

**A BRIEF**  
**To The**  
**AUSTRALIAN SENATE**  
**COMMITTEE**

on

**CHILD MIGRATION**

Respectfully Submitted by

David and Kay Lorente

Founders of

**HOME CHILDREN CANADA**

107 Erindale Ave

Renfrew ON K&V 4G3

CANADA

Phone & Fax (613) 432-2486

Website presently at: <http://pda.republic.net/othsa/HomeChild/HomeIndex.html>

Dec 2000



**Contents: Page**

**2 An Open Letter from Governor General Romeo LeBlanc to Child Migrants attending Home Children Canada Reunions**

**3 Contents**

**4 Why this brief was submitted;** topics for possible consideration by the Committee

**10 Introduction:** Who we are; *Home Children* and Child Migration to Canada defined; Canada learns of Child migration in the 1970's; Home Children Canada is born; its four basic aims; financing; role of Heritage Renfrew; Team branches across Canada; HCC as a Clearing House, Number of requests for help

**13 A Profile of the presenters**

**15 Aims, Goals and Objectives of Home Children Canada (HCC)** Easing access to records and uniting families, Making the Child Migration story known: Erasing the stigma; Replacing the stigma with pride

**22 By and About Home Children to Canada :** some case histories

**32 The Stigma of being a Home Child -** Its Nature and its residual effects on successive generations

**35 Replacing the stigma with pride**

**Addenda**

**36 A.** Extracts from some Open Letters sent by Princess Diana, Prime Ministers, etc

**38 B.** The Stigma - A Home Boy's two daughters describe its effect

**45 C.** "*Rule Britannia, An Odiferous Ode*" re child migrants by Cdn social workers

**47 D.** Home Children Canada's Crest explained

**48 E.** Letter of 11 Jan 2000 from the Cdn Government declaring Child Migration is now of official historical significance

**49 F.** A critique of the British Reports and Canada's response

**52 G.** Parks Canada website page on child migrants

**54 H.** Envoi

**1. Why this brief was submitted**

*"What should they know of England, who only England know?"*

Rudyard Kipling, 1892 NB It should be noted at the outset that:

- a) we make no recommendations to the Australian Senate Committee;
- b) Canadians alone call their child migrants "home children";
- c) Governor General Romeo LeBlanc 1998 letter (page 2) suggests that the child migrant situation in Canada has been different and that a different way of approaching the subject exists and should perhaps be examined;
- d) HCC in this text stands for Home Children Canada

**2.** It must, at first glance, seem arrogant and presumptuous of someone from outside Australia - and from Canada, no less, where the official government stance is "not to inject itself into the British process" - to submit a brief to the Senate Committee studying the Australian Child Migrant situation. We do so for several reasons, not the least of which is that we think highly of Australia for being the first former receiving colony to take a pro-active role vis-à-vis their former child migrants and to

promise that the current Senate study should be as broad as possible. Though the stories of child migration to our countries have their share of differences, there are great similarities, and Home Children Canada (HCC) can testify to the strong bond that exists between many Australians and Canadians simply because our countries both have received siblings from the same family. In our role as volunteer advocates for all child migrants over the last decade we have received many inquiries about child migrant siblings separated by the Pacific Ocean. **3.** When we read the invitation to write a brief Kipling's line came to mind, and we thought '*What would they know of Australia, who might only Australia know?*' And so we compiled this assortment of very personal thoughts about the Canadian situation and our involvement with it. We also updated some material from the brief the British House of Commons invited us to talk to in 1998. We hope that what we offer might be useful, if only because it does come from off-shore and may suggest helpful points of view - perspectives - that may not otherwise be considered and which may favourably affect your deliberations and the findings of your report, e.g.

**4.** Off the top, and in no particular order, some cases in point might be:

**a)** the nature of the unique pro-active Canadian approach put in place ten years ago by volunteers in Canada, without official government input, to deal with former child migrants to Canada whom the British Committee suggested and whom the founder of the Child Migrant Trust said, were "too old to help" (cf. **Empty Cradles, 1994**, ISBN 0385 404522, p 133. ). We trust that the Australian Committee, unlike their British DoH counterparts, will want to at least consider the concerns of those former child migrants sent to your country from the very beginning. Perhaps you will find other ways of helping them - and their descendants - because, surely, in our 'enlightened times' no one should be deemed *too old to help*;

**b)** the methods used by the Orphan Train Heritage Society of America to deal with the problems arising from the USA version of child migration (1854 to the Great Depression). Though the Canadian and American groups started about the same time and were then unknown to each other, they espoused approaches that are virtually the same and differ from those espoused, according to the media, by Australia. Why should this be so? (The current Secretary of the Orphan Train Heritage Society of America [OTHSA], Sheila Beatty [aka Beatty Alexander] can best speak to the connection. Her grandfather was a child migrant to Canada whose children, including Sheila's father, became Orphan Train Riders.)

**c)** the Canadian (and American) emphases on the merits of reconciliation as opposed to the polarization that necessarily ensues from legal action however justified it may be. The cathartic merits of each approach might be evaluated and weighed against each other. (The Canadian way of doing things was initiated by former child migrants themselves and their descendants and resulted from their spontaneous motion from the floor which was passed unanimously at a reunion in 1992 after they were told of the threats of class action suits in your country. The motion, said in effect: ***We will never ask for retribution. We will never ask for restitution.***

***We will never even ask for an apology! We are glad to be in Canada!  
We are proud to be Canadians! All we want is easier access to our records. )***

**d)** the sad consequences of the British Committee and Government's reports' failure to admit that there were even a few positive aspects to child migration, however bad some consequences might have been. (This should not detract from serious attention to complaints or the pursuit of legal measures.) Relating to this topic might be consideration of the effect over the years of the government's political correctness or evasiveness and the media's entrenched penchant for pursuing the sensational in lieu of balancing facts;

**e)** the fact that, with the publication of three books in Canada, the story of British child migration was revealed more than a decade before Australia or Britain seems to have

**f)** the fact that (and this is perhaps related to the advance publication of those books) with comparatively few exceptions, Canadians have learned to speak with great pride about their child migrant past. Why should that be so? Does this phenomenon occur in Australia and elsewhere, and if not, why not?

**g)** our perception, after addressing the DoH Committee in London in 1998, that it failed utterly to deal, as the title suggested, with *The Welfare of Former Child Migrants*, i.e. all former little immigrants sent to all former colonies. (Notwithstanding that fact, we comprehend why emphasis had to be on the children once sent to your fair land. We also clearly understand that the Australian Senate's study will deal only with the Australian condition and touch on other countries, e.g. Canada, only inasmuch as the siblings of those sent to Australia might also have been sent elsewhere. Your Committee's aims are perfectly laudable. We dare hope that what we have to say might facilitate the process of making your study an example to other former receiving colonies and dominions;

**h)** our concern that while the DoH Committee paid only token consideration to the welfare of Canadian child migrants, it paid none whatsoever to the plight of those 40,000 sent to Natal, Rhodesia, Jamaica, Valparaiso etc and thus dashed the hopes of many. (The Committee's stated objective was to study "*The Welfare of Former Child Migrants*". As such it was - and is - a deceptive misnomer. (By way of illustration, were the Canadian Government to strike a Committee to study *The Welfare of Canadian First Nations* and then study only the concerns of the Hurons and make passing reference to the Cree, the other first nations across this country and other Canadians would be properly incensed. We trust that, unlike its British predecessor, the Australian committee will do precisely what it set out to do; (see also item **k1**))

**i)** consideration of the changing ways of examining historical events; Professor Joy Parr articulates this point perfectly in the second edition of her **Labouring Children**.

**j)** the failure of virtually all studies in child migration to date to give all players in the child migration story the same scrutiny – to see them from the same historical perspectives and understand where they too were coming from. e..g. to what extent

had the people now classified as perpetrators also been victims; (The work we have read by Dr Barry Coldrey of Australia exemplifies the approach of trying to see things from all sides. As the French say: “*Tout savoir, c’est tout pardonner!*”)

- k)** consideration of the reasons for and the damage done by the virtual exclusion in Britain – and perhaps elsewhere – of involving the former sending agencies in the cathartic process of:
  - i) getting their records,
  - ii) uniting families,
  - iii) making first trips back to ‘the old country’ etc;
- l)** the differences between abusers and the extent of abuse in Canada and Australia and elsewhere;
- m)** the non-role of Christian Brothers in Canada. They were *not* involved with our home children as at least one Australian tome seems to imply;
- n)** the ill effects of what went/goes on in British public schools etc on children who, as adults supervised child migrants. As Wordsworth said: “*The child is father of the man.*”
- o)** the Canadian National Index, how and when it came to be, the role of volunteers, easing privacy legislation, freedom of and access to information; how national indices (and access to them) vary in the former colonies and UK - their advantages and disadvantages;
- p)** the question of why many former child migrants who, despite abuse and difficulties in overcoming life’s vicissitudes, are now happy with their lot and yet their voice is not heard, not reported in the media, or afforded equal attention to those who complain and/or threaten legal action. I believe such a group is headed by Eric Leonard in Australia. (We met him in the UK at a happy reunion of over 2,000 Barnardo children);
- q)** the social conditions and attitudes in the UK and in the former colonies that prompted the exporting of children and allowed it to continue even in more “enlightened modern times”. Did the reasons change over the years? Did the governments’ culpability as policy makers and empowering agents increase or decrease?
- r)** the overlooked inherited, trans-generational, or residual effects of child migration on successive generations - what to do about that;
- s)** ways in which the former receiving colonies and dominions might work together to officially recognize the contributions child migrants have made to their adoptive countries. (That they did contribute against all odds is too often ignored.);
- t)** consideration of why different criteria were used in selecting children for emigration, e.g. to South Africa. Why were some given better physicals and even IQ

tests and others not? What might this suggest about the UK Government's role and policy?

- u)** consideration of the fact that a law could be passed in Australia (and elsewhere) to enable a person or groups to officially “apologize” and not be subject to legal action. California is contemplating such a law and may have actually passed it by now. Had such legislation been in place in the UK the British Government might have used the more cathartic word *apologize* instead of just expressing *sincere regrets* for *its ill-conceived policy*, and if it had been enacted in Canada our official stance vis-a-vis the British recommendations in late 1998 might have been pro-active;
- v)** consideration of why, notwithstanding the tales of abuse, so great a number of the former child migrants became priests, nuns, clergy, union leaders or professionals working with the under-privileged and/or devoted to improving the lot of others. In short, why was there, to a considerable degree, a positive outcome? (para 71)
- w)** the use of, and role of the media in telling the story of 10,000 Australian child migrants while only token mention - if any - has been made of the 140,000 sent elsewhere. Is there not merit in seeing one's situation against a global background?
- x)** discussion of why the British suggestion that *tripartite blame* for child migration is somehow to be shared equally by the sending and receiving governments and by the sending agencies is patently unjust. (It was the governments who adopted policies which they now admit were ill-conceived; it was governments who took advantage of philanthropic groups and empowered them to do their dirty work for the obvious reasons that it would be done cheaply and by people who cared. And it was, in the eyes of many, the British Government that foisted most blame on the former sending agencies and assumed an almost Pontius Pilate role in seeming to wash its hands of its major role in initiating child migration and empowering those it now blames;
- y)** the role and degree of culpability of Home Office in determining policy vis-a-vis in and for the former colonies and dominions before they achieved true autonomy;
- z)** the policy of absolute separation of siblings, friends etc which led to such abuses as withholding information and official documents and even falsifying such data. Who initiated this policy and why?
- a1)** the significance of the 250 years of child migration precedents beginning in 1618 before the “child migration movement” as it is generally known today, began to Canada in 1868;
- b1)** the role and nature of “eugenics” in Australian child migration (page 32);
- c1)** the nature of and reasons for the silent shame that prevented child migrants from talking of their past until Phyllis Harrison published their (Canadian) stories in the

late 1970's; (see para 8)

**d1)** why the media has seemingly concentrated on sexual abuse by one former sending agency to such a great extent and not dealt with that in other agencies. What influences were/are at work in such cases?

**e1)** the extent to which, as in Canada, child migrants actually fell through the cracks of two social networks when former/receiving agencies closed their doors and returned their records and bank accounts to the UK leaving nothing with officialdom in the receiving colonies. (We have served as advocates for child migrants who still today have no "classification" and we have been told by a Canadian government official that many child migrants have never claimed social benefits to which they are entitled simply because they have no official papers, such as birth certificates.)

**f1)** real vs perceived abuse, e.g. why two brothers who underwent the same placements should react so differently to them - the one positive, proud of surviving - the other bitter.

**g1)** the extent to which former colonial attitudes towards child migrants as lesser human beings were inherited from the UK even in the 1940's. Cf, for instance, **The Days of the Servant Boy**, by Liam O'Donnell, 1997, ISBN 1 85635 165 3, p 91 degradation, and lines like this on pp 16-17.

**"Now his heart would be getting soft and he'd maybe taken a liking to the servant boy and while in the pub he'd put his hand in his pocket and take out a shilling or two and give it to the boy. He'd never hand it to him inside - he'd throw it on the ground and say, 'Good boy! Pick that up for yourself!' and needless to say the poor chap would be delighted."** (Emphasis is ours)

**h1)** In 1995 and again in 2000 the authors of this brief attended Galas in England of former Barnardo children from all over the world. A total of more than 5,000 (five thousand) were in attendance, including many from Australia; all were celebrating what the former sending agency had done for them. Has the Australian Committee encouraged those former child migrants to submit briefs? And if not, will it consider contacting them to ascertain another side of the story?

**i1)** Is there any evidence that an antipathy towards the former sending agencies has been fostered in Australia and perhaps elsewhere as was suggested by two presenters to the British DoH Committee?

**j1)** Canadian newspapers refer frequently to international adoptions. Some of the children come into the country without official papers about their parentage etc. Are not they too going to suffer identity crises in later life as did child migrants and home children? (This is not intended to denigrate in any way the wonderful humanitarianism involved.)

**k1)** Discussion of the deception in the first paragraph of the British Committee's Third Report wherein it states **a lie**, i.e. that "some 150,000 children were dispatched over a period of **350 years**". Mr Luce, head of DoH policy, clearly pointed out that that approximate number was exported over 98 years starting in 1869. God only



knows how many were sent before that, starting in 1618 when the first shipload arrived at Richmond Virginia. Consider that “planters” could order children along with provisions from “the mother country”, that children were sent from courts to penal colonies and from asylums, workhouses (poorhouses), orphanages, the estates of the landed gentry, by philanthropic agencies e.g The Children’s Friend Society, and by politicians such as Shaftesbury. (Whether accidental or intended, the significance of the deception is that the Committee recommendations were based on this utterly false premise - on diluted evidence.)

**5. On political correctness:** It still exists in Canada. When HCC erected a #1000 plaque at a nationally recognized site we were told that in our bilingual (25 words each) message we could not use “ages 6 to 14” “not all orphans” and “cheap farm labour”. We were told by the learned head of the Board that our message had to be “neutral”. We felt it was rather “neutered”.

6. It is our hope that the above and other thoughts in this brief will perhaps suggest areas of exploration that might not otherwise have been considered. If they do in fact promote some discussion then, we feel, this brief will have served its purpose.

## 6. Introduction

**7. Home Children and Child Migration to Canada defined:** Child Migrants to Canada are commonly called *Home Children*. Britain sent the first of 150,000 to the colonies in 1869. Two-thirds of that number - 100,000 - came to Canada. In 1924 and 1925 laws were passed in Britain and in Canada respectively to prohibit the migration of children under school-leaving age (14 yrs). And while it is generally accepted that the movement petered out during the Great Depression, laws were relaxed in Canada’s West to allow the last 76 boys to come to the Fairbridge Farm in British Columbia between 1945 and 1948. Child migrants to Canada were generally placed in private homes in rural communities. The girls came as mothers’ helpers, the boys as farm labourers. Their stay in the receiving distribution homes scattered across the country was generally very short - mere days or just overnight.

**8. Canada and the Commonwealth learn of child migration in the 1970’s:** A decade before the story ‘broke’ in Australia and Britain, the forgotten, hidden or suppressed story of child migration to Canada (and elsewhere) became public knowledge in this country at least thanks to three authors: a) social worker Phyllis Harrison ( *HOME CHILDREN*, 1979, ISBN 0-920486-04-5 pa.), b) academic Joy Parr ( *LABOURING CHILDREN*, 1980, a popularized version of her earlier doctoral thesis at Yale University, ISBN 0-8020-7443), and c) journalist Kenneth Bagnell’s ( *THE LITTLE IMMIGRANTS*, 1980, ISBN 0-7715-9593-X). Harrison invited the child migrants to write of their experiences and grouped verbatim extracts of their letters by decades. Parr’s approach was more clinical and disinterested in that her conclusions were based entirely on what she found in “a paper trail” - thousands of children’s records - and though her research only dealt with the period 1869-1924, her thesis is the most scholarly and best source for those interested in understanding the times and how to interpret the official records. Bagnell presented a broad

historical overview. And while the three touched on the plight of Home Children, and the fact that virtually all kept silent about their past, none suggested what might be done to help them until Home Children Canada came on the scene.

**9. Home Children Canada (HCC) – its birth and four basic aims:** Beginning in 1990 a series of circumstances prompted Dave Lorente, the son of a Home Boy, and his wife Kay, both Past Presidents of Heritage Renfrew, to form a two-person **Home Children Canada Committee** whose basic four aims were, and still are:

- to **help** child migrant anywhere get their personal records directly from the former sending agencies in the UK;
- to **tell** (make public) the hitherto forgotten or suppressed story of home children;
- to **erase** the unfair stigma once attached so unfairly to child migrants;
- to **replace** that stigma with justifiable pride in being true Canadian pioneers. (See paras **26** to **33** inclusive for details of how those aims were translated into goals and finally to achieved objectives)

**10. Financing:** We are often asked about funding and because some, out of ignorance or malice, have clouded the issue, we include this statement: The founders have operated and continue to operate entirely at personal expense. Donations are not and never have been solicited and those that are received have been set aside for special purposes, e.g. raising commemorative plaques, printing research kits (offered free of charge), providing for special care for Home Children at reunions, donating to memorials at child migrant mass graves, etc. Note: Home Children Canada has *never*, and we repeat *never*, charged for its services; nor, to our knowledge, has any former sending agency.

**11. The Role of Heritage Renfrew:** Home Children Canada has operated as a virtually autonomous committee of two under the aegis of Heritage Renfrew, a registered charitable society operating its local archives out of the National Archives building in Renfrew, Ontario, 60 miles west of Ottawa, the Capital of Canada. The Heritage Renfrew directors control the separate account into which all donations are put so that donors may receive a receipt for income tax purposes. The Home Children Canada committee members are not signators to that account. Heritage Renfrew receives a small operating grant from the province of Ontario, none of which is used for Home Children work.

**12. The Home Children Canada (HCC) - The Team:** HCC now has a loose federation of like-minded volunteers across Canada who operate independently and at their own expense. (They are located in Halifax NS, St John, Lower Gagetown and Woodstock NB, St Jerome and Richmond QC, Brampton, Tillsonburg, Peterborough, Brockville, Cannington, Newmarket, Waterloo and Toronto ON, and in Sidney BC. We also have contacts at other centers in every province except Newfoundland which entered Confederation after child migration ended. We intend to remedy that situation soon.

**13. The HCC founders in Renfrew ON have served as a bilingual clearing house for requests for information from all over the world.** Their interest is in all child migrants sent anywhere in the world. The team branch chairs tend, and this is perfectly understandable, to concentrate on the agency/agencies that sent children to their area, e.g. Cossar sent children to Lower Gagetown and Blair and Brenda Stirling now own the former Cossar Training Farm; the Newmarket and Sidney branches are actually headed by former Barnardo Boys who were placed in the UK and migrated to Canada as adults; the children sent from Quarriers of Scotland and their descendants have formed a Quarriers Canadian Family branch that operates out of Toronto and Brockville, while the Peterborough branch has organized a support group of children sent by those agencies whose records were given to Barnardos, e.g. Macpherson, The Children's Aid, The Liverpool Sheltering Home, Sharman's etc. Kay and Dave at Renfrew HQ offer their service in English and in French as do the trio of branch leaders in French Quebec which received the second largest number of children in Canada. (It is little known that the Church of England send all its boys to the province of Quebec.)

**14. Numbers :** While we have not kept track of actual responses by phone, fax, snail mail and e-mail requests over the years, we can say that we have answered over 20,000 requests for assistance or information. This year we have answered over 3,000 requests and have a huge backlog. Requests have come from all over the globe, including Australia and New Zealand, Qatar, Japan, Central America, the UK, France, the USA and, of course, Canada. It should perhaps be noted that not all requests are for individual records, some are for information about tracing siblings, social mores of the time, the history of an agency and especially about poorhouses (workhouses) and industrial schools. Other calls are from the media, authors, historians, genealogical groups, and government officials.

\* \* \* \* \*

## A PROFILE OF THE PRESENTERS

**15.** Jos. Art. **David LORENTE** and Catherine (**Kay**) **GOLLINGER LORENTE**

Founders of Home Children Canada

107 Erindale Ave, Renfrew ON K7V 4G3 CANADA

Tel & Fax: (613) 432-2486

E-mail <lorente@renc.igs.net> (subject to change to sympatico.ca)

Website : <http://pda.republic.net/othsa/HomeChild/HomeIndex.html>

**16.** - both age 70+, retired teachers; six children

- Dave is the proud son of Home Boy Joseph Lorente, sent to Canada in 1914

**17. Academic & Teaching:** - Both have BA and MA, specialist teaching qualifications, experience at secondary and university levels, administrative responsibilities, Kay as elementary principal and Dave as secondary department head. As innovators both team members taught overseas credit pre-university travel courses in Europe for years. Dave also introduced secondary credit courses in classical civilizations, archaeology, photography; he also started art, camera and fish and game clubs, hunter safety and yearbook; was drama set designer, instructor and Commanding Officer of the school cadet corps.

**18. Professional:** - Both involved with night school and professional development; Kay on principals' committees and Dave at provincial level, as an Ontario associate teacher, principal of certification courses for Art Teachers, commanding officer of Central Command training courses for army cadets and teachers.

**19. Military:** Dave: Major (ret'd) Res.; CO local Cadet Corps; national and international marksmanship competitor, instructor and twice coach of the Canadian Cadet Rifle Teams at Commonwealth matches in UK; Conducting Officer for British Athelings in Canada; Kay: 2/Lt .

**20. Decorations:** Dave: - CD (Cdn Forces Decoration (Service Medal), Commemorative Medals: (Centennial Medal for contribution to Canada's youth; Jubilee Medal for contribution to education; 125th Anniversary Medal for work with Home Children (Child Migrants)

**21. Other Honours:** Both are Honorary Life Members of *The Orphan Train Heritage Society of America* and inductees in the British Family History Society (Ottawa) Genealogy Wall of Fame Kay - Senior Home Support Volunteer of the Year and Community TV Producer of the Year.

**22. Other interests: Archaeology:** Dave a member of Canada's first dig in Greece; both

members of Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters - Dave past central executive member) - **Heritage:** Both Past Presidents of Heritage Renfrew and **editors** of *Opeongo Lines* (which includes the only Child Migrant News Supplement dealing with all child migrants sent anywhere by any agency). Dave also created the genealogy section of Renfrew Archives (microform records on 40 million people); **Co-Founders of Home Children Canada**, our full time interest since 1991 (see below)

### **23. Publications:**

- *Home Children Canada's Research Kit*
- *Preparing the Upper Room* - a history of church architecture and the aesthetic and liturgical significance of a local church in Renfrew , authored by both
- **Film, The Lens and You** - a text for the Ontario Ministry of Education's correspondence course on photography, by Dave
- **Home Children & Child Migration, A Suppressed Chapter in Canadian History?** published by the Ontario Historical Society, Jan 2001.
- **Brief to the UK Health Select Committee re *The Welfare of Former Child Migrants***

\* \* \*

### **24. For a summary of activities since 1991 relating specifically to Home Children**

please see next page. For more detailed information consult Home Children Canada's website at <<http://pda.republic.net/othsa/HomeChild/HomeIndex.html>>\*

\* We are by Mr Bruce Ayler and the *Orphan Train Riders Heritage Society of America* in grateful recognition of *The Ties That Bind* Canadian and American Child Migrants

## **AIMS, GOALS and OBJECTIVES of Home Children Canada**

### *Helping You Help Yourself*

**25. Home Children Canada's founders** had four primary **aims** as noted in para 9.  
 1) to **help** Home Children and their descendants get their records,  
 2) to **tell** and promote recognition of the story of child migration, In their own private research they had come to realize why Home Children did not talk of their past. They concluded there was a three-fold cause of their silent shame - a shame that should be shared by the British and Canadian governments - and that

someone had to do something about it. And so the final two aims were:

3) to erase the stigma once attached so unjustly to Home Children,

4) to replace that stigma with justifiable pride.

These

aims in turn led to establishing many more goals which in turn led to attainable objectives, most of which have been realized. (paras **26,27,28,29**).

### ***What the HCC Founders set out to do in 1991 and accomplished since then***

#### **26. Aim # 1: Easing Access to Records:**

The Renfrew pair

**a)** responds to 300+ snail mail/e-mail/fax/phone messages a month and has a backlog;

**b)** has visited former sending agencies in the UK and researched there and in Canada;

**c)** continues to liaise directly with major former sending agencies who actually have the personal records of the children they sent to Canada and the siblings who may have been sent elsewhere and with the National Archives and National Library and LDS sources in the capital of Canada - the only true centre for this information;

**d)** has received lists and photos from former Roman Catholic sending agencies in Westminster, Southwark, Liverpool and Birmingham Dioceses and visits from social workers and archivists from the latter two;

**e)** has also received visits since 1994 from the head of After Care of Barnardos and her teams of social workers and those who release information to Canadians.

Barnardos have also made archival photos and material available;

**f)** has made a database of the Fegan records which are the only original Child Migrant records still known to be in Canada. Owner Doug Fry is a HCC branch chair;

**g)** has been responsible for locating the long lost Church of England Index of all boys sent to Canada (to Gibbs Home in Sherbrooke, Quebec) by the C of E's Waifs and Strays Society. We made a gift of a copy to the Archbishop of Canterbury and his Synod of Bishops; (see also item **k**)

**h)** has ascertained with certainty the location of other hitherto 'lost' registers in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick and the probable whereabouts of more;

**i)** has actual copies of lists of all children known to have been sent to Saskatchewan;

**j)** are members of BIFHSGO (The British Isles Family History Society of Ottawa) and, years ago, inspired fellow-member John Sayers and his volunteers to start, with the co-operation of the National Archives of Canada, the project of indexing the names of all persons 18 and under who came to Canada between 1869 and WW I. The Canadian National Index (a work in progress) is on the internet for all the world to see. It can be found at <[www.archives.ca](http://www.archives.ca)> For best results: scroll to *ArchiviaNet*, click, scroll to *Home Children* and enter surname only (all spelling possibilities or use the wildcards); Also at this website one can find port of entry data on anyone who came to Canada between 1925 and 1935, a list of all who served in

WW I., military records etc.

**k)** has arranged through the National Archives for lists (e.g the Westminster, Church of England's Boys' List and the Fegan records) to be microfilmed by the Latter Day Saints so that they are now available anywhere in the world;

**l)** has donated or arranged the donation of the above and other lists to the National Archives and National Library of Canada and other repositories, e.g. BIFHSGO and Heritage Renfrew Archives;

**m)** has served as advocate for individuals unable to get records, citizenship, passports;

**n)** has lobbied international agencies, e.g. ISS-C, ISS-UK, the British High Commission, Birmingham Metro Council, and the Synods of Bishops of both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches in England;

**o)** has compiled lists of tens of thousands from other sources;

**p)** has a list of 80,000 Orphan Train Riders some of whom were sent to Canada from New York City's Children's Aid Society and Foundling Hospital and liaises with the OTHSA of which they are Honourary Life members;

**q)** has a list of all Roman Catholic boys sent to Australia;

**r)** has compiled a personal cross-reference list that serves to unite people who inquire about the same Home Child or sibling;

**s)** has completed with branch chair Roxanne Belyea of Woodstock NB a list of Middlemore Children to Ontario and to the Maritimes;

**t)** has given out how-to information and research kits free of charge through the real mail, internet and at reunions in the USA and Canada;

**u)** has freely shared information with all HCC chapters and genealogical societies in Canada and with the media;

**v)** has compiled for interested UK agencies several lists of children for whom these agencies have no record;

**w)** has freely put their how-to information at the disposal of the world on their website;

**x)** has been recognized by the major former sending agencies in the UK as the only Clearing House in North America for Inquiries about child migrants;

**y)** is recognized for its achievements by such international genealogical magazines as the UK's Family History magazine;

**z)** submitted a brief to the UK Government and accepted the invitation of the British House of Commons to travel to London to speak to it before the Parliamentary Health Select Committee studying *The Welfare of Former Child Migrants*;

**a1)** met with UK and Cdn government officials overseas and in Canada to address mutual concerns;

**b1)** successfully urged the three largest former sending agencies - Barnardos, the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England to work together to compile databases of child migrant information. This happened years before the British Government demanded such action;

**c1)** have continued to liaise and cooperate with the National Library and the National Archives of Canada;

**d1)** have provided the British High Commission and International Social Services Canada with lists to facilitate their work, e.g relating to access by Canadians to the

British Government's travel fund.

**27. Advantages of liaising directly with former sending agencies.** David Lorente began liaising directly with the former sending agencies in the UK 20 years ago while in search of his father's records. He and his wife Kay have visited and/or researched at Barnardos in Barkingside, Middlemore's and Father Hudson's in Birmingham, The Nugent Care Society in Liverpool, Quarriers in Scotland, The Children's Society (formerly the Church of England's Waifs and Strays Society) and The Catholic Children's Society in London. The close relationship has enabled the Lorente's to:

- a) learn what resources the agencies had and to act as a clearing house directing **inquirers** to the correct agency abroad where **they get not just the official documents that may have been denied them (birth certificates etc) but also copies or originals of the actual documents kept by the agencies** giving details re **family members, why the children were taken into care, where and to whom they were sent abroad, the annual inspectors' reports on their progress, and, in many cases, photos and follow-up information arising from correspondence and/or visits, especially during wartime, by the former child migrants themselves;**
- b) receive from the former sending agencies hundreds of photographs, archival newsletters, and other resource material from Barnardos and the Catholic Dioceses of Westminster, Southwark, Birmingham and Liverpool to assist HCC in its work;
- c) invite staff from former sending agencies who are actually involved in releasing personal records, directors, heads of aftercare, archivists, social workers to 1) come to Canada to participate in the reunions we hold annually across the country (as many as eight in 1999) and to 2) meet face to face with the "movers" in Canada at meetings arranged by HCC with archivists at all levels, federal, provincial, church, social workers, MP's or their representatives, those compiling our central index, etc.

**28. The most important reason for liaising directly with former sending agencies is perhaps overlooked by some. It is their critical role in the cathartic process.** The social workers at the former sending agencies are the ones who have easiest access to the detailed family records of the individual and his/her siblings. They also may have photos. It is our experience over ten years of meeting with tens of thousands of home children and their descendants that the representatives of the former sending agencies are considered "family" by Canadian Home Children and their descendants. It is an experience to see as many as 3,000+ gather to joyfully celebrate their child migrant experience.

**29. Aim #2: Making the Child Migration Story known**

The founders have

- a) erected the first historical plaques in Canada to commemorate home children. They enlisted the assistance of the Ontario Heritage Foundation in doing so at Renfrew ON (the first local marker) and in Ottawa (the first provincial marker);



- b) contributed to the erection of a plaque in Peterborough by a branch chair and her team;
- c) erected a bilingual plaque at Pier 21, a designated Canadian historical site; (the plaque was fully paid for by donations from across Canada and was erected during Nova Scotia's first Home Children reunion, sponsored by Home Children Canada and Pier 21 last Aug);
- d) plans to erect another in 2001 at the unmarked graves of 50 home children in Ottawa
- e) supported the proposed erection of plaques elsewhere, e.g. at Prince George SK and at Niagara-on-the-Lake ON;
- f) successfully lobbied for recognition by the Canadian Government of the historical significance of the child migrant story and the erection of a **federal plaque** at the site of the former Annie Macpherson Home in Stratford ON in 2001;
- g) made presentations across Canada in schools, universities, churches, institutions such as homes for the aged and hospitals, to home children and their descendants, to students, seniors, professional bodies, religious groups and heritage and genealogy groups;
- h) written articles for or been the subject of articles in local and national press and been interviewed by national and local radio and TV in Canada and the UK;
- i) produced TV shows or been guests on community, local and national radio and TV in the UK and Canada;
- j) provided copy, contacts, tapes, photos, artifacts and assisted with CBC, CTV, BBC and other national productions and are currently involved in working with Great North Productions and the History Channel while one of our branches (Brockville) is working on a Vision TV Channel production;
- k) videotaped oral histories of Home Children to be donated to the National Archives of Canada.
- l) informed and involved people in high-places in what we do, e.g. - the Archbishop of Canterbury and the late Cardinal Hume and their respective Synods of Bishops, the Archbishops of Ottawa and Liverpool, Prime Ministers Chretien and Blair, our former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage, and even Princess Diana; (See also p 34 and **Addendum A**)
- m) involved social workers from former sending agencies by having them as guest speakers at Home Children Reunions across Canada;
- n) collected "in trust" Home Children artifacts (trunks, bibles, medals, letters, photos, drawings) to be donated to the National Archives and Museum of Civilization.
- o) contributed artifacts, photos and copy to the Parks Canada display on Child Migration which is touring the country for five years;
- p) contributed artifacts and photos to the Pier 21 exhibit on Child Migrants;
- q) been in touch with Alan Gill of Australia and others and met with overseas writers, e.g Anna Magnusson of Scotland and Dr Barry Coldrey of Australia;
- r) met with Margaret Humphreys of the CMT and been in touch by phone with her husband Mervyn;
- s) worked closely with or edited books on child migrants for authors e.g. Barbara

Haworth Attard (**Home Child**), Carolyn Pogue (**This Play is Called**) and Mary Pettit's (**Mary Janeway**);

- t) assisted undergraduate and graduate students from the UK, Ireland and Canada who are studying child migration;
- u) been invited to represent our federal riding and tell the child migrant story at a Peace and Understanding Conference on Parliament Hill;
- v) worked with the government historians and conservationists or had input on several projects relating to Canadian Home Children, e.g. the Parks Canada travelling display, the Parks Canada *Coming to Canada* website page; critiquing a Ministry of Canadian Heritage submission to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada;
- w) broadened our field of research by seeking parallels and differences between here and what occurred elsewhere, e.g. Australia, South Africa, etc.
- x) told the home child story in the USA and pointed out *The Ties that Bind* Canada's Home Children to the American Orphan Train Riders;
- y) closed the thread on child migration at an international conference on Child Welfare at Liverpool University;
- z) written and edited - and continue to do so - the first and only Home Children News-letter in Canada (a regular supplement in Heritage Renfrew's *Opeongo Lines*) which deals with the concerns of child migrants sent by all agencies and their descendants.

### 30. Aim #3: *Erasing The Stigma Once Attached to Home Children*

The founders of HCC came to realize early in their work that virtually all the children who came to Canada and were scattered about this vast country were so severely traumatized by their experiences that, as one, they "built a wall around themselves" and did not divulge their story even to family. Dave and Kay came to realize that up to three factors might be at work affecting even those children who were placed in 'good homes' with loving families. These were

- i) the dozen or more effects resulting from loss and separation (Kubler-Ross et al),
- ii) abuse (real or perceived) and
- iii) an unfair stigma attached by believers in the pseudo-science of eugenics which held that certain races, occupations and classes of society (including home children, the poor and unwed mothers) had physical, mental, psychological and emotional abnormalities which they would pass on to successive generations.

The founders of HCC decided to erase that stigma and replace it with pride. To do this they:

- a) brought together at reunions home children, their families and friends, including those who had taken them in, so that they could all have a forum to speak and could rejoice in each other's company;
- b) held reunions annually, first in Renfrew, but later right across the country from Halifax to Victoria because Home Children who were too old to come to Renfrew (where the first three reunions were held) asked if the reunions could not come to them. And so they did - as many as eight a year;.

- c) put such a great emphasis on ecumenism and reconciliation that Archbishop Gervais of Ottawa who attended a 1994 reunion called it “a healing ceremony”;
- d) invited social workers and heads of aftercare from former sending agencies to come to Canada to talk to the people to whom they had released records. HCC has had visitors from The Nugent and Fr Hudson Societies in Liverpool and Birmingham, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne University, from the Church of England and an unbroken string of nine visits from Barnardos After Care. (Some overseas agencies have declined invitations because they are too poor to send representatives and receive no grants from the government for such purposes);
- e) attended reunions in the USA and UK (one as large as 3,000+) and reported back to interested members in Canada;
- f) have explained the nature of the stigma, who imposed it, why it was unjust, and its effects in Canada and worldwide e.g. sterilization programs
- g) have fostered a holistic and positive approach to analyzing child migration, while not denying that there were negative factors and experiences;
- h) have tried to so explain the story of child migration that any one could see how the thread of his or her Home Child life was tightly woven into the panoramic tapestry of that global history.

### ***31. Aim #4: To Replace the Stigma with Pride:***

Besides telling the home child story with pride the founders have used a variety of simple methods to instil pride in former child migrants.

- a) A Home Children Canada pin was commissioned by the daughter of a Home Boy who was placed in a French community and became a Francophone. The HCC pin is worn with pride. It is also an advertisement to anyone who recognizes its significance that the person is willing to talk about home children and share experiences.
- b) A HCC coffee mug is another conversation piece that - like the pin - is given free of charge to every former child migrant.
- c) The newsletter Update is a third way of keeping people informed and sustaining their reasons to be proud;
- d) Video productions involving Home Children and newspaper articles, e.g. about Home Boy CLAUDE NUNNEY winning the MM, DSM and Victoria Cross, and promoting books and even songs about child migrants have helped, but the best technique of all has been:
- e) **Open Letters from VIP's**: The founders thought to contact people in high places and ask them for their assistance for two reasons. - When we solicit their help we invariably are asked to inform them of the untold story of child migration, of the significance of the Home Children's plight, and its residual or inherited effect on successive generations. In short influential policy makers are actually asking us to educate them. The second reason is more obvious: 800 Home Children and descendants were thrilled to receive individual letters from the Prime Minister in 1994. They are also thrilled to hear Open Letters from Princess Diana, the Governor

General, Prime Ministers Chretien or Blair and other dignitaries read to them at our gatherings, or to have an Archbishop actually attend a reunion and deliver his message personally. The letters facilitate the process whereby Home Children come to realize that they have indeed made a quiet contribution to their adoptive country and that it was actually recognized by “people at the top”.

**32.** In short, after 25 years of personal research into a father’s past, we saw what had to be done ten years ago and did something about it without the financial support of government. Rather than promise wonderful things down the line or waste years building a local tourist attraction we operated out of our home (and still do) and offered a service immediately whereby people could help themselves. And that offer was accepted by hundreds of home children and tens of thousands of their descendants in Canada, the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, France, even Arabia and Japan. We started by asking home children and their descendants what their needs were and then we set about meeting them. We adopted a compassionate and reconciliatory approach rather than an adversarial one. We chose not to pit one body against another. We have never advocated legal action because we feel there is no room for reconciliation in such cases. Peace of mind for Home Children and their descendants has been our paramount goal.

**33. Our branches across Canada,** though entirely independent, have also hosted or co-hosted reunions, set up their own websites, erected displays at local fairs, gone into schools and made presentations to interested groups. They too have spearheaded the erection of local markers to commemorate home children, erected or re-furbished cemetery monuments, published their own newsletters, collected artifacts, visited surviving Home Children, and formed self-help groups. In doing so they, like the founders of HCC, have never charged for their services. Our record speaks for itself, which is perhaps why the major sending agencies in the UK. say we are the only legitimate voice of Home Children in this country.

\* \* \* \* \*

**BY AND ABOUT HOME CHILDREN SENT TO CANADAA Potpourri of  
Facts and Quotes**

**34. Introduction:**

a) This is a random selection of extracts from research and the thousands of requests for help in locating records and family that we have answered. (Exact quotations are **bolded** and *italicized*.)

b) Since being given a forum at Home Children Canada Reunions to tell their

stories and to be recognized, Home Children have declared their joy at being Canadians and their love of Canada. (p 4, para 4c) The words of Barnardo Boy ART MONK at the unveiling of the first historic plaque in Canada to commemorate Home Children echoed those sentiments:

***"I am proud to be able to say at last that I am a Home Boy, and prouder still to be able to say "I am a Canadian!"***

These words were quoted by former Governor General Romeo LeBlanc in his open letter to our eight 1999 reunions (page 2)

- c) That said, every last Home Child to Canada and perhaps elsewhere
  - i) experienced the pain of an unjust stigma,
  - ii) passed through as many as 13 emotional phases resulting from Separation and Loss (Kubler-Ross et al)
  - iii) a majority - sixty-seven percent - suffered abuse of some sort.
  
- d) That is why the Australian Senate Committee may wish to consider why it is that Canadians at large
  - i. celebrate the survival of Home Children (by recognizing their quiet contribution to the fabric of the nation and by assisting them to access their records);
  - ii. play a pro-active role in the catharsis that is taking place by admitting publicly that there were indeed serious down-sides to Child Migration that still affect "Home Children" and their descendants today, but that...
  - iii. while Canadians who have been in touch with us and attended our reunions believe the down-sides should not be minimized, they also believe they should be weighed against the good and the might-have-been situations had the children been left in the UK, especially if they were unwanted or in dire need of "rescue".
  
- e) Readers in Australia will find parallels as well as contrasts with what the child migrants tell us happened to them in Canada. The choice of home children experiences that follow is predicated on that fact.

**35. HOME CHILD COSMO DE CLERQ (and many others):**

***"You were given a choice of where to go - Australia or Canada. There was no choice to stay in Britain".***

(Consider too that the children were too young and ill-informed to make a sensible choice.) And when he got to Canada, COSMO said:

***"I ate in the barn, I slept in the barn, I lived in the barn. I never saw the inside of the house, and when I ran away nobody came looking for me."***

(And yet, Cosmo did not remain bitter about what happened to him as a child. He "***got on with life***" became a paratrooper during the war, was Trenton Ontario's Citizen of the Year, wrote an advice column for seniors in the local newspaper, introduced soccer to the town and coached for years. And because in old age he could not drive and a friend could not walk, together they delivered meals on wheels to those less fortunate than they.)

**36. 'I never saw an inspector, and those that did often saw him at the table with the farmer and his family who would deny it if you said you were abused. Now who was the inspector to believe - the kid or the adult? And when the inspector left, the kid would be thrashed for causing trouble.'**

This sentiment was expressed by many Home Children including diminutive GEORGE BARTER who died at 102. He built his own home, took night school classes, was recognized for his long-service by Canada Post, worked in 'retirement' until he was 95, had a loving family of 17 children, 55 grandchildren, 65 great grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren. He was proud of his legacy.

**37.** When an inspector asked COSMO DE CLERQ how well the poor people he was with were treating him and whether he had enough to eat, the child replied:

- **"I like it here; they love me."**

And the inspector

retorted:

- **"Love has got nothing to do with it!"**

**38.** One wonders about the competency of inspectors: One reported he examined 3,000 children in one year - this, at a time when roads were poor and travel was by horse and buggy and paved roads and trains that did not connect with most communities. One wonders too about the training another inspector had. He wrote that a shy Quarrier boy who had "lost his tongue" was doing better **"now that he has put up a stick in the barn. He talks to it".**

**39.** ARNOLD WALSH came to Masson QC in July 1905. He also lived and slept in the barn. He even died in the barn; he froze to death in February and was buried in a box too small for his crumpled up body. The autopsy and court records show he had been prodded with a pitchfork, was under-nourished and poorly clad and bruised, had severely frost bitten hands and feet, and a fractured skull. He lay on a bed of manure in his coffin. His "patron" was convicted of "manslaughter by neglect" and was sentenced to seven years in penitentiary. No one in the community - including the clergy - reported the abuse to the authorities. ARNOLD was not the only home child who was murdered.

**40.** Home children were not all paupers or wards of an agency whose room and board was paid by the state (or Poor Law Union) before being sent abroad. The Westminster List of 2000+ Roman Catholic Children sent to Canada from that diocese alone, for instance, lists many children as **"non-paupers"**. Our research has shown that the room and board of many children, e.g. TOMMY COPPINGER of Ottawa was paid by his mother or a member of the family...and that such children were sent abroad when their benefactor defaulted or died. (TOMMY had been placed in the Liverpool Sheltering Home.)

**41.** The reasons for Child Emigration from Britain were not entirely altruistic. Books by June Rose (**For The Sake of the Children**) and Bean and Melville (**Lost Children of the Empire** (and others) explain the profits that could be made for ship owners, ship captains, judges, charities, philanthropists, agencies and agents who earned a handsome living trafficking in exported children. And forced emigration

saved the British government money; when the child was shipped abroad the burden on taxpayers was lessened. Furthermore there was money to be made; agencies got a bounty (2 pounds Sterling) from the Canadian Department of Agriculture for each child sent to Canada while provinces upped that bounty again, e.g. Ontario paid 6 pounds more. Even if one accepts that the reasons for child migration were altruistic in 1869 when the movement began, one can surely not deem them acceptable after WW II when it ended in Canada...or when it ended in Australia in 1967. (This bears repeating!)

**42.** Parents did not necessarily give their permission for a child to be sent to the colonies, e.g. from Barnardos "Export Emporium" at Stepney Causeway" nor were they necessarily told when or where their children were sent abroad even after the passing of the "Barnardo" Emigration Act ca 1890 with its (in)famous "Canada Clause". For example, before its passing Barnardo denied charges in court that he had kidnapped eighty-five children, changed their names, vital stats (and perhaps their religion) (cf TABLET) and shipped them out of the country. BUT he readily admitted - in court - to "philanthropic abduction" in those cases, and he did not return the children to their parents when ordered to do so.

**43.** Nor did the "Barnardo Act" and "Canada Clause" ensure there were no further abuses.

***"By 1908, 8 per cent of the girls and 6 per cent of the boys were sent to Canada illegally - without parental consent" by Barnardo.***

(Cf June Rose's **For the Sake of the Children - Inside Barnardos**, p 96).

**44.** Home Children were NOT ALL orphans; Two-thirds of those sent to Canada had parents who often were not told when or where their children were sent abroad. Child Migrants have living relatives in the UK and elsewhere, but since many were given no official birth or baptismal record tracing kin is difficult. (It has been argued that "orphan" meant something different in Victorian times. If so, to what extent did authorities twist the definition to justify exporting children with parents?)

**45.** Correspondence with contacts back home was generally through the agency which could and often did withhold addresses of, and correspondence from, relatives back in the UK or in the colonies. This is perhaps understandable when one learns that it was commonly held that separation had to be complete. TOMMY COPPINGER should not have had to wait until he was 103 to get letters from his mother and find out she loved him; CHARLIE MARTIN was in his 80's when that happened to him. (One wonders if the practice of total separation was really designed to make control over the children easier - to facilitate the administration's job with utter disregard for the effect on the youngsters.)

**46.** While many Home Children were "adopted", official adoption in Ontario and Quebec only occurred in 1922 and 1925 respectively. Before that "adoption" perhaps meant something different. Note the answer given to British civil servant official ANDREW DOYLE when he asked a Home Girl what "Adoption" meant to her ca 1873):

" *'Doption, Sir, is when a lady gets a girl to*

***work for nothing***". (It seems the children were sold a false bill of goods when they were told that they would be "adopted" and become one of the family they were placed with in Canada. The effects of their subsequent disillusionment has not, to our knowledge, been the subject of a definitive study.)

47. Home Children often did not get the education promised them (yet it must be admitted that in rural Canada parents seldom sent their own children to school if there was work to be done on the farm,.) Home Boy BOB EVANS, Ottawa ON: ***"I came at age 10 with two years of schooling and never saw the inside of a school in Canada. I worked for 9 years and got \$100 wages in all. I gave \$25 to the nuns and started life on my own in 1929."*** (A bad year!) (After 65 years Bob finally located a brother he never knew who had been sent to Australia. Another brother died in Canada before Home Children Canada located his whereabouts.)

48. Agencies too often withheld the names and addresses of kith and kin. My British merchant marine Home Child uncle ARTHUR actually stumbled on my father JOSEPH LORENTE's name on a visit to Canada 23 years after they had parted in 1914. After WW II, Cardiff resident ARTHUR was found by the third brother WILLIE of Isleworth. Together the two British Home Children located their three sisters in France in 1947. Except for two short visits by ARTHUR, my father never saw his family after he came to Canada before WW I.

49. Home Girl NORA OVER, was over 75 years a St Joseph's nun in Pembroke ON when she told us:

***"I've had my little sorrows."*** Her Home Boy brother in Canada had paid her way to this country. He thought she was coming to him and she thought she was coming to him. The agency sent her elsewhere and would not tell either of them where the other was. It took him two years to locate her at a handsome home in Ottawa, and when he did the owners would not let him enter because ***"He was a Home Boy!"***

50. It took CHARLIE MARTIN of Dacre ON just 69 years to locate his sister in Australia and he was 88 years old when, with the help of HCC, he received his personal records which contained a lock of his mother's hair and three letters that she had written to him. His letters promising to bring her to Canada were presumably not delivered either.

51. 103 year- old TOMMY COPPINGER learned his mother loved him when he received his personal dossier - thanks to HOME CHILDREN CANADA and BARNARDOS AFTER CARE. He also learned she had paid his room and board and bought his clothes while he was in boarding school. This cost her 13 and a half pounds out of her 16 pounds annual salary so she was forced to sign consent forms for him to leave the country. She never heard from him again. A few weeks after receiving his personal file he told his care worker:

***"I am happy. I outlived everyone who ever made fun of me and I finally learned my mother loved me. It's time to let go"***. And he



died.

**52.** Home children were often denied such official papers as birth and baptismal records. They were often given wrong names and birthdates.

a) Little MARJORIE on Main Street in Ottawa, wrote to the home in London:

**"Please send me my birth certificate; I can't get married without it."**

b) My father JOSEPH LORENTE, never got his birth certificate. Fourteen years after he died I discovered his name had been misspelled on his baptismal certificate.

This caused him - and others in similar positions - endless trouble when they - applied for jobs, married, retired, applied for Old Age Security, etc. LEN BROOKER never got his birth certificate.

53. Home Children were denied medical histories. While researching in London we came across a page in St Peter's Net, the Catholic Emigration Society's newsletter, on which there was a letter from SAMUEL PAUL MUNDY to the Home asking about his parents and...

*"if dead, what they died from since it might better help the doctors here in Montreal help me."* On the same page, edged in black we found PAUL MUNDY's obituary - *'dead after two years in Canada'*.

54. Many, if not all, of the agencies in Britain effectively robbed children of their individuality and personal identity. From an early age until they were sent to the colonies the children had to respond to numbers - not names. (see paras 55, 56, 57)

55. KEN DONOVAN, a former Home Boy now residing in Ottawa, can still recall the numbers of all the boys in his wee group **"in the orphanage home"**, and he counts them

off on his fingers, starting with #27 and #28, .and ending with:

*"number 42...that's meself!"*

56. JOHN ATTERBY, a Barnardo Boy, told us of being hit on the head with a book until he responded to his number rather than his name. He also remembers the joy of coming to Canada because he was called by his name again. John is also quoted in **Home Child**, by Barbara Haworth Attard.

57. LEN BROOKER of London, England, does not know who he really is or when he was born. The name and date of birth given him by the agency that sent him to Canada where he was abused for four years does not tally with the records at the PRO.

58. Agencies trafficking in children often controlled news concerning them to the own advantage. e.g.

a) Four British Church of England boys, who were heading for the Church of England's Gibbs distribution Home in Sherbrooke QC, stole a boat and drowned in the St Lawrence River. The local newspaper reported the event but said the boys were part of a Polish party and did not name them. HCC has their Anglo-Saxon names.

b) When Mr Owens, Superintendent of the Barnardos Home in Toronto, impregnated girls in his care the matter was hushed up and all charges stayed. (cf June Rose's **For the Sake of the Children**). A sad corollary to the story is that some children ensuing from Owens's misdeeds are alive today and have been in touch with HCC re their mothers' personal records which are probably "lost".

59. Not all Home Children are proud of their British roots. Former Barnardo Boy BILL POWELL, Sheriff of Renfrew ON told a local reporter:

*I've never been back to England. Why would I go back to a country that rejected me."* ART MONK of Beachburg echoed those sentiments to author JOAN

FOSTER of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. (On the other hand, my father became a proud Canadian and always spoke lovingly of the "old country".)

**60.** Agencies which exported children did not seem to consider the ill-effects resulting from Loss and Separation or Stigma and Abuse. Yet most of these were recognized as existing by Andrew Doyle in his report to the government ca 1874, and by Louisa Birt in the 1913 biography on pioneer ANNIE MACPHERSON and her sister who ran the Liverpool Sheltering Home. (Cf **The Children's Home-Finder**). One supposes that they thought that the risks would be greater if the children were left in the UK.

**61.** VERA O'DACRE, a Roman Catholic St George's girl and DICK WRIGHT, a Fegan Boy, and others, become silent when asked about how lonesome they were. VERA told British author Joan Foster: *"There is no describing it"*.

DICK said he was all right until about three years after he came to Canada. He was working alone in the silo one day when **"a strange feeling came over me. I put the rake against the wall and just cried and cried."**

**62.** Suicide was not uncommon among child migrants: The Church of England records for Gibbs Home for boys shows that in the decade after 1920 26 boys died, 11 through accidents (some suspicious), 10 through illness. EC GLADDING, HE GREEN, HC HALL, WJ KIDMAN and EW ROBINSON died by their own hand..

**63.** Studies have shown that 67% of the Home Children were abused and that pitchfork marks were all too often used to prod the child to work harder. My father JOE LORENTE was involved in a pitchfork incident at his first placement.

**64.** Home Children were sometimes sent to homes where no one spoke English,. They often lost their own language and became Francophone or German or Polish. One boy on a French farm in Quebec wrote to the agency: *"It has commenced to snow here."* Another wrote back to the sending agency: *"Please send a picture of my brother. I have forgot him in the face."* On the other hand, The LAVIOLETTE Family in Renfrew Ontario are direct descendants of JOHN ELLIS, an English boy who took a French name in his French environment because he was well treated. And Francophone LIZZIE SMITH is the proud daughter of HENRY SMITH, a Home boy who became a Francophone. LIZZIE designed Home Children Canada's crest.

**65.** JOE BROWN, from Orpington, Kent, used all the wages he earned when he came to this country to put himself through school and become a priest. He told our first Reunion in 1991 that *"I never celebrate my birthday; I celebrate the day I arrived in Canada."*

**66.** Home Children and their descendants suffer even today from having fallen through the cracks of two systems of national governments. Historical background: Canadian laws were relaxed in 1945 to enable 76 Fairbridge children to come to

Duncan BC. The last one arrived in 1948. But Child Migration to Canada started to peter out during the Great Depression when most British agencies closed their homes in Canada and took the Children's records and bank accounts back to Britain. Canadian social service authorities were not notified or left with lists and Home Children themselves were cut off from all contact with their legal guardians in Canada. Many did not realize what rights they had as British Citizens nor the conditions for claiming Canadian citizenship which were later imposed. Many thought that, just as Canadian citizenship was conferred automatically on War Brides in the late 1940's, so too they had become Canadians when they married

Canadians or had merely stayed in Canada X number of years. Events today prove them wrong. cf paras 66, 67)

**67.** ERNEST NEAL, a WAIF AND STRAY sent to Quebec by the Church of England, had lived here for 70 years during which he raised a family and fought overseas in WW II for five years. In November '97 his daughter asked him and his wife to visit her in Arizona at Christmas. He was turned back by US border authorities because he "***lacked classification***" like a lot of other Home Children. When all else failed Mrs Neal asked HOME CHILDREN CANADA to intervene. With the cooperation of our PMO, Minister of Citizenship, and the British High Commission (for a welcome change) the matter was rectified within the week.

**68.** Mere days after the Neal case, Barnardos After Care asked us to intercede on behalf of the widow of a Home Boy who died in Ontario. Because he had "***no classification***" Mrs G--- was told she could not inherit her husband's estate. Again, in our advocacy role we called on the authorities mentioned above. Because her JOHN was dead he could not apply for classification as MR NEAL had done (para 66). The matter was ultimately settled in courts three months later on a legal technicality...and at a cost to the Home Child's widow.

**69.** The forced separation from family without any explanation had traumatic effects on many children, even those who became clergy. One such former child migrant (name withheld at request of his family) returned to England and arranged to meet his mother. He was introduced as a "***friend from Canada***" and he never told her who he was. He simply wanted "***to meet a woman who could give up her child.***" to say, he never saw his personal records from the agency or knew the circumstances of his being in the home beyond the fact that the family was poor

**70.** RC Clergy (and perhaps others) in England often personally sponsored child migrants to Canada. My father JOSEPH LORENTE was sponsored by a Roman Catholic priest and LOUIS CASERTELLI by a bishop. Louis also became a priest.

**71.** A surprising percentage of Catholic children sent to Canada joined religious orders. At the Father Hudson Archives at Coleshill, Birmingham in Sept 2000 we perused Fr Hudson's private photo albums and saw a newspaper clipping showing that in the first decade and a half after St George's Home opened in Ottawa and started to receive and place British children, 14 boys had become priests and 50 girls

nuns. That so many would emulate the people who sent them to Canada in their career choices suggests that they were positive about what had happened to them. (We have seen a BBC Glasgow TV production citing a similar situation re two Scottish half-brothers sent to Australia. One became a Jesuit and a celebrated street priest, the other a Christian Brother.)

**72.** The British government was apprised in the early 1870's of the problems involved in Child Migration and commissioned an experienced civil servant, ANDREW DOYLE, to visit Canada and write a report. Charges that he was a Catholic out to attack the state church ensued. His findings were not accepted for 50 years at which time, in 1924, Britain, then Canada in 1925, passed laws prohibiting the emigration/immigration of unaccompanied children under school age (14). Children older than that continued to be shipped to Canada. The movement petered out during the Depression and ended in 1948.

**73.** In our research on what Home Children died of, only *young girls* seem to have died of "unknown causes". Perhaps we can read between the lines of what an Old Home Girl (anonymous) in Barrie, Ontario, said: ***"I wish they had a bomb, a big bomb that could destroy everything in this country and everyone in it."***

**74.** The first words of the first letter we ever received from a former Home Girl read: ***"I was one...and a most unhappy and degrading period of my life it was. I don't even want to think about it and I haven't even told my children about it. Nothing except the Grace of God can dim the memory of that terrible period of my life."*** (name withheld)

**75.** Labour unions in Canada resented the competition for "cheap labour" and professionals involved with children decried British arrogance in sending their "orphans" here when we had enough of our own. The Social Workers of Ontario at their first Annual Review in Toronto on April 16, 1925, sang **"an odiferous ode on Juvenile Immigration to the tune of Rule Britannia.** (copy attached as **Addendum C** from the National Archives of Canada MG 28 I -10, Vol 6, File 33, 1928). This is an excellent reflection of the attitudes of the times. It perhaps suggests that one should not judge what happened in the past by today's standards..

**76.** A test case wherein a British Insurance Company attempted to deny a widow her Insurance Money if her child migrant husband died. Child Migrant L.B. moved back to Britain after years of abuse in Canada. He joined the army to replace the family he never knew, was wounded at Dunkirk and suffered the sad realization that if he died, no one would be notified. He was rescued, married his nurse, raised a large family and when he was seriously ill and putting his house in order, his Life Insurance Co in Britain told his wife she would not receive any money for the insurance policy they had contributed to all their lives because the birth date he had been given by the agency that sent him to Canada, and which he used all his life, did not conform with records at St Catharine's House. When all else failed in the UK, including appeals to their MP, the couple turned to HOME CHILDREN CANADA. We contacted agencies and government officials and explained that giving Home

Children wrong information about their names, birth dates, and parents was almost routine at times. The British High Commission told us they had contacted Home Office and been advised not to intercede because it was a "business matter". The

Insurance Company HQ in Canada, the US and Britain were not very helpful until we threatened to tell the British tabloids. Case solved overnight.

77. Many Child Migrants saved their money and paid for their siblings and parents to come to Canada. To what extent did the same thing happen in Australia? And what does this suggest?

78. Of Pause and Retrospection: ART MONK tells of coming to Canada in 1923 and not telling anyone of his being a Home Boy until 1989 when he told his family. In 1991 he wrote to Home Children Canada and "went public". He also tells of being placed with a good loving family and being asked to sign the family bible. But he left when his indentured labour was up. In the early '30's while working on a highway, he was called into the foreman's office and told that a message came in that said he was ***"to go home, because a family member, Mr Leetch, had died."*** It was only hours later, and years after he had left the farm, that two words struck him ***"I had a 'home' and 'a family', and I didn't even know it."*** ART's experience is not unique. Late recognition often comes only when one realizes all the facts, sees one's life reflected in historical events and weighs the good against the bad. It also helps to be involved with a group of others, who had the same experiences - and this is just as important for descendants of child migrants. Home Children Canada also gets many requests from heart-broken families who once took in Home Children who left and never maintained contact.

79. "Tout savoir, c'est tout pardonner" (Victor Hugo) - "to know everything about something is to be able to accept it even if one can't agree with what happened." After making presentations re the history of child migration at a reunion and after citing individual cases of hardship - if not of abuse - and emphasizing that the child migrant seldom had a family role model, a middle-aged man approached my wife in tears and said: ***"I always thought my father was a strict and mean old bugger. He's long dead, but now that I know what he went through, if he walked through that door right now, I'd run over, hug him, kiss him and tell him I love him, because...at last, I understand"***

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE STIGMA OF BEING A HOME CHILD

### ITS NATURE

and its

### RESIDUAL EFFECTS ON SUCCESSIVE GENERATIONS

**80.** *"You ask me why I do not tell you who I am? It's because if I do and you laugh at me..I'm all I've got left!"*

(from a 1997 colloquium in the Canadian Parliament Buildings on Peace and Understanding, at which the Chair of HOME CHILDREN CANADA was an invited participant.)

### 81. EUGENICS - A PSEUDO-SCIENCE'S DEVASTATING EFFECTS

It is axiomatic that the certainties of yesterday are all too often the headaches of today. From the 1880's - if not before - to 1945 the pseudo-science of *eugenics* played a major role in stigmatizing children who were shipped out of Britain and in stultifying the growth of their own legitimate self-worth and esteem. (cf **Our Own Master Race, Eugenics in Canada 1885-1945**, by Angus MacLaren, 1990, ISBN 0-7710-5544-7). Consider that, to the British, if not the receiving colonies, the child migrants were an "*export commodity*" shipped, for instance, from Barnardo's **Export Emporium** at Stepney Causeway, and that the youngsters were commonly called "*Street Arabs*", "*urchins*", "*guttersnipes*", "*Waifs and Strays*" and worse. This latter name was the unfortunate title chosen by the Church of England for their commendable organization. The name was changed to The Children's Society only in the mid 1940's. Consider the devastating effects on a child who might be asked: "*Tell me little girl: Are you a Waif or a Stray?*" Even "**Home Child**" was derogatory. (cf **Anne of Green Gables** by Lucy Maude Montgomery, 1908, p 7, ISBN 0-7700-0008-8)

**82.** People are often victims of their own times. Newspapers have recently reported that in Britain, Churchill, HG Wells and GB Shaw were eugenicists and so was Teddy Roosevelt in the USA and in Canada, WS Woodsworth and Tommy Douglas (Fathers of Canadian Medicare) and Charlotte Whitton. So, ultimately was Hitler. Hitler and Whitton, did not outgrow the fad; the others presumably did. Canada, the USA, France and the northern Countries of Europe are only now coming to terms with class action suits over the sterilization programs that ensued from the belief in *eugenics*. We all know of the Nazi gas chambers. No country has yet officially admitted that exporting children from the "mother country" (a euphemism?) and treating them badly in the colonies were also effects of eugenics. Home Children

Canada thinks they were.

**83.** *"The pseudo-science of "eugenics" - that morality, criminality, mental and physical defects could lead to race degeneracy supported Whitton's stance ...she connected moral deficiency (e.g. being illegitimate) with immigration domestic service and mental deficiency".* (From **No Bleeding Heart** by Rooke & Schnell, 1987, pp 23-24. ISBN 0-7748-0237-5) (Whitton was the first female mayor of a large city in Canada - Ottawa - and a social worker closely connected at one time with the League of Nations and global projects involving children.) In her efforts to keep Canadian blood lines pure, Whitton and others so stigmatized Home Children that to this day many of them will not talk of their past. This, perhaps, is the greatest Child Migration sin of all.

**84.** Major former sending agencies have accepted HCC's invitation to come to Canada and attend our reunions. This includes the archivist for the Church of England and social workers from Barnardos, and the Roman Catholic Dioceses of Birmingham and Liverpool. We have also helped Quarriers organize a reunion. Our visitors have recognized the depth of the hurt in Home Children and its residual effects on successive generations. Collette Bradford, Head of After Care at Barnardos, and/or her social workers, for instance, have come to Canada to meet with Home Children from all agencies every year since 1994.

**85.** We close this section by referring the reader to two letters from the daughters of a home boy (**Addendum B**). They speak more eloquently than we can of the effects of child migration and the stigma associated with it.

## **REPLACING THE STIGMA WITH PRIDE**

### **(Extracts from Open Letters to Home Children Reunions in Canada)**

**86.** Barriers break down when child migrants and their descendants learn of the nature and reasons for the stigma that grew, in part, out of the belief in the pseudo-science of eugenics. Knowing about it and knowing it was at last in the open has enabled those afflicted to articulate why they once suffered a silent shame. On the assumption that it is easier to find pride in oneself if someone else feels you are worthy, and easier still if that person is famous and recognized as an authority of some sort, HOME CHILDREN CANADA has, over the last nine years, asked political and religious leaders to write Open Letters to all attending our Reunions for Home Children, their families and friends.

**87.** Letters from which the following extracts have been taken have had a very profound



effect on Home Children and their descendants. We have even been told by grateful descendants that three former child migrants had received on their death bed individual letters from our Prime Minister which HCC had relayed to their caregivers.

**88.** We are grateful to the following people who have responded to our requests and sent open letters to be read at our gatherings: Please turn to Addendum A to read extracts from samples of some letters. (Note that one of Governor General LeBlanc's letters is printed in toto on page 2.)

Prime Minister Chretien of Canada (every year since 1994)  
 Minister of Canadian Heritage & former Deputy Prime Minister Copps (ditto)  
 Governor General Hnatyshyn  
 Governor General LeBlanc (page 2 of this brief)  
 Governor General Clarkson  
 Archbishop Gervais of Ottawa  
 Princess Diana  
 Prime Minister Tony Blair  
 Archbishop Kelly of Liverpool

Please turn to **Addendum A** p 36

## **ADDENDUM A**

### **EXTRACTS OF LETTERS TO HOME CHILDREN CANADA REUNIONS (in no particular order)**

#### **Princess Diana, Kensington Palace, 1995**

*Most of you will have lived in Canada for many years and contributed enormously to its development and prosperity. I very much hope that happiness and a sense of achievement are prominent among the many emotions you must be feeling on such an occasion.*

*I wish you all a rewarding and enjoyable reunion amongst your friends and families.*  
**Diana**

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **Prime Minister Tony Blair, 1998**

*Britain is proud of the achievements of the numerous British children who were emigrated to Canada, who overcame great odds with courage and perseverance. They made a valuable contribution to creating a successful society in a great new country. History will remember the pioneering work of those who went to Canada alone as children or as young people - far from their loved ones, into the unknown, and making the best of the opportunities that arose.*

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **Prime Minister Jean Chretien, 1999**

*These gatherings will provide you with a special opportunity to reflect upon your life in Canada and to share your experiences and memories. It also allows Canadians to salute you for your many contributions to the development of our country. Your pioneering and brave spirits enabled you to meet the challenges and difficulties of a new life with vigour and perseverance. I am most pleased to join with*

*those who gratefully acknowledge the important role you have played in the growth and prosperity of Canada.*

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minister of Canadian Heritage, Sheila Copps**

*Children are our most precious resource. Unfortunately, they have often been and remain victims of situations that overtake them and mark their lives forever, as in the case of “our little boat people”. Individually and collectively, we must recognize this dark period of our past and learn from our mistakes. It is impossible to change history, but it is possible to ensure a better future for our children and grandchildren.*

*As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I support Home Children Canada in its efforts to assist the survivors in finding their families and easing their suffering.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## ADDENDUM B

### THE STIGMA - A HOME CHILD'S TWO DAUGHTERS DESCRIBE ITS EFFECT

#### Preamble

How does a child survive stigma, abuse and as many as 13 rites of passage as a result of Loss and Separation with no one to turn to? How does s/he develop and maintain any measure of self-respect when even the name Home Child or Child Migrant is a put-down? In Canada and elsewhere the home child was, indeed, as Wordsworth had it, "the father of the man" because most adult Home Children carried their secrets to the grave.

*"I have my mother's Quarrier Bible. The front signature page is torn out. She didn't want anyone to know!"*

To find out at a funeral that one's father had lived in a chicken coop as a home child, or to learn in looking through a deceased parent's belongings that s/he was a Home Child who was abused can be devastating. To find out under those circumstances is to realize the deep and silent shame - entirely unwarranted - that blighted 100,000 young lives.

In many cases the trauma affected the first marriage the Home Child entered into. It also affected the way many brought up their children. Who could blame them for being overly strict, for not showing any affection? What role models did they have?. ADA ALLAN says as much, so does BILL PRICE, in an article on Barnardo children in an article in **This Country Canada** magazine.

### **THE STIGMA...AND CRIES FROM THE HEART**

(HOW A CHILD MIGRANT'S SILENT SHAME CAN AFFECT THEIR OFFSPRING AND EVEN SUBSEQUENT GENERATIONS)

*Editor's note:*

*When Irene Cook phoned in late January 1998 to seek assistance in discovering her father's records, I told her about the cross-reference file I was making and about the British All-Party Health Select Committee looking into Child Migration.*

*Though I had never met her, I was so moved by what she confided to me, a perfect stranger, about her father and their relationship, that I asked her to write about it. I promised to include her letter in Home Children Canada's submission to the British Committee. Irene faxed her story a day later and asked her sister Barbara Alden who lives hundreds of miles away in Nova Scotia to do likewise. In retyping the papers for this brief I have underlined and italicized passages I believed might be of*

*significance to Committee members.*

*It is important to note that both papers were written "off the top" and that I received the first (and only) drafts. What we have here is sheer, honest, pent-up emotion - a clear picture of the effect of the stigma imposed on all Home Children and the residual effects on second and perhaps third generations.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### **JAMES WILLIAM COOK (1903-1996)**

**by Irene Cook**

I would like to add, with great pride, my father's name to the list of children whose childhood was taken away from them by becoming one of 100,000 children brought to Canada. My father is **JAMES WILLIAM COOK** and he was brought to Canada at age eight in 1912. My father was the dearly loved foster child of John and Jessie Dixon from the age of 3 to 8. He spoke almost tearfully at age 92 of how much he was loved and cared for. How completely happy he was with these people he thought of as family!

He told me he remembered clearly his foster mother sobbing the day he boarded a ship to Canada, telling him it would be only for a little while and he should come back to England as soon as he was able. He told me the band was playing "God be with you till we meet again" as he walked up the gangplank. My father recalled the terror he felt at viewing the icebergs in the Atlantic Ocean which had, six weeks earlier, sent the "unsinkable" Titanic to the sea-bottom. He remembered the loneliness and isolation of a train ride from Halifax, I believe, to Port Hope Ont.

He was sent to a farm in Garden Hill. *My Dad told me the first thing the farmer did was take his shoes away from him. He was only allowed to wear them to church on Sunday. He was treated horrifically for ten years by this family. He was never included or involved with the family. He was teased, tormented, and even deafened in his left ear by the beatings he received. He ate alone and stayed apart from the family. He led a life of lonely desolation, never knowing the love and affection of a mother, or the strength and wisdom of a father. He was treated as a hired hand and badly even by those standards. Please bear in mind this was an 8 yr old child who had been pampered and coddled by his foster parents.*

May I take this opportunity to tell you *how desparately ashamed my father was at being one of these "Home Boys". We were forbidden to tell anyone of how my dad came to Canada and he himself lied once when a local newspaper interviewed him. He stated he was born in Toronto.*

My dad left that farm on his 18th birthday. With the *grade 3 education* he received he walked away from that farm of horrors the instant his obligation was fulfilled. He walked down the road to a neighbour's farm where he would work until he saved enough money

to travel to Toronto. My dad made a life there and years later moved to Brampton with my mother. *I loved my father, but ours was not a smooth relationship.*

*My Dad could be very insensitive. As a very small child I was given a chick by my uncle. I must have mauled it half to death as I carried it everywhere. It became very sickly from my loving it so much and I remember carrying it to my father and holding it up to him with both hands. I wanted him to make it better. My dad took the chick from me and said "Well that's had it!" and promptly wrung its neck. To my father everything had a purpose and when that purpose expired so did the animal's existence.*

I blame this on my dad's childhood. *He had nothing to emulate but cruelty. He could not relate to pets with love.* To get along with my Dad you had to be useful, do things right the first time, account for every cent you spent or wanted to.

My father was an *incredibly intelligent man. He worked harder than anyone I have ever known.* He started an upholstery business and worked until he was 71 yrs old. He raised four children. *My dad was unable to speak of his feelings, never said he loved us. Never showed any physical affection towards me. It was only as an adult when I learned to say "I love you", that I told him and he reciprocated with "Me too!".* We had a very rocky relationship but I loved him dearly. I didn't often like him and we butted heads often.

*It has only been since his death from bone cancer at age 92 two years ago in May that I have made peace with him.* I read Mr Bagnell's book entitled "The Little Immigrants" and suddenly I understood him. *His insensitivity, his coldness, his inability to show love. They were a small piece, a curtain-crack piece of the atrocities he lived, endured.*

So I add my father's name with pride to the list of small souls who were damaged irreparably by England's unwise decisions and Canada's cruel new development. They (Home Children) worked hard, built the farms, and indeed the country. They came to us as hired slaves, but (as in) my father's case died heroes who survived.

*In closing I'd like to say I wish I could know who my father was.* I've never seen a picture of him as a child. I don't know who his parents were, their nationality, where he was born. Did he have siblings? These many unanswered questions leave a huge void for myself and my family.

Thank you for recognizing the tremendous sacrifices these children made. *We as Canadians are fiercely proud of them all.*

Irene Cook

\* \* \* \*

**JAMES WILLIAM COOK**

**by Barbara Alden**

Dear Mr Lorente,

After my sister, Irene Cook, spoke to you on the phone, she called me and told me about the impact statements you are gathering. *My first reaction was anger, as it comes too late for my beloved Father **JAMES WILLIAM COOK**. Irene pointed out to me that we may speak in his behalf. What a daunting responsibility! BLESS YOU for FINALLY seeking recognition, RESPECT and accountability for these forgotten children. I am only sorry that my father did not live long enough to see it happen, perhaps then he could have put his childhood to rest and felt some pride in who he was, instead of shame.*

*First of all I want to say I'm PROUD of my father! I have always been PROUD of him and all the children like him. To have survived (I know many of them didn't) is testament to their strength and courage, but to have survived and become decent human beings boggles the mind!*

Where to begin? How do I put over 80 years of pain, hurt and humiliation into words? *How do I describe the effects of shame!!!!*

*I grew up in a home full of secrets! I knew from a very young age that my father was SENT from England to Canada at age nine. I also sensed that there was some terrible shame attached to that sending and we were never to discuss it outside the home. Because of my love and respect for my Father a part of me still screams "DON'T TELL!" If I didn't believe that there will finally be some recognition for the pain and suffering that my Father and all men and women like him endured, I WOULDN'T TELL. It still somehow feels like a betrayal!*

Dad had his earliest memories when he was approximately two years old, being taken to a large sheep farm in the village of Renham near Stanstead, Essex, England, by a woman he believed could be his mother. He was lucky; his new foster parents loved him, adored him and pampered him for six years. On the back of a photograph of them he wrote "My Beloved foster parents, John and Jessie Dixon"; he even remembered when Mrs Dixon sent him the picture and she said she had a splitting headache the day it was taken.

When Dad was between 8 and 10 years old Mr and Mrs Dixon were asked to take his sister, a sister he did not know and had never met. Because they could not afford to take another child my Father was torn from the only family he had ever known.

*Until my father was 65 years old and had to send to England for his birth certificate he believed he was illegitimate and THAT was why he was sent to Canada! Only the bad kids were sent, the illegitimate, the incorrigible, the weak of mind - they had to be tainted in some way to be sent away. He was terrified of having to present this document to some official in order to receive his pension. He told me in those days ILLEGITIMATE was printed in large letters across the birth certificate. My heart still breaks remembering the trauma he suffered waiting for that piece of paper. Over the years he had "invented" a man he thought would be respected in our small community, now all the lies, the secrets, were out! Everyone would KNOW! As it turned out, when my Father received his birth certificate he was not illegitimate but he carried that stigma all those years for nothing.*

I know in 1998 when we are all so very politically correct, illegitimate is never used to describe a child (thank God!) but go back to the early 1900's and try and imagine what that label did to a little boy growing up.

*My father was told by the authorities that he was being sent to Canada so he and his sister could live together, but upon arriving here they were immediately separated and never met again for over 40 years by which time it was too late. They were never close. I know very little about her and only recall meeting her once or twice as a small child. I do know that the ordeal she suffered scarred her for life and she was in and out of mental hospitals.*

*Dad was sent to a farm in Gardenhill, near Port Hope, Ontario, to a good "Christian" (a word that leaves a bitter taste in my mouth to this day) family. From the first day he arrived he was made aware that he was not a part of their family; he was there to work!!! He endured both physical and emotional abuse and was never accepted in the community. He was allowed to go to school when it was convenient, which wasn't often. He did not share his meals with them, or Christmas, or any holidays. His birthdays were not acknowledged; he never had a birthday cake or card. When he was an adult birthdays were very important to him. I can remember him counting his birthday cards, they gave him a sense of value and worth.*

*I believe the most important thing in my Father's life was his family. I also believe that my brother and sister would probably not agree. Dad knew about hard work. He was a perfectionist. He never settled for second best in himself or his children. Because he had no family while he was growing up he had no one to emulate. When he became a Father he never learned to temper his criticism with gentleness. He never learned to be tactful; when something popped into his head he blurted it out, never stopping to think how it would wound a child or a grown son or daughter. He often appeared harsh, authoritarian, unfeeling. This caused many rifts with his children and broke his heart. My Father loved his children, he just didn't know how to express that love.*

*Dad was amazing, if something broke, no matter what it was, he would find a way to fix it...but he never found a way to hug his children. The first time he hugged me was the day I got married. I never saw a job my Father could not do...except kiss his children. There was never an obstacle put in his path that he could not overcome...except his childhood! He had no idea how to comfort a child with a skinned knee or a broken heart, that part of him was....I was going to say "missing", but that's not true. Life had been hard for him and he thought you had to be tough to survive. If you fell down you got up and you tried again and again and again and you didn't cry and you didn't give up. Because he grew up in a brutal environment, he never learned about gentleness.*

My sister recently asked me why out of his eight children from two marriages I was the only one not adversely affected by him. I was not treated any differently than my brother or my sister. I felt the brunt of his criticism, the sting of his hand on my behind, the disapproval in his voice, but I ALWAYS forgave him or made some excuse for his actions. The question surprised me and left me speechless for a minute and then I told her "it was because I saw his vulnerability, the fragility of who he was."



From the time I was old enough to recognize him I ADORED my Father, there was a bond, a closeness between us that grew with every passing year. *I KNEW he loved me.*

*I also knew that under that hard exterior the little boy was still there...afraid, lonely, longing to be loved and accepted. His soul was scarred and he never recovered.*

Because of the closeness between us I think my Father felt safe enough, every now and then to let his guard down and allow me to see that little boy and why he had become the man he was. That took tremendous courage!!

When my father was in his seventies *I read "the Little Immigrants". He told me over and over he wished I had never read it, that it was best to leave the past in the past.*

*When I asked him questions he was vague and uncomfortable. He was so ashamed of his past and thought his children would think less of him if they knew the truth. Of course it had the opposite effect. I told him over and over that he should be proud of his past but he never was. I think each question that he answered gave him courage to answer the next one until he had told me about his childhood, or at least all that he could. I think there were many things he never told.*

*Part of me hates England for all the things it stole from my Father - his dignity, self-respect, a sense of value for who he was, his childhood, the love of a wonderful foster mother and father (whom he continued to write to until their death). He never intended to remain in Canada, he always planned to return HOME to England to Mr and Mrs Dixon.* How different his life would have been if he had been allowed to remain with this lovely couple. I'm sure his children would never have doubted his love or craved his affection!! There is also a part of me that grudgingly accepts how much my Father loved the country of his birth.

*As I have grown older I have come to realize that England was the loser, these children were MAGNIFICENT, they sent us their BEST. The children overcame the most horrific obstacles!*

My heart bursts with pride for my Father and all the children like him. I think Canada owes them a tremendous debt of gratitude and recognition. They played a huge part in molding this country into what it is and stands for today.

I wrote this for my father but also for his sister. Perhaps by taking part she will finally see the little boy and KNOW our Father and, most importantly, KNOW THAT HE LOVED HER!

*My father taught me about strength, determination, overcoming obstacles, never giving up and COURAGE. When he left this life it left a hole in my heart that no one can ever fill. He was, and always will be, my hero!*

I LOVE YOU DAD.

(Thank you Mr Lorente for my Father and me.)

Sincerely,

Barbara A (Cook) Alden

**ADDENDUM C** - To illustrate the influence of *eugenics* among professional people and the degree to which there was antipathy to the "Mother Country's" actions we reproduce (sic) this song sheet April 16, 19 found in *National Archives of Canada* (MG 28, I 10, Vol 6, File 22 - 1928).

**BRITONS NEVER SHALL BE SLAVES**

*Being an Odiferous Ode on Juvenile Migration* Sung by John Bull (in person) at "THE FOLLIES" The First Annual Review of the Social Workers of Toronto April 16, 1926

O, there was a London urchin  
Of a feeble minded strain,  
His parents both were in the clink  
And he was raising Cain.  
The Poor Law guardians got him  
But he drove them near insane,  
Till an emigration Home got a subsidy  
For shipping him across the main.

*Singing Rule Britannia! Britannia rule the waves!  
For Britons never, never, never shall be -  
Made to care for dependent poor  
If Canada will do it for free.*

O, his tonsils were defective  
And his teeth were just a wreck.  
He had a spot upon his lung  
And he could not see a speck.  
The government men were busy  
So we used our own M.D.  
And we bluffed an exam and got him passed  
And hustled him across the sea.  
*Singing Rule Britannia! Britannia rule the waves!  
For Britons never, never, never shall be -  
Scrutinized by Canadian eyes  
Before they cross the sea.*

When he reached this land of promise  
With a hundred just the same  
We sent him to a farmer on the mail order plan  
Though we hardly knew the farmer's name.

He may have been a trifle lonely  
For kicks are all he understands,  
But why supervise - when it's far from wise  
To get him back upon our hands.

*Singing Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves  
For Britons never, never, never shall be -  
Supervised or Canadianized  
in their homes across the sea.*

O, we've heard of the thing called case work  
 In our Island of the Free,  
 But what it has got to do with the problem child  
 We never yet could see.

O, we know a technique far more easy,  
 For family-break-ups cause us small concern  
 To keep a home together costs real money  
 But emigration brings a cash return.

*Singing Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves!  
 For Britons never, never, never shall be -  
 Taught their jobs by social worker snobs.  
 They're colonials - "We owns 'em, don't you see".*

We've unloaded eighty thousand hopefuls  
 On Canada, the loyal and fair.  
 Australia built a nation on our convict population  
 So Canada should take her share.

They are ninety-nine per cent successful,  
 But we're certainly not going to say  
 Why we think that is so - for we very well know  
 Facts are stubborn - and they point the other way.

*Singing Rule Britannia! Britannia rule the waves  
 For Britons never, never, never shall be -  
 Said to fail unless they're sent to jail  
 Or deported to their own countree.*

## **THE HOME CHILDREN TO CANADA STORY**

is told in our emblem.

- a) The **LION** against a **RED FIELD** represents the **SENDING COUNTRY**
- b) The Silhouette of an **URBAN INDUSTRIAL CENTRE** signifies the areas from which most **POOR CHILDREN** came.
- c) The **SHIP** bringing the children west is guided by the **STAR of GOOD HOPE**

- d) The **GOLDEN SKY, HILLS, FIELDS, RIVER AND WHEAT** represent the **PROMISE** of a **LIFE** in **CANADA** devoid of poverty and hunger.
- e) The **RED MAPLE LEAF** against a **WHITE FIELD** are our national emblem and colours.

The Latin motto "***SPE IN CANADA***" translates as **OUR HOPE IS IN CANADA**" An interesting note:

This crest was commissioned by Lizzie Smith, the proud Francophone daughter of JOHN HENRY SMITH, an English Home Boy sent to a French-speaking family in Quebec.

The Crest was presented as a surprise gift at the Ottawa Reunion in 1994.

From the crest a pin was made which is another way of telling anyone who notices it that one is proud of his/her child migrant past and willing to talk about it.

**ADDENDUM F**  
**A CRITIQUE OF THE BRITISH DoH AND GOVERNMENT REPORTS ON**  
**THE WELFARE OF FORMER CHILD MIGRANTS**  
**and CANADA'S RESPONSE**

The information herein is dealt with at greater length in an article by the author in **Celebrating One Thousand Years of Ontario's History**, an Ontario Historical Society publication and video.

**The British DoH and Government Reports - 1998**

a) When the Toronto Star carried a mid-summer report in 1997 that Prime Minister Blair had announced that a government Health Select Committee would study *The Welfare of Child Migration* the garbled details in the article suggested to us that only Australian and New Zealand concerns would be addressed. We had no trouble with the Committee addressing the concerns of the survivors of the 10,000 children sent there after WW II until 1967. But we were also aware that a far greater number - 100,000 - were sent to Canada as late as 1948 and we thought their concerns should be addressed also - as well as the concerns of the 40,000 sent elsewhere in the world, else the title of the study would be a misnomer. We faxed Mr Blair our concerns immediately,

b) We then submitted a brief with more than three dozen recommendations.

c) We were invited to London to talk to it and were dismayed to find that

i - a mere hour was given to historical background,

ii - a mere hour was given to Canadian concerns,

iii - the Committee interviewed not a single child migrant from the 140,000 sent to Canada, Zimbabwe, Natal, Valparaiso, Jamaica etc.,

iv - at least five were flown in from down under to testify in London, but...

v - the Committee did not fly anyone in from Canada or elsewhere,

vi - the Committee visited Australia and New Zealand and ...

vii - it rejected outright Home Children Canada's invitation to visit Canada or stop-over here to meet our home children.

d) We were equally dismayed that the official Committee report lied in its first paragraph by minimizing the numbers of children exported globally between 1869 and 1967 and then predicated its recommendations on that 'diluted' evidence. (See para **4-k1**)

e) Re the Committee's recommendations: We were glad to see the Government address the need for former child migrants to make a first trip back. We were dismayed by

i - the condition that it was to meet "*close family*" which the government defined as "*father, mother, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters*". Our former child migrants

ii - average 90 years of age and were/are virtually excluded from the possibility of taking advantage of the offer. (To date only four Canadians have made the trip since April 1999 and three were on compassionate grounds.)

Nor are we pleased that:

iii - the British central Index starts (for the time being) at 1920 and that full access has

been restricted. (By contrast, Canada's Index - though incomplete and a work in progress by volunteers - starts in 1869 - and is on the internet for all to see.

iv - the Government has dragged its feet about sponsoring an International Conference on Child Migration and left only two groups (both with their own agenda) to fill the void;

v - the Government, to our knowledge, has not addressed its other recommendations, eg re working with the former receiving nations, erecting plaques or memorials or issuing postage stamps.

f) On the positive side, we were told by a government official with whom we met in the UK and in Canada that the British Government was not restricted by the limitations of its own recommendations and was quite willing to go beyond them. Unfortunately, we have seen little evidence of this happening.

### **The Canadian Response to the British Reports - 1999**

a) Home Children Canada founders met with two British officials and a team of Canadians from various departments in Dec 1998. Several months later the Foreign Affairs chair of the Committee advised us that Canada would "not inject itself into the Canadian process".

b) Since we were not involved in the process beyond the initial meeting we have no idea if the officials were informed (most people are not on this issue) or even discussed the recommendations which we had put forth; virtually all of which would have required a minimum financial outlay. We do recognize that our Home Children problems are different from Australia's and require solutions that can be less costly.)

c) And while the official Government stance is to *not* be involved in the British process, officials and government departments in Canada have quietly been doing something. Because we have been involved in the processes, we can say that

i - our Governors General, Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage have written annual Open Letters to our reunions;

ii - at least one MP and an MPP have attended our reunions and served as facilitators with requests to Government departments or officials;

iii - our Minister of Canadian Heritage has involved us in the process of drafting a submission to recognize the hitherto suppressed story of child migration as being of official national historic significance; (**Addendum E**)

iv - the Minister of Canadian Heritage's Parks Canada Department has also involved us in setting up a display on child migration which is travelling the country for five years;

v - Parks Canada has also involved us in providing data for its website (**Addendum G**)

vi - the same Ministry's National Museum of Civilization has been in touch to receive trunks, bibles, medals and other migration artifacts which we accept in trust for them.

vii - the Canadian Historic Sites and Monument Board will erect a federal plaque to commemorate Home Children's contribution to Canada;

viii - the National Library and National Archives have accepted our donations of lists of child migrants;

ix - the National Archives has facilitated our request to have our lists microfilmed by the Latter Day Saints;

x - the National Archives has also hosted meetings with the oversea visitors and archivists whom we invite to our reunions;

xi - the National Archives has worked with volunteers from the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa to put the Canadian Index of child migrants on the internet (at [www.archives.ca](http://www.archives.ca));

xii - Parks Canada has leased land to a local entrepreneur in PEI for a tourist attraction. The property was originally the home of the child who inspired **Anne of Green Gables**; the child was purported to be a child migrant though there is no proof that she was;

xiii - the Ministry of Immigration has facilitated the process whereby Home Children can get "classification" and they have been helpful in at least two cases in which we have served as advocates;

**HCC's one failure to date:** We should also add that we have faced one stumbling block in our Aims, Goals and Objectives. We have failed utterly in our ten-year efforts to have Canada Post issue a stamp commemorating Home Children.

There is still work to be done and we soldier on.



# ADDENDUM G



## COMING TO CANADA

For more than 400 years, immigrants came to Canada from all over the rest of the world. Settling in an unfamiliar land was often difficult, but our population has been shaped by people of diverse origins who make Canada their home.

### The Home Children

Children who immigrate usually come with their families. But can you imagine settling in a new country without your parents? That's what happened to up to 100,000 children between 1869 and the late 1930s. Some are still alive today.

In the late 19th century, thousands of very poor people lived in cities in the British Isles. Many children lived on the streets, or were placed in homes or workhouses temporarily because of a death or illness in the family. Many were sent away to parts of the British Empire, without the knowledge or consent of their parents. Some were told that their parents had died. In 1998, the British government expressed sincere regrets to the Home Children for allowing them to be sent away.

Home Children and their descendants live all over Canada. Like many immigrants to Canada, Home Children overcame hardships to make a new life for themselves and contribute to Canada.

Find out more at these National Historic Sites:

- Grossa Ilha and the Irish Memorial - QC
- Pier 21, Halifax - NS
- Partridge Island Quarantine Station, Saint John, NB

Also see: <http://partridgeisland.ca>

**H**ow do you help out at home? If you lived in your grandparents' time, how do you think your work would be different?

#### A Home Girl might tell this story

When my father died there was no work for my mother, so my brother and I were put in a Home in England. My mother wasn't allowed to see us. She did not know when we came to Canada, or that we were split up. The first woman I stayed with was mean. She didn't give me warm enough clothes and I was not allowed to eat at the table. Last summer, a woman from the Home in England came to Canada to check on me. She placed me here, where the people are kinder and send me to school. Someday, I hope to find my little brother.

#### A Home Boy might tell this story

I was an orphan. I had stayed in Britain. I'd still be running Hungry and cold in the streets. In the Home, over there, I was called by a number, and now I'm glad to be called by my name again. The Home gave us each a trunk with clothes and a Bible. And I came to a farm in Canada. The work was new for me. It took me a while to get used to it, and to the teasing I got because I was different. But I get paid, and the man I work for says someday I'll have a farm of my own.



**PARKS CANADA WEBSITE PAGE on CHILD MIGRATION**



Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0M5

Mr. David Lorente  
Home Children Canada  
107 Erindale Ave,  
Renfrew, Ontario  
K7V 4G3

1 September 1999

Dear Mr. Lorente:

Some time ago you kindly reviewed the draft text of a story on Home Children and provided valuable input to amend the preliminary version. I am happy to forward to you a copy of this story written for children aged between 8 and 13 years as a token of my gratitude for your contribution.

You may be interested in knowing that 200,000 copies of this story have been printed and will be distributed in our various parks and sites across the country along with other stories in order to present aspects of the history of Canada to a young audience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marc de Caraffe".

Marc de Caraffe  
Research Manager  
Historical Services Branch  
National Historic Sites Directorate  
Parks Canada

Canada



## ADDENDUM H

### ENVOI

A refresher and some other facts:

Our HCC research has revealed that:

- a)** trafficking in children could turn a profit for the agencies involved, the shipping industry, and the "mother land" - (a euphemism, surely!);
- b)** for years records did exist in the UK and in microfilm form in Canada, even though access to them was frequently denied;
- c)** some agencies in the UK gave and, in spite of government intervention in 1998, may still give, a low priority (if any at all) to answering requests for what they may deem to be "just genealogical information"; they may be forgiven, perhaps, for they are not funded by the government to do this and operate as charities;
- d)** some social workers in the UK and in Canada even refused to believe that their employers had once exported children to the colonies.
- e)** agencies thought total separation from homeland, family and friends was best and so, in most cases, discouraged correspondence between siblings and parents;
- f)** all who suffer "normal" Loss and Separation can go through as many as 13 emotional phases (Kubler-Ross et al). Consider then, what Home Children, average age 6-14, suffered when they were sent to a foreign land where climate, accent, culture, even language, were different. (Many unilingual British children were placed in Canadian homes where only French, German or Polish was spoken.)
- g)** Home Children had to rely on a distant and impersonal agency to protect them. As a result, studies show that as many as 67% were abused. Consider the cumulative effect of this abuse on top of their severe loss and separation trauma.
- h)** inspectors did a rather poor job of evaluating children after placement in Canada, if they "evaluated" their situations at all. Report entries are minimal and often missing;
- i)** there was overt abuse by a few officials and more "foster parents";
- j)** many Home Children were murdered or died of "manslaughter by neglect"
- k)** mortality among Home Children was as high as 20% one year;
- l)** Home Children had an unfair stigma attached to them in Britain and in Canada - a stigma that still affects many of them - a stigma that must be erased.

My father, like virtually all Home Children never talked much about the past and especially his own life in "the old country". Because he coached me at soccer I was able to find out bits and pieces which later served as clues in my 36- year search for his history. Dad's records were burned, I have been told. In the process of researching his past I became interested in the child migration movement as a whole and wrote to virtually every agency whose name I ran across.

I discovered that to is important to know the various are precedents for child migration from Britain's shores to North America long before 1869 when the movement as we know it first began. The first children sent to work on plantations came to Richmond, Virginia, in 1618. The Orphan Train Riders Movement of children sent to help open up the American west started in the mid 1850's and drew its inspiration from what the founder of the Children's Aid Society had seen on his travels in Britain. Maria Rye and

Annie Macpherson who set up the first Receiving/Distribution Homes in Canada in 1869 and 1870 respectively had visited the Children's Aid Society Headquarters in New York in 1868 and earlier to meet with officials there and discuss the logistics etc of child migration as it was practised in "America". The men, (Barnardo, Quarrier, Rudolph, etc) came later; They are more famous but perhaps less deserving of praise than the ladies; most only sent children to their own homes in Canada from the early 1880's on.

The Canadian experience can define the push and pull factors leading to the initial emigration of "Home Children" and the reasons for terminating the movement in 1939 (though 76 were sent after the war.) It also clearly delineates the changing attitudes towards "*Home Children*" and the "Child Evacuees" who came during the war to escape enemy bombing. *Home Children* and *Child Evacuees* are not the same, even though both were child migrants and both suffered to varying degrees from loss and separation. The Evacuees also suffered much less abuse and no stigma.

Home Children sent to Canada largely until 1939 constitute two-thirds of the child migrants sent from Britain's shores. They can't be overlooked!

Social worker Phyllis Harrison's book HOME CHILDREN, was the first popular book to draw attention to the fact that they had fallen through the cracks of two countries social systems. Joy Parr's doctoral thesis at Harvard stirred more concern and then a former editor of the Globe and Mail, Kenneth Bagnell, wrote THE LITTLE IMMIGRANTS. All this happened more than a decade before Margaret Humphreys drew the attention of the British and Australian public to what her book cover calls "Britain's most shameful secret".

The British video presentation, LOST CHILDREN OF THE EMPIRE, based on the book of the same name (by Joy Melville and Phillip Bean), is important in that it touches on child migration (1869 to 1967 and its three main thrusts to Canada, Australia/New Zealand and Africa. Each has its own story to tell and the differences and comparisons are worthy of study.

Yet the concern in Britain - as perceived in Canada - seems to have been largely on what has happened to children sent to Australia. We have had THE LEAVING OF LIVERPOOL docu-drama on TV and 1997 headlines about Australian "War Orphans" returning after 50 years to find they have families and new identities.

The Canadian situation has taken a back seat largely because of the commendable success Margaret Humphreys and her Child Migrant Trust.

Margaret has been the single most undeniable factor in drawing to the attention of the British public - and government - the plight of the Child Migrants especially in Australia. She has inspired the aforementioned docu-dramas and has led marches on parliament that have received international news coverage.

That said, she has admitted to me over dinner when we met that she had neither enough time nor the resources to do Canadian research. She also says as much in her autobiographical book, **Empty Cradles**, (Doubleday, London etc, 1988, Br Library 0385

404522). On page 133 she states categorically:

*Canada was immensely sad for me because it represented a generation of people I knew I could do little to help; it was far too late for them. \*\**

*I'd do what I could, of course, by finding their birth certificates and locating where their parents were buried." (Our emphasis)*

*However I had a difficult decision to make.....Events in Australia were so recent and appalling, and my resources were so limited, that I decided that I would immediately focus my attention there.*

And while Margaret laments that Barnardos, the Catholic Church, and other agencies have no office in Canada to address child migrant concerns (p. 127) she touches on some of the reasons when she comments on the fact that "*They were spread over a large area*" (p 124) and too old or poor to travel long distances. She, herself, says, (page 128) she "*wasn't prepared for the immense distance that had to be covered in Canada.*"

There you have it. Distance, cost and a perception that there was not as great a need. And without mentioning it, she might have added another factor: when the Australian government acknowledged its complicity in sponsoring child migration until as late as 1967, it also gave Margaret financial and moral support not available elsewhere.

\*\* At this point I must again take issue with the statement that "*it is far too late*" to help Canadians. Collette Bradford, Head of After Care of Barnardos has come to about 20 Reunions across the country which were sponsored by Home Children Canada for child migrants and their descendants. She, and other guests from former sending agencies have come to recognize that there are many Home Children alive today who can be helped.

It is also wrong to imply that the need of Canadians is not as great or as valid because their parents are not alive. Home Children are looking for relatives, it is true, but that includes brothers and sisters, cousins, and, yes, their descendants. And if none exist, they still want to know about their roots and what happened to their siblings and family. Only then can they have closure.

After her second visit Collette came understand another reality: that the child migrant movement had a devastating effect not only on the Home Children but on their families and successive generations. As a result, for the last two years at Reunions in Toronto, Montreal, Belleville and Peterborough she has brought along fellow social workers who can see for themselves the residual effect on successive generations.