



British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association

March 2017 Newsletter

By: CEO Lori Oschefski

Author and Historian
Andrew Simpson

Very special guest writer
Doreen Young

Student Essay by
Charlene Hutchinson

Ronald Chamberlain by his late daughter Doreen Young

ALTHOUGH RONALD CHAMBERLAIN lived in Canada since he was sent here by Barnardo's at the age of ten, served in the Royal Canadian Air Force in the Second World War, married and had children in Canada, it wasn't discovered until much later in his life that he wasn't a Canadian Citizen. He had to apply for and finally received his Citizenship in 1976.

Ronald's father and his mother, Maud's fiancée, Jack Bradshaw, was a British soldier who was killed in action during the First World War. Maud, who already had another child, Reginald Jack Chamberlain, was not receiving child support ordered by the court from his father, was forced to live with her elderly father, John Chamberlain. They lived in abject poverty – the only means of support was her seventy-five year old father's old age pension. Maud was only able to get occasional odd work. "She was proved to be of weak will and totally unfitting to bring up her two boys" (Barnardo's admitting papers). Ronald was described as being of good behavior at school, but quite uncontrollable at home.

On August 5, 1920 Maud signed the "full agreement" for the Dr. Barnardo Homes, admitting both children. She was hoping then that she could seek work as a domestic. It is not clear that Maud understood that by signing a "full" agreement, she had given her consent to send the boys out of the country if Barnardo's saw fit. Martha, Maud's sister, who was married and had family of her own, was willing to raise the boys along with her sons however she was denied custody by Barnardo's. On March 27, 1925 Ronald was placed aboard the Montclare headed for Canada. Sadly ten months prior, his older brother Reginald was shipped to



Australia, departing January 4, 1924 aboard the Euripides. The brothers would never see each other again. On the farms in Canada, Ronald had good and bad experiences: one place did not provide him with socks (which gave him trouble with his feet his whole life) and treated him as a farm hand, at best, but there were also kind

people – people who treated him like family. His fondest memories were of the Pettman's family in Ingersol, Ontario who treated him as one of the family. Ronald's family would come to know them as Aunt Elma and Uncle Fred. His worst memory was of a placement on a farm in the Georgetown area of Ontario. The family treated him as a farm hand, at best. They would take him to town with the family each weekend, and make him wait outside the Ice Cream Parlor while they went inside and indulged. They would give him his week's compulsory allowance once back at the farm. Ronald was required to wear rubber boots on the farm, presumably throughout the winter, with no socks. As a result he suffered trouble with his feet the rest of his life.

His kindest treatment came from the family of Mary Mitchell, a kind spinster, and her father from Port Perry, Ontario. Friendships he nurtured with this family and community members continued throughout his lifetime.

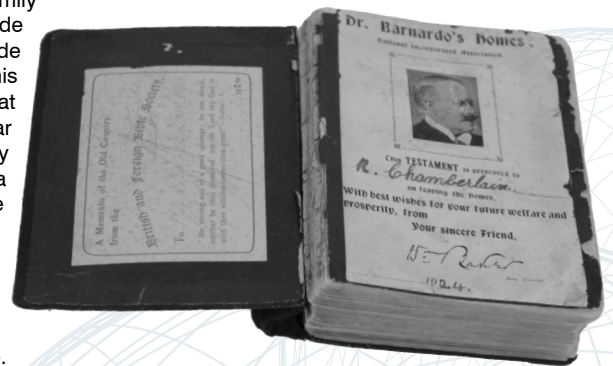
In 1937 Ronald met and married Beatrice Laura Demman in Kitchener, Ontario following which they would move to Toronto. In January of 1940 Ronald joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. He served in the Second World War as a Wireless Operator and Gunner on a Halifax Bomber, which was shot down over Germany in April, 1944. Ronald parachuted out of the plane, landing on railroad tracks and injuring his hips and back. He was taken as Prisoner of War where he remained until liberation in May, 1945.

Ronald and his brother Reginald just missed seeing each other during their respective service in the Second World War. They both visited the home of their Aunt Martha, apparently missing each other within minutes of each others visit!

After the war, Ronald would enjoy a wonderful family life with Beatrice. Together they would have six children and seventeen Grandchildren. They were married for over fifty years!

The injuries Ronald suffered in the war, as well as the injuries to his feet as a child on the Canadian farms plagued him the rest of his life. Severe debilitating arthritis set into his hips causing him constant pain. He also suffered with heart problems and poor circulation. Ronald underwent at least three heart operations.

Although Ronald suffered many hardships in his life, he was a wonderfully loving, kind and caring husband and father. He rarely had a bad word to say about anyone, a true gentleman. Ronald passed away June 1, 1996.



Canadian House of Commons apologizes to the British Home Children

Resulting from the ongoing efforts of many people and various organizations, the campaign to obtain an apology from the House of Commons came to fruition on Thursday February 16th when a members bill was passed in the House of Commons apologizing to the British Home Children. [Details are on page 7](#)

Inside this month

New Book release:

Author and Historian Andrew Simpson has been writing for our newsletter since January of 2015. We are pleased to present his new book "Manchester Remembering 1914-1918" Page 6

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The Trials and Tribulations of British Home Children

By Charlene Hutchinson, Grade 10

Nantyr Shores Secondary School, Innisfil, Ontario

Teacher: Mr. Froese

January 13, 2017

Student Essays

As the story of our BHC spreads, we find more and more classes are studying this mass immigration of children to Canada. Over the next few months we will publish some of the essays written by our students

British home children, although it is a very new topic, it is an enormously important one that should be discussed more often. Social reformers such as Annie Macpherson, and Maria Rye were involved in this scheme when it had first started. Barnardo's, Macpherson Pioneers were some of the many that saw this as a great way for these children to be off the filthy streets of Britain, to somewhere clean, and fresh.

"Contemporary reports commented on the 'swarms of ragged children' infesting the metropolis." 1 Many sources prove that there were large amounts of children filling the streets of Britain. This scheme was made in the 1800's and to this day, Canada has still offered no apology to the children involved, who are very elderly to this day. The Australian government however, has offered their apology for the suffering and loneliness, and many emotions mixed in between that these children had to endure.

In the late 1800's, a young man named Dr. Thomas Barnardo saw the plight of homeless children loitering in the streets of Britain. After he discovered this problem, he began to gather them up, and give them food and shelter. Despite the growing wealth of Britain, many working people lived, worked and died in very poor conditions. This was evident when seeing how the children lived. This plan was seen as a great idea to parents. They had thought of this migration of the children as a way to get them off the streets of England, to the clean fresh land in Canada. This was basically their idea of salvation.

The plan was put into place very quickly. Children as young as two were being sent to their "new home" in Canada. This was also thought as a way to help populate the country. The idea was to emigrate these children to Canada, to work as indentured farm workers and domestics. Most of the children were believed to be orphans. However, only two percent truly were. 2 George Herbert Beardshaw, who was fourteen years old when he was sent to Canada, was mistaken to be an orphan and thought when he came to Canada he would become a cowboy. "I was at school one day and they said, "How many boys would like to go to Canada?" So I stuck up my hand."

There were over 50 organizations that sent the children to Canada. Some like Barnardo's, Salvation Army, and Quarriers to name a few. Lori, Oschefski, CEO and founder of British Home Children Advocacy and Research Association says, "Barnardo's sent over thirty-thousand children, and was by far the largest organization sending to Canada." Sometimes, the migration was supposed to be temporary. It would be a minor solution until families could get back on their feet. However, sometimes parents were sent letters stating that their child had been shipped out, which was very tragic.

The children did not have the greatest time on their journey getting here. These children were all homesick, and in doubt as to if they'd ever get to see their parents again. All they wanted to do was just go home. Unfortunately, some of them never got to see their families again. The parents were told that Canada was a wonderful place to come to. After all, it would help populate the country. These children saw other otherwise. Most of them didn't even know where they were going. Before the children arrived at where they'd be staying, Dr. Barnardo had to acquire large vacant homes and many estates to accommodate the growing demand. To be able to acquire this land, Dr. Barnardo had to do a lot of canvassing for charitable support to assist in this program. Eventually, ample amounts of land, housing, and financial support became available. A typical meal given on their journey consisted of Irish Stew, Rice dessert, coffee and bread and butter. To pass the time on their voyage, the children played various games on deck. Games such as tug of war, and the boys often busied themselves by watching for whales. It is said that one small boy apparently asked, "Could that whale swallow a man?" Other passengers that were aboard the ships with the children were not fond of being on the same ship, let alone anywhere closer to the children. One woman, upon realizing who the children were, became frantic. "It's bloody well not acceptable that we should have to travel with this bunch." The high-class woman then continued to go on about the children, now with her posh friends around her. "Not only will they steal anything that's not secured, these waifs are infected with god knows what diseases and contagious mental insufficiencies."

People were really not fond of these children, but they were okay with bringing them in their homes to do all their work for them. These children were criticized every where they went, but they didn't have a choice to be this way. All throughout the ships, the smell of oil and grease filled the areas, and gradually became stronger. Most of the children had started to take on a shade of green in the face. As the odour became stronger, the children started to feel sick to their stomachs.

Nausea was very common for them at that time. Thoughts about their parents filled the children's minds quite often. Imagining their mothers arms wrapped around them tightly. Faintly feeling the safety of her company for a brief second was blissful for these lonely children who felt emptiness. As the days slowly passed, hopes of being reunited with their families faded little by little, as the ships heartlessly pushed towards Canada. Even though the children were told not to make friends with the others on the ship, it was hard not to. The children filled their loneliness by finding a friend and planned on sticking together with him or her when arriving to Canada. As the ships arrived to Canada, the children were eagerly wanting to get off, but also desperately wanting to go back home.

All in all, the journey was not pleasant for these children. Illnesses, loneliness, and anger were common for these children as they arrived in Canada. Canada, like their journey was dreadful for the children. Being sent to abusive homes, doing endless, amounts of work for people they had just met. All these children wanted to do was go home, and they would most likely do anything to get back home. Almost immediately after arriving in Canada, the children were forced to go through an inspection. Some had already gone through the process at the orphanage, but were to do it again now. The doctors would look at the children one by one, poking and prodding them, noting any obvious defects. After inspections were done, the children were allowed to enter Canada.

The children were sectioned off into different cities after inspection. They had been placed in advertisements in the newspaper prior to their arrival, so that they could go to their designated placement at that time. The homeowners were awaiting their arrival, so the children could get right to work. They were free labour after all. It was common for the children to be sectioned off to Quebec or Halifax. It was very unfortunate, that the children were separated from their friends, even siblings. With no friend or companion nearby, the feeling of loneliness intensified. All these children wanted to do was go home. Even though the children were being sent to their new "home", it was not supposed to feel like home. The homeowners had no emotional connections to the child. They thought of the children as just another worker.

All the families had to do was answer an advert, and the child was theirs. Some of the children were accepted into the families they worked for, and were practically adopted. Many other children suffered. If necessary, children could be returned, and reassigned. Many children were moved from one farm to another. While some indeed did run away, many died from ill-health or injuries, resulting from neglect or abuse. Unfortunately, some even committed

suicide. Monitoring these children, however, was usually neglected, and so was the placements of them. The children did have to sign an indenture contract, that stated they would have to stay at their location for three years, for a set fee, work and lodgings. The children were often treated as outcasts. They were called names like Fegan Boys, Gutter Children, and Street Arabs. These children were often told many times that they were just home children, worthless, undependable, and thieves. In most cases, many dogs and animals were treated better. On the farms, there ere lots of jobs to be done. The girls assisted farm wives, not only with the housework, and the children, but also on the fields. The boys became farm workers who were grossly overworked. They were to earn their keep through work.

There were terms required in the housing of the children. Children must be housed, fed, clothed, and sent to school, to name a few. Sometimes these terms were not met. The children went through very rough conditions while living on the farms. A factor that made their surroundings much harder was that some of the children were abused. Girls were sexually assaulted while living on the farm. Many of these children were sent to homes that were worse than their actual home. Through these rough times, the children did have a few things to look forward to. On their 18th birthday, the children were to receive a sum no less than \$100, and be discharged. Seeing as the children were denied education, some of the boys enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces. This gave them a way to get back and see the family they had back home. Some of the children ran away from their placements and lied about their age to attain this, and also get away from an inadequate or abusive arrangement. Everything considered, it is evident that these children had a grim experience here in Canada. They went through abuse, heartbreak, loneliness. Those were major changes for the young children.

"11% of today's Canadian population are descended from home children that made the crossing from Britain to Canada." When asked what the descendants of British home children want most, Lori Oschefski said, "they want to reunite with their lost families." The descendants are wanting to find out all they can about their lost family members. From what happened to their ancestors, how they came to Canada, to where they were placed, and how they were treated. The families will take any information they can get.

George Beardshaw, a surviving home child was asked what he wanted British Home Child organization to achieve most with their work. He replied with, "*Make it a part of history, make sure this story survives.*" Some of the British Home Children that survived did not tell anyone they were a home child. Home Children were seen as outcasts and not valuable members of society back then. These children were ashamed of who they were. Unfortunately, a lot of descendants are still unaware of their family history. Many people have come together to discuss their history, show support, and bring awareness of this topic. It is a great environment of people who are looking to find information. All in all, these people want to know all they can about their family members.

With everything considered, British Home Children went through very hard times. From being torn away from their families, going to an unfamiliar country, to being abused and mistreated, these children had a rough childhood. These children had come from a life of playing in fields, having fun and forming friendships, with a regimented order of school, housework and overall togetherness to be transported across the ocean to be left on the farm and not know a soul.

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We are very pleased with Charlene's essay! While reading it, one thing came through very clearly. She was able to empathize very much with the Home Children and really felt their pain and sense of loss from being separated from their families. As adults we tend to think from a parenting point of view and feel anger at the abuse and mistreatment of these children and gratitude for those who were lucky and found good homes with good people. Charlene turns this around by helping us realize from the children's point of view, that all they wanted was to go back to their homes, even if the situation there was less than ideal. At the end of the day, a child wants to be with their mom and dad. When Charlene was describing the children's voyage to Canada she placed herself on the deck of the ship playing games, and she smelled the oil and grease, and she felt the anguish of missing her parents as only a child could. Charlene gives us valuable insight from a totally different perspective - thank you Charlene and very well done!

Remembering Vimy Ridge

Vimy Ridge marked on of the most significant battles for Canada and for our British Home Children. The most common death date of the BHC who served is 9 April 1917, the first day of the battle. We lost 45 BHC on that day alone. April's newsletter will be a special commemoration of Vimy Ridge. Our Nantyr Shores students will have a special commemoration for the BHC in April in FRANCE! Details next month!

With many thanks to our researchers who have tirelessly worked over several years to identity the soldiers lost, we have started posting in our [Facebook Group](#), one of the soldiers each day, who lost their lives on 9 April 1917, for the 45 days leading up to the 100th Anniversary.



Battle of
Vimy Ridge
100th

Histories of the Receiving Homes

538 Jarvis Street

Barnardo's Canadian Headquarters 1922 – 1948

By Lori Oschefski

Originally called "Northwold", the late Victorian mansion once located at 538 Jarvis Street was designed in the early 1880's by leading Toronto architect William Storm. The home was built by Sarah Ellen Cawthra (nee Crowther), the recent widow of one of Toronto's wealthiest men, William Cawthra. Sarah was the sister of a well known Toronto lawyer James Crowther.



William Storm

Sarah and William did not have children and when he died, he left no will. A court divided his money between Sarah, two nephews and a niece, providing them with the money to have lavish life styles. Sarah used her portion to build a stately mansion located at the corner of Jarvis and Isabella Street and opposite the former Cawthra Square Park, named for her husband's family. The mansion rose three storeys, designed in dark red brick and cut stone, featuring a porte-cochere (large covered entrance for vehicles to pass through) and a winding drive way leading to a large coach house and stables in the rear.

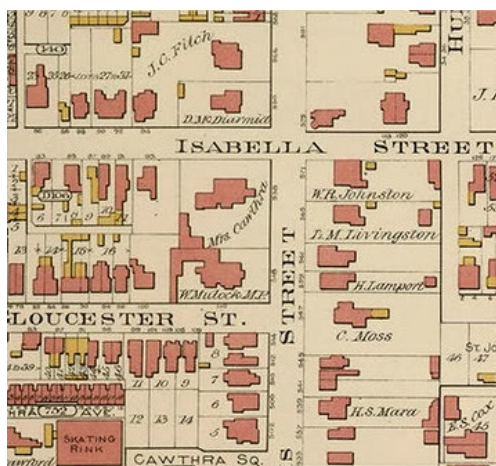
The mansion had thirty five rooms, eighteen fireplaces, an oak panelled dining room, lofty ceilings and richly carved beams. It had two drawing rooms, a ballroom and a marble conservatory. The huge ball room hosted Corinthian columns. The mansion supported decorative gables, varied window groupings and colouristic detailing favoured in the late 19th century. Internally the home was organized around a large panelled ground floor vestibule with the stairway a conspicuous feature. Elaborate cornices adorned the doors, windows and mantels of the principle rooms. The servants quarters were located on the third floor and housed

thirty staff. The land the mansion was built on has a frontage of 186 feet by a depth of 190 feet and also comprises a rear portion of 50 by 50. Northwold also was one of the first private homes in the city to have electric light installed

Sarah remarried in 1890, 10 years following her husband's death, to another affluent business man, William Allan Murray; who died in 1891. At the time of this marriage Sarah was sixty years old, William Murray was seventy. Sarah's



Sarah Ellen Cawthra, nee Crowther, the original owner of 538 Jarvis Street.



Goad 1884 map showing the location of Northwold.

Cawthra Mulock's childhood house was the mansion to the south

brother James Crowther and his wife Eliza Torrane married in 1849 and had several children including Sarah Ellen Cawthra Crowther who married another rich and powerful Toronto resident Sir William Mulock, Post Master General and Chief Justice of Ontario. When Sarah died in 1897 her vast fortune was left to Sir Mulock to administer, with the bulk of the estate going to his fifteen year old son Cawthra Mulock. Northwold stood empty until 1905 when Cawthra moved into the home. Instalments of Cawthra's inheritance began when he reached twenty one years of age, in 1907, and at the age of twenty five, the magnificent Jarvis Street, residence became his.

Cawthra's inheritance vaulted him into prominence in Toronto's social and financial circles. As the youngest millionaire in Canada, he became known as the 'boy millionaire'. In 1903, at the age of 21, he married Chief Justice William Glenholme Falconbridge's daughter Adel. Cawthra and Adel entertained the likes of the Sir John A. MacDonald, the Masseys, the Gooderhams and the Mowats in the lavish Jarvis Street home.

In 1907, the same year Cawthra Mulock turned twenty one, he financed and built the noted Royal Alexander Theatre in Toronto with funds from his inheritance. Cawthra was firmly established as one of Toronto's elite. The Toronto Star, in 1913, named him as one of Toronto's wealthiest persons. Northwold was the hub of Toronto society.

The Mulock's lavish life at 538 Jarvis Street came to an end with the untimely death of Cawthra, who died in the Spanish influenza epidemic while



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I have been commissioned by the Executors of the estate of the late

Mr. Cawthra Mulock

to arrange for disposal by auction at the residence,

No. 538 Jarvis St., Toronto

of the entire very valuable household furnishings, comprising all the costly furniture in the dining room, the drawing room, the palm room, the reception room, the hall, stairway and upper hall, the bedrooms and in the 26 rooms in the wing comprising the children's and servants' quarters, the Persian rugs, the silk rugs, the draperies, a number of valuable paintings by Weissenbruck, Anton Mauve, John M. Swan, R. A. J. E. Miller, Fantin La Tour, Roelofs and Frere. A large quantity of valuable linen, the china, the cut glassware, a quantity of sterling silver and Sheffield plate, the valuable English billiard table, the specimen palm trees and collection of conservatory plants.

COMMENCING ON MONDAY, JUNE 16th, at 11 a.m. and CONTINUING EACH DAY UNTIL ALL IS SOLD,

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C. J. TOWNSEND,
AUCTIONEER

111 King St. West. J. 7,10,12,14.

visiting in the United States in 1918. His wealth was divided among his children, his estate and he left his wife Adele a paltry \$250,000 trust fund, which was the subject of extensive litigation. The mansion fell under the care of the executors of Cawthra's estate and Adele, along with their four children, were forced out of the home. The mansion was initially listed for sale and its contents auctioned, but was eventually rented out to a local doctor, Dr. Thomas J Glover/Clover. Adele married her cousin Thomas Moss in 1919 and remained married to him until her death in 1935.

In January of 1922, the Dr. Barnardo Homes, under the supervision of the Canadian manager of Barnardo's John W Hobday. Purchased the property for \$90,000. The book "The Little Immigrants - The Orphans who came to Canada", by Kenneth Bagnell, claims that Sir William Mulock, Cawthra father, was a close friend of John Hobday and a strong supporter of child immigration.

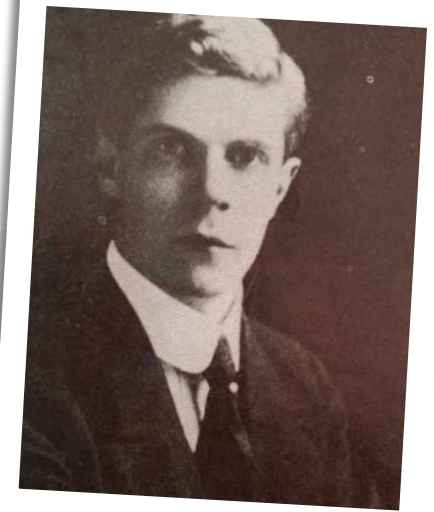
Once the property was acquired by Dr. Barnardo's they began an appeal to raise an additional \$100,000 for renovations to outfit the home to become their head office and their Toronto receiving home. The new receiving home was dedicated to the war efforts of the Dr. Barnardo Boys and called "The War Memorial Building." The ground floor was renovated into offices, the second floor the children's dormitory and the Hobday's family quarters on the third.

The new offices/receiving home officially opened in May of 1923. Among those attending the opening was: Lord Byng of Vimy; the Governor General; Herbert C Cox, son of the late George and Mrs Cox and 'vice-president of the Canadian branch'; autographed pictures of King George, Queen Mary and Queen Alexandra; Prof. Albert Carless, Hon. Medical Director of the U.K. Barnardo's; Walter Cole and Emily Scott, two former Barnardo children. Of the new premise John Hobday said, "As a council we consider that a house such as this is not too good for our children, and we wish it to stand as a practical demonstration of the value we assign to our boys and

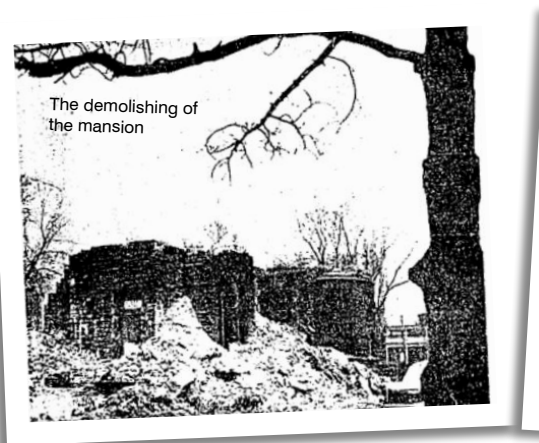
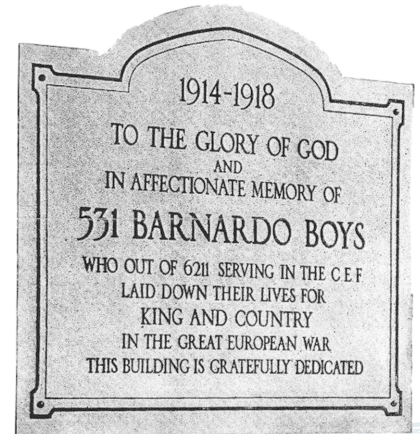
girls, and of the estimation of which we think they are worthy." (Globe, Toronto, May 22 1923). A memorial plaque hung at Jarvis street which read: "1914-1918 TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY OF 531 BARNARDO BOYS WHO OUT OF 6211 SERVING IN THE C.E.F. LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR KING AND COUNTRY IN THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR THIS BUILDING IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED ". The location or what happened to the plaque is not known.

Northwold served as the Canadian Headquarters for Barnardo's until 1948 when the mansion was sold to the Salvation Army. The sale price was less than the 1922 purchase price. Barnardo's moved its headquarters to 20 Spadina Avenue. The Salvation Army used the home until 1956 when the property became part of a \$600,000 land deal. While used as the SA Canadian headquarters, it is estimated that over than 7,000 immigrants passed through the rear quarters while officials directed the Canada-wide organization from the main floor.

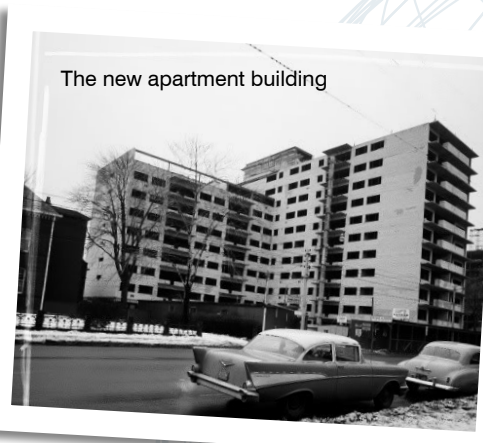
In 1957 the mansion fell to the wreckers ball to make way for high rise apartments. Wrecking foreman Lewis Green had this to say in a Toronto Star article: "It was one of the finest houses in Toronto. It should have never been torn down. You never get craftsmanship like this today: it would have lasted another 1,000 years...it would have made a wonderful museum." Noted in the newspaper also was the fact that hundreds of Barnardo children had carved their initials into the 24 inch stone walls in the wine cellar.



Cawthra Mulock who the Toronto Daily Star described as 'a strikingly handsome young man, in a bloodless, blond way, the golden boy of Edwardian Toronto

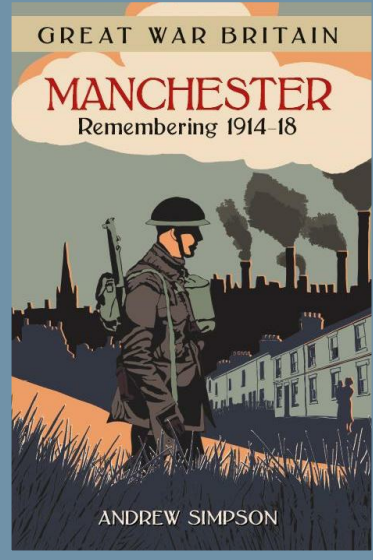


The demolishing of the mansion



The new apartment building

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Growing up in Manchester during the Great War

By Author & Historian Andrew Simpson

www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca

Now as part of that outrageous piece of self promotion and with Lori's permission here is an extract from my new book *Manchester, Remembering 1914-18*. Published by the History Press*. It tells the stories of people caught up in the Great War, from the men who went off to fight, the women who as ever kept the family home going but also worked in the munitions factories on the trams and delivering the post and the children who saw their child hoods interrupted in many ways.

The war threw up a raft of social problems of which the rise in juvenile crime was one that exercised the concerns of pretty much everyone from magistrates and teachers all the way up to the Home Secretary and drew into the debate Sir Baden Powell, and an assortment of clergymen and "experts."

No one doubted that there was a problem. In the July of 1916 at the Manchester City Sessions Mr A J Ashton, the Recorder commented that "of seventeen prisoners nine were under age and eight were less than 18 years."

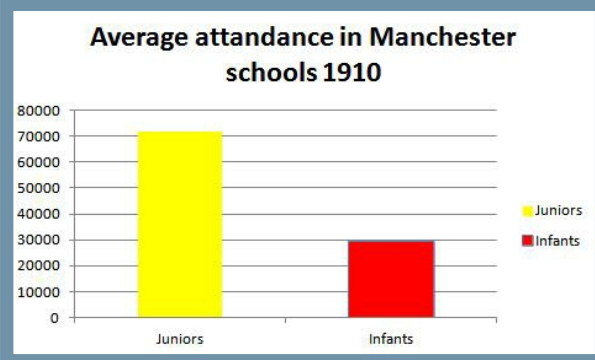
And later in the year Spurley Hey Manchester's Director of Education, in a report on juvenile crime in the city pointed out that "the greatest tendency to commit offences was at 12 years of age."

Not that there was any agreement on the reasons why this was the case.

The obvious and very easy answer was down to the lack of parental control at time when many fathers were away at the Front and mothers were working. This was seized upon by a succession of observers including the bishop of Liverpool who felt that owing to the war "boys had been deprived of the corrective hand of the father [while] mothers did not seem to have the same authority over the children."



Students at St Clement's school, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, date unknown



The school population, 1910

Equally likely to be cited was the impact of the Kinema which according to one correspondent to the Daily Telegraph was full of shows which "are demoralising to children and too many who are grown up [making] the audience familiar with death, crime, and killing and are of unhealthy excitement."

But while not underestimating the impact of the war the report by Spurley Hey highlighted the fact that the majority of those involved in juvenile crime came from central Manchester in what "were the denser districts" while other areas like Crumpsall, Longsight, Withington, Didsbury Openshaw and Levenshulme were collectively "only about one fifth of the number registered by Hulme alone."

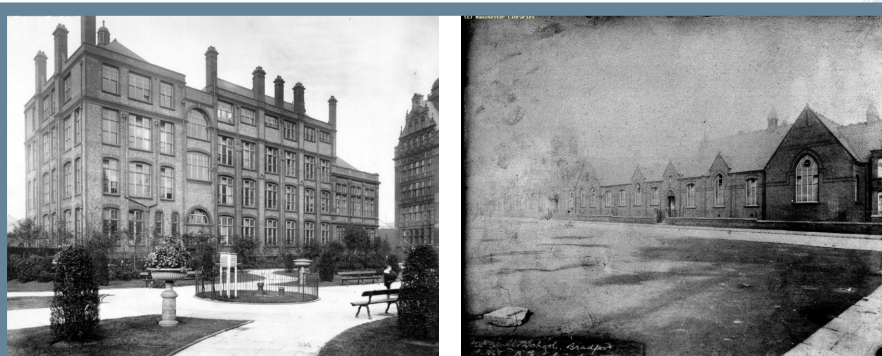
Moreover because the report covered the years from 1911 through to 1915 it gave a context to the later concerns on juvenile crime and making a telling point about the link between poverty and poor housing and the role of education.

All of which was well enough but this was at a time when expenditure on education was being cut and some at least of our children were "half time attenders."

The recommendation of the Government's Retrenchment Committee was to make savings of £200,000 with cuts to medical inspections, teacher training and technical school grants.

Across the country local authorities were engaged in their own cost reductions. Here in Manchester the Education Committee had reduced its expenditure on higher education by £11,106 and on elementary education by £13,039 while Cheshire had reduced the leaving age for boys and girls from 14 down to 13.

This was compounded by the numbers of trained teachers leaving the profession for the Forces and the practice of a



Central School for Boys and Girls, 1906

half time system for some children whose schools had been taken over for military hospitals.

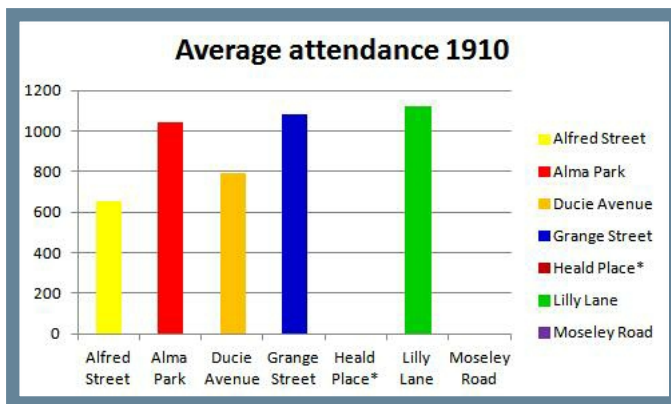
It had resulted in a degree of ad hoc provision for some at least. In the February of 1916 the Manchester Museum reported that it was providing effective instruction "for 900 to a 1,000 children per week drawn at present from the higher standards of the elementary schools"

A similar scheme was underway at the "City Art Gallery, the Whitworth Institute, and kindred institutes in the city," It had proved so popular that children not only travelled some distance to attend but even brought their parents.

In Manchester by 1915 the number of schools taken over amounted to eight. The first was the Central High School for Boys and Girls on Whitworth Street which had a thousand students and became the headquarters of the 2nd General Western Hospital.

The following year another seven schools were taken over.

These were Alfred Street in Harpurhey, Alma Park in Levenshulme, Grange Street in Bradford, Lilly Lane in Moston, Ducie Avenue, Moseley Road and Heald Place which amounted to the loss of 3897 places.



* **Manchester Remembering 1914-18, Andrew Simpson, 2017, pre order now from the History Press, <http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/publication/great-war-britain-manchester-remembering-1914-18/9780750978965/>**

After years of tireless efforts by many - an apology from the House of Commons!

In a carefully orchestrated motion put together by Gilles Duceppe former leader of the Bloc Québécois and Grandson of British Home Child John James Rowley, this motion was presented and passed in House of Commons on 16 Feb 2017: Mr. Luc Theriault (Montcalm, BQ): "Mr. Speaker, I ask for the consent of the House to adopt the following motion, with the support of the MP from Humber River--Black Creek [Judy Sgro], the MP from Chilliwack--Hope [Mark Strahl], the MP for Vancouver East [Jenny Kwan] and the MP from Saanich--Gulf Islands [Elizabeth May]:

"That the House recognize the injustice, abuse and suffering endured by the British Home Children as well as the efforts, participation and contribution of these children and their descendants within our communities; and offer its sincere apology to the former British Home Children who are still living and to the descendants of these 100,000 individuals who were shipped from Great Britain to Canada between 1869 and 1948, and torn from their families to serve mainly as cheap labour once they arrived in Canada."

The motion was approved by Prime Minister Trudeau and received unanimous consent in the House. A video of the motion can be viewed on the Facebook page of MP Mark Strahl, also a descendant of a British Home Child. Although not a formal Government apology, which would be issued by the Prime Minister, this apology marks a huge step forward for the recognition of British Home Children in Canada.

It has always been the mandate of the BHCARA to lobby for an apology issued by the Prime Minister, in public and one where surviving BHC and descendants can be present. We are diligently moving forward in this direction. We also have further goals that we hope the government will support. Recognition for the contributions of thousands of BHC in our Wars by Veteran's Affairs, better education for our children in our schools about the BHC and descendants also feel that making the current Ontario and Nova Scotia BHC Day of September 28th a national day would be a fitting tribute to the BHC.

This past week, two media outlets in Montreal shared this call for an official apology by our Prime Minister. Gilles Duceppe was interviewed about BHC by Aaron Rand on CJAD Radio and this movement was commented on. La Presse newspaper published an interview with Lori Oschefski and also Gilles Duceppe, in which the call for an official apology was noted. The article in Montreal can be found on our web site at www.BritishHomeChildren.com. An open letter to Prime Minister Trudeau is now online at Change.org and/or available for printing and signatures at the bottom of our [Apology page](#) on our web site. Letters can be signed and mailed to the Prime Minister, for those who wish to do this, a copy of the open letter is included on the last page of this newsletter.

[Montreal Gazette: Former Bloc leader Duceppe rallies for rights of British Home Children](#)

[Our Andrew Simpson weighs in on the apology given](#)

[Sean Arthur Joyce, author of Laying the Children's Ghosts to Rest give us his thoughts and reason for moving forward](#)

[Lori Oschefski - Orillia Packet and Times: Motion passed in House of Commons acknowledges suffering of British Home Children](#)

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British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association



The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister of Canada, Ottawa
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

On 16 February 2017 the House of Commons, with your support, passed a motion apologizing to the British Home Children (BHC). On behalf of the few surviving BHC and Child Migrants (CM), their descendants, all BHC groups and the many others who have worked tirelessly and unselfishly towards gaining recognition for this very deserving group of people; we humbly convey our sincere and heartfelt thank you to you, Sir and all members of the House of Commons, who supported the motion presented in the House of Commons. Many descendants around the world have posted through social media, comments of gratitude and support for the apology made in the House of Commons in February.

Our work is by no means complete. There are very few BHC/CM left in Canada. For these few and all descendants, what an achievement it would be for them to hear an official apology, from their/our Prime Minister. Within the past ten years the Prime Minister of Britain and Australia have made a sincere and genuine apology to the Home Children and their descendants. It is our hope that the few BHC/CM here in Canada will live long enough to hear you, Prime Minister Trudeau, make an official apology, after many decades of contributing selflessly to their new country. Anyone who knows and understands the information of the BHC scheme knows that an apology is long over due here in Canada. They would also recognize and acknowledge the contribution this group of Canadians have made to our beautiful country. As a father yourself, it must be unimaginable to consider any circumstance, where your children would be shipped away from Canada and put to work in another land.

Additionally we humbly request that the contribution made by the thousands of BHC/CM in the First and Second World Wars, to be recognised by Veterans Affairs Canada. We would hope with the encouragement of the Canadian Government this chapter in our history will be integrated and taught at all levels of education across Canada.

It would be a fitting tribute for the Federal Government to follow the lead of Ontario and Nova Scotia. Ontario has legislated September 28th - British Home Child Day and Nova Scotia proclaims September 28th - British Home Child Day. Once again through social media many descendants across Canada are asking why their provinces don't have a BHC Day.

We are grateful that we are able to say that not all BHC/CM were mistreated in Canada. Children found good and loving homes from people who truly captured the spirit of Canada. For these examples of Canadians caring for Canadians, we are eternally thankful.

With all due respect Prime Minister Trudeau, on behalf of all BHC/CM and their descendants we implore you to take action and offer a genuine and sincere apology to the few living BHC/CM and to the descendants. An apology given where survivors and family members can be in attendance. An online version of this letter has been published and is open for signatures on Change.org. So far, hundreds of people has signed. <https://www.change.org/p/open-letter-to-the-right-honourable-prime-minister-trudeau>

Yours respectfully,

Address: