote to the Times, asking for support to remove the "guttersnipes" from the British cities and send them to Canada. The term "guttersnipe", a derogatory term applied to these children, added to their stigmatization that has only now, been dispelled.

With the support of prominent British reformer Lord Shaftesbury, Rye opened the Peckham Home for Little Girls around 1867 using funds raised through an appeal in the Times. The home housed girls from five to twelve, mainly from workhouse schools. Other children were brought to Peckham by officers or parents, believing their children would be better off in Rye's care. In 1869, she established a reception house for emigrated children in the old court-house of Niagara-on-the-Lake in Ontario, Canada, calling it "Our Western Home".

Rye personally oversaw the renovation of the former jail to a suitable temporary home for the children. Returning to England, she set about securing financial support for her program. William Rathbone, Esq., M.P. for Liverpool personally donated enough money to outfit and emigrate fifty children. He also encouraged the Kirkdale Industrial School in Liverpool to work with Rye.

The first party of children, 65 girls and 3 boys from the Kirkdale Industrial School, left for Canada in the company of Miss Rye in October 1869 on the SS Hibernian; the first of some 4,000 children she brought over the next 27 years.

The long and sorry period of child migration had begun. In Canada most children were indentured, but many were also "adopted," therefore providing the farm family with free work. Rye drew up apprentice agreements for the children making it clear they were servants. Rye felt that the Canadians taking her children were respectable, well-established people, and therefore inspection of the children was not necessary; no supervision of the placements occurred. Rye left "her" children unprotected. This was the subject of concern for many in the UK including her initial supporter, Lord Shaftesbury.

In 1891 Rye was influential in the founding of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society. When Rye retired she transferred her Peckham Home and Our Western Home to the Waifs and Strays Society. She retired in 1895 to live with her sister in Hemel Hempstead. Rye died of intestinal cancer in 1903.



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1905 post card from the BHCARA collections

*The first ship to bring
British Home Children
to Canada*

SS Hibernian & the Allan Line

Article by Lori Oschefski

Samuel Cunard, born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, began transatlantic travel by steamboat in an effort to improve the speed at which mail was delivered from Britain. He became a founding director of the Halifax Steamboat Company, which built the first steamship in Nova Scotia in 1830, the SS Sir Charles Ogle. Launched in 1830, this ship was used to transport passengers across Halifax Harbour from Halifax to Dartmouth. She could only carry four passengers at a time, but she was able to make the trip in seven minutes, a trip that had taken twenty minutes to an hour. In 1837 Cunard, along with several other businessmen, set up the company that would become Cunard Steamships Limited. At this time, it took up to six months to send and receive replies to letters sent between England and North America. In 1840 they launched the steamship "Britannia", the first transatlantic mail service ship running between the UK and North America. The Britannia reduced the time to cross the ocean to two weeks. This voyage marked the beginning of regular transatlantic passenger and cargo service.

In 1854, ship owning brother's, Hugh and Andrew Allan put in a successful bid to Ottawa for the mail contract, his competition was Cunard. Their new company, "Montreal Ocean Steam Ship Company", was better known as the Allan Line. The company was carefully created to be Canadian, but it was inextricably linked (and financed) by the Allan family in Scotland. Hugh Allan, born in Scotland, had relocated to Canada in 1826. He invested in the first single-screw steamship and by 1854, his ship, the "Canadian" had reduced the crossing time to twelve days. They successfully won the contract for shipping mail and emigrants away from Cunard. The Allan Line signed a ten year contract with the Grand Trunk Railway, to ship their cargo across Canada. However, they fell out with the Grand Trunk Railway, over their plans to open their own steam train company. By the 1870's Allan expanded to become Canada's most flamboyant railway entrepreneur. As president of the Montreal Northern Colonization Railway, he bribed the Conservative Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, "donating" over \$350,000 for Macdonald's 1872 re-election campaign to ensure he received the contract to build the national railway, promised to British Columbia as a condition of their joining

on 2 April, 1873 opening up the first major political scandal in Canada after Confederation. Macdonald was forced to resign and Allan never started the contract. Macdonald was eventually reelected and retained his position as Prime Minister until his death in 1891. He was succeeded ironically by John Abbott, Allan's lawyer who had represented him with the bribery charges. George Stephen was awarded the contract for the railway and construction began in 1881.

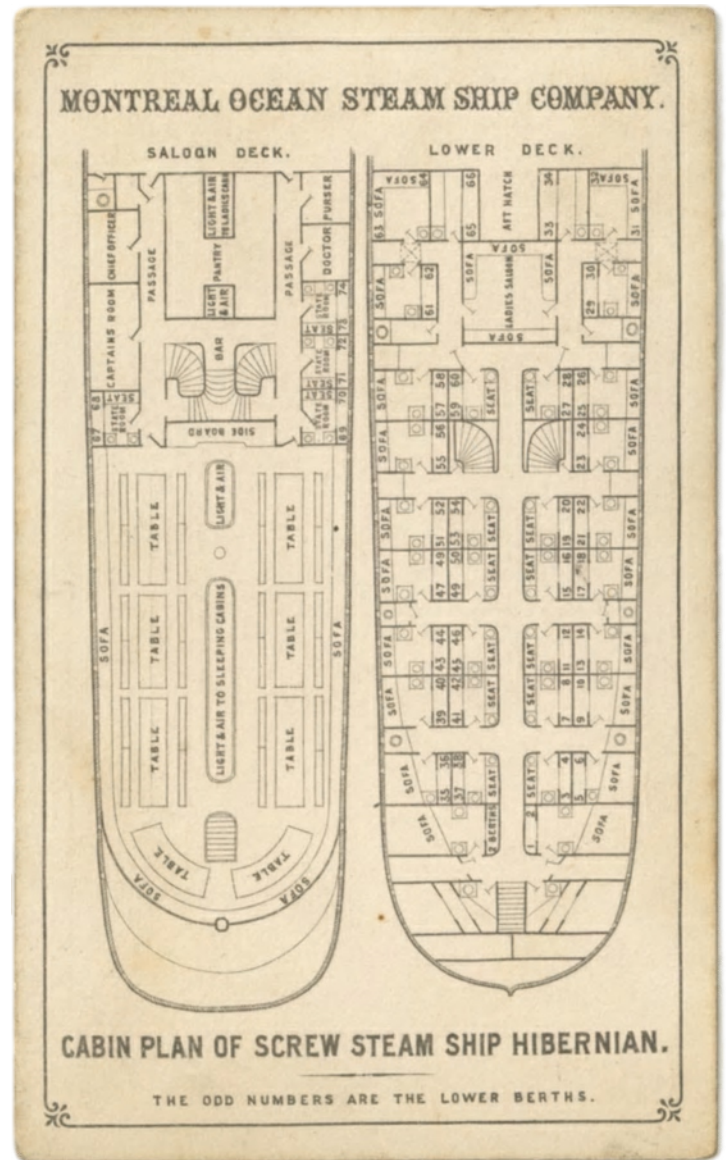
The Allan Line ships brought almost half of the British Home Children to Canada. In January of 1861, the SS Hibernian was launched by the Allan Line. The ship was built by William Denny & Co. in Dumbarton, Scotland. Her maiden voyage began on 23 May 1861, sailing from Liverpool to Montreal, Quebec. The Hibernian carried passengers between Britain and Canada for the next 40 years. She was the top of the line and one of the most popular ships on the Canadian run.

In 1868 Captain Smith, formerly of the Glasgow Line, was promoted to the command of the Hibernian. In April of 1868, Captain Smith entertained the passengers in the Grand Saloon by reading them a quip called "The Sea-sick Passenger". Later that year, Captain Smith, was at the helm when the Hibernian sailed from Liverpool to Quebec carrying our first party of British Home Children. Eighty children departed Liverpool under the care of Maria Rye, on 28 Oct 1869 arriving in

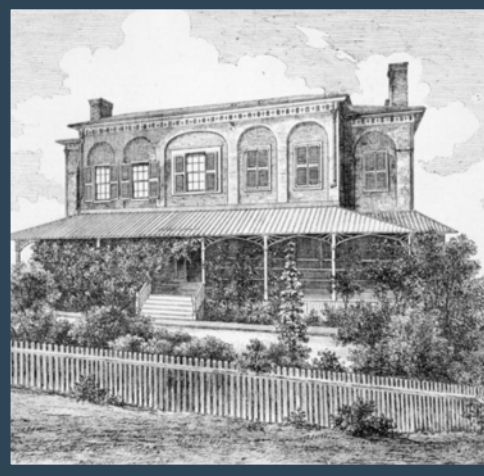


A steel bowl from an Alan Line ship

1889 saw another small group emigrate and Reverend Wallace brought eleven more children on this ship in 1890. Quarriers used this ship again in 1891 for a party of one hundred and thirty children. In 1892 Emma Stirling brought seven children to Canada, marking the last party of British Home Children to be brought to Canada on the Hibernian.

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- Norway Heritage - Hand Across the Sea web site
- The Ships List web site
- The Ships List accounts of the Hibernian
- Ancestry.ca Shipping records -left, Page 1 of the first party of BHC to come to Canada
- Sailing Seven Seas: A History of the Canadian Pacific Line - book, used for the history of the Allan Line
- RMS Hibernian postcardsCourtesy of Peter Marquis-Kyle, Conservation Architect Australia



History of our First Receiving Home Our Western Home - Maria Rye

by Lori Oschefski, edited by Ann Griffin

During the War of 1812, on the morning of October 13th, Fort George and the Village of Niagara, as

The building served as a double purpose jail and court house from 1817 until 1847. From 1847 until 1866 it was a jail only. The building sat empty from 1866 until 1869, when Maria Rye purchased it and refurbished it as a home to receive British children. The spectator's gallery and the fine arches remained, but the prisoners' cells were removed. One grating remained, only about a foot square, from which a prisoner condemned to death might take his last sight of the light of day. Rye had trees and flowers planted outside the building.

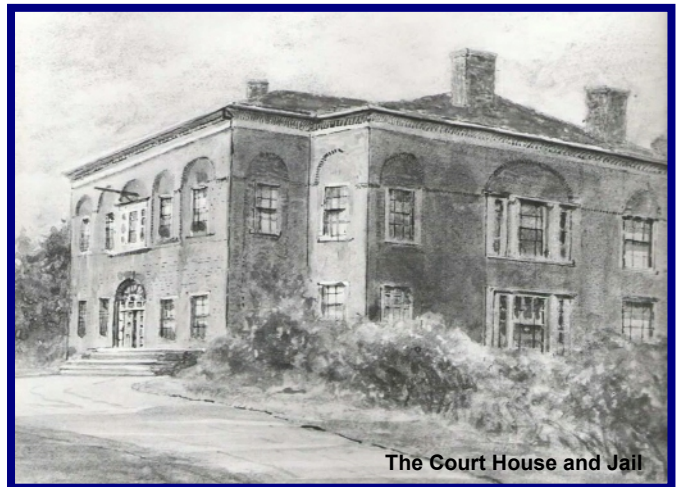
Niagara-on-the-Lake was then named, came under heavy enemy fire. Within minutes, the Court House and Gaol, along with fifteen homes, were set ablaze and destroyed. Adding to the enormity of the loss, some 300 prisoners perished in the jail when it was burned. At the close of the War of 1812-14, the Village of Niagara lay in ruins.

An advertisement published in 1816 in the St. Davids Spectator, for brick, stone, lumber, lath, shingles and such, for a jail and court house, was signed by Ralfe Clench, a United Empire Loyalist, a member of Butler's Ranger, a member of Parliament, a Judge and a veteran. Mr. Clench, remarkably, had signed the advertisement for materials for the first jail and court house in Niagara in 1795.

Officials made the decision to move the town further inland, away from the river and American territory on the opposite shore. The new Court House and Jail, built in 1817, were constructed well away from the previous town centre. This building of stately red brick with a lavish woodwork interior, became known as the most splendid and handsome building in Upper Canada.

The jail cells were located on the main floor. They were open to the hall which led to the Court room, so the inmates were exposed to the gaze of those who entered. The partitions were of bolted oak, and the nine-inch thick doors were two thickness of wood with sheet iron in between. Some of the cells were heated with wood fireplaces, but inmates in stoveless cells could only gaze out at the stove in the hallway, which offered them no warmth during the Canadian winters.

One the most notable historical and dramatic events which happened in this building, was the 1837 Slave Escape. At that time, there were three hundred to four hundred inhabitants of Niagara who had escaped slavery from the United States. One of these men, named Mosby, had used his master's horse to escape. Following him to Canada, his master had him arrested and demanded he be returned to the States. Hundreds of excited people of both races gathered by the jail to ensure Mosby was not removed. The protest continued for two weeks until a wagon arrived to transport Mosby back to the USA. A riot ensued, including women armed with stones in stockings. Determined protestors stuck rails from a fence into the wagon's wheels, and Mosby escaped. Gunshots were fired, two men died.



The Court House and Jail

Our Western Home officially opened on December 1st, 1869, with many dignitaries present, including the Mayor of Niagara, Mr. Tibbert Ball, the magistrate of the county; Judge Lauder, of St. Catherine's Ontario; Rev. Dr. Macmurray, Rector of Niagara, Rev. Mr. Burchall, rector of the Presbyterian Church at St. Catherine's; Rev. Mr. Holland, clergyman of the Church of England and many others. It opened with a prayer and afterwards the children were introduced to the visitors.

Some 4,000 children came to Canada through Maria Rye. She retired in 1895, and returned to England, turning her home and work over to the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, which had initially brought their first children to Canada through Maria Rye

The Church of England used Our Western Home to receive their girls from 1895 until 1914 when the home was sold and demolished. Maria Rye died in 1903 at the age of 74. The street leading to the land where the building stood is now called Rye Street, and a plaque marks the spot where the home used to be.

From rebels, debtors, escaped slaves, public executions and the British Home Children who were placed through these walls, this building shaped Ontario's history

Annie Macpherson:

Taking on 'Satan' in Whitechapel and Bethnal Green

By Sarah Wise

Between 1868 and 1925, some 80,000 boys and girls were sent to Canada from Great Britain to work as agricultural labourers and domestic servants. Most were under the age of 14, and one third were orphans. Much wonderful historical recovery work is being done to reveal the Canadian experiences of the little Britons who were shipped out. My own work, by contrast, aims to piece together the world that they were leaving behind them—in particular, the East End of London in the late 19th-century. I first stumbled upon Annie Macpherson and her work as I researched my 2008 book *The Blackest Streets* a portrait of the Old Nichol district. The Old Nichol was a place where 80% of its residents lived in what was termed 'chronic poverty', which made it one of the poorest places in the whole of the nation. But perched on the very edge of the slum was Annie Macpherson's 'Home of Industry', a former warehouse, which she also interchangeably called 'The Bee Hive'.



Annie's second Home of Industry - 29 Bethnal Green Rd

Macpherson was deeply embedded in the life of the slum—so much so that her mission work had provoked the envy of more than one local vicar. It was clear that Macpherson was deemed to be a big player in the world of 'rescuing' the poor. She was, by the late 1880s, attracting over 500 people to her Gospel evenings—astonishing in an area in which many parish churches struggled to achieve just 50 worshippers at a Sunday service.

She was an entirely self-made woman— independent and enterprising from an early age. She grew up in Stirlingshire in Scotland, and in 1861 (aged 28) she visited London and quickly fell in with a group of wealthy evangelical Christian

men and women, with whom she visited the slum districts of East London. In February 1869, she rented a three-storey warehouse at 60 Commercial Street,

Whitechapel, and founded her children's refuge-come-training home. (The building is still there, on the southern corner with Flower & Dean Street.) Here, she devised her own individualistic approach to charity: she offered food, shelter and some kind of industrial or domestic training to children, initially boys, but later expanded to girls, then to local wives and mothers. Among the skills-training on offer were tailoring and shoe-mending for boys, and sewing and housekeeping for girls. One of the earliest enthusiasts for Macpherson's work was a young medical student called Dr Thomas Barnardo, who came along to observe and learn her technique saving souls while teaching a trade. Barnardo was inspired by her vision and for a while he even became the equivalent of a PE teacher at the Bee Hive.

In this first version of her Home of Industry, Macpherson found herself on the edge of one of the most deprived pockets of the East End: Annie herself estimated that four people each week starved to death in the surrounding Whitechapel streets, and official figures back up her estimate. In 1869, 154,000 Londoners were reliant on parish 'welfare' relief (of a city population of 3.9 million), but many additional thousands never came forward for help from the authorities. Estimates of London children living rough are as high as 30,000, and one of them, Maggie Fritz, aged 12, arrived at the Bee Hive one night close to midnight. She was brought in by a girl even younger, who could not bear to see homeless Maggie sleeping night after night on a doorstep. The final straw had been seeing other homeless girls kicking Maggie so that they could have the doorstep to sleep on. Maggie was freezing, wet and hungry, with a filthy tear-stained face and matted hair. Macpherson took her in and trained her to become a housemaid.

Macpherson also wrote about a boy named Hugh, whose widowed mother had three other children, another on the way, an aged mother, and a learning disabled 18-year-old-sister all to provide for from her terrible wages as a cigar-maker. Macpherson brought Hugh into the Bee Hive.



Another lad, named 'Punch', about 10, was discovered one night by Macpherson, asleep in a barrel at Billingsgate Market alongside his dog, Little Dosser. Punch made a living of sorts by doing acrobatic tricks and ventriloquism in various East End gin palaces.

For Annie Macpherson, Satan was not just a figure of speech: in her eyes the Devil really did haunt slum areas. These were districts, she wrote, 'where Satan reigns openly'. Spitalfields, Whitechapel and Bethnal Green were, in Macpherson's words, 'the Enemy's territory'.

She was politically aware, too, though: 'God is watching the grasping capitalists and the oppressors of the poor — the grinding taskmasters who cannot wring another farthing out of the toilers,' she wrote. However, in her view, politics was not the arena in which social evil should be fought: it was divine power that would right all wrongs and mete out appropriate punishments at Judgment Day.

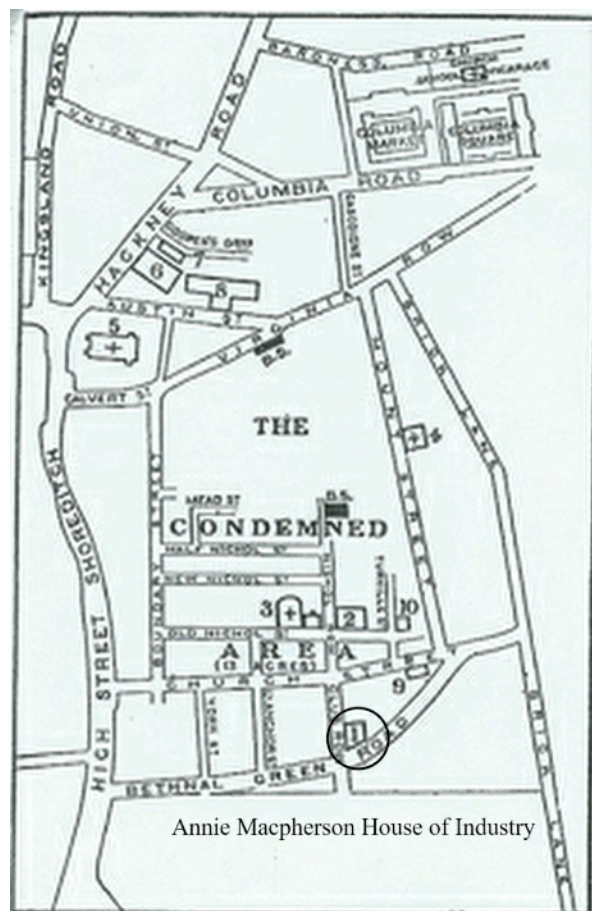
Macpherson moved out of Whitechapel and up to the edge of the Nichol in the 1870s where, as mentioned earlier, her success did not go unnoticed.

She was far from alone, though, in her battles to help Nichol children. The London City Mission in Old Nichol Street had been doing what it could for local children since the 1830s; the Kilburn Sisters were a Church of England sisterhood who offered help to local women and children, as did the lower church Mildmay Deaconesses. There were Sunday Schools and Mothers' Meetings run by two local Church of England vicars (both of whom disliked each other, as well as disliking Macpherson). Larger in scale than all these, though, were the local schools, whose hardworking teachers identified and attempted to direct charitable funds towards the neediest pupils.

Certain teachers in Bethnal Green have left poignant details of how tough life was for some of the poorest children, such as this account, from the late 1880s: 'With the exception of a few small girls, all were poorly dressed and ill-nourished, but none were bare-footed. In Bethnal Green, however poor the children are, some foot covering is worn; it may be in holes, and simply absorb wet, but something they must have. One boy I noticed, as they filed out, had a pair of ladies' dress slippers, with high heels and pointed toes; they had to be tied on across the ankle.'

And another eyewitness noted: 'In the schoolrooms... most were undoubtedly from poor homes; pale, listless children, with the dull look that comes from a diet mainly of bread. Some of them bore signs of neglect on their persons, as well as ragged clothes... The school hours are perhaps the happiest they enjoy.'

It was in order to evacuate children from such seemingly hopeless poverty that Macpherson began her emigration programme, shipping infants to Canada. In my forthcoming talk, on 23 July 2017, I'll explore this controversial



intervention into the lives of the poor in greater depth. For now, here is a brief outline.

Emigrationism (that is, the planned transporting of poor British children to far-flung imperial colonies for re-settlement) had been tried earlier in the century, notably at times when it seemed that the threat of civil unrest, or even outright revolution, was suspected — during times of unemployment, under-employment, and low wages. But such schemes had always been abandoned, largely because of worries about potential labour shortages at home in Britain, as well as the concern about the potential for the abuse and neglect of unsupervised youngsters sent halfway around the globe. However, the cholera crisis that struck London in 1866, the subsequent industrial and agricultural depression, plus a new chief arriving at the Poor Law Board department in Whitehall, saw the British government change its mind once again. There was a financial reason too: historian Joy Parr has calculated that the expense of the fare and arranging foster parents in the Colonies

for a child cost the equivalent of a whole year's stay in a British workhouse. If a child were emigrated instead, that would save the British authorities a whole six years of upkeep in a workhouse.

So that is the background against which Macpherson got her massive emigration scheme under way. By the time of her death in 1904, she had exported over 12,000 London children to Canada.

The government became uneasy, however, at the lack of follow-up undertaken for these children once they had left British shores, and sent an inspector to Canada in 1875 to find out what was going on. He was horrified by the absence of inspection on the part of Macpherson and other emigrating agencies. Although never doubting her integrity, the inspector criticised Macpherson's scheme for its naïve trust in human nature and disorganised approach to placing children with scarcely vetted Canadian families. The children's lives, he wrote, were 'hard and lonely... the little emigrants have been set afloat, and too many of them left to paddle their own canoes.'

Back in Britain, from the radical wing of the Liberal Party, to socialists, and on to Marxists and Anarchists, the inequitable distribution of wealth, and access to opportunities for self-betterment, became the focus of debate as the 1880s wore on. Why, these various voices asked, should poverty be a reason for a child to be exiled from its country of birth? Why should a child 'slave' work for no pay except his/her board and lodging? One anarchist collective, based in Boundary Street, at the other end of the Old Nichol from the Bee Hive, printed a pamphlet entitled 'Are We Overpopulated?', which called for the forced emigration of the idle rich only, since they (and not the poor) were a parasitical drain on the resources of Britain.

On the other side of the argument, there was heated language about why the emigration of the masses should continue, not least as a way of evacuating the poor



1908 group of Macpherson children

from just that sort of seditious talk! The Church of England's Waifs and Strays children's charity wrote of how the poor were vulnerable to 'the poisonous doctrines of Nihilism and Socialism'. Writing in an influential journal in 1883, Liberal MP

Samuel Smith wrote of the massed urban poor as 'foul sewage' who would cause 'terrible disasters' if left untreated. Emigration, Smith wrote, was 'the safety valve to tide over the troubles at home [and make] starving and desperate men into contented and loyal subjects [and] neglected female children into happy, honest mothers of a stalwart colonial race'.

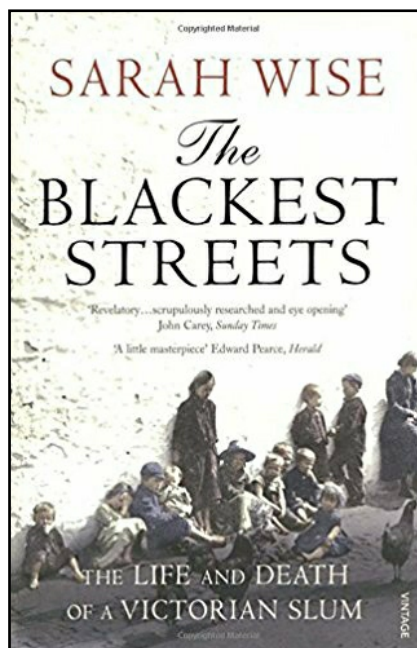
Did Annie Macpherson do the right thing for the wrong reason? Did she do the wrong thing for the right reason? Anyone interested in the plight of the British Home Child and his/her descendants will have plenty to think about while contemplating her extraordinary career.

Sarah Wise

A life-long Londoner, Sarah Wise is a lecturer, author and researcher. She teaches at City University, London. She is the author of *"The Italian Boy: A Tale of Murder and Body Snatching in 1830s London"*, *"The Blackest Streets: The Life and Death of a Victorian Slum"* and *"Inconvenient People"*. Sarah has been awarded the CWA Gold Dagger for Non-Fiction and nominated for the Baillie Gifford Prize.

Sarah has lectured across the world on Victorian England and we are thrilled to have her speaking at our Canada 150 In 2017. For more information on Sarah visit:

sarahwise.co.uk



Honouring the Service of our BHC in our Wars

Cecil Bennett - KIA 9 April 1917

“In those few minutes,” said Canadian Brigadier-General A.E. Ross of the Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge, “I witnessed the birth of a nation.”

“Among Canada’s defining events, the Battle of Vimy Ridge in the First World War ranks high. It was a triumph — a major victory for the Allied side after a long, bloody stalemate — and a tragedy. In the four-day battle, 3,598 Canadians died and another 7,004 were wounded. In the century since it ended, on 12 April 1917, it has become something else: an event bordering on myth.” (From: Vimy Ridge - The Canadian Encyclopedia)

The attack started at 5:30 am on on 9 April, Easter Monday, a bitterly cold and snowy day. The log of the 2nd Division’s 6th Brigade described the battle’s first day: “Wounded men sprawled everywhere in the slime, in the shell holes, in the mine craters, some screaming to the skies, some lying silently, some begging for help, some struggling to keep from drowning in craters.”

“A young private soldier from Sussex, New Brunswick, George Frederick Murray, had as good a vantage point as any, for he was waiting in reserve with the 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles almost at the very centre of the Canadian line and had time to absorb the spectacle unfolding before him. He looked up at the ridge and saw, through the wan light of breaking day, that the entire slope had become a shambles. Every foot of ground was churned and dug up, thousands of gaping shell holes were slowly filling with bloody water, arms, legs, pieces of dismembered bodies; and equipment of both sides was strewn about like garbage - abandoned rifles, steel helmets, bits of flesh, all bound together with a mucilage of mud over which long lines of haggard prisoners and the walking wounded stumbled and groped their way back to the

Canadian lines. And still the guns roared over the carnage.” From Pierre Berton’s book “Vimy”. George Frederick Murray was a British Home Child.

Cecil Bennett born on 3 April 1895, was also a British Home Child. At ten years of age he was brought to Canada by the Dr. Barnardo Homes. Cecil arrived in Canada on 11 April 1905. Twelve years less two days later, he died in

France, on the first day of the Battle of Vimy Ridge,

9 April 1917. We have not discovered who his family was or exactly where he came from, what we do know is that Cecil came into Barnardo’s care alone. The only mention of siblings was of brothers, but they had never been in care of Barnardo’s. There is very little information available. In his

second placement, Cecil was indentured to Mr. Ben Johnston of Cavan, Ontario on 4 September 1907.

He was indentured until 1 April 1913 for a total of one hundred and twenty dollars.

Mr. Johnston was good to Cecil, treating him as a son. He never expected Cecil to work any harder than his own children and ensured he was educated. Cecil enlisted 20 October 1915 in Peterborough, Ontario. His NOK was listed as Ben Johnston. He claimed he was twenty years and five months old. Aside from a bout of influenza in early 1917, Cecil had remained uninjured in the war until 9 April 1917, when he was reported as killed in action in the field. His personal records from the war are sparse and unremarkable. However, his burial

location tells more of his story. Cecil was buried in the Lichfield Crater Cemetery.

Lichfield Crater was one of two mine craters (the other being Zivy Crater) which were used by the Canadian Corps Burial Officer in 1917 for the burial of bodies found on the Vimy battlefield. The crater is essentially a mass grave and contains 57 First World War burials, 15 of



them unidentified. All of the men buried here died on 9 or 10 April 1917 with one exception, a soldier who died almost a year earlier, in April 1916, whose grave was found on the edge of the crater after the Armistice. His is the only grave marked by a headstone. There are 40 Canadians buried there from the Battle of Vimy Ridge, including one recipient of the Victoria Cross. Lichfield and Zivy Crater are the only Commonwealth War Cemeteries on the Western front to be circular in shape. In 1925 Mr. Johnston received a letter from the Department of National Defence stating that the individual graves of the soldiers buried in the Lichfield Crater could not be identified. It was decided to commemorate the soldiers buried there in stone panels in the walls of the cemetery. In 1919 Mr. Johnston was presented with a memorial certificate in Cecil's honour from the Peterborough Board of Trade. In 2014 this certificate was used as the foundation for the BHCARA's First World War Commemoration Plaque unveiled on 23 July 2014, an event attended by BHC descendant Don Cherry. Mr. Johnston lovingly kept all the documentation pertaining to his indenture of Cecil as a young child through his enlistment and death in the war. The documentation was turned over to the BHCARA by Mr. Johnston's granddaughter Wilda Hay. The documents date from a 1907 letter from Barnardo's acknowledging they had received, Mr. Johnston's \$3 application fee for a child, right through to Cecil's death in the war. At this same time, CEO Lori Oschefski acquired another document package relating to BHC Winifred Payne. Among the items in her documents is an original "after sailing notice"; the only one BHCARA is aware of in existence. In 2014 the BHCARA relinquished both sets of information to the *Canadian Museum of History* (formally the Civilization Museum) in Gatineau, Quebec where they have become the foundation in an exhibit which opened on 1 July 2017; Canada's 150 Anniversary of Confederation. It is fitting and appropriate that our BHC have finally taken their place in our national history museum.



BHC in Service

- Over 10,000 BHC enlisted in the First World War
- An estimated 25 thousand served in our collective Wars.
- 689 British Home Children died in 1917 in the Battle of Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele and the Battle of Hill 70.
- 46 are known to have died on the first day of the Battle of Vimy Ridge
- 223 BHC have their names on the Vimy Memorial
- 123 have been identified on the Menin Gate Memorial
- The last surviving Infantry Man from the Battle of Vimy Ridge, Charles Reaper, was a British Home Child.

- Victoria Cross recipient Claude Nunney, was a British Home Child
- Victoria Cross recipient Walter Rayfield was a British Home Child.
- Don Cherry's Grandfather Richard Palamountain was a BHC
- BHC Henry Hickley, KIA, was recommended for the Victoria Cross, received the Distinguished Conduct Medal.
- BHC Albert Edward Ahmed was one of the 4 soldiers whose remains were found by a 14 year old in Hallu, France digging in his garden.
- Two BHC Veteran's remain alive (that we are aware of) George Beardshaw who arrived in 1938 with the Barnardo's, served in the Second World War with the Queen's Own Rifles. Pat Maloney, from Fegans, also served in the Second World War.



In 2017 our British Home Child exhibit, featuring Cecil Bennett and another Home Child, Winifred Payne opened in the Canadian History Hall. The exhibit was a collaboration between the museum, Judy Neville and Lori Oschefski. We are especially grateful to the family of Ben Johnston, the farmer who lovingly cared for Cecil Bennett and his family, who honoured this boy by keeping safe, all his precious and worldly goods.
Canadian Museum of History, 100 Laurier St, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0M8

CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BHC TO OUR SOCIETY

THE SEYMOUR AND THE WARD FAMILY

Florence Seymour was born on the 4th of December, 1891 in Liverpool, England. She was the eldest of three sisters, Rose, born in 1899 and Catherine, born in 1901. Florence and Rose are found living in West Derby in the 1901 census, their mother Emily listed as a widow. Catherine was born very shortly after the 1901 census was taken. Emily's husband was thought to have been an officer in the British Army, but very little is known about him. It is assumed that he died sometime before Catherine's birth in 1901. Emily, like many other single mothers, found herself in a difficult position of trying

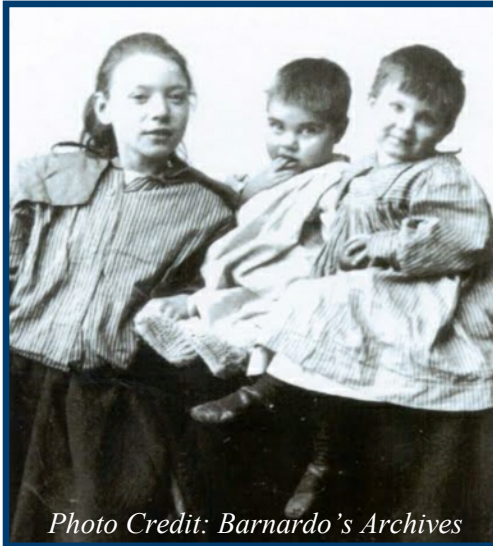


Photo Credit: Barnardo's Archives

to support and raise children on her own. The children were relinquished to the care of the Dr. Barnardo Homes. The exact circumstances and the date remains unknown, but it is thought to have been shortly after Catherine's birth.

Florence was sent to Canada on the 19th of April, 1904 aboard the SS Kensington. Upon arrival she was taken to the Hazelbrae Home in Peterborough, then put out to work. According to the family story, Florence was placed with two spinster teachers. When she finished grade school, the teachers decided she'd had enough education and pulled her out of school to put her to work full time on the farm.

Rose and Catherine arrived in Canada together, also through the Dr. Barnardo Homes, on the 28th of May, 1909. In about 1914, Florence was "adopted" by a physician's family from the USA. When vacationing in Canada, the family met Florence and decided to bring her back to New York as their nanny. The family was good to her and allowed Florence to finish her schooling. She trained as a nurse in the New York Hospitals.

Florence also worked for other families, one taking her to the Jersey Shore to care for their children while on vacation. While working there, she met George Robert Pettit who worked in the area delivering ice for his father's business. Love flourished and couple were married in Manhattan, New York on the 14th of April, 1928. Shortly after, they relocated to West Long Branch.

George Robert Pettit, known as Robert, their first born son, arrived on the 8th of June, 1929. Life was not easy for this new couple and their new born son. With the crash of the

stock market, George, then working with the New York Central Railroad, lost his job. With Florence, having given up her work while pregnant, they found themselves "thrown to the wolves." There were no social systems in place to help families in need. The family managed to survive a few years by George working odd jobs and Florence taking in laundry at 25¢ an hour. Some relief came when in about 1933, West Long Branch, initiated a welfare program. Still the family struggled, on the brink of starvation at times, surviving on an endless supply of potatoes, eating them for breakfast, lunch and dinner!

Two more children were born during this time, Stanley in 1932 and Kenneth in 1936. With a hungry and growing family of five, her husband working odd jobs, Florence was forced to look for more work. Things took another turn for the worse in 1937, when Stanley, only five years old, became seriously ill. By the time the destitute family were able to get medical help, it was too late. Stanley died of a burst appendix.

Florence herself became seriously ill with scarlet fever. Anxious that she would die, her son Robert stayed by her side. With sheer tenacity and a strong will to survive, Florence rallied and continued to fight for her family. She stood up to foreclosure efforts made on their home and thwarted attempts to repossess their family car. However, they lost the battle to keep their home. Things improved when George was hired back by the New York Central Railway and Florence found work making clothing for the troops during the Second World War. The family was never very well off, but Florence and George loved their sons and cared for them the very best they could.

Robert suffered from bullying while in school. At its worst, his nose was broken by other kids beating him up. It was clear to him that there were certainly some bad people in this world. It also was clear to him, that he had to be tenacious and tough to survive.

When Robert was young, his neighbour, Albert, invited him over one night to play with a new chemistry set he'd received. A new passion was born in Robert. At ten years of age he earned enough money by mowing lawns to purchase his own chemistry set. Robert never looked back, becoming one of the world's top organic chemists.

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He specializes in anti cancer treatments and holds sixty-five anti-cancer patents at the Arizona State University. Robert founded the Cancer Research Institute on the campus and pioneered the development of anti-cancer drugs from marine compounds. As a child, Robert has wondered often why fish did not get cancer.

Over the years, Florence's sisters were able to keep in touch with her, often visiting her in the United States. In 1983, Robert was speaking at an international symposium in Paris, when he received a telegram telling him that his mother had died of a stroke, in her sleep.

Rose struggled through many adversities in her life as well, losing her only daughter, Marion Florence, at six months of age and her husband, Frederick Gay, who died at the age of 52 in 1946. Frederick was born in England. He immigrated to Canada in 1914, at the age of nineteen, as a farm worker, much like the BHC. Frederick was an orphan, with three surviving siblings in the UK, but no family in Canada.

Rose and Fred, who married 2 Jun 1921, raised their two surviving children, Stanley and his younger brother Ralph. Stan served with the RCAF in the Second World War, attached to the RAF/Bomber Command, 106 Sqd. Stan was shot down July 7, 1944 and survived a fall with only one arm in a burning parachute and was MIA behind enemy lines till meeting up with Canadian/American D-Day soldiers at end of Aug 1944. Rose's husband was in the Veteran's Guard and also on duty away from home. Rose was left at home, with young Ralph, to cope.

With her tremendous, stamina, possibly a carryover from her childhood, she survived this and the loss of her husband. Rose lived a comfortable life until her death from cancer in June of 1958.

Catherine Seymour, the third sister, moved to Toronto and worked at Eatons Dept Store. She had daughter Barbara Marilyn Claridge in Toronto. Catherine was very religious and very devoted to the church. She was very involved in the Church's activities and wrote the Church's newsletter. Catherine lived to be 92, born in 1901 and passing away in 1993. Barbara graduated as the top Registered Nurse from Toronto General's Nursing class of 1952 and was featured in the Toronto Star and Telegram. She went on to work over 40 years as a Nurse.



Photo credit: 1914
Barnardo's Ups and Downs Magazine

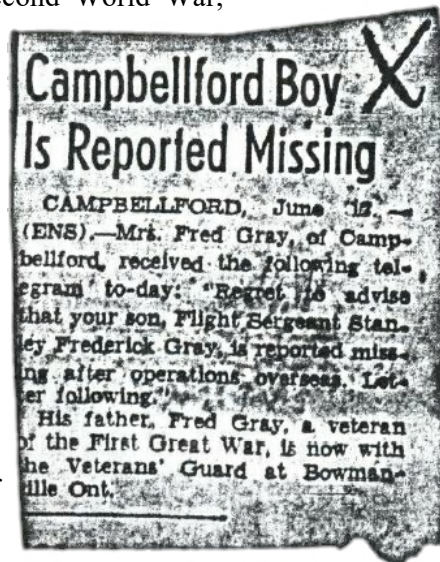
FLORENCE, ROSE AND CATHERINE SEYMOUR.



Catherine and daughter Barb 1952

Barbara married Frank Lloyd Ward, who like Barbara was a first generation BHC descendant. Frank was born in 1925 to son of Stanley Edward Ward and his wife Margaret Lucy Lloyd. Both Stanley and Margaret were BHC.

Frank enlisted in 1943 to RCAF to join his brother Walter, but flying on a Lancaster like Stan Gay, but with the 48th Highlander 514 Squadron.



After the war Frank attended the University of Toronto to become a Industrial Engineer. He was hired at Avro, where he worked on the plans and production of Canada's iconic twin-engine, high-speed fighter-interceptor jet. This jet was being built to be the fastest aircraft. Believing that American missiles were going to make manned fighter jets obsolete, Diefenbaker ordered the Arrow production stopped and all 37 Avro Arrows were destroyed, one of the Prime Minister's biggest mistakes.

Following this Frank secured a salary job, with great benefits, with the Ford Motor plant in Oakville. He worked there until his death from a heart attack in May of 1976. Frank was only 50 when he died.

Barbara continued to care for their two children, Frank and Janice. Barbara died in 2003 at the age of 72 and is buried in the York Cemetery in Toronto, with her husband Frank and mother Catherine.

Stanley Edward Ward & Margaret Lucy Lloyd

Intertwined with the Seymour family we found the Ward family and more notable British Home Children. Catherine Seymour's daughter, Barbara Marilyn Claridge married Frank Lloyd Ward, son of Stanley Edward Ward and his wife Margaret Lucy Lloyd. Both Stanley and Margaret were British Home Children, both brought to Canada with the Dr. Barnardo Homes.

Stanley, born July 22, 1898 in West Norwood, London, England; was one of eight children born to Harry William Ward and his wife Bridget Louisa Baker. Harry and Bridget kept a small shop and unfortunately their married life was an unhappy one, eventually breaking down. As a result, Stanley was admitted to Dr. Barnardo's on 15 January 1908. In April he was transferred to the Chelsea Villas in Felixstowe, Sussex; a seaside convalescent home and holiday home for the Barnardo children. The reason for Stanley's admission is not known.

In September of 1911, with permission from both his parents, Stanley was sent to Canada aboard the SS Corinthian. He was placed with Kenneth McLennan in Slade, Ontario. Representatives of the Dr. Barnardo Homes visited him yearly and their reports describe him as "steady, willing, industrious, truthful, mannerly and gentlemanly in behaviour."

9 Jan 1915 he was moved to Lorne, Ontario to work with William Bland. Reports indicated he had a lump the size of an egg removed from his right elbow. Tuberculosis was feared but his arm healed.

On 25 Jan 1915, in Walkerton, Ontario, sixteen year old Stanley enlisted in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force. He, like many BHC, falsified his age, so he could enlist. His scar on his right elbow was noted and his regimental number was 602243. On 10 August 1916 he proceeded to France. Stanley suffered a severe gun-shot wound to the face. The wall of his lower jaw was smashed and five teeth were missing. After recovering in hospital, Stanley returned to the trenches. In May of 1917 Stanley volunteered to give sufficient blood to another patient in the No 1 Canadian Hospital, Etaples, although injured himself.



Stanley Ward
To Canada age 13 years, 2 months
1911

He was discharged from the Army in July of 1919 with the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. Upon his return to Canada he was admitted to hospital with a tuberculous arm. While in hospital he met a volunteer, Margaret Lucy Lloyd.

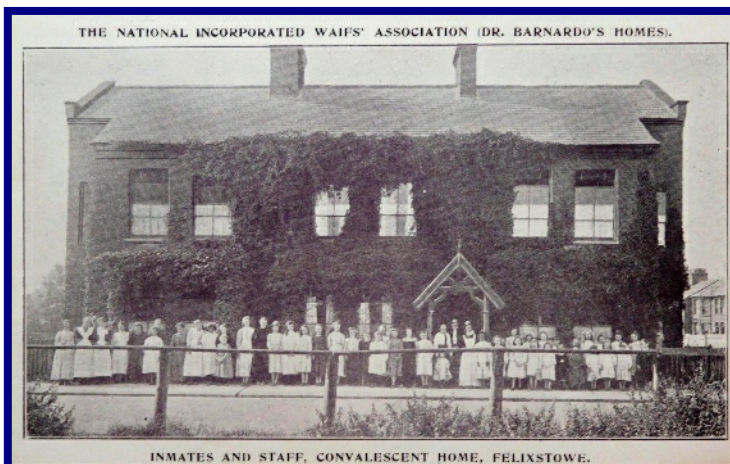
Margaret was born 28 June 1897 in Cardiff, Wales to single mom Dorothy Lloyd. Margaret's birth name was Lucy Margaret Howell. Her mother was working as a dress maker for the famed Howell's Department Stores when she was seduced by J. C. Howell, nephew of the owner James Howell. Howell refused to take responsibility for the child, leaving Dorothy and her mother, Elizabeth Walters, to raise the child without his support.

Dorothy contracted tuberculosis and after a lengthy illness, died in 1903 in the Cardiff Union Hospital. Elizabeth, now a widow, tried to care for Margaret on her own, but a troubled life made that impossible. On 29 April 1905, Margaret was relinquished to the care of the Dr. Barnardo Homes. Initially placed in the Barkingside Girls Village Home, she was later sent to a home in Weymouth, Dorset then boarded out in Stansted, Kent. She was returned to Barkingside shortly before sailing to Canada 8 Oct 1908.

Margaret was taken to the Hazelbrae Receiving Home in Peterborough before being sent out on her first placement with Mrs. Robert Southworth in Cavanville, Ontario. By all written accounts, Margaret fared well in her placement. She was described as a happy child, trustworthy and treated as one of the family. Later in her inspection reports, this comment was made: "*obedient tho rather difficult to manage*". The Southworth's expressed their desire to keep Margaret with them for the next couple of years as she was very happy and very fond of them.

The Southworth family moved to Toronto in September of 1909, taking Margaret with them. Just days before Christmas that year, she was returned to Hazelbrae for being "*wilful and naughty*".

Margaret was moved through several homes before taking a job with Robert Simpson Co, a Canadian department store chain. Margaret also worked as a Bell telephone operator and in 1919, she was a hospital volunteer. While working at the Christie St Hospital in



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Toronto hospital in Toronto, she met her future husband Stanley Ward.

Stanley and Margaret were married 12 May 1922 in York, Ontario. They had three children, Walter, Frank and Melville. In 1930, suffering from mental illness, Stanley was admitted to the Ontario Hospital in Whitby where he remained until his death, due to kidney failure, 17 December 1946. Stanley is buried in the veteran's section of the Groveside Cemetery in Brooklin, located just north of Whitby on highway 12.

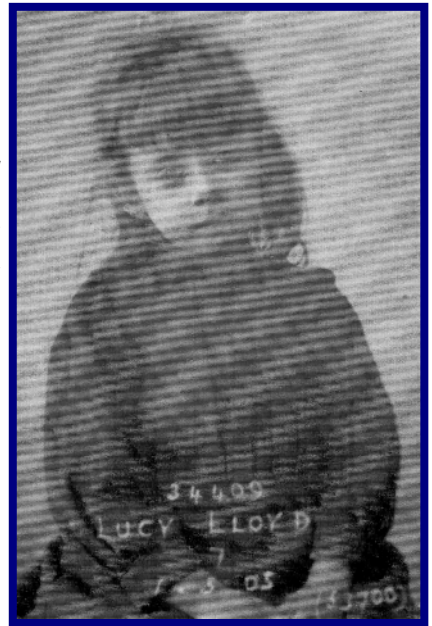
Stanley's illness and subsequent death, left Margaret to raise their three children alone. During Stanley's illness, she worked part time for Elmore's Drug Store. After his death she was employed by the Unemployment Insurance Commission on Richmond Street in Toronto. On 28 January 1965, while traveling home from work, Margaret suffered a coronary thrombosis and died. She is buried in the York Cemetery, the same cemetery as her son Melvin, Frank, his wife Barbara and mother to Barbara, Catherine. At no time before Stanley and Margaret's deaths did they ever tell their children they were British Home Children. This was found out by their son Walter. After visiting friends in England, he was encouraged to look into his own family background and was astonished at what he found!

Like Stanley, most of the Home Boys in Canada enlisted in the First World War. In fact over 10,000 did; a number which represents almost 100% enlistment rate of the Home Boys. Estimates sit between 15,000 and 20,000 enlistments for the Second World War. The numbers of descendants who enlisted are countless. Walter Ward is one of those descendants who served for our country in the Second World War. He flew more than 100 missions over the European war theatre during his time as a pilot with the RCAF 440 Squadron, including on D-Day, June 6, 1944, the Invasion of Normandy. Walter is one of the few surviving RCAF Hawker Typhoon (Tiffie) pilots. He has been honoured in both Ottawa and his home town of Mississauga. The History Channel featured Walter's story in the show "Whistle for a Tiffie". Walter was awarded the Knight of the Legion of Honour medal, France's highest honour for military and civil merits. This award was established in 1802 by Napoléon Bonaparte.

Walter's contributions to Canada did not stop with his military service; he also became a local hero in his post war career as principal of the Gordon Graydon Memorial Secondary School in Mississauga. Although he was offered a full time career in commercial flying, he chose to attend university, graduating with a degree in English. Walter taught English at Gordon Graydon Memorial School for years before he became the headmaster. Walter is remembered by his students as "epitome of cool, a lovable leader with a stylish

flair (he was often celebrated for his artful collection of bowties) *and a daring, Douglas Fairbanks-like moustache. He also had the wonderful capacity to make each student feel special, the only subject of his attention"*(source: 'Ward'ing off the enemy' by Rick Drennan, Mississauga News)

What is clear in the story of the Seymour family and the Ward family, is that they typify the



Margaret, photo credit: Barnardo's archives & Ward Family

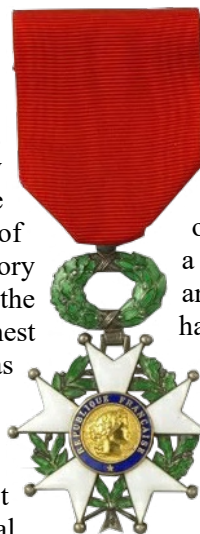
legacy of the BHC, not only in the enormous contributions they made in the building of our great nation and their service in our Wars, but also in the families they raised and the millions of descendants that today, contribute enormously to the the fabric of our nation. Descendants who have compounded the contributions of our BHC immeasurably. BHC struggled and faced tremendous odds against them in Canada. Many did not survive or thrive, and we should never forget that. But we should also remember that most BHC, in spite of their adversities, created families and lives for themselves, wherever they eventually settled.

These children were made to feel ashamed of themselves in Canada. When we look back upon our BHC, we do not look back with shame, but with a great sense of pride. Because of their hardships we are who we are today. Because of their fortitude, we have descendants such as Bob Pettit, Walter Ward, Frank Ward, Barbara Claridge and Stanley Gay. BHC and their descendants have become mayors, Members of Parliament, hockey heroes, TV stars, doctors, lawyers, reporters, war heroes and became regular hard working people; raising families and just getting on with life.

Article put together by Lori Oschefski with notes, information and help from the Ward Family. Personal interview with Walter Ward 18 June 2017. Bob Pettit's story from the book "Waging War on Cancer" by Robert Robert S. Byars - robertsbyars.com



Stanley Ward



The Tears of a Clown

Richard M O'Mahony

The Life of Richard Mandeville O'Mahony Canada's Famous Clown Fifi by Gwynneth Bennet (nee O'Mahony)



Family traditions told of a great uncle who had disappeared in Canada. In 2007 having visited uncles and aunts the only information available was that he had gone to Canada and had become a clown called Fifi. Intensive research over several years revealed, in bite-size pieces, not only a history of Richard but also a previously unknown family in Canada who were unaware of their origins.

The first breakthrough in information came from the online archives of the "Toronto Star". A subscription allowed access to what can only be described as a wealth of information which included advertisements for Fifi's appearances at show and fairs in the area and, in shops at Christmas, and articles that told of his personal life. It became quite clear that Richard was publicly well known. It appeared he had married and had four children. So the immediate research then turned to trying to locate our 'Canadian Family.'

The computer age is wonderful for family research and within the last 8 years the amount of information online has expanded at a tremendous rate. Even back in 2008 there were sufficient resources to access for international information and after a couple of false leads we were able to make contact with the family through lateral thinking and the discovery of a family aunt on Richard's wife's side of the family who luckily had the same initials as his wife. Our approach to the family was welcomed and is wonderful to record that we have a growing and thriving branch of the family in Canada.

The "Toronto Star" confirmed that Richard had started

life in Dover, Kent, England. In the early 1900s Dover was very much a garrison town. John Evelyn O'Mahony, Richard's father, had left Ireland in 1886 when he joined the 21st Hussars. His father Thomas O'Mahony of the Old Square Mitchelstown had been a respected Land Agent who worked for the Kingston Estate. Life for this family erupted due to the political and social conditions in Ireland prior to 1881, culminating in riots and boycotting against the family. They caused the family to leave hearth and home with Thomas and the youngest children going to Liverpool as a family unit. But for the older children it meant dispersal.

John Evelyn was the third son of Thomas to enter the army as his two older brothers had joined the Royal Irish Regiment in Cahir in 1883. John ended his six years' service, which had included action in India, in Canterbury in 1891 and was then on the reserves. Here he met Alice Sinclair, daughter of Richard Sinclair the military artist and photographer. Married in 1891 John Evelyn and Alice spent the early years of their married life in Manchester where their first son and then daughter were born. They appear to have been happy from the tone of letters to and from each other.

This was a time of great poverty in Manchester and they lived in housing designed for the workers in the cotton mills. Overcrowding was rife and often several large families shared a room. Engels, writing at the time, described vividly the shocking conditions of the working classes in Industrial Manchester.

By 1896 when their third child was born they had moved to Dover and were living in a little terraced house in Wyndham Road. John was working for the Hart & Company Furniture Firm. Richard Mandeville was born on the 2nd January 1905 at the house in Wyndham Road, in the Catholic Parish of St Peter. He was the third son and fifth child of John and Alice, but was not baptized until the 30th July 1905.

The Catholic register records his name as Joseph Mandeville which was obviously an error as he was always known and documented as Richard Mandeville. By July, within months of his birth, the family had moved to another terraced house in Heathfield Ave in the shadows of



Richard's parents John and Alice

Dover Castle which dominated the area. This was the first indication of trouble.

Quite what happened in the family to cause the disastrous breakup is not known. With much patient research and in correspondence with the Catholic Children's Society we eventually pieced together some facts.

In October 1905 Richard and his eldest sister Dorothy were placed in the Catholic Children's home for boys which had recently been opened by the nuns in Eastbrook Place, Maison Dieu Rd. We assume Dorothy was placed there (she was the only girl) to care for Richard as he was such a young baby. The other children were also abandoned and were scattered. How long Dorothy was able to stay there is unknown. Richard appears to have been there until 1910 when just months after his 5th birthday he alone, on Thursday 25th August, was at 12:10 pm admitted to the Buckland Dover Union workhouse.

A letter was written by the Guardians on the day of his entry requesting his mother to collect him and the address given for her was 'Poste Restante, Paris'. It also recorded the whereabouts of John Evelyn as unknown. Dorothy is recorded as living in St Mildred's Convent, Minster which was one of the Magdalen Laundries. Richard, alone and unloved, was to remain in the workhouse for six more years. Letters at the time in the workhouse records show the spartan lifestyle and although the children went to the local school they were humiliated by being dressed in striped material and by having shorn hair. But even this must have formed a welcome break from the monotony of picking oakum (the removal of tar from used rope which damaged the fingers).

England had a major problem at this time with so many abandoned and homeless children. Changing thoughts and ideas led to philanthropic attempts to improve the situation by individuals and agencies such, as the Church. A new school in Orpington, St Joseph's Orphanage, was opened by

the Catholic Brothers. Richard was selected to go and was discharged from the workhouse on the 14th July 1916 with the aim of being trained as a farm labourer and ready for a life in one of the former colonial countries. Richard was educated here and we find he learnt to play the piano as well as practical farming skills.



Dover Buckland Union Workhouse

He thus spent the years of the First World War in Orpington. After a hiatus in the transport of children abroad during the War, by 1920 the ships that had been taking soldiers from the USA and Canada home were being released for civilian work and so the transportation of thousands of children started again.

Amongst a few boxes of records recently discovered in the attic of Father Hudson's Society in Coleshill, Birmingham, were Richard's records and thus we have a very clear knowledge of his struggle with life from 1920 to 1926. He was given a choice of destination for emigration and evidently chose to go to Canada. He travelled north to join a group of boys from Father Hudson's. When the boys set off to Liverpool this must have been like a big adventure under the leadership of the Rev Patrick Joseph Healy. On the 27th August 1920 they departed on the RMS Minnedosa. This passenger cargo vessel had been built on the Clyde by Barclay Curle & Co, Glasgow and was launched in Oct 1917. It was scrapped in 1949. We can only imagine the fun and laughter these boys had on the journey heading for a new life. Listed as 'Waifs and Strays' on the ships manifest they were also classified as Catholic Migration Society. They arrived in Quebec on the 4th September 1920.



The St. George's Home in Ottawa

Richard spent the next few months in the St Georges Home Ottawa. This Catholic home placed the newly arrived children into homes and farms in the wider area under an 'indenture' scheme whereby they agreed to work for 5 years for a small amount of pay which was then saved for them and given to them on their release. Richard's first placement could not have been more unfortunate. Laprairie is situated on the south bank of the St Lawrence river overlooking Montreal. To the south of the town was the farm of Ovide Lamarche near the banks of the river, a lovely place in summer but the winters would have been bitterly cold. However the main problem was the fact that this family were French speakers. The experience of these 'Home' children varied

enormously and some became members of the family. Others like Richard were used as cheap labourers. So for Richard his life was once again filled with hurt and rejection. After a few months the nuns realised he was in distress and quickly removed him from Laprairie. He then went to Miss Doyle at Billings Bridge, Russell Co, Thos Stinson at South Gloucester and finally to Miss McGrath at Manotick. He suffered neglect and hardship before completing his indenture in 1926.

Reports in the *Toronto Star* state that Richard ran away to become a clown in the circus, which fits as a romantic witness to the spirit of resilience that must have dwelt deep within the character of this young man. However he was at this stage actually free to make his own choices. We do not know how he came to join the circus but with Bernardi's Circus as a starting ground he developed his innate skill of making people laugh and became Fifi the clown. It was not long before he was being referred to as 'beloved Clown' and 'Canada's Famous Clown'. It is thought that he wished to return to the family and live in the UK but that rejection again haunted him and he returned to being a clown in the Toronto area.

Possibly this added sadness created a reckless state of mind for in 1934 his name hit the newspaper again this time for entering the USA without permission. It is reported that a circus that had fired their clown, Muggo, hired Richard, and had then travelled across the border to Buffalo, USA. There he was apprehended by the authorities.

Richard had to resort to writing to the nuns at the home in Ottawa. This was a beautiful handwritten letter to which the Mother Superior replied by sending a letter of verification to the authorities. He was then able to return home.

The *Toronto Star* recorded the main features of Richard's life for the next few years. As Fifi he performed in many local venues such as Sunnyside, Centre Island, Simpsons Department Store, Royal York Hotel and the Maple Leaf Gardens. One of his most important roles was at the annual agricultural show in Toronto, the Canadian National Exhibition. He also did annual benefit shows for the Orphans Home and the Hospital for Sick Children. This appears to have been a period of relative happiness and normality.

Some time prior to 1938 Richard met Voila McQuain, the daughter of Mr and Mrs Wesley McQuain of Huntsville. She was from one of the pioneering families of that area and had moved to Toronto in 1838. They planned to marry but true to the character of Richard he managed to make this into a drama. Quite what was the truth we will never know but he certainly created a story for the papers. They report that he mislaid the marriage licence and thus the wedding was delayed for six hours. Richard and Voila eventually went to the wedding reception so as not to let down the guests and there they were told that the important piece of paper had been picked up in the street. It was returned via the Rev Parks who was then at a very late hour able to take the ceremony. Despite the nomadic life-style that being a clown imposed on Richard, he and Voila had three daughters and then a son. Richard's roaming life and sporadic work pattern must have caused difficulties, both emotionally and financially, and for many years the children lived in Huntsville with their mum and grandparents. This hard working and selfless couple had wonderful values and they gave the children security and sustenance, but above all taught them by example and expression how to love and have relationships.

The most stable time for the family was during the Second World War when Richard joined the Canadian Royal Air force in 1940 and an income was regular. He naturally took on the role of entertaining the troops and worked in this capacity until November 1943. Sadly, but understandably, Richard, who as a child and infant had never been shown love or been taught to love, was unable to sustain the marriage relationship and thus became yet another member of the extended family to sustain a marriage breakup. In her teens Barbara, Richard's eldest daughter, moved to and worked in Toronto. She read about her dad's life as a clown in the papers but occasionally saw him in the street. In 1947 a series of photos of 'Fifi' when he was part of the Garden Bros Circus were taken by Gilbert A Milne, a professional photographer.



Richard in 1940 R.C.A.F Uniform

In 1976 he was introduced to Bob Hope at the Canadian National Exhibition and was still working in 1984. A final newspaper article reports that he was living a lonely existence in Toronto in poverty. However when he was in hospital a few years later he gave Voila's name as next of kin and although estranged for many years she came to collect Richard and took him home to nurse him back to health. He thus was known latterly to his children prior to spending the last few years of his life in a nursing home in Toronto.

On Nov 11th 2002 Richard died aged 97 years. He is remembered by a plaque on the wall in St John's (Norway) Cemetery, Scarborough, Toronto. We found him just six years too late as we would dearly love to have told him about his English family. A photo taken of him at this stage life bore a close resemblance to our dear uncle Pat.



*Photo credit:
G A Milne*

Throughout his life of tears
Richard "the Clown" had the great
gift and ability to make people laugh.



Fifi meets Bob Hope

Sources:

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A Home Child's Brush with Royalty

By Beryl Young

I'm sure my father who was a Barnardo Home Child would ever have dreamt he would one day ride in the back seat of a limousine with a future queen!

Here's how it happened. My father, Charlie Harvey, was born in Southampton, England in 1897 and was sent to a Barnardo Home when his mother was left as a widow with eight children. When Charlie was taken by a neighbour to the Stepney Barnardo Home in London, the tram they were riding probably passed the mall leading to Buckingham Palace where King George V, grandson of Queen Victoria, was in residence.

Charlie was sent to Canada in 1911 when he was thirteen and worked in farms in southern Ontario with both bad and good conditions. He enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in WWI and was injured the last day of the disastrous Battle of the Somme. Returning to Canada he signed up with the RCMP and began a career working in almost every province across the country. He married in Saskatchewan where my brother and I were born, and just a few years before retirement was sent from Ottawa to a plum posting as Inspector in Victoria, B.C.



It was 1951 and Buckingham Palace had announced that twenty-five-year-old Princess Elizabeth and her husband Prince Philip would tour Canada in October. Their five week tour went from Newfoundland, across the country to Victoria on Vancouver Island where my father had responsibility for security. After a busy tour of Victoria, a well-earned private rest had been planned for the prince and princess at Eaglecrest, a resort two hours north of Victoria.

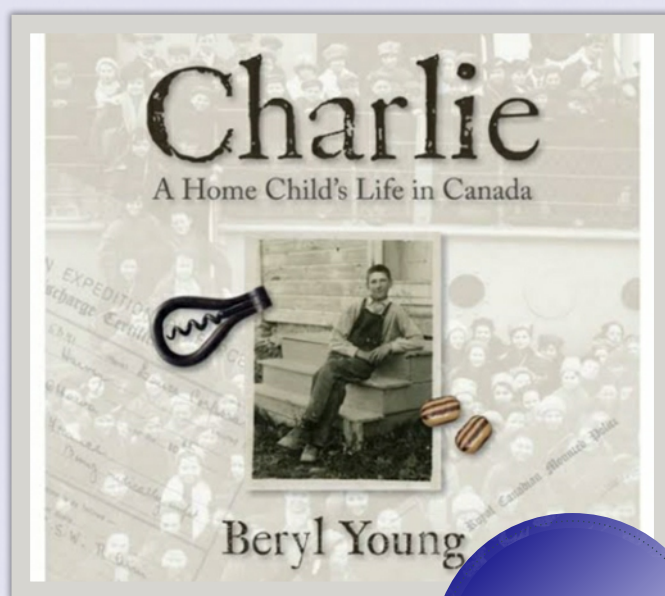
I was in high school and I could hardly wait to hear my dad's report of the trip. He was to ride in the front seat beside a driver with the royals in the backseat of the black Cadillac

announced that he would like to drive. The prince had a reputation for speeding, and my father said, "How do you say no to prince?" So Prince Philip drove up Vancouver Island with the man appointed as driver sitting beside him; the Princess and my father sitting together in the back seat. The trip was made even more memorable when a hitch-hiker attempted to hail the royal car from the side of the highway. The astounded young man watched as a black Cadillac, complete with the flapping royal flag, sped by him at over 160 kilometres an hour.

Of course I'd told all my friends at school that my father and Princess Elizabeth had travelled together, no doubt implying that the two had become good friends, but my father was a close-mouthed RCMP officer and all he'd told me was that the Princess was "a very nice person."

A short time after the royal couple returned to England, they left on another tour, this time to Enya. It was here on February 6, 1952 they received the news that her father George VI had died and the Princess became Queen of England. This was just four months after my father met her. Many years later after my father died, I decided to write the story of his life. The book was published as in 2009, and has been a best-seller, now into three printings.

I still marvel at this true Canadian immigrant story when a boy from a poor family in Southampton, England can make a success of his life in Canada and one day ride in a limousine beside a future Queen.



Charlie is an award winning best selling book. Author Beryl Young tell's her father's story in a compelling and interesting way. It's enjoyed by both young children and adults. It is the number one pick for children by the BHCARA.

**BHCARA's
#1 pick for
children**

When Mr and Mrs Hampson left for Canada in 1850 and all that has happened since

By Author and Historian Andrew Simpson

Now right at the start I shall wish you all a happy 150th from this side of the Atlantic.

In this internet age it is easy to forget that for most of human history news of wars, deaths and marriages took much longer to become public knowledge. So on July 25 1867 when the Canadian mail steamer Peruvian arrived in Liverpool, the news it carried from Canada was already twelve days old.

The Manchester Guardian reported that the ship brought the Quebec papers, commenting that they contained “no items of importance from the United States” but went on to single out a selection of “the most interesting Canadian Items.”

These included an address from the Bishop and clergy of the Church of England Diocese of Quebec, expressing satisfaction at the appointment of Lord Monck as the governor of the Dominion of Canada, news that “Cabinets were in the course of formation for the local division of the provinces” and “the weather in Canada was fine.

Adding, “that the crop accounts are generally cheering with those in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick promising an abundant yield.”*

The ship had docked with 72 cabin and 60 steerage passengers, a fair few of whom were wealthy enough to have been accompanied by their servants, including a number of nurses employed to look after the children.

And in the spirit of the age few of the women amongst the 72 were named and of course none of their servants or any of the steerage

passengers is known to us. General Burrows was listed with lady, two children and servant; Captain Brown, lady, infant and nurse and so it goes on.

Travelling in the opposite direction a full decade and a bit earlier were four of ours who will have been “steerage” and would certainly not have been recorded by name.

They were the Hampson family from Salford who strictly speaking belong to my cousins from Ontario, but they are the start of our long connection with Canada.

James Hampson was born in 1816 and married Sarah Tildesley in December 1838 at the Parish Church of Eccles. In 1841 he described himself as a cotton dyer and in that year was living in Pendleton. Sometime after 1849, James, Sarah and their children left for Canada which was a popular destination for emigrants.

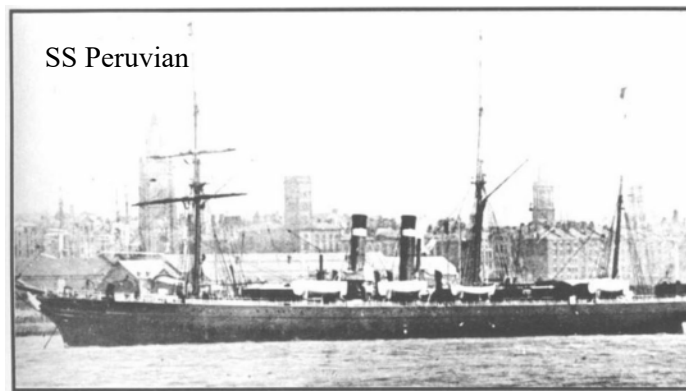
Now I can be fairly certain of this because their last child was born in England in 1849 and the Canadian census of 1851 records them as there.

Thousands of people, many of them from Ireland left these shores in the nineteenth and early twentieth century's. Most



hoped that a new country would mean a fresh start with new opportunities and a better life.

The 1840s were a hard time for all but the rich and there were schemes to resettle working families across the Empire. This was a policy that was actively pursued by the Poor Law Commissioners with parochial aid or assistance from local landlords.



SS Peruvian

The Commissioners reported that over 2,000 had gone to Canada in 1841 which was an increase on the year before, and that assistance was also being given to move to Australia and New Zealand.**

The main sea port for their departure was Liverpool and in the hundred years from 1830 to 1930 over nine million emigrants sailed from the port to the US, Canada and Australia.

I don't think we will ever know

exactly why the Hampson's left and there is no record of when they went but they were part of a steadily rising number of people which reached a high point in 1849.

Even today the decision to emigrate cannot be an easy one to take, but a hundred and sixty seven years ago the cost, the problems and the very real dangers must have weighed heavily.

A ticket for just one person travelling on the cheapest passage might be three to five times James's weekly wage, and of course there were four of them.***

Then there were the ever present threats from unscrupulous dealers, ship owners and the crew who might cheat the passengers at every turn of the journey.

Lastly there was the sea passage itself, a trip of a month in a sailing ship at the mercy of an unpredictable weather on the open sea, crammed together with people some of whom were ill with disease.

So, taking that decision was as much an act of faith as it was a rational choice with a secure conclusion.

The ships might hold up wards of four hundred passengers although some like the Isaac Wright could carry 900 people. The Hampson's could expect a fairly basic diet on the journey. Each passenger was given a weekly ration of bread, rice, tea, sugar as well as oatmeal flour, molasses and vinegar and one pound of pork. Passengers could however supplement this with their own provisions but there was an upper limit. There are contemporary stories of passengers being cheated of their rightful ration either because it was delivered late or just not at all.

Conditions on board were not ideal. Packed together there was the ever present threat of disease and death.

All the passengers were by law inspected by a doctor before they embarked but this did not always prevent the outbreak of illnesses. In one month in 1847 twelve ships making landfall at Grosse Island reported a total of 198 dead passengers out of just over 3,000.

Some ships arrived safely with no deaths others like the Bark Larch from Sligo lost 108 of its 440 passengers with another 150 reported ill. The highest death rates seemed to be ships bound from Ireland escaping the effects of the famine some years earlier.****

The Hampson's arrived safely and prospered in their new home, and in the fullness of time my great uncle was migrated across in 1914 by the Derby Union in the care of Middlemore and nine years later his sister made the same journey on an Empire Assisted Scheme.

Our story is not unique but it is our story and it is one which binds us to Canada in this month of the 150th anniversary.

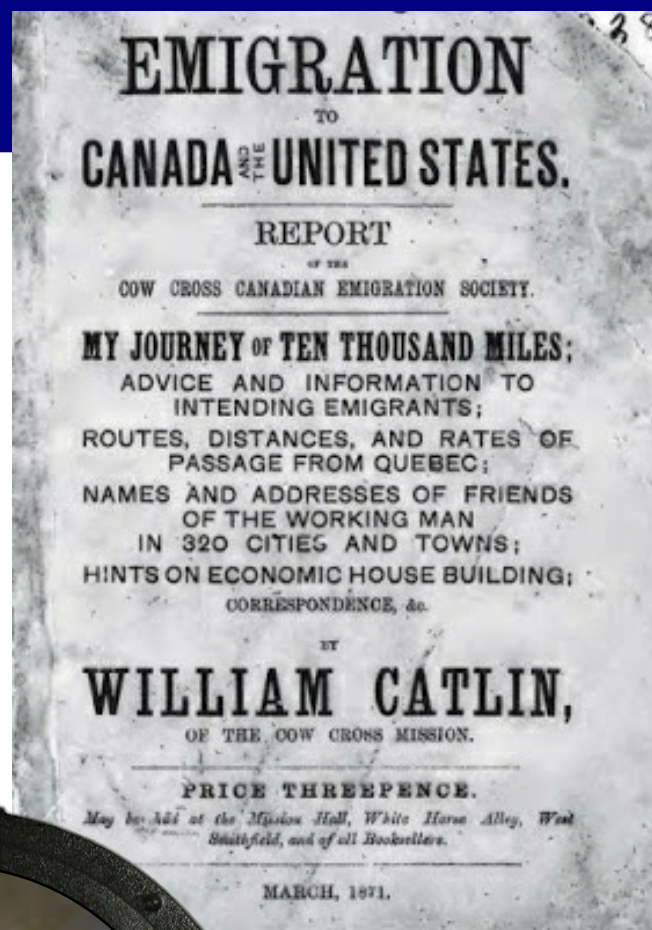
Nor is it over. My great aunt returned briefly to Britain in 1968 with one of her sons, and our Saul who is currently working in Poland made the journey to Ontario in the winter of 2015, and one day I hope to follow him across.

*Arrival of the Peruvian, Liverpool, Wednesday, Manchester Guardian, July 25, 1867

**The Eighth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, HMSO 1842, page 37

*** In 1847 a ticket might cost between £3.10/- and £5. From The tide of emigration, The Illustrated London News, July 1850

****Immigrants to Canada, <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/thevoyage.html>

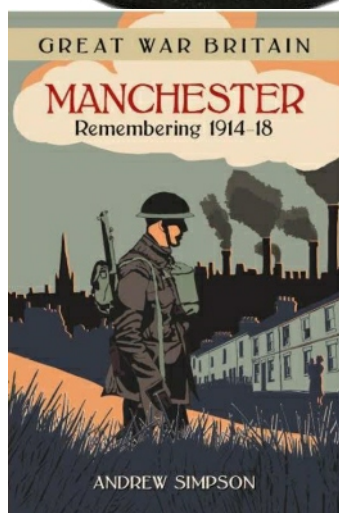


Saul Simpson

Andrew Simpson

Andrew Simpson, from Manchester England is an accomplished Author and Historian. One of our most widely read contributors, he has been writing articles for the BHCARA newsletter since 2015. Andrew has recently published the book Manchester Remembering 1914-18. His other books include *The Story of Chorlton-cum-Hardy*, *Manchester Pubs*, *Hough End Hall*, *The Story Didsbury Through Time* and *The Pubs and Bars of Chorlton*. Coming soon is his next book *The history of the Together Trust*. Andrew's articles provide an insightful and interesting perspectives on child immigration from the home land of our BHC.

You can read more from Andrew at:
www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca



THE CHILDREN'S TRUNKS BY MARJORIE KOHLI

All of the agencies involved in bringing children to Canada used some sort of trunk or duffle bag to hold the possessions of each child. Many organizations used trunks which were made right in the institution by the boys themselves. To date I have never seen a duffle bag, except in pictures, but many of the trunks, being more durable, still exist. It may, therefore, be interesting to take a look at some of these trunks and at the kit they contained.

Trunks varied in shape and size. Some were very plain wooden boxes, some looked like they were covered in alligator skin and some were very fancy in their design. Almost all had the name of the child painted on and sometimes there were other items glued on the inside of the lid, for example, Fegan's Dos and Don'ts. Trunks were used

yard and stowed in the hold of the ship. The trunk, or large duffle bag, was usually marked, in many cases, "Not Wanted on Voyage" or some similar phrase. I have a picture in my mind of the first Indiana Jones movie and of a man in a warehouse wheeling a cart with the Ark upon it into this vast space piled high with other boxes. The ships hold may have looked much like that.

When making the voyage, however, a child required some belongings on the crossing. These few items were often placed into a cloth bag of sorts, where today we would use a backpack. In the very early days the children also had to carry utensils and some dishes with them as these were not provided onboard ship. This was not unique to the children this was standard for anyone travelling in steerage at the time. Annie Macpherson gave us this information for her first group. She stated the children had "a canvas bag across their shoulders [which] contained a change of linen for the voyage, towels, tin can, bowl, and mug, knife, fork and spoon". After a time the shipping lines did provide dishes, towels, soap and many other necessities which we today take for granted.

The contents of the trunks varied from time to time and changed over the years as clothing and styles changed. For example, the trunk of a boy sent out by Quarrier Homes in 1872 contained: 3 suits, 4 pair socks, 4 shirts, one box of collars, writing material, 1 pair boots, Bible, Pilgrim's Progress and a pocket knife. It took only two years for the home to realize the lads required some additional gear. So, in 1874, the following additions to the kit were made: another pair of boots, another shirt, two neck ties, a cravat, a Balmoral cap (similar to a tam), a straw hat, long boots for winter and a topcoat for the older boys. Winter wear was not very noticeable in the early years but this too changed.

The worst equipped children were those brought over by William John Pady between 1890-1894. The boys were only given a Bible, 2 scarves, 3 collars, 1 tie, 2



Quarrier's Girls boxes en route for Canada

by most of the major agencies. However, some of the smaller institutions used duffle bags for their emigrants.

The worldly possessions of each child were packed away in a trunk or duffle bag and loaded onto wagons to make the trip to the railway station. From there they were taken to the dock

suits of clothes, 3 cotton shirts, 1 Scotch cap, 2 pair of socks, one pair of boots, and a thin Inverness overcoat with no sleeves. This type of overcoat would have left the boys very ill equipped for a Manitoba winter!

The "housewife", or sewing kit, was included for both boys and girls. The children were taught to sew on buttons and darn socks, skills that have become a lost art today. Some agencies included several yards of cloth in the girls kit so that the young lady could make herself an additional frock.

One might wonder at the "writing materials" that seemed to be included in most of the kits but the children were encouraged to write letters especially back to the home. Louisa Birt, in 1892, requested the children give her some summer news. She wrote "I should like your answers to this to give me an account of some of your summer occupations and pleasures, so that your people at home shall not think that there is nothing but winter and snow in Canada." In reality it was more often in the winter that the children had time to write as life on a farm was very hectic during the growing season.



St Nicholas Boys, Catholic Party with duffle bags

In the 1904 report of the Inspector of British Immigrant Children, George Bogue Smart, he commented on the "Large selection of wholesome reading matter and note paper" which was in the kit of the Fegan boys. Pilgrim's Progress is no easy read so I admire those of the children who did make the effort to read this book. Over time, however, Fegan's and Barnardo's added other books to the kit including a travel guide.

The girls required a different kit but the writing paper and books were still included. The National Children's Home (NCH) supplied: a jacket, 3 frocks, 4 petticoats, stays, 2 drawers, 2 pair combinations (underwear), bloomers, 3 bodices, 2 nightdresses, 4 pair socks, boots, shoes, slippers, 10 aprons, six caps, cuffs and collars, felt hat, tam-o'shanter,



National Children's Home Party

2 pair gloves, umbrella, scarf, bags, brushes, combs, handkerchiefs, 2 yards calico, supply of needles, thread, etc. It was the girls' kits which changed the most over time due to the change in style - most notably in the undergarment area.

Quarrier's kit for girls was not much different from that of the NCH but the description of the items was more embellished. It included: a nicely trimmed dress and hat for Sabbath wear, 2 print dresses for summer, a dark hat and warm dress for winter, one dress to travel in, liberal supply of underclothing (for summer and winter), 3 pair boots, 4 pair stockings, ties, gloves, collars, aprons, pinafores, warm Ulster [loose long overcoat] for onboard ship, jacket, hood and scarf, Bible, Pilgrim's Progress, writing materials, brush and comb in bag, work-bag with needles, pins, thread, worsted for darning, etc.

Along with the standard dresses and aprons Maria Rye provided her girls with three night gowns. The kit also included both cotton and flannel petticoats and tops, three pair of cotton and the same of warm stockings, and a "warm brown Ulster coat". She also noted that the possessions were packed in: "1 box, addressed".

By 1925, the Macpherson girl's kit had not changed substantially even if the style was updated but housecoats, slippers, lingerie and felt hats were making an appearance. The kit now included: 1 winter coat, 2 hats (1 straw, 1 felt), 1 cap, 3 service frocks, 1 working frock, 1 winter best frock, 1 woollen house coat, aprons, 2 sets underwear lingerie, 2 print dresses, 4 print aprons, 3 white aprons, 5 pair stockings, 2 pair boots, 1 pair slippers, handkerchiefs, 1 hair brush and comb, 1 housewife (sewing kit) and other necessary perquisites, Bible, writing material.

The boys were later given such items as running shoes, rubbers, woollen underwear, garters, laces, studs and links, waterproof jackets, clothes brushes, jerseys, tooth brushes, earflap caps, and nightshirts. This warmer gear would have been appreciated by the boys.

In contrast to the kits of the children is a list of necessities recommended by the Canadian Immigration Agents in 1912 to prospective adult farmers. The description of the clothing is quite extensive so it is difficult to compare it to that of the children. They recommended:

1 heavy woollen suit, 1 heavy moleskin working suit with sleeved vest (this may be dispensed with if plenty of good, heavy, warm suits of old clothes are taken), 1 army wool tweed reefer jacket, lined with serge or 1 frieze overcoat, lined

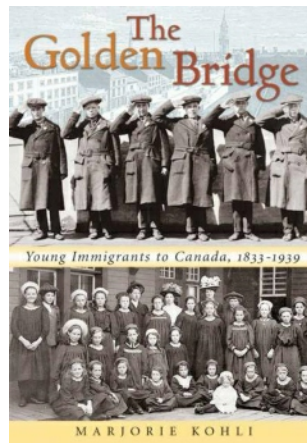
One thing is for sure, the children must have prized these boxes because many have survived. They pop up from time to time in auctions or when someone cleans out a barn, attic or basement. Sometimes they are not recognized for what they are so you should keep your eyes peeled for you may find a treasure.



The 1910 Annie Macpherson trunk of Henrietta Wren Stratford Ontario

Marjorie Kohli

Author Marjorie Kohli Marjorie Kohli was born in Calgary, Alberta, and spent her formative years migrating, with her military family, through the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Manitoba before settling in Waterloo, Ontario. A graduate of the University of Waterloo (UW), she worked at UW as a computer consultant from 1969 until 2003.



In her book, "The Golden Bridge", she has meticulously documented the incredible story of the removal of thousands of "waifs and strays" and young men and women, primarily from the UK and Ireland. They braved the perilous voyage to an unknown future in Canada, ultimately being placed throughout the Maritimes, Ontario, Quebec and westward as far as British Columbia.

The most comprehensive resource of its kind, The Golden Bridge promises to be an indispensable tool for family researchers with a "home child" ancestor, and of interest to those unfamiliar with this aspect of Canadian history. This extensively researched book incorporates background detail on agencies and key organizers such as Maria Rye, Annie Macpherson, Thomas Barnardo and William Quarrier, along with lesser knowns including Ellinor Close and Charles Young. It is available for purchase on amazon.ca and many book stores.

Marjorie's article on the children's trunks first appeared in the The British Home Child Newsletter of the BHC-SIG of the Ontario Genealogical Society September 2016



Note small canvas bag for taking onboard ship

tweed, 1 waterproof or oilskin coat, 1 pair heavy cord riding pants, 1 pair corduroy knickers, 1 warm cap with ear flaps, 1 felt slouch hat, 1 straw slouch hat, 6 flannel shirts, 3 suits natural llama underclothing, 6 cotton shirts, 2 suits pyjamas, 1 cardigan jacket or wool jersey, 12 pair socks, 3 pair stockings, 12 handkerchiefs, 2 pair boots, 1 pair bluchers boots, 1 belt, 1 pair slippers or canvas shoes, 1 pair braces, 1 pair puttees, 2 pair mittens and 1 jack knife.

The numbers may vary, for example 12 pair of socks and Handkerchiefs instead of four, but for the most part the boys were being properly equipped.

A box was found in the basement of a family home not long ago. It was packed with military uniforms, nurse's items, pictures and other things. It had belonged to Alice Knight Ross who came to Canada with Macpherson Homes in 1886 at the age of only four years. Alice became a nurse and served during World War I in Greece.



1895 Barnardo Trunk of Richard Williams



1925 Church of England, Waifs and Strays
Fred Foreman



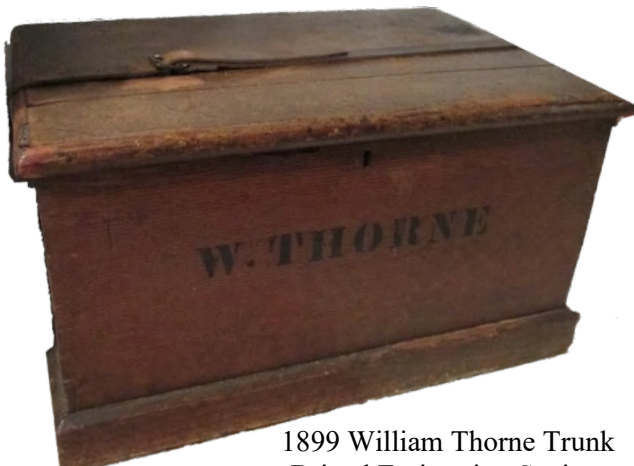
A Quarrier Home Trunk date unknown



Quarrier's trunk of James McNay



1907 trunk of George McDowell - Smyle Home



1899 William Thorne Trunk
Bristol Emigration Society



Two Fegan
Boys with
their trunks

Our British Home Child, George Craig

By Donna Diebel on behalf of the Craig Family

George Craig was born on August 25, 1895. His family's origins on both his father and mother's sides lay deep in the overcrowded slum streets and alleys of the Old Nichol area of Bethnal Green (the east end of London as immortalized by Arthur Morrison, in his book *"A Child of the Jago"* or told historically in Sarah Wise's recent book *"The Blackest Streets"*.) The youngest son of a Boot Laster, censuses show his family moved constantly. Either moving just a few streets or often living with several other families just to survive.

George was the youngest of his parents' eight children. In 1900, George's father, Thomas Craig was admitted into the Hackney Workhouse and resided there until his death in the workhouse in 1905.



Photo credit: Barnardo Archives
& Diebel family

In May of 1907, the Annie MacPherson Home recorded that *"George (age 11) came under their care as his father met with an accident 18 months ago and died. Mother was in poor circumstances (age 54) unable to support him; married daughter shelters the mother."* Due to George being from a single-parent family and a long history of poverty, his mother had the best of intentions when she admitted him into the Annie MacPherson Home of Industry in London.

On July 25th, 1907, George departed Liverpool, England aboard the S.S. "Tunisian" (with the 92nd Party of Children with the Mr. Merry Party) and arrived eight days later in Quebec, Canada on August 2nd, 1907. George and the other children from this "party" were sent on to one of Annie MacPherson's homes (51 Avon Street) in Stratford, Ontario. From here, the children were placed out in various locations in Southern Ontario. George was sent to farm in Moorefield, Ontario where he first lived with Mr. Frederick Jacob Weitzel. He reported in

a letter home to his mother, that he *"seems to be doing not so badly at all"* and stating he *"liked his work in Canada and would soon be starting school."* In 1909, George had the opportunity to work for Charles and Margaret Christie and their family of two young children on their farm just outside of Moorefield. Only a short while later, the Christies' chose to give up farming; as they had the opportunity to run a Temperance House in Moorefield. While George enjoyed working for the Christie family, he preferred farming. Thus in 1912, he went to work for Fred Stricker. In all three cases, he was a hired as a labourer working for board, wages and sometimes his clothing. All Canadian British Home Children reports stated, that *"he was a hard worker; who was kept busy; with very few days off for pleasure."*

George was also regarded "as a good lad who was strictly honest" and it was noted he "was a good saver of his wages." Such high praise makes his descendants proud!

When the war broke out in 1914, there was a lot of encouragement for young, able bodied men to enlist. George enlisted and joined the 34th Battalion of the Canadian Army in Guelph, Ontario in 1914. He was sent to Winnipeg, Manitoba for his medical on December 18, 1914. By this time, his mother had remarried in England and George returned to London in the spring of 1915. Before going off to serve he had the opportunity to have a photo taken in his Canadian army uniform with his mother and new step-father, George Samuel Cottrell Byerley, a Middlesex toymaker. We

understand that George was never fond of his new step-father whom had four children with one being approximately George's age.

By September 1915, enough soldiers had been recruited to enable formation of a full county-based battalion. This new battalion was assigned the



George & Amelia with some of their Grandchildren (Donna on George's lap)

number 116. Despite repeated attempts to break up the battalion in England and France, the 116th remained together and fought in Europe as a complete fighting unit with distinction with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in England, France and Belgium, earning battle honours as follows: Somme 1916; Arras, 1917, Vimy 1917; Hill 70: Ypres 1917, Passchendaele; Amiens; Arras, 1918; Scarpe 1918; Drocourt-Queant; Hindenburg Line, Canal du Nord; Cambrai, 1918; Valenciennes; France and Flanders, 1916-1918.



Sadly during the war, George suffered the loss of some of his hearing and lived with the use of a hearing aid for the remainder of his life.

After the war in 1919, he married Amelia (nee Webb) Bannister in Oldham, England who was a war widow with a 3 year old son named Harold. (While no one really ever asked how they met, our Uncle Short would often joke that they "had met in an air raid shelter in England.") After their marriage in England, they chose to leave England for Canada. With roots and friends now in Canada, they made Guelph, Ontario their home. In 1920, they had their first daughter Doreen (born in Oldham, England) and had the remainder of their children in Guelph. In 1921, they had their second daughter Phyllis. In 1925, had their son George William and then in 1930, their youngest son, Donald Kenneth, my father.

Very early in their marriage, they purchased a home at 66 Water Street in Guelph. George was employed with the Guelph Transportation Commission; working his first five year as a track repairman, then as a car barn garage worker for the next 33 years. On December 3, 1963, George chose to retire. On January 13, 1964 George suffered a heart seizure in his bank on St. George's Square in Guelph. He was pronounced dead on arrival at St. Joseph's Hospital after efforts by the inhalator squad of the Guelph Fire Department failed to revive him.

At the time of my grandfather's passing in 1964, I, at the age of 2, was

the youngest of his grandchildren. In conversations with my mom, older brother and cousins, they recall our Grandfather being very kind and gentle. As he was somewhat deaf, he didn't speak to us children very much but all recall that he used to sit back and smile at the family when we were all gathered together. While he was very quiet, no one ever recalls him either reprimanding or losing his patience with us. He was both a gentle man and a gentleman.

My Grandfather never spoke of the fact that he was a British Home Child. In fact, news of

his passing in the Guelph Mercury newspaper stated "he was born in England and moved to Canada with his family settling in Moorefield." We are not even sure if our Grandmother knew. After his passing, through his friendship with a neighbour, Mrs. Geddes, the family finally pieced together the fact that he was a British Home Child. His BHC trunk that he arrived in Canada with in 1907 remains in the family. Even through all of this, he always spoke lovingly of his mother Cordelia; and we as a family now understand and respect her sacrifice of sending her youngest child away. We feel that he must have understood that. Like most of his ancestors before him, our Grandfather suffered a hard life, but remained a real cheerful and hard-working Cockney. On behalf of our entire family, we are grateful and indebted to our Grandfather. The choices he made and the life he lived,

has made a better life for all of us who followed him...and we thank him for that!

Donna Diebel

Donna Diebel has made her life in Kitchener, Ontario, not far from Guelph. We are very privileged to have Donna as our co-host for our Canada 150 BHC Family Reunion held on 23 July 2017 at the Waterloo Region Museum and Doon Heritage Village, Kitchener, Ontario. Donna's passion and dedication to this event has made it a resounding success!



George and his mother Cordelia

Marjorie Skidmore nee Arnison: British Child Migrant, aka British Home Child, sent to Canada in 1937

by Patricia Skidmore



Marjorie, holding 'Her Story.'
December 2012. (Photo by Joan Skidmore)

School - was passed down to me. It has taken until just recently to feel a sense of tremendous pride in being her daughter. This mainly came about from researching and finally finding my mother, Marjorie's buried past and then writing about her Home Child experience in my book, *Marjorie Too Afraid To Cry*. My mother, Marjorie, was by my side the entire time. I started with a simple photograph (the top photograph used on my book cover) - we only had the one photo of her as a child when I began my research, and 'her story' grew around that first image.

British Child Migration to Canada began as early as 1833 and continued until 1948 - however I have heard that some children arrived after that date. During this 115 plus years, over 120,000 child migrants were brought to Canada. Many of these children were placed in harsh, isolated and loveless environments and were expected to work long hours. As adults, far too many kept their home child experience from their families and friends, thus many of Canada's important historical stories are buried. I am so grateful that I was able to go back in time, with my mother, as once the door to her past was opened, the hidden memories trickled out. (Note - worldwide British Child Migration has a 350-year history - with the first groups of children being sent to the then colony of Virginia in 1619 and the last child migrants were sent to Australia up until the mid 1970s.)

In 1925, a stop was placed on child migration to Canada. This came about because in the spring of 1924, Margaret

Let me introduce myself. My name is Patricia Skidmore. I am a daughter of a British Child Migrant, Marjorie Skidmore, nee Arnison. It has taken me most of my life to 'admit' to being a daughter of a "Home Child" - as my mother's fear and shame, which began when she was removed from her mother's care as a 10-year-old girl, then taken away and sent to Canada and finally treated so poorly at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm

Bondfield, from the British Overseas Settlement Department, headed a delegation to look into child migration. The group toured Canada for just under 2 months. The Bondfield Report was completed in November 1924. Overall the system met their approval, but it was recommended that no children should be transported until they had reached the age of fourteen, the school leaving age in Britain, as the children sent to Canada were mainly sent to work. They reported that younger children could also be vulnerable to abuse. As a result, the British government announced that it would no longer offer financial assistance for immigrants to Canada if they were under the age of fourteen. The Canadian government supported the decision and enacted regulations in April 1925 banning the entry of children under fourteen and unaccompanied by their parents or guardians. This ban was set in place for a three-year period. In 1928 the ban on unaccompanied children under the age of 14 was made permanent. Even with this ban, child migrants were still sent to Canada, though not in great numbers.

Then in 1934, despite the federal government ban, the Prince of Wales (later - King Edward VIII who abdicated the throne) spearheaded a campaign to raise money to open further Fairbridge Farm Schools in the British Colonies, such as the one opened by Kingsley Fairbridge in 1912 at Pinjarra, Western Australia. The London Times ran a 4-page spread on June 21, 1934. It stated in this article that: "It is no exaggeration to say that the Fairbridge Farm School scheme is the only completely successful form of migration at the present time." And it went on to report that: "This is not a charity, it is an Imperial investment."

British Columbia had little experience with British child migration. The Fairbridge Society approached the BC government and over time, was successful in gaining their support. The federal government relaxed its position, providing the Fairbridge Farm School Society did not expect any financial support from them. The Fairbridge Farm School Society also made the parents and guardians sign over guardianship of the children they were bringing in to Canada and the Society promised the Canadian governments that they would be responsible for the children until they reached 21 years of age.

The Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School, located off the Koksilah Road - near Cowichan Station, just south of Duncan, on Vancouver Island, BC, was the first result of this campaign. This farm school opened with the first party of 41 children arriving in September 1935. Today, the Dining Hall, the Day School and the Hospital are no longer there, however many of the cottages that

the children were placed in are still standing, as is the Fairbridge Chapel, which now has heritage status.

The 'horseshoe' shaped road is visible today.



My mother, Marjorie was the fifth child of Thomas and Winifred Arnison. She was born on September 21, 1926, in Whitley Bay, in the Tyneside area of north-eastern England.

Unemployment in the Tyneside/Newcastle area was high and so my grandfather left his wife and 8 children, with one more on the way, in Whitley Bay while he searched for work in the London area. He found work and plans were under way to bring his family south to London at the time of this letter, (right) postmarked on January 14, 1937.

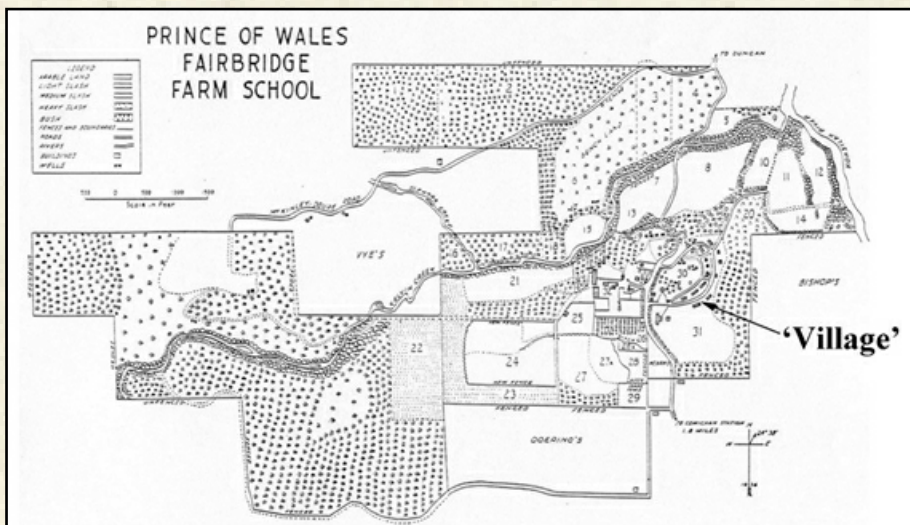
Marjorie and three siblings were removed from their mother's care in February 1937, by what I view as an overzealous interpretation of my grandfather's letter. His response to the letter from those recruiting children for the Fairbridge Farm School Society was: "...providing my wife and the children are willing I am quite agreeable to what you propose..." Written across the top of his letter is "This is a consent." They quickly swooped in and removed four of the Arnison children. They had the head

of the household's consent thus they did not need the consent of his wife or his children. Family letters found in the late 1990s state that it was to Marjorie's mother's "...eternal distress that she lost her children to Canada."

By February 10, 1937, four of the Arnison children had been placed in the Middlemore Emigration Home in Birmingham. Canadian Officials based in England tested the children and had the final say as to their acceptance. In September 1937, my 10-year-old mother and her 9-year-old younger brother passed and were sent to the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School on Vancouver Island, BC, Canada. Marjorie turned 11 on the journey.

In the Middlemore Emigration Home Record book the birthdates for Joyce, Marjorie and Kenneth are incorrect, putting them a year older than they are. This caused the eldest sister, Joyce to be rejected for the Fairbridge scheme as she was deemed to be too old. In actual fact she was within the age limit - but her incorrect records were believed, not her. Perhaps my Aunt Joyce was the lucky one in that she got to stay in England, but she was traumatized by the loss of her siblings, as is evident by a letter she wrote to me saying that as a 12 year old girl, she watched her younger sister and

brother walk down the path - she did not know at the time that they were going to Canada, she stated: "That was the last time I saw them. I was ill in sick bay a long time, they said I was ill with a broken heart because they had taken them away and left me." The children were not given the chance to say goodbye to each other nor were they allowed to take any



little personal belongings with them. The youngest of the four Arnison children stayed at the Middlemore Emigration Home until the following year. Eight-year-old Audrey arrived at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School in August 1938. Joyce, once again, had to contend with being left behind. Joyce stayed at the Home in Birmingham until she reached 16, then she was returned to her family.

27 Kildbrooke Lane
Edinburgh
S.E. 9.
Thurs 14/1

This is consent

Dear Sir
I am receipt of your letter of the 12th, promising my wife and the children are willing I am quite agreeable to what you propose. If my wife thinks that they will be better off away, and how you have my full permission, but I think a little explanation from me is needed. My job here is worth £3-12-4 a week I pay 25/- lodge and send

the wife £2 a week I have only messen two weeks saving for the full amount that I was down with flu, I think myself I am better working down here than a idle hole in Whitley a 3 months time I hope to have them down here

Believe me
Yours Truly
F. Arnison

January 14, 1937



This photo was taken in 1937 at the Middlemore Emigration Home. The 'M' embroidered on Marjorie's tunic is for 'Middlemore' not Marjorie.

Once at the Fairbridge Farm School Marjorie and her brother were separated and placed in different cottages. The cottages held 12- 14 children and were headed by a cottage mother. Some were kind to their wards, but many were not. Isobel Harvey, a BC Provincial Superintendent of Child Welfare, visited the Farm School and in 1944, prepared a report. She had this to say about the cottage mothers:

They [cottage mothers] lack sensitivity to the emotional needs of children, - scream and shout at the children constantly and are imbued with the Fairbridge doctrine that these children are different from Canadian children and must be shouted at and disciplined firmly, and that you must not be too kind to them.

The cottage mothers are the foundation stone of a cottage system such as this. They are the children's substitutes for their own mothers, yet they change so rapidly that it is impossible for most children to get any security from them. One small boy had had nine different cottage mothers, according to the records, and I was told that the number was larger. (Note the complete report can be found on my website at: <http://patriciaskidmore.com/?p=1251>)

The boys and the girls at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School were kept apart as much as possible. They had separate pathways and they knew not to be caught on the wrong path. My mother Marjorie felt it her duty as a

big sister to protect her younger brother, but she was not able to. She carried the guilt all her life, because she knew that he was the victim of abuse and bullying.

When Marjorie turned 15, as with the other 15 year olds - she was taken out of her work and day school routine, and worked full-time as a domestic and farm helper on the farm until she turned 16. (One former Fairbridge boy stated this was slave labour as they worked hard every day for the final year at the farm school for 25 cents a week.) Once Marjorie turned 16, she was placed out to work as a domestic with a family in Victoria, BC. Half her wages were sent back to the Fairbridge Farm School Society. The understanding was that she would have 'nest egg' when she turned 21. This money was never returned to her. Marjorie was anxious to get away from the Farm School, but she had little experience with the Canadian culture and world she was suppose to be now part of. She struggled with the loss of her sister who would remain at the farm school for another 4 years and her brother who would be there another 1½ years. It took a few months and it wasn't until her third placement that she was able to settle in. In this placement, she found a level of comfort in working for a young family. Marjorie stayed working for them for two years, then lived with them for a further two years while she worked in a department store in Victoria. Our whole family owes this family a huge debt of gratitude, as quite likely it was Marjorie's experience of living with a real family for the first time since being removed from her English family, that allowed her to gain the experience of what a family should be like - and not the dog eat dog world that she found herself in at the Fairbridge Farm school.

Altogether, 329 children were sent to the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School between 1935 and 1948. Of this total, 95% were not orphans. Some of the children were as young as 4, although the average age was between 10 and 12. A number of siblings were separated, with one being sent to Canada while others were sent to one of the Fairbridge Farm Schools in Australia. The Farm School closed down in the early 1950s and the final 20 or so children were placed in foster care.

Marjorie's 6,600-mile journey from her home in the Tyneside area of north-eastern England to Canada has been told in my book, *Marjorie Too Afraid To Cry: A Home Child Experience*. (Toronto: Dundurn, 2012)

Marjorie and her siblings' day-to-day life at the farm school is being told in my next book, as yet unpublished: *Marjorie: Her War Years: A Home Child in Canada*. This book ends in with Marjorie being sent out to work as a domestic servant once she turned 16.

In February 2010, Marjorie was present at the British Government Apology given by the then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown. When Brown took my mother's hand and said directly to her, "I am truly

sorry." I saw a change in my mother. Her shoulders softened as she responded, "Do not forget about Canada."

Marjorie Skidmore with Prime Minister Gordon Brown. February 2010. (Photo by Patricia Skidmore)

Brown presented his Apology Speech to the House of Commons, which we watched on a large screen, and then he repeated his speech directly to the former Child Migrants in an intimate setting. Most of the people present at this Apology were originally sent to Australia. Only 2 of the 7 'Canadians' who attended this Apology were there to represent the 120,000 or more children who had been sent to Canada. Brown's speech began:

Until the late 1960s, successive UK Governments had over a long period of time supported child migration schemes. They involved children as young as three being transported from Britain to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South



Africa and Zimbabwe. The hope was that those children, who were aged between three and 14, would have the chance to forge a better life overseas, but the schemes proved to be misguided. In too many cases, vulnerable children suffered unrelenting hardship and their families left behind were devastated. They were sent mostly without the consent of their mother or father. They were cruelly lied to and told that they were orphans and that their parents were dead, when in fact they were still alive. Some were separated from their brothers and sisters, never to see one another again. Names and birthdays were deliberately changed so that it would be impossible for families to reunite. Many parents did not know that their children had been sent out of this country.

The former child migrants say they feel that this practice was less transportation and more deportation—a deportation of innocent young lives. When they arrived overseas, all alone in the world, many of our most vulnerable children endured the harshest of conditions, neglect and abuse in the often cold and brutal institutions that received them. Those children were robbed of their childhood, the most precious years of their life. As people know, the pain of a lost

childhood can last a lifetime. Some still bear the marks of abuse; all still live with the consequences of rejection. Their wounds will never fully heal, and for too long the survivors have been all but ignored.

(Hansard Transcript of British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown's Apology to all British Child Migrants <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100224/debtext/100224-0004.htm#10022460000003> House of Commons Debates, 24 February 2010, Volume No. 506, Part No. 44 UK Parliament: <http://www.parliament.uk/>)

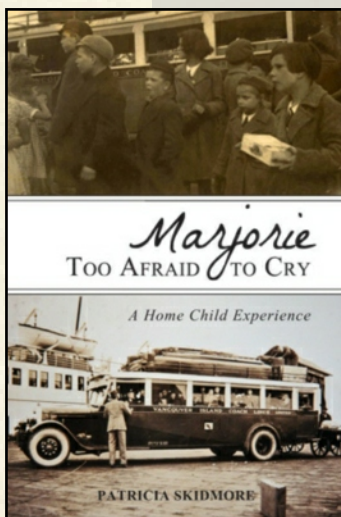
I think I can say that my mother, Marjorie made some peace with her life as a child migrant, but forgiveness did not come easy. Being formally recognized, and hearing what she had known since a young girl - that it was wrong to remove her from her family and ship her over 6,000 miles away, helped her find a bit of that peace.

My mother, Marjorie passed away January 2017. She was just over 90. She was living in her own suite in my sister, Joan's home. But she was getting frail and it was obvious that more help was needed. A senior's home was suggested as a possibility. My mother responded with terror.

"If you send me to a home I'll jump off a bridge. It will be like starting and ending my life in Canada in a horrible institution. It'll be just like going back to Fairbridge."

This response shocked me, but it showed me the depth of her fear towards the place that she was incarcerated in, all those years ago as a young girl. Needless to say, she did not go into a care home.

Patricia Skidmore



Author Patricia Skidmore began exploring the story of child migration to Canada in the late 1990s. She is actively involved with the Fairbridge Canada Association (FCA) and its various programs: the Fairbridge Gazette, and the Fairbridge Alumni Bursary Society, which was formed by the former Fairbridge child migrants who were sent to the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Fairbridge was the last organization to bring children to Canada. Her mother rarely spoke of her five years at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School or why she was sent there as a little girl. It took

Pat well into her adult years to confront the issue — child migration and the role her family played in it — and try to understand it.

www.patriciaskidmore.com

FROM RENOWNED TO NOTORIOUS

Many BHC made a mark in Canada or whatever country they eventually settled in. Be it remarkable achievements or notorious behaviour. These are a few mentions of BHC whose stories were more in the public eye. Many stories of

our BHC are yet to be discovered as our work uncovering and collecting information continues. Every story, good or bad, is valuable. Every story needs to be told. Many more stories wait for us to discover in the years ahead. Compiled by Lori Oschefski.

- **Morris Abraham Cohen - Two-Gun-Cohen**
1887–1970

Dr. Barnardo's

Morris was a British and Canadian adventurer of Jewish origin who became aide-de-camp to Sun Yat-sen and a major-general in the Chinese National Revolutionary Army. He became known as Two-Gun Cohen.

- **Claude Nunney - Victoria Cross recipient**
24 December 1892 – 18 September 1918
Sent by the Catholic Immigration Society in 1905

Claude was a Canadian soldier and a recipient of the Victoria Cross, the highest award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces.

- **Robert Rankin - Mayor of North Bay**
1866– June 29, 1952
Sent by Quarriers (Macpherson escort) in 1880

Robert Rankin was a Scottish-born merchant and politician in Ontario, Canada. He served as mayor of North Bay from 1909 to 1910. He established a well known grocery store in North Bay. He retired from business in 1926. Rankin served several years on the North Bay council. He was also a member of the board of health, the town planning commission and the Old Age Pension board. He was a founding member of the local Board of Trade. He also was chair of the board for the local Children's Aid Society. Rankin was a promoter of the Georgian Bay Ship Canal.

- **Frederick Cawthorne - Lawyer**
December 10, 1897 - March 12, 1963
Sent by Dr. Barnardo's in 1907

Frederick became a well known lawyer in the Orangeville area. He served for Canada in the First World War

- **Charles Reaper - Vimy Ridge**
27 Jul 1897 - 2 March 2003
Sent by Quarriers in 1912

Vimy Ridge's last remaining infantry man. Private of the 39th Infantry Battalion

- **Frederick John Kempster - The English Giant**
1889–1918

Sent by Dr. Barnardo's in 1899

Frederick was an English showman, renowned for his extreme height and also known as the English Giant or Blackburn Giant. He was 7 ft 9.3 in (2.37 m) tall, had an arm span of 8 ft 4.5 in (2.55 m) and weighed 375 pounds (170 kg). Between 1967 and 1993 Kempster appeared in the Guinness Book of Records.



Wallace Ford

- **Jennie Bramwell - paranormal activity**

Born in 1877

Sent by Quarrier's in 1881

Jennie made headlines in Beaverton, Ontario for alleged paranormal activity.

- **Samuel Grundy - Wallace Ford - movie star**
12 February 1898 – 11 June 1966

Sent by Dr. Barnardo's in 1905

Samuel Grundy came to Canada at seven years of age. He was ill treated in his placements and became a serial runaway. At the age of 14, Samuel and a friend Wallace Ford, ran away to the United States, Wallace was killed by a train. Samuel took Wallace's name and became a naturalized American civilian, stage, film, and television actor.

- **Cecilia Jowett - northern nurse and author**
11 NOVEMBER 1890 - 2 JUNE 1983

Sent by Dr. Barnardo's in 1901

Cecilia Jowett became a nurse in Orillia, Ontario. She devoted her life to nursing in Northern Ontario, often for no pay. She was befriended by Stephen Leacock who encouraged her to write her memoirs. She published "No Thought for Tomorrow, The Story of a Northern Nurse" detailing her life's work. She left out critical pieces of her personal family history in the book, reinventing this part of her life.



- **Gypsy Simon Smith - Evangelist**
July 25, 1875 - August 12, 1943

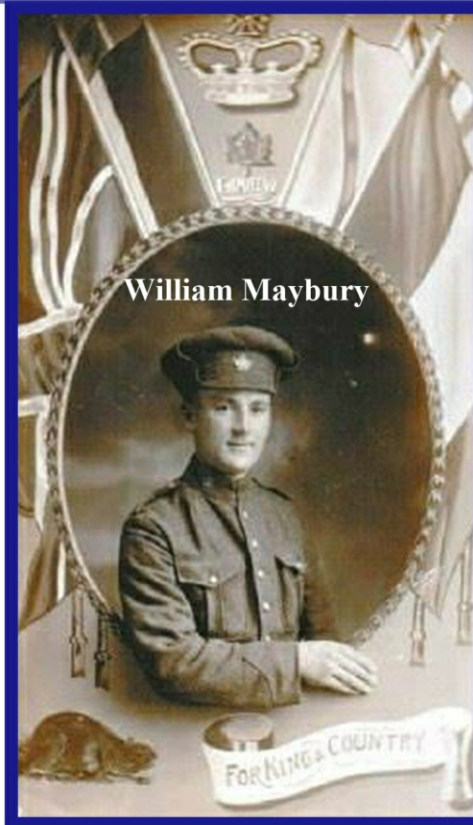
Sent by Dr. Barnardo's

Gypsy Simon Smith became a widely known evangelist, who, during his 40 years as a preacher of the Gospel, was dubbed the "silver-tongued tenor from the woods", for his fantastic singing voice. Simon composed several hymns, including *The Shadow of the Cross* and *At The End of the Trail*.

- **William Maybury - Vimy hero**
2 May 1892 - 1 Dec 1917

Sent by Dr. Barnardo in 1903

William became a Corporal in the Canadian Army and a hero of Vimy Ridge and Hill 70. His story was featured in a History Television Documentary, "Finding the Fallen", to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the ending of the First World War.



- **William Joseph Carter - Wandering Minstrel**
1875 - 1958

Sent by Dr. Barnardo in 1899

William led his adult life wandering around Canada playing a violin and penny-whistles. He earned the name in the press as "Canada's Wandering Minstrel". William entertained thousands of Canadians. His biggest audience was in Callender, Ontario, where he played to an audience of eight thousand people at a gathering to celebrate the birthday of the Dionne quintuplets.

- **Dr. John R. Seeley - York University**
1913-2007

Sent by BICA in 1929

During the 50's and 60's, John Seeley was one of the Canadian leading intellectuals, the author of classic works in sociology, an eloquent critic of authoritarian institutions, and an outspoken advocate of the youth revolt's potential for social change. He was part of the founding of the York University in Toronto.



- **Ken Donovan - Canadian Flag**
July 20, 1913 - 2004

Sent by Catholic Emigration in 1929

Mr. Donovan was the an assistant purchasing director with the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission, which later became a part of the Department of Supply and Services. Prime Minister Lester Pearson enlisted Ken to produce three prototypes of the new Canadian Flag - to be sewn and delivered to Pearson by the next morning. Ken retained his daughter Joan to sew the flags. He personally delivered the flags to the Prime Minister.

- **Madge Gill - renowned visionary artist**
Dec 27 1879 - 1899

Sent by Dr. Barnardo in 1896 as Maude Eades

Maude changed her name after marriage, in England, to Madge Gill. Madge endured a very difficult childhood, which did not abate in her adult life. Madge was wracked with mental health issues. In her 30's she started experiencing trances. Under the procession

of her inner spirit Myrnerest, she would draw frenetic improvisations with an almost hallucinatory quality producing an extraordinary number of artworks. Madge Gill is one of the world's best known visionary outsider artists.

- **Nick Hodson - renowned artist**
May 08, 1916 - 12 January 2013
Sent by the United Church in 1932

Renowned Canadian Artist. Nick's sketches were published in a book, "A Collingwood Collection:

Drawings by Nick Hodson", by the Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts. Nick was awarded the Order of Collingwood in 1993 and 2008.

- **Spencer Smith - Spencer Smith Park**
18 January 1870 - 8 Nov 1955

Sent by Shaftesbury Homes in 1885

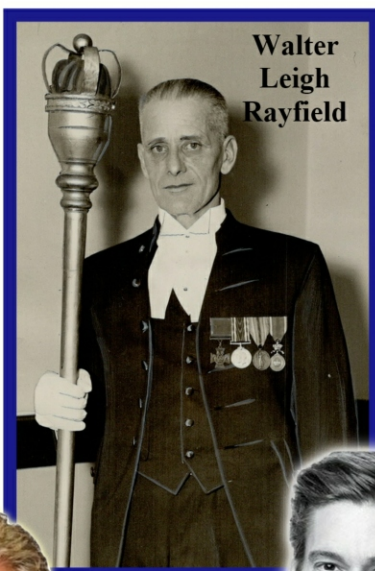
Spencer became a very successful grocery store owner in Burlington, Ontario. He was a member of the Burlington Horticultural Society, serving for some time as its president. In 1933, Spencer Smith as President embarked on a project to beautify the land at the foot of Brant Street in Lakeside Park. Today the park is greatly expanded, Spencer's name is one of the most recognized names in Burlington - as the park bears his name - "Spencer Smith Park".

- **Stanley Herbert Maxted- Fegan's**
August 21, 1894 – 10 May 1963
Brought by Fegan Homes 1906
Stanley enrolled in voice training before the First World War broke out. During service, he was twice wounded and gassed during the First World War - causing him to lose his voice. After he continued training his voice to recover - becoming one of Canada's best known tenors. In the Second World War he was a well known BBC correspondent. Following that, he became an actor with about a dozen films to his credit.



Stanley Maxted - photo credit BBC

- **Augustus Bridle - critic, & writer**
March 2, 1868 - 21 Dec 1952
National Children's Home - 1878
It was a long and improbable path from England to Toronto, from the illegitimate infant "Augustus Bridewell" to Augustus Bridle, arts and drama critic for the Toronto Daily Star, organizer of choirs and concerts, "Fellow Member Number One" and the "Father of the Arts and Letters Club."
- **Walter Leigh Rayfield - Victoria Cross Recipient, Sergeant at Arms in the Ontario Legislator and Governor of the Don Jail in Toronto**
7 October 1881 – 19 February 1949
Sent by Annie Macpherson in 1891 as Walter Lee
Walter is one of seven Canadian Soldiers awarded the VC for their actions in the same battle on the same day. They are called Canada's one of Canada's Magnificent Seven. BHC Claude Nunney was also one of those seven.



Walter Leigh Rayfield

- **The Hon. James Murdock, P.C., Senator**
(August 15, 1871 – May 15, 1949)
Annie Macpherson 1876

James was appointed the Minister of Labour in Mackenzie King Government in 1921. He served for 22 years.

- **Cyril Kincella - his likeness depicts Humanity on the Bell Monument in Brantford, Ontario**
March 14, 1897 - December 1960
Sent by Fegan's in 1908

Cyril was wounded in the First World War and recovering in Canada when his paths crossed with Walter Allward. Allward was creating a monument to commemorate the invention of the phone. Cyril's likeness is carved into the monument.

- **Albert Edward Ahmed - War hero 1885 - Aug 11, 1918**
Sent by Dr. Barnardo's in 1891

Killed in the War, his body was found along with 7 other soldiers in a garden in France in 2007 - all belonging to the 78th Manitoba Canadian Infantry Battalion.



Cyril Kincella

A few well known descendants of British Home Children

Don Cherry, Hockey Icon
Grandson of BHC
Richard Palamounain
Louisa Birt

Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Grandson of BHC Ernest Ford
Middlemore

David Muir
ABC 20/20 Anchor
Grandson of BHC
Archibald Muir
Quarriers

Dr. G. Robert Pettit is a man who has dedicated his life to finding cures for cancer. He is one of the world's top organic chemists. Dr. Pettit has development of numerous anticancer compounds in use today. His mother, Florence Seymour, was a Dr. Barnardo Girl.

Acknowledgements

For historical work done with the British Home Children

There are so many people who have contributed over the years, to the work done for our British Home Children. People like John Sayers and the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa who compiled the Library and Archives Canada shipping lists and the Ups and Downs index. We rely heavily on their efforts, in our work today. Some of these people are still actively working, some retired and some no longer with us. Together they have paved the road on which we travel. Without their foundations laid in this work, we could not accomplish what we are today. This is not meant to be a full listing of their accomplishments, but simply a heartfelt thank you to a well deserved group of caring people.

John Sayers - Library and Archives Canada BHC shipping records, Ups and Downs index and the Hazelbrae Barnardo Home monument. Work with the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa.

Irene and the late Douglas Fry - Fegan's Canadian records and compiling "The Red Lamp" - the Fegan's newsletter. Irene and her husband worked with many descendants over the years.

Ivy Succee - Hazelbrae Barnardo Home Memorial Group, the Hazelbrae Barnardo Home Monument and official Barnardo representative in Canada, awarded the Queen's Jubilee medal for her work with the BHC.

Marion Crawford - Marion runs the Middlemore Atlantic Society. Marion continues to help descendants with their research work.

Catherine West - Catherine runs the British Home Children and Descendants Association (Nova Scotia) group.

Pauline and the late Sarge Bampton - for their work with the Church of England Waif's and Strays - the Gibbs Children

David Lorente - Home Children Canada founder, expert on the Catholic organizations and an official Barnardo representative in Canada. Now retired, David largely was responsible for bringing the story of the British Home Children to awareness in Canada.

Perry Snow - as the Roots mailing list founder, he compiled information on almost 53,000 children for his database, which is now run by the BHCARA. Perry serves as advisor to the British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association.

Marjorie Kohli - is the author of one of the most influential books "The Golden Bridge". Marjorie has given years of her time to ongoing work for the BHC, including many presentations, articles written and with the service of out BHC in the Wars. Her web site "Young Immigrants to Canada" was one of the first published and is still active today.

Gail Collins - Gail compiled the Maria Rye index 1869 - 1879 and the Ontario 2010 BHC Quilt. Gail has provided invaluable help to descendants seeking information.

Chris Sanham - Maria Rye index 1880-1896

Hazel Perrier - Alberta 2010 BHC Quilt and leading member and cofounder of the British Home Children Western Canada group.

The Late John Willoughby - Canadian Centre for Home Children, spokesperson for the BHC

Jim Brownell - MP who successfully lobbied for British Home Child Day in Ontario. Spokesperson for the BHC.

Gerald Lee - The former Chief Executive of the William Quarrier's Home Children Association - Quarriers Canadian Family.

Melanie Robertson-King - Author and spokesperson for Quarrier's Canadian Family.

Fred Wardle - Quarriers Canadian Family, spokesperson for the BHC.

The late Brian Rolfe - Brian wrote many historical articles the BHC, many published through the Roots Mailing list.

Sidney Baker - Sidney is a former Barnardo Boy who relocated to Canada. He ran the group Home Children Canada from Western Canada. Sidney was one of four Canadians who represented the BHC at a Buckingham Palace Royal Garden Party, a guest of Barnardo's.

Dr. Patricia Roberts-Pichette - Dr. Pichette did extensive work on Middlemore, published in her book "The Middlemore Experience".

The late Sandra Joyce - Sandra wrote three books on British Home Children which were based on her British Home Child Father. She did over two hundred presentations. Sandra lobbied successfully for the placement of two historical plaques, one in the Maria Rye Park, Niagara-on-the-Lake and one at the former Marchmont Homes in Belleville, Ontario.

Roddy Mackay - Fairbridge Child Migrant, President of Fairbridge Canada. Spokesperson and advocate for the Child Migrants and the BHC. Roddy recently released his story in his book "The Memoirs of a Guttersnipe".

Judy Neville - For many years, Judy has been, and still is, one of our strongest advocates for the British Home Children. Judy lobbied successfully for our National British Home Child Day.

Phil McColeman - Conservative MP for Brantford - Brant, nephew of a BHC. Mr. McColeman successfully pushed through a private members' motion that declared 2010 Year of the British Home Child. The motion unanimously passed in the House of Commons.

Kenneth Bagnell - Author of "The Little Immigrants: The Orphans Who Came to Canada. Published in the early 1980 it became a best seller on all the lists for over a year. Today it is still one of the most widely read books on the British Home Children.

Lori Oschefski - Lori is the founder and CEO of the British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association and runs their Facebook group - the largest social media platform for the BHC in history. Lori is the author of the book, "Bleating of the Lambs". Her new book "Emma Stirling: Died Unmarried" will be released soon. Lori was one of four Canadians who represented the BHC at Buckingham Palace in 2016.

Sean Arthur Joyce - Art Joyce is a historian and an accomplished author. He has written extensively about the BHC and is a strong advocate. His book, "Laying the Children's Ghosts to Rest" has been widely read.

Andrew Simpson - Andrew is an accomplished author and historian. Based in England, he has written extensively about the British Home Children. Andrew has been writing articles for the BHCARA Newsletter since January of 2015.

Patricia Skidmore - Patricia is the author of two books, first hand accounts of her mother's experience as a Fairbridge Child Migrant. Patricia is a advocated who lectures extensively in Canada and the UK.

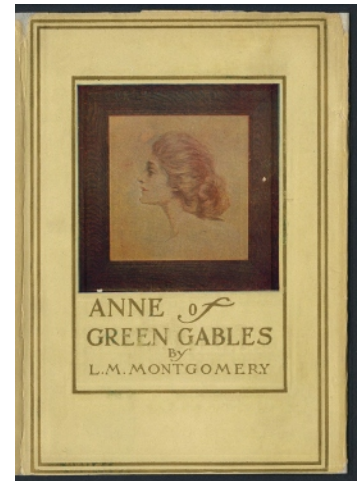
LeeAnn Beer - LeeAnn is the creator of the British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association British Home Child Registry.

Dianna Hanson-Fulton - Dianna is the Chair of the British Home Child Special Interest Group of the Ontario Genealogical Society. Dianna and her husband Steve Fulton (Elected President of the OGS 2018) promote the story of the BHC through lectures, exhibits and the preservation of BHC information and documents.

Beryl Young - Beryl wrote one of the most highly regarded books available for youth through to adults today, *Charlie*. She travels and lectures extensively on the British Home Children.

A quote from the quintessential Canadian book
"Anne of Green Gables"

"At first Mathew suggested getting a Barnardo Boy. But I said a flat "no" to that. They may be alright - I'm not saying they are not - but no London Street Arabs for me. I said get me a native born at least. There'll be a risk, no matter who we get. But I'll feel easier in my mind and sleep sounder at nights if we get a born Canadian."
- L. M. Montgomery 1908

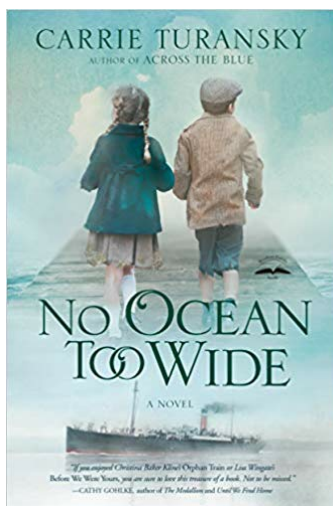


Breaking the Silence Award Winning Exhibit

Created in 2014 in partnership with Black Creek, "Breaking the Silence" and the BHCARA, this exhibit was awarded the Ontario Museum Association Award of Excellent in Exhibitions in November 2016. 450 sq feet of comprehensive information. The largest BHC exhibit in the world!

Black Creek Pioneer Village
1000 Murray Ross Pkwy,
North York, ON M3J 2P3, Canada

New book releases!



"No Ocean Too Wide" by Carrie Turansky, released in 2019 was inspired by the British Home Children migration programs. This widely read and moving novel follows a young lady, Laura, as she seeks to reunite her family, and her siblings sent to Canada as BHC, who, in their darkest hours, must cling to the words from Isaiah: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God". Careful attention was paid to the historical details making this book a historical lesson.

"No Ocean Too Wide" is available on Amazon and at many libraries across Canada or at :
www.carrieturansky.com

"The Forgotten Home Child" by Genevieve Sawchyn is set to be released in March of 2020. This novel tells the story of the British Home Children through the eyes of an elderly lady whose memories awaken from within her BHC trunk. Sawchyn tells this heart wrenching account with great historical accuracy.



"The Forgotten Home Child" is now open to preorder at: www.genevievegraham.com

For a listing of books available on the British Home Children visit our Facebook Page:
British Home Children Book Club at: <https://www.facebook.com/britishhomechild>

British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

*Working hand in hand
with our members since 2012*



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