British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

January 2019 Newsletter
2019 BHC 150

2019 marks the 150th year since the first party of BHC arrived in Canada

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Rising from the ashes of a terrible beginning
The story of
Arthur T Clarkson & Lily Ivy Agnes Wood

As told by their daughter Linda Clarkson Pagnani

My Dad, Arthur Theodore Clarkson, was born in Bloemfontein South Africa on December 23,1897. His father, Arthur William Henry France Clarkson, was born into an upper middle-class English family that included a long-line of lawyers, ministers and military officers. His mother, Annie Maude Baker, was the daughter of a Norwich postal worker. The union of Arthur and Annie did not meet the approval of the Clarkson family and as a result Arthur W. H. was disowned. Arthur W.H. was an engineer who had gone to Africa to help design and build the first railroad line to transverse South Africa. Their first child, Norman Arthur France, was born in 1895. Shortly before my father was born Norman died, tragically crushed to death by a falling pile of lumber, Arthur W.H. and Annie's first son Bloemfontein was in the Orange Free State which was the setting for many of the Boer War's bloodiest battles. Probably because of this, when Annie again became pregnant, she and little Arthur were sent back to her family in England. Their third son, Cyril Stuart Hill, was born in Norwich on Feb. 4, 1902. Annie returned to South Africa with her two little boys once it was safe to do so.

We don't know much about the family's life in S. Africa after the war, as Dad shared very little about his childhood in Africa. The event that was to change the family forever occurred in the spring of 1907, when my grandfather died of malaria. Alone and despondent in a land that was not her own, my grandmother and her two sons booked passage to return once again to England. Boarding the ship that would take them home, Annie was in an extremely fragile emotional state, and my father was told to "watch over your Mother and little brother". 9-year-old boy that he was, Dad took this admonishment completely to heart and believed even after arriving back in England that it was his duty to safe-guard his Mother and brother's well-being. So seriously did he feel this responsibility he often left his school in the middle of class in order to run home and make sure that his family was safe. Sadly, this behaviour was judged incorrigible, and he was sent to a home for "wayward" boys. He was eventually sent from that home to an orphanage in Surrey and from there he was sent out to Canada. We don't know if his mother actually signed the release for him to be sent out of the country, but considering the state of her mental health, she may have done so without knowing what she had signed. How ever it may have happened, this well-loved little boy was shipped off to a place where no loving home awaited him. What was in store for him instead was brutally hard work and inhuman treatment by those to whom he had been entrusted.

He was sent to work for farmer David S. Flaherty of Tilbury in September, 1909. He remained there until January, 1911 when he was removed from the Flaherty farm because of the severe abuse

he suffered there. The only account of this he ever gave to us was that he had to sleep in the barn with had no covering at the window and no heat. He said the snow would blow in through the window opening and lay across the foot of his bed through the night. Because of this exposure, his feet were badly frost-bitten. This caused his feet to swell to the point that he could no longer get his boots on and he worked for a time in his bare feet. Eventually Flaherty gave him a pair of his own boots which were, of course, many sizes too large. Instead of helping the situation the oversized boots chaffed against Dad's already severely damaged feet. When his condition was discovered, he was removed from the farm and hospitalized and his abuser was brought up for trial. The damage to his feet was so severe that at first it was feared that amputation might be required. Thankfully that was never necessary and he kept his feet, and although they were quite badly deformed, they served him well for the rest of his life.

Exactly how long his recovery took is unknown, but in August of 1911 he was apparently again physically able to work and he was placed in the employ of another area farmer, who spoke highly of him in his reports. He remained at that farm until 1913 when he was employed by Francis E. Brown of Tweed.

His employment with the Browns finally gave him a chance to realize the one goal he had had since first arriving Canada and that was to somehow save enough money so that he could send for his mother and younger brother to join him. The devastation he must have felt when , in 1914, he learned that his mother had died in England of an overdose of Laudanum that was presumed deliberate. (My Dad never shared the details of his mother's death with any of his family. It was only through my own family research that it was discovered. I'm sure Dad believed he had failed his mother - a belief which must have caused him great sorrow and shame, even though it wasn't true.) Dad remained with the Browns until 1916 when he enlisted in the Canadian Army Signal Corps. By Sept. 1917 he was in France where he served 10 months in the trenches before suffering appendicitis. He had an emergency appendectomy done in a hospital tent in the field of battle (and without anaesthesia) and was then sent to a convalescent hospital in England. Some months later he was sent home to Canada.

Lily Ivy Anges Wood

Dad's employer, Francis Brown, had a sister whose married name was Newton. Mr. & Mrs. Newton had a farm near Tweed. My Mom, Lily Ivy Agnes Wood, was their hired girl. Mom was sent to Canada in 1911. Her mother died when Mom was three years old and Mom was sent to live with her paternal grandmother and maiden aunts in Manchester . Mom was as talkative as Dad was quiet and an ardent storyteller. We grew up laughing and crying over the stories of her childhood. Her grandmother was a stern and deeply religious woman who had given birth to 14 children and managed to raise 9 of them to adulthood. One of the two aunts who lived with Mom and her grandmother was very kind - the other the complete opposite. It was a great sorrow for my 7-year-old Mom when her "good" aunt died. Mom told of having to peel potatoes and having to eat the cooked peels if she cut them too thickly. She told of a Christmas when, because she had misbehaved, she was shown the presents that she would have received if she had behaved, and then got a stocking stuffed with coal on Christmas morning.

Mom was only allowed to read the Bible or Pilgrim's Progress. Already an avid reader and hungry for more variety, she once borrowed a book from a school friend. She used to sneak "down the yard to the privy" to read the forbidden book only to be discovered by her vengeful grandmother, who promptly destroyed the book. The loss of that borrowed book caused Mom to lose "one of the only real friends I had ever had". Despite behaviour which sounds like cruelty, Mom always said her grandmother loved her and was good to her in many ways. Because of her advancing age (and the constant prompting of the remaining maiden aunt who resented having to help feed and clothe "the wretched child), Mom's grandmother made the decision to place Mom in Rosen Hall as Home for Girls in Manchester. This decision was hard on Mom's grandmother, who often walked miles to visit her in the home. Not surprisingly, Mom was not happy in the home and so decided, on her own, to volunteer to be sent out to Canada. Her grandmother at first refused to give her permission for Mom's emigration, but she was eventually persuaded to sign the consent papers.

Mom arrived at the Marchmont Home in Canada on May 14, 1911. By May 16 she had been sent to work for a Mrs. Peppiot, whose first reports about Mom were full of praise. But by winter of that year Mrs. Peppiott reported that Mom had run away once and was "acting strangely" ever since. Mom was removed from the Peppiott home on January 2, 1912. As forthcoming as Mom always was about sharing her "stories", she would never give any details about this episode, but she often mentioned that some of the men where she worked were not "good". In later years, we have come to believe that she was probably subjected to sexual abuse, and perhaps by more than one employer, since she later asked to be removed from another farm owned by a Mr. Buck. When asked outright about abuse, Mom would just say it didn't bear talking about and she was just "glad I survived". Her final placement was on the Newton farm in 1914. She was happy there (although she said she worked like a mule), and the Newton family was pleased with her. She came to consider the Newtons her "family" and she and my father continued to visit them several times a year until the Newtons passed away.

While working at the Newton farm she met my Dad - who she "wasn't very impressed by". He however must have been immediately smitten and continued to call on Mom whenever he could until he entered the Canadian Army in 1916. Mom wrote to him while he was away in the Army and when he returned home to Canada he proposed. After his proposal had been made and accepted, Dad sent his younger brother Cyril the passage money to travel to Canada. Cyril arrived in time to "stand up" with Mom and Dad when they were married on March 7, 1919 at Sydenham United Church in Kingston. Looking forward to making a new life in Canada, Cyril traveled to Western Canada where he heard there was a need for good workers. Sadly, he drowned in British Columbia in 1920. Brother Cyril became yet another subject that Dad never talked about.

Dad's school days ended with his arrival in Canada and he was ashamed of his lack of education and vowed he would do something about it one day. After entering the Army, he was finally able to afford to enroll in a correspondence school. He continued the correspondence courses throughout his time in the military and after he returned home. Because of the courses, he was hired to work at the power facility in Kingston Mills. He and Mom moved into a tiny rented house overlooking the Rideau Canal. Their first child, Arthur Norman, was born there in December, 1919. Another son, James Lionel, came along in May of 1921 and their first daughter, Doris Gertrude, in November, 1922. Anxious about supporting his growing family, and hearing that in the US Henry Ford was promising "five dollars a day" to new workers, Dad decided it was time to leave Canada. In the spring of 1923, leaving his family behind, Dad traveled to Detroit,

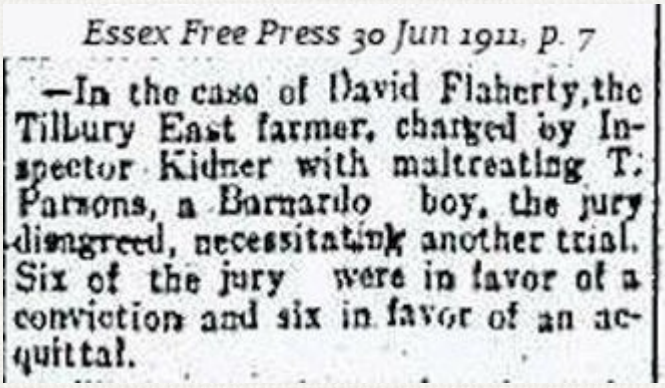
Michigan, and was hired by The Ford Motorcar Company. Mom and her three little ones followed several months later and the family settled into a rented house in Detroit. Thanks to his increased income and frugal habits, it wasn't long before Dad was able to buy a lot in a Detroit suburb.

By November 1924 he had built a small home where their fourth child, Gladys Leila, was born. Dad realized his family would soon outgrow the "little house" , so he began building a much larger house on the property. The new home was completed just in time for the birth of daughter Ruth Elaine on October 1, 1926.

The family's relative prosperity didn't last, however. When daughter Shirley Jean was born on August 1930, Dad found himself with no job, a mortgage to pay a wife and six children to feed. The hard times of the depression defeated many men who simply gave up looking for work and left their families to fend for themselves. Luckily Dad wasn't one to surrender to anything. He worked doing whatever work he could get, sometimes working two and even three or four jobs at a time so his family could survive. Keeping a roof over their heads was another problem and Dad dealt with it in his usual determined way. He wrote to the man who held the mortgage on their house asking him to accept interest payments only until he could afford to make full payments, explaining that if the house was repossessed, they would both be losers. The gentleman saw the wisdom in the proposition and having confidence that Dad would do exactly as he said he would, he accepted the interest only offer and the family home was saved. By the time the seventh and last child, Linda Dianne was born in 1941, Dad had a secure job working for the Detroit Edison Co. as an electrician (self-taught) where he remained until 1963 when a heart attack forced him into retirement. Although reluctant to give up working, Dad eventually learned to enjoy his leisure years. He kept busy with his hobbies of amateur radio and gardening, and spent time with his many friends. He died of a stroke in September, 1973, a few months short of his 76th birthday.

Mom lived on in the family home for another 7 years before moving to a smaller house to be nearer her daughters. After being married for more than 50 years, adjusting to a life alone was not easy for her, but she carried on with a resolve and acceptance that was typical of her nature. Her education had also stopped when she left England, but she was a voracious reader and accumulated an amazingly wide range of knowledge. She was a great cook and especially loved to bake. She was never without a book or a hand-work project. Every baby born into the family went home from the hospital in a sweater and bonnet she had made. Before she died she made and stored away such a quantity of baby layettes that every great grandchild born also wore one of her creations! Mom remained mentally sharp, following the political news devotedly and working crossword puzzles almost until the day she died in June 1987, 12 days before her 91st birthday.

Many of the children who were sent out to Canada as part of the Home Children Diaspora were unloved or unwanted orphans who hoped the life they were going to would be better than the one they left behind. Sadly this was often not the case, and it was not the case, at first, for either of my parents . They left people who loved them but couldn't care for them and went to live with people who neither loved or took care of them and, in fact, were often cruel. They left large extended families back in England, but in their new lives they were completely alone. But somehow, as bereft of kindness as those earlier days were, they never forgot the meaning of love. And tempered in the fire of their bad beginning in Canada, they found the strength, faith and courage to create a large, devoted family. Two lonely, sad children became the roots of a family tree which includes seven children, 16 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren, 17 great great grandchildren and 2 great great great grandchildren. Most of the members of this amazing family still live in Michigan not more than 50 miles from the family homestead. The entire "clan" manages to get together once a year at Christmas. Most importantly, we all love and respect one another - thanks to a Mother and Father who taught us, by example, not only how to build a family but how to truly appreciate having one.



Essex Free Press 30 Jun 1911, p. 7

—In the case of David Flaherty, the Tilbury East farmer, charged by Inspector Kidner with maltreating T. Parsons, a Barnardo boy, the jury disagreed, necessitating another trial. Six of the jury were in favor of a conviction and six in favor of an acquittal.

Flaherty was subsequently charged $75 for the abuse of Arthur. *Upon learning about this verdict, Linda remarked: "After reading it I at first felt quite bitter that the man who hurt my Dad seems to have gotten off with a mere slap on the wrist - although $75.00 was a considerable sum back then. Then I started thinking about the fact that my Dad, in the few times the incident was ever mentioned, never expressed any hatred or bitterness for Flaherty and I realized yet again what a truly good man my father was. Carrying around hatred all those years would have only weighed my Dad down and accomplished nothing good for anyone. "*

In 2014, at the BHCARA First World War Commemoration Service, Arthur's story was highlighted in speeches made by Lori Oschefski and Don Cherry. Following this, both Linda and Don Cherry were interview for an article which was published in several countries. Canada could now never forget what happened to Arthur.

https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/07/28/don-cherry-lends-support-_n_5628043.html

Growing up in a rural village in the mid 19th century

By Author and Historian Andrew Simpson

Click on icons to visit Andrew's Facebook Group or to visit his blog

It is all too easy to view the story of British Home Children as the story of destitute and poor young people living in the slums of our cities and towns.

But poverty, and destitution were also the lot of children living in the countryside and while urban areas could offer up terrible living conditions, they also offered up a degree of social mobility and pay rates which were in advance of what agricultural labourers could command.

All of which has led me to reflect on what it would have been like to grow up in a small rural community in the first half of the 19th century.

The village was Chorlton-cum-Hardy which I know well because it is where I live today.

Back then it consisted of just 750 individuals and was on the edge of Manchester which had undergone dramatic change which has led one historian to describe it as "the shock city of the Industrial Revolution".

The children referred to will have grown up by the time the migration policy got underway, but their lives make an interesting contrast to what might have been experienced in Canada, and conditions were only beginning to change in 1869.

In 1847 our village school was just two years old. It was the second National School here in the township and replaced the first which had been established in 1817. These were church schools and provided elementary education for the children of the poor. They were the product of the National Society which had begun in 1811 and aimed to establish a national school in every parish delivering a curriculum based on the teaching of the church.

Townships in the 1840's

The new school had been built with grants from the National Society and the Committee of Council on Education on land given by George Lloyd in 1843 *"for the purpose of a school for the education of poor children inhabiting the said township of Chorlton cum Hardy.....and for the residence of the master of the said school for the time being, such schoolmaster to be a member of the Established Church, and the school to be conducted upon principles consistent with the doctrines of the Established Church".*

Ours was a fine brick building which could hold three hundred children which was just as well because we had 186 children between the ages of 4 and 15. Most were at school, a few were educated at home, and fifteen were already at work.

The youngest at just ten was Catherine Kirby who was born in Ireland and worked as a house servant. There were slightly more boys than girls and they did a mix of jobs ranging from errand boys to farm worker and domestic service and most were born here.

There may even have been more for when William Chesshyre interviewed their parents in the March of 1851 some children were described as farmer's sons and daughters. They may have been at school or they may have already begun to work alongside their parents on the farm. And as we shall see just because parents described their children as scholars was no guarantee they attended school or even if they did that they were there full time.

Haymaking

The national picture was one of children even younger than 10 being employed. A labourer's child could earn between 1s.6d and 2s. a week which was an important addition to an agricultural family's income and in the words of one government report was *"so great a relief to the parents as to render it almost hopeless that they can withstand the inducement and retain the child at school".*

But in some cases this child labour would have been seasonal. In one Devon school up to a third of boys over the age of seven were absent helping with the harvest, while in

another school during the spring upwards of thirty were assisted their parents sow the potato crop and then dig it up in the summer. It was just part of the rural cycle and which one contributor to the Poor Law Commissioners on the employment of women and children in agriculture in 1843 said would at least teach children *"the habit of industry"*, which fitted in with the belief much held in the countryside that "*the business of a farm labourer cannot be thoroughly acquired if work be not commenced before eleven or twelve"*.

And yet it may be that most of our children were in school for at least some of the time because while parents did remove children out of season to help with other farm work or in the case of girls look after siblings, *"in the greater number of agricultural parishes there are day schools, which a considerable number of children of both sexes of the labouring class attend"*.

Nationally in 1851 it was estimated that 61% of all children were in a school. But actual attendances varied enormously. In private schools the number of children attending on any particular day was 91% of the number belonging to the schools, while in public schools which catered for the labouring classes the number in attendance was 79%. Which the authors of the report on education calculated amounted to a loss of half a year's schooling.

No attendance figures have survived for our township. The best we have are attendance figures for south Manchester which formed the Chorlton Poor Law Union and included our school. These showed that on Friday March 29th 1851 the attendance was 83%. This is not a good attendance figure judged by the expectations of our modern schools and can still be misleading. March is a quiet time in agricultural areas and a record taken in the summer or at harvest time might be more revealing of how many of our children had walked through the school doors.

But for those who did attend school the experience could be varied. The core was a rigid and austere style of teaching which nevertheless could provide young minds with the wonder of the wider world. There was strict discipline where lessons were delivered with the help of monitors who were trained on the job, and much of this would focus on learning by rote. Standing on the green outside the school the passerby would have heard the repetitive chanting as row by row the children repeated the prepared text. And if he had strayed inside, hanging from the walls around the room were embroidered verses extorting the virtues of thrift and hard work. Despite this grim scene there would have been much that could still stimulate eager imaginations. There were the stirring tales of faraway lands and the dramatic episodes from the Old Testament which had the power to transport the young listeners.

The curriculum ranged from the basics of reading writing and arithmetic to languages, music, drawing and geography. The degree to which these were taught varied from subject to subject, and there was a gender split, so while almost all boys and girls were taught the 'three Rs', 10% of boys received tuition in mathematics compared to 4% for girls. In contrast 46% of girls were instructed in industrial occupations compared to 3.6% of boys.

These opportunities were defined by the fault line of class. Both boys and girls from private schools were more likely to study both modern and ancient foreign languages, mathematics and music than their counterparts in the public sector.

It was with some concern that the report to Parliament of the 1851 Census on Education commented that
"To find in the schools a large proportion of the children learning the mere rudiments of knowledge, while a small proportion only is engaged upon the higher branches, must be looked upon as an unfavourable sign, ... when it is remembered that, of those who appear to have engaged in the more advanced departments of instruction, a majority were probably belonging to the upper and middle classes".
And that *"the children of the working classes go to school while very young, and remain but a very scanty period"*.

This was complicated by the wide differences in the age groups that walked through our school doors. Of those who might have attended in the March of 1851, under a quarter were five or younger, just over a half between the ages of 6 and 10 and more than a quarter from 11 to 15.

The conventional way of dealing with such a spread was as we have seen to employ monitors or pupil teachers alongside the school teacher. These were abler students who passed on what they had already learned. To some it was a way of training working class children for responsible jobs, and a cheap way of extending primary school education. In 1851 a male National School teacher received a £1 a week, his female counterpart 6s [30p] and a monitor or pupil teacher just 1s [5p]. But there were critics who pointed out it encouraged larger class sizes and were no substitute for better trained teachers.

We have no names of monitors or pupil teachers for our school until the 1860s. If they existed here in the township in the late 1840s they chose not to describe themselves as such to the census enumerator although it is more likely they were just recorded as scholars. The school may also have had a second teacher employed to teach the infants, but again their names have not come down to us. Only in 1850 do we find that Eliza Johnson who taught the infants was employed alongside James Bugden who taught the older children. The following year John and Ann Ellison were in the school on the green and were still there in 1852. Not till 1861 do the names of pupil teacher appear in

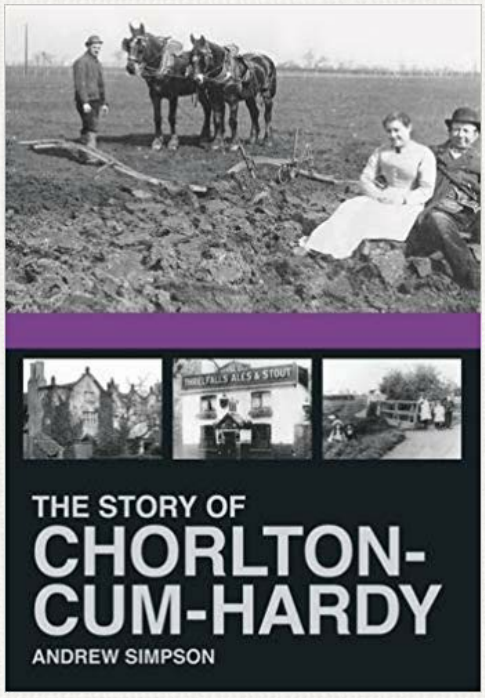
the records. These are Elizabeth and Martha Gresty aged 16 and 13 who lived up at Martledge with their parents who made a living as market gardeners.

As ever the concern also revolved around standards. The authors of the 1851 census on Education fell back on the simple test of how many people were able to sign their marriage certificate as against those who put a cross or mark. The *"test of marriage marks"* was not in itself an over accurate form of assessment as the report pointed out "*the art of writing is with great facility forgotten by the poor who find no application for it, while for various causes some who can write nevertheless decline to sign the register.*" It did however show that the number of people signing with a mark had progressively been dropping from 1839.

There was also a gender divide, with more boys attending in south Manchester than girls. So while there were 3,286 boys on the books of the 35 public schools only 2,028 girls were registered. But here it seems there was little difference.

Adapted from the Story of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Andrew Simpson, 2012. Due to shortage of space I have omitted footnotes, but these area available in the book.

Andrew's book is available for purchase on Amazon.com



New to our collections

The BHCARA is thrilled to add another vintage copy of the Dr. Barnardo edited "Our Darlings" bound magazine edition. This edition appears to be dated c1900

Dr. Barnardo supported his burgeoning philanthropic practice by editing and publishing children's periodicals continuously between 1874 and his death in 1905. In 1874 he purchased Father Williams Stories, which he re-named The Children's Treasury and Advocate of the Homeless and Destitute, the title clearly specifying its philanthropic connection. He dropped the reference to charity work in 1881, when he replaced The Treasury with the more lavish, Our Darlings: The Children's Treasury of Picture and Stories. A third periodical superseded Our Darlings in 1894, Bubbles: A Volume of True Tales and Coloured Pictures, In the 1890s, he also launched another periodical to reflect the work of his newly-formed children's brigade, The Young Helpers' League Magazine.

Colored plates from this edition

This edition of the Our Darlings contains many coloured plates as shown to the right. Plates are whole page illustrations printed separately from the text. Coloured plates were produced in eras before improved printing processes enabled true mass production. Coloured plates were expensive to produce and they were mounted to the pages in the book. Coloured plates were used in the earlier Our Darlings, this edition however has a few "cuts", colored illustrations within the text, printed directly onto the page. This dates this edition to about the late 1890's as the printing process has progressed to allow this type of image to be included.

Colored "cut" from this edition

"We are not so young and unsophisticated as to imagine that the farmers take our boys for love....The primary object of the farmers in taking a boy is that his services be useful to him"

Dr. Barnardo, April 1900 Ups and Downs Magazine

BHC - Indentured Servants and their Contracts

THE SECRET OF A successful farm, wrote Canniff Haight in 1885, lay in "the economy, industry and moderate wants of every member of the household." It is generally recognized that in earlier years of Canadian and British history, all members of a farm family—including the children—worked. Haight was simply repeating the conventional wisdom of the age in his recognition that *all* members of a farm family contributed to the successful functioning of the household economy. As Joy Parr states in her book *Labouring Children*, "It is not surprising that the child immigrants went to work when they came to Canada."

Roy Parker, in his book *Uprooted*, notes that although the 1871 Census shows 80 percent of the Canadian population living in rural areas, this percentage decreased by 6 percent per census year, until 1911, as young adults moved away to seek education and non-farm employment or to acquire cheap land in the west. By 1911, 56 percent of the population lived in rural areas. This, coupled with growing legislation and the popularity of education, left a serious shortage of family labour aged fourteen and under on the farms. Parker notes that between 1901 and 1911, imported children replaced farmers' sons at a rate of about twenty-seven to eighty percent. The 1911 Census shows that BHC constituted 80 percent of the growth in male wage labourers on Ontario farms during the same time. Parker notes that between 1901 and 1911, 49,000 sons were lost on the farms in Ontario, replaced by 13,000 BHC. Not all BHC were placed in Ontario, the demand throughout Canada was equally as high. Alfred Owens, the disgraced superintendent of Barnardo's, stated in 1897 that the demand for children 12 to 14 years old in Manitoba was "*practically unlimited*."

Ontario's rapidly expanding labour-intensive agrarian economy meant that pauper apprentices were a source of cheap and readily available labour in light of the labour shortage on farms. As a result, the organizations involved in apprenticing children found that they regularly had more applications than available children. A letter found in the Canadiana.org Héritage files from the Dr. Barnardo Homes, dated 4 October 1901, states that in a recent 12-month period of time 889 children were emigrated with 4,415 applications received. It is also worth noting that an application fee of $3 was charged by the sending organizations, in particular Dr. Barnardo's.


"DR. BARNARDO'S HOME."
No. 25011
214 FARLEY AVENUE,
TORONTO, March 22 1907
Received of Mr Bevin Johnston
the sum of Three Dollars
in payment of application fee
$ 3.00
Alfred B. Owen
AGENT.

John Joseph Kelso founded the Toronto Humane Society in 1887 for prevention of cruelty to children and animals. He was appointed in 1898 as the superintendent of neglected and deprived children in Ontario. In 1897 he published 'A Special Report on the Immigration of British Children.' Of this demand for children he stated:

"There is not an agency engaged in the work that does not receive more applications than they have children. Each party of fifty, seventy-five or one hundred children is almost completely disposed of within two weeks after arrival, and the requests for children seem to increase rather than diminish as time goes on… The reason for this would appear to be that small families prevail as a rule in the agricultural districts, and when there are four or five sons and daughters it is seldom more than one or two remain on the farm. They go off to the colleges, professions, and to the city shops and factories, to be typewriters or conductors on streetcars, and as help is imperatively needed on the farms the boys and girls from the Old Country take the places of sons and daughters."

In Canadian farm families, in return for their own children's contribution of work to the household, the children were often bequeathed the land in their parents' wills. This inheritance system was not considered an appropriate means of payment for non-family members like the Home Children. As Parr noted, British children needed indenture contracts to protect their rights rather than extinguish their liberties. Indentured labour was a form of contract employment usually with a three- to seven-year time frame. A person became an indentured servant by agreeing to work off a debt during a specified term. 'Debt slaves' is another phrase to describe the arrangement, especially in the case of prisoners and youth who had no choice and no other opportunity to repay the debt. (Source: June Payne Flath, *Indentured Servants in Canada*)

The intention of indenturing the BHC was to offer fair wages for their work and to promote their fair treatment. However, in the end, this did not bode well for many BHC. In Parr's book, she clearly outlines the framework for the indentureships under

which the BHC would work, based on age, physical strength, dexterity and judgement. Things which were expected to develop as the child aged. 'Fair market value' for the children's work was accessed based on this criteria, fand farmers were expected to pay accordingly.

Parr notes that difficulties for the BHC were that they did not have family ties in Canada, they often were not raised in family units and many did not have any knowledge of the tasks of farming. The organizations dealt with this by creating three stages of indenture. Barnardo's used 'boarding out,' 'board, clothing and school,' and 'wage.' The National Children's Home used 'adoption,' 'raising' and 'service.' Catholics used the term 'boarders,' 'helpers' and 'service.' The term 'adoption' was very misleading as most BHC were not formally nor legally adopted. Webster's dictionary defines INDENTURE as: "A contract binding one person to work for another." The definition of ADOPTION is: "To take into one's family through legal means and raise as one's own child." The three-level terminology helps to explain the different positions noted on the census records, often making it difficult to identify a BHC.

Typically, but not followed by every organization, children between 6 to 10 were boarded out, farmers were paid $5 a month with the expectation that child did not work. Other homes placed children from 3 to 8 in trial 'adoptions.' Children between 11 and 14 were more difficult to assess. No board was paid to the farmer for these children as they were considered old enough to do light work to earn their keep. They were expected to be given time off in the winter to attend school. Older children did heavier work and were therefore expected to receive a higher wage for their efforts. Clearly the children's placements were determined by economic criteria—they were moved as their worth increased. As Dr. Barnardo noted in the April 1900 *Ups and Downs*, these children were not placed in Canadian families for love, they were here to work. Parr also notes that the BHC changed situations often throughout their indentures. On average Barnardo girls moved four times in their first five years in Canada, boys moved an average of three times. She notes that patterns were similar at Marchmont, Birt's and Macpherson's.

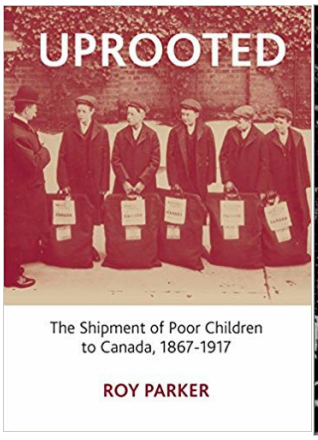
Indenture contracts did not—in many cases—work as expected for the BHC. Primarily, the indentures made the children distinctively different from the farmers' children, marking them as servants of the household and not a family member. They were throwaway children. If they did not meet the expectations of the farmer, or if they outgrew their stage of indenture—therefore costing the farmer more money—they were returned to the Home. Younger children were sent back when they reached the age that the farmer no longer received the $5 a month, but were now expected to pay. Most children bound by these agreements were moved from farm to farm. As Parr noted, "the indentures destroyed the illusion that all the BHC must have entertained at some point, of being like family." They were transient children who could never truly be settled or even carry the illusion they would be. Being uprooted and moved was a threat that loomed over their heads constantly throughout their formative years. Mary Taylor, aunt of Lori Oschefski, was moved twenty times in eight years!

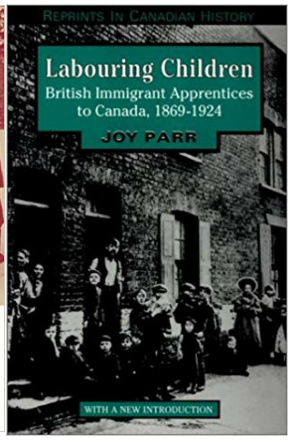
Farmers were negligent on the terms of indenture, sending young children out to do heavy work and not providing with protection against neglect and abuses, making children sleep in barns and neglecting to pay the expected wages, to name a few. As we saw with Arthur Clarkson, our featured BHC, frostbite, beatings and neglect was suffered by many. BHC were treated merely as a commodity. These indenture contracts were enforceable by Canadian law, bound by the Masters and Servants Act until the age of eighteen. This further set the BHC apart from the native-born children, who were free to make their own choices at fourteen. BHC were bound while these children, if working on the farms, moved on at their own free will, thus escaping difficult or abusive situations the BHC might have been trapped in. Deserting your indenture left the BHC open to jail time or a fine.

The BHC had to have just cause to leave; a demanding master or bullying from the master's children was not considered just cause. The distance between the children and the Home offices was great and the promised inspections were infrequent, leaving the BHC wide open to unscrupulous masters. Often children were not sent to school, young children forced to work beyond their capabilities, while inadequate clothing left many children freezing and frostbitten. Clothing was not replaced as it wore out. Children were sleeping in barns and—as in the case of George Green—made to sleep with the pigs. Children were subjected to various forms of abuse often with life altering or life-ending results. Suicide was often seen as the only way out of their situations as neither the laws nor the Homes protected them adequately.

Many BHC were even denied the pittance they were to received in exchange for their work. Children typically did not receive their earnings until the age of twenty-one. Payment of these wages was also something that was suspect. Quarrier documents found in the Héritage files show that children had to *apply* for their wages. Money for the children's contracts was sent to the Quarrier office in Scotland and became difficult to have returned to Canada when needed to pay out the indentures. Many children never understood they were to receive wages and therefore never received their money. Many BHC boys enlisted in the First World War before the age of twenty-one and many died. Life insurance was also heavily promoted by sending organizations.

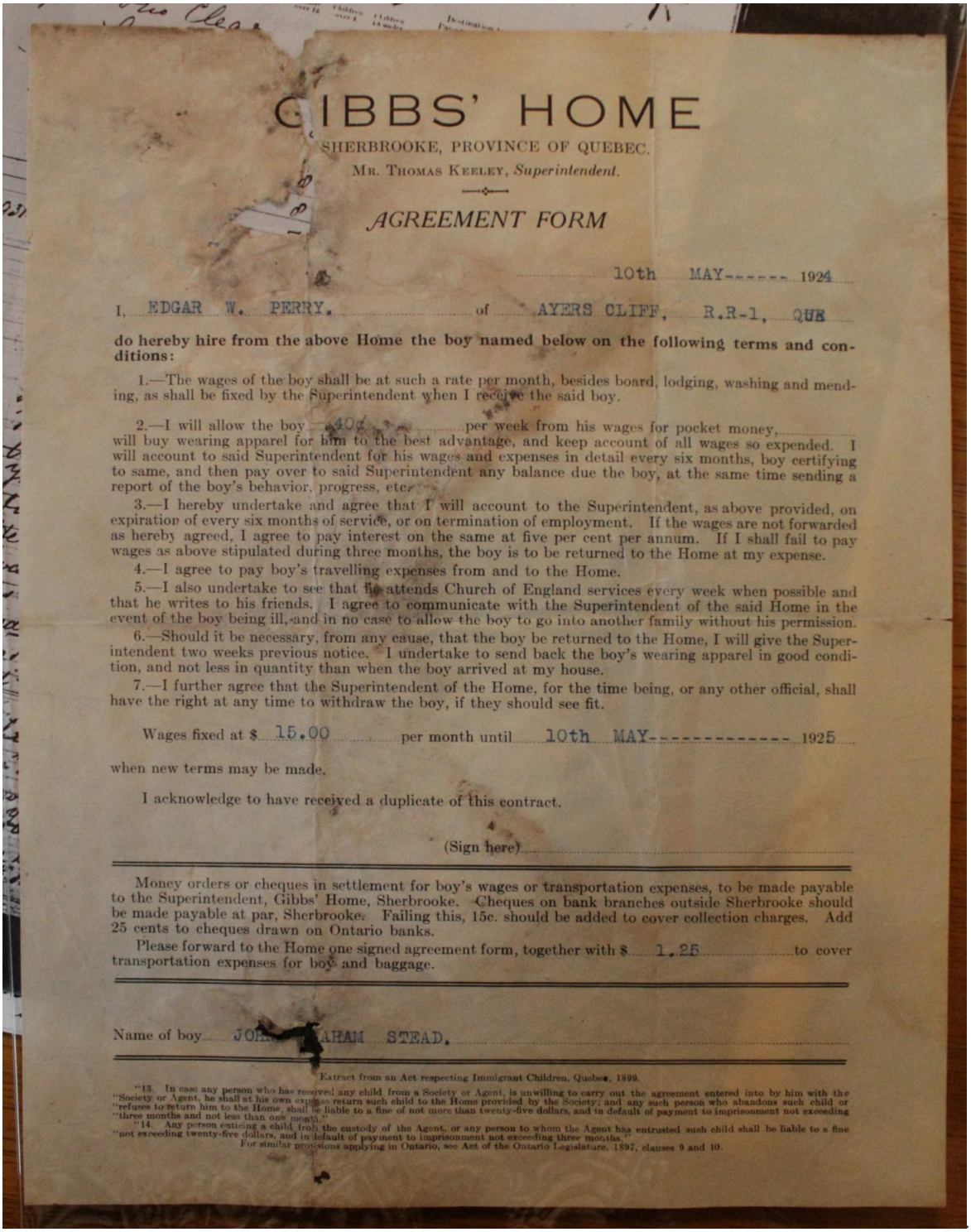
Parr closes her chapter on 'Apprenticed or Adopted' by stating, "They wanted what experienced child-savers knew would rarely, truly be theirs; status as family, siblings not servants, adoptees not apprentices. *Yet it was not their indentures or wages but their social circumstances that relegated them securely to a place outside the family*. By birth, by background, by speech, by the physical and mental legacies of their early deprivations, the child immigrants were different from Canadian children, too different to plausibly claim kin."





To purchase "Uprooted" visit: Amazon.ca

To purchase " Labouring Children" visit: Amazon.ca



GIBBS' HOME

SHERBROOKE, PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

MR. THOMAS KEELEY, *Superintendent.*

AGREEMENT FORM

10th MAY------ 1924

I, EDGAR W. PERRY. of AYERS CLIFF, R.R-1, QUE

do hereby hire from the above Home the boy named below on the following terms and conditions:

1.—The wages of the boy shall be at such a rate per month, besides board, lodging, washing and mending, as shall be fixed by the Superintendent when I receive the said boy.

2.—I will allow the boy 40¢ per week from his wages for pocket money, will buy wearing apparel for him to the best advantage, and keep account of all wages so expended. I will account to said Superintendent for his wages and expenses in detail every six months, boy certifying to same, and then pay over to said Superintendent any balance due the boy, at the same time sending a report of the boy's behavior, progress, etc.

3.—I hereby undertake and agree that I will account to the Superintendent, as above provided, on expiration of every six months of service, or on termination of employment. If the wages are not forwarded as hereby agreed, I agree to pay interest on the same at five per cent per annum. If I shall fail to pay wages as above stipulated during three months, the boy is to be returned to the Home at my expense.

4.—I agree to pay boy's travelling expenses from and to the Home.

5.—I also undertake to see that he attends Church of England services every week when possible and that he writes to his friends. I agree to communicate with the Superintendent of the said Home in the event of the boy being ill, and in no case to allow the boy to go into another family without his permission.

6.—Should it be necessary, from any cause, that the boy be returned to the Home, I will give the Superintendent two weeks previous notice. I undertake to send back the boy's wearing apparel in good condition, and not less in quantity than when the boy arrived at my house.

7.—I further agree that the Superintendent of the Home, for the time being, or any other official, shall have the right at any time to withdraw the boy, if they should see fit.

Wages fixed at $ 15.00 per month until 10th MAY---------- 1925

when new terms may be made.

I acknowledge to have received a duplicate of this contract.

(Sign here).....

Money orders or cheques in settlement for boy's wages or transportation expenses, to be made payable to the Superintendent, Gibbs' Home, Sherbrooke. Cheques on bank branches outside Sherbrooke should be made payable at par, Sherbrooke. Failing this, 15c. should be added to cover collection charges. Add 25 cents to cheques drawn on Ontario banks.

Please forward to the Home one signed agreement form, together with $ 1.25 to cover transportation expenses for boy and baggage.

Name of boy JOHN GRAHAM STEAD.

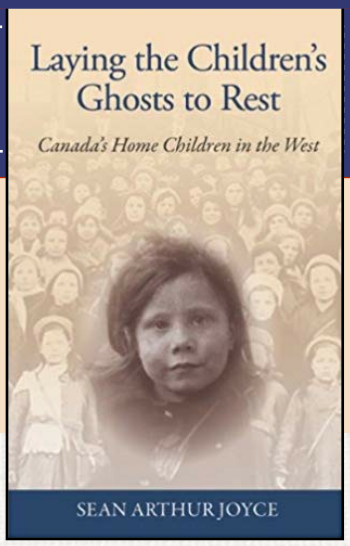
Extract from an Act respecting Immigrant Children, Quebec, 1899.

"13. In case any person who has received any child from a Society or Agent, is unwilling to carry out the agreement entered into by him with the "Society or Agent, he shall at his own expense return such child to the Home provided by the Society; and any such person who abandons such child or "refuses to return him to the Home, shall be liable to a fine of not more than twenty-five dollars, and in default of payment to imprisonment not exceeding "three months and not less than one month."

"14. Any person enticing a child from the custody of the Agent, or any person to whom the Agent has entrusted such child shall be liable to a fine "not exceeding twenty-five dollars, and in default of payment to imprisonment not exceeding three months."

For similar provisions applying in Ontario, see Act of the Ontario Legislature, 1897, clauses 9 and 10.

Laying the Children's Ghosts to Rest by Sean Arthur Joyce



Sean Arthur Joyce *is a poet, journalist and author with a strong commitment to the environment and social justice. He is also a descendant of a British Home Child. Joyce has written extensively about the British Home Children in his widely acclaimed book "Laying the Children's Ghosts to Rest" and in his blog. We are pleased to present an article he wrote introducing his book. To read Joyce's blog visit:*
https://chameleonfire1.wordpress.com/author/seanarthurjoyce/
Click here to purchase: *Laying the Children's Ghosts to Rest*

On February 24, 2010, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown publicly apologized to the families of the approximately 130,000 children who were emigrated from Britain to the colonies between roughly 1867-1967. For the elderly survivors and their descendants, numbering now into the millions in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, it was a long awaited moment, one some thought might never arrive. Many of these former child immigrants endured horrific physical, emotional or sexual abuse and nearly all of them were worked like beasts of burden. Indeed, on the balance sheet of empire, they figured as little more than that. In 19th century Malthusian and social Darwinist terms, these children were 'surplus population', unwanted because they were poor. Imagine growing up carrying that in your psyche.

For the British governments of the day child emigration was a politically expedient solution to the burgeoning poverty problem created by the upheaval of the Industrial Revolution. With the advent of mechanization, an agrarian/craft-based economy was uprooted virtually overnight and with it, hundreds of thousands of workers, who were suddenly unemployed. Britain's cities were inundated with families struggling to survive, giving rise to roving gangs of half-starved street children as immortalized in the novels of Charles Dickens. The parish relief system originally established under Elizabethan era Poor Laws, even with its cold, massive workhouses and orphanages, was overwhelmed. The religious revivals of the 1860s led to social reformers like Annie McPherson and Thomas Barnardo getting involved and they hit upon the idea of exporting children to the colonies. Both church and government were soon on board since it was a way of reducing the expenses of maintaining children in the orphanages.

Parish priests were given the authority to take children "into care" as wards of the State if it was determined that the family was too poor to support them. Barnardo called this practice "philanthropic abductions." Poor parents unwilling to give up their children had little choice. Once taken from their families, children were essentially branded 'orphans', regardless of whether their parents survived or not. Although parents could occasionally visit their children in the orphanages, some were shocked to discover that what they had considered a temporary placement had become permanent. Or worse, that they had been shipped overseas. Most of these parents would never see their children again. With state, church and charitable subsidies some emigrationists earned as much as £2 a head for transporting children in the late 1800s. A single ship might carry as few as two dozen and as many as a hundred or more children bound for Australia, Canada or New Zealand.

Probably millions of Canadians are now descended of the 100,000 or so child immigrants sent to this country by Britain. In Canada they came rather ironically to be known as the 'home children' though few were adopted into Canadian families. 'Homeboy' came to be an insult and child immigrants did their best to hide their origins. Depending on your political views, you could argue that it was a necessary phase in the development of a new country and that once grown up, the home children had a whole new country of opportunities before them. Certainly Canadian farms were desperately short of labourers. But from a humanitarian perspective it was a disaster. Girls were often sexually molested and boys worked like draft animals. Often they had to sleep in the barn with the horses and cows. The fact that capitalism's so-called 'global economy' still exploits children in sweatshops and unregulated factories around the world demonstrates that we have yet to learn from this tainted chapter of our past.

I am the descendant of one such child immigrant. My grandfather Cyril William Joyce was sent to Canada in 1926 as a boy of 16. His father George was a 'commercial traveller' and the family lived in the poverty-stricken east end of London—East Ham, to be precise. Cyril spent several years working as an indentured farm labourer in northern Alberta until reaching legal age. He never spoke of it much with his wife and children, and spoke even less of his family in England. His mother had signed the emigration papers and he never spoke of her again. Shame is a powerful silencer, but it doesn't stop the pain. What one generation leaves unfinished, the next one will have to deal with. I grew up with no connection to my English relatives and a huge hole in my psyche that wondered what had happened. Interestingly, I unconsciously imitated my grandfather's pattern when I left home at the early age of 15 due to family disagreements. Sadly, Cyril was unable to loosen the bonds on these painful memories and took his family secrets to his grave. When PM Brown's apology came I had already felt 'called' by my grandfather to spend more than two years researching his history. What I call 'walking the path of the ancestors' led me to the child immigrants.

It was decades before any system of Canadian government inspections of immigrant children was created and even then child welfare agencies were grossly under-funded. It took until 1924 for the minimum age of child immigrants to be raised to 14. Our past governments paid to bring these boys and girls here, then largely abandoned them to their fates on isolated farms in the Maritimes, Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and later, the West. Yet not once in all my years of public schooling did I learn about Canada's home children. Although the House of Commons unanimously passed a motion in February 2017 to offer an apology to BHC families, there still has not been a formal federal government apology from the Prime Minister as was done by the governments of Britain and Australia. The time is long past due for Canadians to own up to this and help lay the children's ghosts to rest.

As my Uncle Rob Joyce wrote upon hearing of Brown's apology: "It is a great day, I wish we could be reading this with Dad now, that would have made it even better. I understand Dad better now than I ever did, and why he was sad at times for reasons I never knew. An understanding that, like the British Government's apology has come, sadly, much too late."

The elders of the Native American Siksika/Sauk Blackfeet nation say there is great healing power in the acknowledgement of past wrongs, and that healing goes both forward and backward in time. The children's ghosts are waiting. Let the healing begin. Published in Acumen magazine (UK) January 2011 — revision 2019.

BHC 150 Special edition pin

BHCARA is thrilled to announce the release of our BHC 150 Special edition pin. This pin commemorates 2019 as the 150th year since the first party of British Home Children arrived in Canada. The pin also notes the years the BHC were brought, 1869 to 1948. The BHC schemes started officially on 8 November 1869 when Maria Rye's first party of children arrived in Canada. Our official pin (to the right in the photo) is silver rimmed with silver raised letters. The special edition pin features a gold rim with raised gold lettering.

CLICK HERE FOR BHC 150 pin orders in Canada

CLICK HERE FOR Official pin orders in Canada

If unable to utilize pay pal, please contact us at info@britishhomechildren.com with your order. E-mail transfers or checks accepted. Checks should be made out to the BHCARA and mailed to Lori Oschefski, 59 Blair Crescent, Barrie, Ontario, L4M 5Y4

Canadian price per pin is $7 - if using Pay Pal $7.50

For international ordering - please contact us at info@britishhomechildren.com

ENGLAND: Each, including postage of $5.90: $12.90 CAN converts to £7.43. For 1 to 5 pins, cost is $7 each plus a total of $5.90 shipping, converted to British pounds.

AUSTRALIA: Each, including postage of $5.90: $12.90 CANADIAN - converts to AU$13.30. For 1 to 5 pins, cost is $7 each plus a total of $5.95 shipping, covered to AU funds.

UNITED STATES: Each including postage of $2.95: $9.95 Can converts to 7.57 USA. For 1 to 5 pins, $7 Canadian each plus shipping of $2.95 Canadian funds.

Payment:

BEST OPTION

e-mail money transfers to info@britishhomechildren.com - make the password BHCARA - please include your address in the "note" section of the e-transfer or pm it to me.

Check mailed to me at 59 Blair Crescent, Barrie, Ontario, L4M 5Y4 - made out to the BHCARA (letters acceptable). Please let me know if ordering by check.

Please remember to include with orders, your name, address and which pin you wish, our official pin or our BHC 150 pin.

You can also PayPal the funds to me, but we need to ask another 50¢ to $2 (depending upon number ordered) to cover their fees. Use bhcara@gmail.com please.