

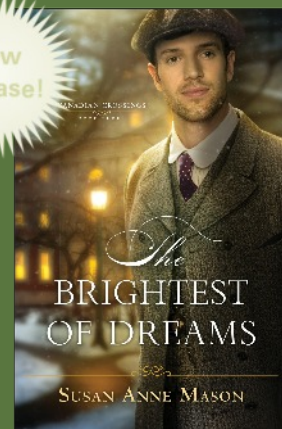
BRITISH HOME CHILDREN ADVOCACY & RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

April 2020 Newsletter

SPRING

Is in the air

New
Release!



Designed by Lori Oschefski articles by:

Author Lori Oschefski: Joseph Smith story

Author and historian Andrew Simpson: Page 3

Author Susan Mason Page 5 - NEW BOOK
RELEASE!

President, Niagara Historical Society

David F. Hemmings - A new Maria Rye

Database: Page 6



**We are very pleased to announce that
our Beacons of Light Tribute book is
now finished and available for
ordering.**

Compiled and designed by Lori Oschefski

This book commemorates an extraordinary year, 2019, which saw descendants of BHC come together, united, in a unprecedented show of support and honour for our BHC.

Inspired by the 150th anniversary of the first landing of BHC, on Canadian shores; this book illustrates in pictures and short stories, the "Beacons of Light" tribute. Over 240 different organizations and individuals, shone red, white and blue lights, on their buildings, monuments, bridges and homes. Prestigious landmarks, such as the CN Tower and Niagara Falls supported the event, and Her Majesty the Queen of England sent a letter of recognition and support.

But equally, people of all generations and backgrounds gave their time, and enthusiasm spread, crossing geographic boundaries of not only Canadian Provinces, but also the gardens and public landmarks in the countries of England, Scotland.

**There is a limited supply of books
To order your copy visit:
<https://bit.ly/3dmQhi1>**

Unbelievable? Joseph William Smith - a Colorful Story

By Lori Oschefski with the help of our BHCARA Researchers

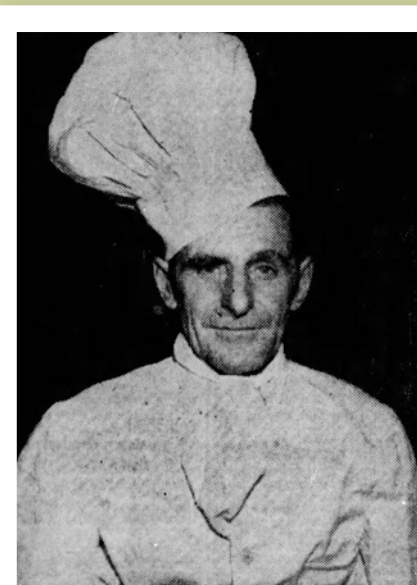
Many British Home Children concealed their childhoods, or lack of one, with colorful embellished stories of their "adventures". Stories of being a stowaway on a boat or running away to join the circus, were often told. It's understandable that, when we came upon the story of Joseph William Smith, in an old newspaper, we were sceptical of the truth. After all, his list of occupations included: Barnardo Farm worker in the North West Territories, Railway buffet car boy, circus clown, hotel and dining car waiter, bell-boy, U.S. Army cavalryman, vaudeville performer with animals, Great War Canadian soldier, chauffeur and waiter to Royalty, Mickey Mouse, husband, father, and a survivor of the Halifax explosion.

The article, *Army Cook with a Colorful Past Plans to Stay Put for Duration*, was published in *The Gazette*, Saturday November 1, 1941, in Montreal, Canada. Snippets of the news article appear in italics in this article as we try to confirm the story with the facts we have found.

Joseph was born in England, August 20, 1889 (the date he gave in Canadian documents) His family history in England is still unknown. Joseph arrived in Canada, through the Dr. Barnardo Homes, on July 29, 1901. He states in the news article that he was placed for work in the North West Territories in 1901- at the age of 12. He remained there for three years "drawing the munificent total of \$100, approximately 65 cents a week". The 1901 Canadian census confirms that he is, indeed, indentured to the family of William and Jane Barber, in the Territories, Assiniboia, Quappelle.

"He went then to Regina where he got a job as buffet car body with the old Soo Line railway working out of Moose Jaw. He left his job one day in North Portland, North Dakota, and joined the Gollmar Brothers circus as a general handyman at \$3.50 a week, but before he left the show a year later he was featured clown earning \$40 a week."

"At that time the Blackstone Hotel in Chicago was just opening and Smitty got a job as waiter in the famous Gold Room but left that to work as a waiter on dining cars of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. From



there he went to El Paso, Texas, and became a bell-boy at the Sheldon Hotel and then began the first of his three terms as soldier."

We have not found information to confirm his work with the Gollmar Brothers Circus, or the waiter and bellboy, but we do catch up with him in 1910.

The Census for that year shows Joseph, living in San Francisco Assembly District 39, San Francisco, California. His occupation is listed as "soldier" in the US Army. *"He joined the 11th Cavalry, United States Army, at Fort Bliss Texas, in 1911 and was on duty along the boarder at the time of the insurrections in Mexico.* Service record files indicate he was an American trained soldier.

When his hitch was up in 1913, he returned to the C R I & P as a waiter, leaving that job to go to New York. In New York he got into show business, playing the various vaudeville circuits with a trained animal act. One of his tours took him to Halifax and there he met the girl who was later to become Mrs. Smith. He returned to Boston, sold his act and went right back to Halifax, married the girl, and shortly afterwards joined the Canadian Medical Corps to do his bit.

On October 6, 1917, in Halifax, Canada, Joseph married Lilian Francis Caldwell - a Native of Nova Scotia. Two days later, he enlisted in Halifax. On his attestation documents, he claimed he was born in Chicago, and had served with the Illinois National Guard. He gave his occupation as a chauffeur.

Joseph claimed he had been rejected from service by Nova Scotia's 85th Canadian Infantry Battalion, a Canadian Expeditionary Force because of a bad ankle. For the same reason he was also rejected by the 97th Canadian Infantry Battalion, a Toronto, Ontario battalion that recruited American citizens for the CEF. This unit was a feeder for the other CEF battalions and is how Joseph joined the CEF in the first place. This also explains why he claimed he was born in the USA, when clearly he knew he was not.

Joseph applied to serve with the No 1 Field Ambulance Unit (Hospital) which he served with until 1 August 1918. This unit helped the victims of the Halifax Disaster. As he was stationed in Halifax at that time, he indeed survived the Halifax explosion of December 6, 1917. Although he did not serve overseas in the trenches his experience with victims of the Halifax explosions was invaluable in saving the lives of these Halifax residents. His service, including taking these men, women and children out of the destruction, and carrying or transporting these wounded and dying to an Aid Station (First Aid Post) or Field Ambulance Unit (Hospital), was invaluable in saving the lives of these Halifax residents. Neither Joseph nor his wife were injured.

"After the War he remained at Halifax as chauffeur for Brig-Glen. H. Thacker. Officer commanding MD.6, and as such was selected as official driver for the Prince of Wales, now the Duke of Windsor, when he visited that city."

On October 1, 1918, Joseph received notification he would be transferred from the Canadian Army Medical Corps in Militia District 6, effective that December. That following January he was posted or transferred to Camp Hill Military Hospital. April 10, 1919 Joseph was transferred from Army Medical Corps Militia to the CEF. On December 6, 1919 he was transferred to the #6 RCASC Service Co.

The 1921 Census of Canada shows Joseph living in Halifax with his wife and his one-year-old daughter Josephine. He is listed as a Private with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps, meaning he was either a Driver or a Supply person who dealt with Food or Rations.

In 1924 he became employed by the dining car department of the Canadian National Railways and as a sideline, enacted the role of Mickey Mouse every Christmas for the annual T. Eaton Company Parade. In 1939 Smitty was chosen as one of the waiters for the civic banquet tendered to the King and Queen at the Windsor Hotel and is proud of the fact he can be seen in the official picture of the banquet which hangs in the lobby of that hostelry. "They were easy to wait on," he recalls, "and both the King and Queen had good appetites during their short visit there".

And then came the present war and shortly after the outbreak Smitty joined the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps. He was transferred to No. 4 District Depot at Longueuil as a cook. Smitty likes cooking and especially for the Army. Whether or not Smitty yields to the wanderlust in the future is open to debate, but until the war is over, he stays right where he is, in the army preparing food for the troops and enjoying every minute of it.

This is where our story of Joseph comes to an end. Further research, so far, has not discovered any more details of his life. From what we gleaned about Joseph's life, certain bits do match up - so, could the rest be true?



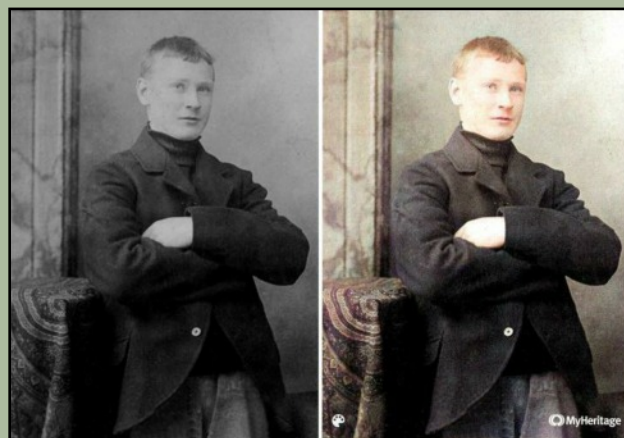
The Civic Banquet

Please note:

Due to the COVID-19 the BHCARA has canceled all engagements in the foreseeable future and will not be accepting new ones until further notice.

Wishing you and your families the best of health during these times.

We have a member who submitted a story for our April newsletter, unfortunately we cannot find it in our e-mail. Please accept our sincerest apologies - and please, resubmit your story.



Fun stuff to do while self-isolating Colorize your vintage photos

[Heritage.com](https://www.heritage.com) has opened up their *Colorize Your Family Photos* program for free until April 23rd. Big shout out to Debbie Lee Jiang for letting us know. Our BHC group has been busy turning our beloved photos into color. Visit our [Facebook group](#) to view the results. Above photo is of William Cheesman, 1892, Dr. Barnardo's - Grandfather of BHCARA CEO Lori Oschefske

Explore Ten Historic Homes

[HouseBeautiful.com](https://www.housebeautiful.com) has 10 historic homes available for online tours. Among the homes are: Buckingham Palace, the home of President Thomas Jefferson and George and Martha Washington. The tours are amazing and you are allowed to "wander" the homes at your leisure.



St Clements' Parish Church, circa 1870, where Mary Crowther did penance

It would be easy to fall into the trap of coronavirus isolation stories.....

It would be easy to fall into the trap of coronavirus isolation stories, with a tortured link to pandemics, other diseases and medical emergencies through time, but given that we are all in the same boat, that seems less than inviting.

So instead I shall reflect on that rural Britain in the two generations before the first British Home Children were migrated.

It remains a period that fascinates me, and it became the subject of my first book back in 2012.

This was a study of a small rural community during the first half of the nineteenth century, on the edge of Manchester which was “the shock city of the Industrial Revolution”.

A city which drew both British and foreign observers who wanted to study a place and its citizens which had been shaped and made by the rapid industrialization of the country.

But while lots of historians had written extensively about Manchester there was very little on the small townships which surrounded it. Most of these townships were small, still very rural and provided food as well as some labour for the fast-growing city.

To the south of Manchester one such community was that of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, whose farms and markets gardens poured food into the city via the newly built Bridgewater Canal and in return began to share in the industrial products made in the factories and workshops of Manchester which were brought south by itinerant traders.

So, in a bout of outrageous self-promotion I have lifted part of one chapter from the book exploring some of the customs and attitudes to unmarried mothers.

“Small communities are not always good at keeping secrets. After all there are very few places people can go where they will not be seen and once seen their business like as not soon becomes common property. It follows that it is easier to conform or look the other way and ignore a neighbour’s transgressions. But there were times when the bounds of decency or lawful behaviour were crossed and our township was still very lightly policed which meant it fell to the community to maintain order and remind those that might stray from the commonly accepted values and morals that they would be punished.

So, it was with Mary Crowther who was made to do penance in the church at the turn of the last century. It is unclear what Mary had done but during the closing decades of the eighteenth-century Mary had given birth to three illegitimate children.

More raucous was the custom of Riding the Stang or as it was known in the south Rough Music. It was a practice which dates back to the Middle Ages and was common across Europe.

"If a man was known to beat his wife, or if he allowed himself to be henpecked; if he was unfaithful to her, or she to him, the offending party, if living in the village, was serenaded with a concert of music, consisting of cow's horns, frying-pans, warm-

ing-pans, tea-kettles, &c., in fact, any implement with which a loud, harsh, and discordant sound could be produced. This hubbub was generally repeated several times, and seldom failed to make a due impression on the culprit."

And in Larkhill much the same happened to an adulterous couple. Effigies of the two had been made and carried on aloft on poles by torchlight to the house to the accompaniment of the banging of pots, pans and coal-shovels, the screeching of tin whistles and mouth-organs and cat-calls, hoots and jeers."

Nor was this the only form of humiliation. A brush tied to a cottage chimney was a statement for the entire village that the occupier had been left and that half a bed was to let. Earlier in our century one of the last ringleaders had been Caleb Joddrell who lived at Lane End.

Here in Chorlton the Joddrell family felt it was a fitting name for their son who was born in 1761. In turn Caleb gave the name to his son who was baptized on June 12th, 1796 in the parish church. During the next nineteen years Caleb and his wife Ann stood in the same church and baptized another four children.

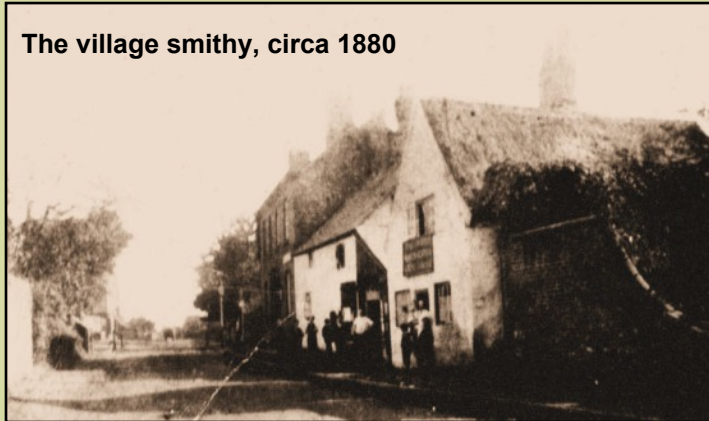
He was a gardener and rented 2 acres of land which was mainly meadowland. By the 1830s when the custom seems to have spluttered out Caleb was in his 70s, not that this may have prevented him from still directing operations in 1848 when he was aged 87. His wife survived him by nine years continuing to live in the family home at Lane End, receiving a parish pension and living with her granddaughter.

Public humiliation can also serve to engender sympathy for the victims and Riding the Stang was never as popular in the township as the noisy jeering crowd might think. Nor did it extend to those mothers who carried or gave birth to children out of wedlock.

Unmarried mothers and the stigma that hung around both parent and child featured in the literature of the period perhaps



The village smithy, circa 1880



parish church and baptized their children without a husband and in the following five years another five. Their status was recorded in the baptismal record as single woman. Nor were they the only ones to do so. Most years stretching back into the eighteenth century as many as three women a year baptised a child with no father present.

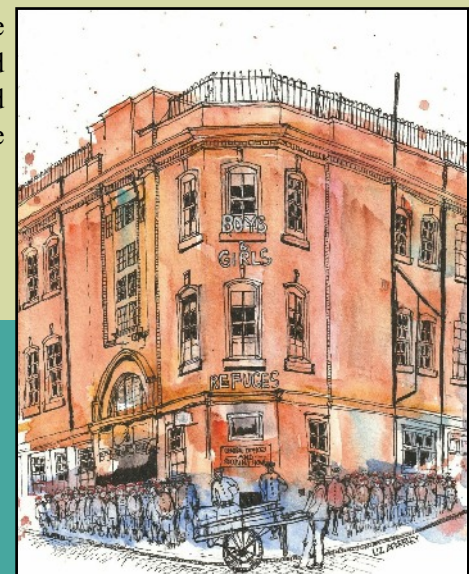
If there was an outburst of shame it is difficult to find it in the records of the township. Many of those unmarried mothers went on to marry the father's and even Mary Crowther's penance at the altar may not have been because of her own pregnancy, indeed she continued to live in the township and was buried in the parish churchyard along with her illegitimate son.

To be continued

bests reflected in Richard Redgrave's painting Outcast. It was painted in 1851 and well sums up the drama of a young mother turned out of the home by the stern father, while around the room family member's swoon, or cry and her mother stands stoically comforting her son with an expression which seems to mingle sadness and bewilderment.

Such might have been the stir created in the village when Susannah Pinnington announced that she was about to have a child out of wedlock sometime in the early months of 1837.

Not that Susannah had been alone in her plight. In the seventeen years before the birth of her son Thomas in 1837, there were seventeen other women who stood in the



The Ever Open Door
150 years of The Together Trust
ANDREW SIMPSON

“ Andrew Simpson is an Author, historian and researcher. Among his accomplishments, is his newly released book “The Ever Open Door - 150 Years of the Together Trust”. This book gives an excellent insight into the Together Trust, who sent children to Canada as part of the BHC programs. ”

Visit his blog at: <https://chorltonhistory.blogspot.com/>

NEW BOOK RELEASE

A romantic tale, a moral story with a twist. It tells of commitment to a promise made, and a commitment to family and love. What could be more important? Somehow the author intelligently blends a rescue story with a love story and to top it all, a historically sound story of the trials and tribulations, which typified many of the British Home Children. The many hallmarks of a home child's life. The hardship, cruelty and worst of all, shame; all come to the fore without any sign of cliché. Pick the book up, and you won't want to put it down - well done Susan Ann, well done! - Lori Oschefska, CEO BHCARA



Susan Anne Mason describes her writing style as "romance sprinkled with faith." She loves incorporating messages of God's unconditional love and forgiveness into her stories. *Irish Meadows*, her debut historical romance, won the Fiction from the Heartland contest sponsored by the Mid-American Romance Authors chapter of RWA.

Susan lives outside Toronto, Ontario, with her husband and two adult children. She loves red wine and chocolate, is not partial to snow even though she's Canadian.

The Brightest of Dreams

Quinten Aspinall is determined to fulfill the promise he made to his dying father and keep his family together. To do so, he travels to Canada to find his younger siblings, who were sent there as indentured workers when Quinn was away at war. While overseas, he agrees to look for his employer's niece who ran off with a Canadian soldier. If Quinn can bring Julia back, he will receive his own tenant farm, allowing him to give his ailing mother and his siblings a true home at last. Torn between reuniting his family and protecting Julia, will Quinn have to sacrifice his own happiness to finally keep his promise?

When I set out to write the third book in my Canadian Crossing series for Bethany House Publishers, I didn't realize the magnitude of the subject matter I'd chosen.

I'd never heard of the British Home Children until my editor suggested it as a possible topic for a book. And the more I learned about these brave souls and their impact on our country's history, the more astonished I was that we hadn't been taught about it in our Canadian History classes in school. I began reading copious articles and books on the subject and was rather disheartened by the darkness of the topic. How would I maintain a delicate balance between honoring the gravity of these children's experiences while depicting the sweetness of Quinn's budding romance?

Before I'd even begun to write one scene, I happened to attend a Christian Fiction Readers' Retreat in Cincinnati, Ohio in August 2017 where I ran into fellow author, Carrie Turansky.

"Oh, Susan," she said. "I have to tell you that I'm writing a book set in Canada." (She knew I was from the Toronto area). "It's about the British Home Children that came to Canada in the early 1900s."

I think my heart stopped for a second or two. "I'm writing about the British Home Children too," I told her.

"Really?" she said. "Well, my story is about a girl searching for her three siblings."

"My book is about a young man looking for his three siblings." I think we were both dumbfounded at the enormity of this coincidence. Two Christian historical romance authors from different countries both writing very similar stories at the same time. It could only be divinely inspired.

And so when Carrie's "No Ocean Too Wide" came out about nine months before my release date, I purposely refrained from reading it in order to ensure I didn't subconsciously incorporate any of her ideas, plot lines, or research into my book. It wasn't until the final edits had been sent in for "The Brightest of Dreams" that I finally read Carrie's book, and of course I loved it!

I did my best to portray some of the harsher conditions the children endured without being too graphic. And to show the topic in another light, I included the story of Mrs. Chamberlain, a boarding house matron, who years earlier had endured similar suffering as a

home child and whose sister suffered a terrible fate. Quinn's journey stirs up old wounds for Mrs. Chamberlain, who like many of the home children, never really talked about her childhood. Learning about Quinn's siblings leads Mrs. Chamberlain to seek closure from her own painful past and to take action so that the Barnardo children might be better treated in the future (this part was entirely fictional on my part). I hope that through my characters' journeys, I managed to portray a realistic picture of the home children and do justice to the brave souls who endured so much.

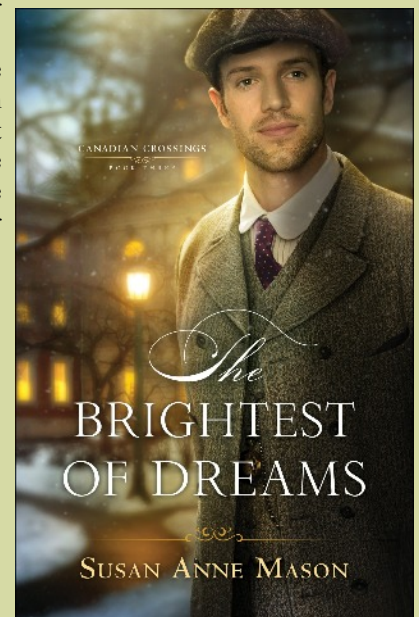
I want to thank Lori Oschefska and many of the people on the BHC Facebook group for their help with any questions that arose during the writing of my book. In closing, I'd like to share my book's dedication page.

"For all the British Home Children and their descendants who have made their home in Canada. May this story shine a light on the hardships they endured and demonstrate the strength and courage it took to forge a new life here. Thank you for making Canada an even stronger country!"

I truly hope you get the chance to read the Quinten Aspinall's story. May it enlighten many more people to the important role these children played in our history.

Blessings, Susan

Links for *The Brightest of Dreams*
<https://tinyurl.com/vlbk3vp> Amazon.com
<https://tinyurl.com/y2jooonjm>
Christianbook



Learn more about Susan and her books at www.susanannemason.net. Follow her on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/susan.anne.mason.333> Or Twitter <https://twitter.com/samason> or Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/sbmason123/>





NEW ACCESSIBLE MARIA RYE DATABASE

By David F. Hemmings

President, Niagara Historical Society

In 1867 Maria Susan Rye started communicating with Canadian Government about the immigration of young poor women and girls to Canada from the gutters of urban centres and workhouses in Britain. For a decade she had been a leading advocate for improved employment opportunities for young women in Britain, and she was an early suffragette. In 1868, after testing the distant waters of Australia and New Zealand, she settled on the colony of Canada because it was much closer. So, in 1868 she brought young women in their 20s to be domestics in Canada.

Although this was partially successful, she realized that greater pressure on society and the British Government was the huge unresolved issue of young and teenage destitute, deserted and orphaned girls who were unending generations of life givers by unscrupulous means. In 1869, Rye acquired the former courthouse & gaol in Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) for a modest sum and converted it into 'Our Western Home'; and the first girls arrived there during that year. This was the first large mass transport of children to Canada and Rye was always considered by the Canadian Government as the leader in the Children Immigration field. With advertising and unsolicited requests for young domestics and farm workers, Rye's program was hugely successful, and the demand accelerated at an extraordinary rate. So much so that Annie Macpherson and many others quickly followed her example as the years of the 19th century passed by. Rye also acquired Avenue House in Peckham, Southwark, South London to channel her British homed children through to the administration at Our Western Home.

In 1874 the Doyle Report slammed Rye and Macpherson for their practices of child immigration without proper Government oversight and inadequate follow-up of those children placed in North America. Doyle, a



*November 1869 -
The First Party of Home Children to arrive in Canada*

Catholic, was especially damning of Rye, who was an evangelical Anglican. When one reviews the paperwork currently available for the children in the charge of Rye and Macpherson, the latter did a somewhat better job of her accounting reports while Rye felt that the children were in respectable hands. As we all know, teenagers will be rebellious teenagers, and some children, even in those days of more respect, religious instruction and controls, were bound to be dissatisfied with their new environment. The effect of the Doyle Report was that, in 1877 when child immigration to Canada restarted, Rye made sure that all her reports offered only children's initials and ages, and not their full names. This also applied to the person(s) who acted as the placement for each child. So, in the 21st century, a useful listing of Rye children is only possible by combining the ship's manifest information with Rye's reports.

A little over twenty years ago Gail Collins, late of St. Catharines in Ontario and Chris Sanham in Henfield, West Sussex, England decided to try and find all of the records available that applied to Maria Rye and her children to make up a database, with Gail doing the period 1869 to 1879 and Chris doing 1880 to 1896. All went well until Chris became extremely frustrated with his

dealings with Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and eventually withheld his portion of the database and refused to correspond with Gail, or anyone else as far as I know, for the last 8 years or so. Gail submitted her contribution to a Rye database to LAC several years ago and it has been included in the main Home Children database at LAC.

In parallel with the work of the late Gail Collins and Chris Sandham, Richard and Monica Taylor of the Niagara Historical Society collected most of the papers they could find on Maria S. Rye's children by extensive research in Canada and abroad. Starting more than a decade ago, they became

exhausted from this considerable effort and their health failed. However, they left a treasure trove of uncompiled papers in the Museum's archives. It was these papers that were the starting point to this project.

Recognizing that all sources of Rye's children information were incomplete and lacking the compilation required for simple access to a research tool for descendants of Rye BHCs - including the LAC (RG17 file, etc.), Ontario Archives, BIFHSGO, University of Liverpool, Collins, Sandham and Taylor - the author took a totally systematic approach to the compilation of the Rye BHCs. The outcome of this compilation is a .pdf file on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum website, <http://www.nhsm.ca/>, under Collection & Research, Links and Our Western Home - Rye Home.

The Scope of the project was to create a single Excel spreadsheet with all known BHCs in chronological order in the charge of Maria S. Rye from 1868 to 1896, and in the charge of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society from 1896 to 1914 that were administered by the Our Western Home staff in NOTL. This was a statistical, or genealogical, project - and not a history project. At the conclusion of this, in

understanding Rye and CofE NOTL BHCs better, we now know specifically and in one document what BHC information is still missing.

In some cases, these BHCs did not set foot in NOTL but were sent directly to their placements in Eastern Canada. As far as is known, all those Rye BHCs that were placed in the United States actually came through Our Western Home in NOTL. At the outbreak of World War One the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society vacated Our Western Home in 1915 and the building was turned over to Niagara Camp for the housing of Polish Army officers until 1919. The building was demolished in 1923.

With few unknown exceptions, the following complete documents are in the author's electronic backup document files, having been extracted and included in the new Rye BHC database:

(I) **Ship Manifests** for all Rye BHCs from 1868 to 1914. Prior to 1880 several shiploads of Rye BHCs to Halifax, NS and St. John, NB are largely unaccounted for. Unlike Quebec City, the Maritime ports did not retain their ships' records until 1881. It is believed that we have yet to account for about 200 Rye BHCs. It should be noted that all early BHC shiploads to Canada were accompanied by Rye herself. Later Mrs. Hannah Soffe was the matron in charge for ship transportation for more than 25 Atlantic crossings. There were usually 2 voyages per year with about 100 BHCs.

(Ii) **Miss Rye's Annual Reports.**

(Iii) **Department of Agriculture** correspondence and reports with regard to BHCs (some now missing).

(Iv) **Department of Agriculture** correspondence with regard to Miss Rye.

(V) **Available Rye BHC Letters.**

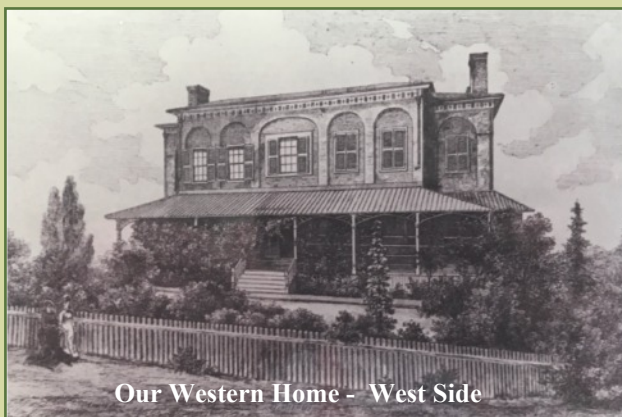
(Vi) **Government oversight records** (e.g., field reports) with regard to Rye BHCs.

(Vii) **Appropriate Census records in NOTL and England.**

(Viii) **Boards of Guardian and Charity Commission** reports.

(Ix) **LAC's RG17 file.**

(X) **The Collins Collection** at LAC, the **Kohli Collection** at University of Waterloo, and the **Taylor Collection** at the NOTL Museum.



Our Western Home - West Side

(Xi) The **BIFHSGO file**, administered by Lynda Gibson.

(Xii) **Special Collections & Archives**, University of Liverpool Library, England.

(Xiii) **Heritage Canadiana Collection** of BHC documents.

(Xiv) Various secondary website documents, including Ancestry, myHeritage, etc.

See:

<http://www.nhsm.ca/media/MSRBHC-v.5-Nov2018.pdf>

So, until the Niagara Historical Society published this new comprehensive Rye database on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum website in late 2018, none of the material on any other website was close to complete and certainly not useful as a single comprehensive research tool for descendant family members. There have been many contributors to this project; the author has simply been the compiler of all their available data for the benefit of future researchers. Our NOTL Museum holds a collection of Rye BHC artifacts and materials.

As a postscript to the database project, the author is now slowly building a database of MARRIED Rye BHCs and their families and collecting their photographs and images. This includes communication with current descendants and relations. To this end, the author continues to seek family involvement in discovering more about (i) the descendants of Rye and CofE BHCs who were administered through Our Western Home in Niagara-on-the-Lake, and (ii) any other sources not described above.

The compiler of the database cited above, and on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum website is:

David F. Hemmings

President, Niagara Historical Society

Email: hemmingsdd@gmail.com

Tel: +1-289-783-2772

Records are only as good as their original and continuing existence and their availability online. This researcher does not take on projects that require travel. However, he may make recommendations for further study by the family, if such opportunities exist to his knowledge. He has been researching family histories for over 50 years and conducts a once-monthly Workshop for the general public in NOTL. A typical project might be as follows:



Commemoration Plaques in Rye Park 2018

Maria Rye Database continued....

Scope of Possible Work:

1. Family tree - as much as is readily available from Ancestry database.
This will not include those people living after 1921, unless their births were before 1911.
2. Supporting documents, such as census, birth, baptism, marriage, death and burial records; British and Canadian military and civil records; as many as are readily available to confirm dates/places in the family tree.
3. Transatlantic travel document(s) confirming vessel, dates, places.
4. Photographs, if readily available. The images may be of person(s) or grave markers.

Not included in this scope:

1. Any data not included in the Rye BHC database on Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum website.
2. Correspondence, unless it appears in Miss Rye's records.
3. General Internet references to Rye BHC children.

Notes:

1. The scope is estimated for a single Rye BHC. For sisters, additional time will be required.
2. Information will be delivered electronically only as a set of .pdf files.
3. All work will be done on a best-efforts basis only. If the material sought is not readily available, the time used will be commensurate with the material available. It is reasonable to expect errors and omissions from the work delivered.

The passing of Gail Collins

British Home Child advocate and researcher, Gail Collins, has sadly passed away; Monday March 16, 2020. Gail devoted many years to the research on the British Home Children, working on many projects behind the scenes and also on Facebook. Gail was responsible for part of the Maria Rye database - her portion has been published by the Library and Archives Canada and also in the new database built by David F. Hemmings. Gail was known for the beautiful British Home Child quilt she made. Gail was a top notch researcher for whom many people have gratitude for the help she gave. We will help to ensure as we move forward that her vast contributions are not forgotten. The BHCARA extends our sincerest condolences to the Collin's family for the loss of Gail.



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