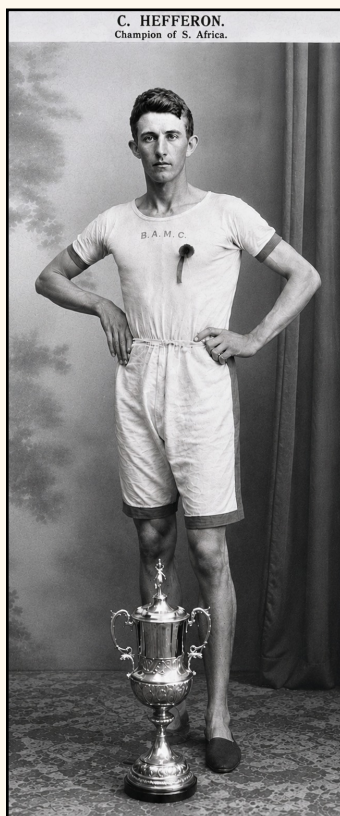




Charles Archer Hefferon - From British Home Child to Olympic Hero

By Lori Oschefski



Charles Archer Hefferon entered the world on 25 January 1878 in Marylebone, London. His father, Daniel Walter Hefferon, was a soldier, while his mother, Mary Ann Wickins, struggled to raise the family. When Charles was only twelve years old, his childhood ended. In 1890 he was placed in the care of James William Condell Fegan and boarded the Sarnia for Canada as one of thousands of British Home Children.

Like most Home Children, Charles had no say in his future. He left behind his parents and younger brother James, who remained in England. By the 1891 census Charles had vanished from the family home, confirming that he had begun a completely different life across the Atlantic.

Charles was placed with Joseph Fathers, a farmer in Haldimand County, Ontario, about six miles from Dunnville.

Unlike many placements that became stories of hardship, this proved to be the turning point of Charles's life.

Years later newspapers would write that Joseph Fathers had "really brought him up." Those simple words reveal something important. Charles had found not merely employment, but stability, guidance and, perhaps for the first time since leaving England, something resembling a family.

The local farms also shaped his athletic ability. Long before organized training existed, Charles developed the endurance and strength that would eventually astonish the sporting world.

Answering the Call

When the Boer War erupted in South Africa, Charles was among the first Canadians to volunteer.

Still considering Canada his home, he enlisted with Strathcona's Horse before later serving with the South African Constabulary. Military service took him halfway around the world, but when the war ended he chose not to return immediately. Instead, he settled in South Africa, accepted a position as a prison guard in Bloemfontein, and began building an entirely new life. There he met Susanna Jacoba Terblans, daughter of a Boer family, and they married.

Discovering a Gift

Curiously, Charles had shown only modest promise as a runner in Canada. South Africa changed everything. Almost overnight he emerged as one of the country's greatest distance runners, winning national championships over the mile and four miles for five consecutive years. His tactical intelligence became legendary. Reporters noted that he "used his head in every contest," relying as much on strategy as physical strength.

By 1908 he was recognized as South Africa's finest distance runner. Charles Hefferon had transformed himself from an



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unknown farm boy in rural Ontario into one of South Africa's finest distance runners. Although he had shown promise while living in Canada, it was only after settling in South Africa following the Boer War that his remarkable athletic ability truly emerged. Year after year he dominated long-distance races, earning national championships and building a reputation as a disciplined, intelligent competitor. When the Olympic Games were awarded to London in 1908, South Africa selected Charles to represent the young nation.

The marathon would become one of the most famous races in Olympic history. Unlike today's carefully planned training programs, marathon runners of the early twentieth century competed with very little scientific knowledge about nutrition, hydration, or endurance. The race was held on a hot July day and covered a new distance—from the grounds of Windsor Castle to the White City Stadium in London. To allow the royal family a clear view of the finish, the course ended directly in front of the Royal Box, making the distance exactly 26 miles and 385 yards. That measurement became the international marathon standard and remains unchanged today.

From the opening miles, Charles controlled the race.

Running with a smooth, economical stride, he steadily pulled away from the rest of the field. Mile after mile he increased his lead while many of the world's finest marathon runners struggled in the oppressive heat. Spectators lining the roads watched as the South African runner, who had begun life as a British Home Child from England, appeared unstoppable.

For much of the race, victory seemed certain.

Then, with less than two miles remaining, everything changed.

A spectator offered Charles a glass of champagne, believing the alcohol would revive his energy for the final push. At the time, such practices were not considered unusual. Athletes often consumed whatever supporters believed might help them continue. Exhausted after more than twenty-four miles of running, Charles accepted the drink. It proved to be a disastrous decision.

Instead of providing strength, the champagne caused severe stomach cramps. His pace immediately slowed, and the commanding lead he had built over twenty-four miles began to disappear. Every painful stride allowed the chasing runners to close the gap.

Italian marathoner Dorando Pietri eventually overtook him and entered White City Stadium first. But Pietri had pushed his body beyond its limits. Confused and barely able to stand, he entered the stadium the wrong way before collapsing repeatedly onto the track. Officials and medical attendants rushed to his aid, lifting him to his feet several times and physically helping him reach the finish line.

The dramatic scene captivated the thousands of spectators inside the stadium.

Only moments later, American Johnny Hayes crossed the finish line, followed shortly afterward by Charles Hefferon. While Pietri was initially declared the winner, officials soon ruled that because he had received physical assistance before crossing the line, he had violated the rules of competition. Following an official protest, Pietri was disqualified. Hayes was awarded the gold medal, while Charles Hefferon moved into second place, earning the Olympic silver medal.

History has often remembered the marathon for Dorando Pietri's heartbreaking collapse. Paintings, books, and films have celebrated the exhausted Italian being carried toward the finish. Yet another remarkable story unfolded that day—one often overshadowed by Pietri's dramatic final moments.

For nearly the entire race, it had been Charles Hefferon who set the pace.

Had it not been for that ill-fated glass of champagne in the closing miles, many historians believe the British Home Child from England, raised on a farm near Dunnville, Ontario, would almost certainly have become Olympic champion.

Even in defeat, Charles's performance was extraordinary. He had not only earned an Olympic silver medal but had helped create one of the greatest moments in sporting history. His race established the marathon distance that millions of runners continue to challenge today, more than a century later.



"Almost as Much a Canadian..."

Following the race, Canadian newspapers proudly claimed Charles as one of their own. One Toronto newspaper wrote that he was "almost as much a Canadian as he is a South African," reminding readers that he had been raised in Haldimand County by Joseph Fathers and had grown into adulthood on Canadian soil.

For British Home Children, who were so often treated as outsiders, it was a remarkable public acknowledgment. A boy who had arrived alone with little more than hope had become an athlete admired around the world.

Professional running eventually brought

Charles to England before he returned permanently to Canada in 1911. Passenger records identified him as a "returning Canadian," noting that he had first arrived in 1890.

That single notation speaks volumes. Despite representing South Africa internationally, Charles considered Canada to be home. He settled once again in Haldimand County, farmed the land, and reunited his family in Canada.

Answering the Call—Again

When the First World War erupted in Europe, Charles Hefferon was no inexperienced recruit. Nearly fifteen years earlier he had volunteered for service during the South African War, serving with Strathcona's Horse before spending four years with the South African Mounted Police. Military life was already familiar to him.

Now, approaching forty years of age, with a wife, young children, and a farm in Haldimand County, many men in his position would have considered their military service complete.

Charles did not.

On New Year's Day, 1916, Charles Hefferon enlisted once again, joining the Canadian Expeditionary Force at Hamilton, Ontario. Assigned to the Royal Canadian Dragoons with regimental number 227149, he would later attain the rank of Lance Corporal. At thirty-eight years of age, the former Olympic silver medallist described himself not as an athlete, but simply as a farmer. His attestation papers paint the picture of a seasoned man standing five feet nine inches tall with blue eyes and brown hair. They also reveal the physical toll of the life he had already lived, documenting numerous scars across his chest and abdomen and an old ankle fracture—lasting reminders of years spent farming, competing, and serving his adopted country.

Military service had already left its mark. It would do so again.

Only a year after enlisting, disaster struck during training. On 30 January 1917, Charles suffered a serious injury when a dummy bomb exploded, burning the cornea of his right eye. Military doctors noted that although the eye gradually improved, his vision had been permanently affected. The medical assessment concluded that he was unfit for overseas service, ending any hope that he would join the fighting in Europe.

For a man who had twice volunteered to serve his adopted country, it must have been a bitter disappointment. Charles had already proven his courage on the battlefields of South Africa, yet the First World War would deny him the opportunity to serve overseas.

He remained with the military until 4 May 1918, when he was honourably discharged from the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles on compassionate grounds.

For Charles, however, military service was only one chapter of a life devoted to public duty. Within a few years he would again place himself in harm's way—this time wearing the uniform of a police officer—and, like so many veterans of his generation, he would continue serving until the very end.

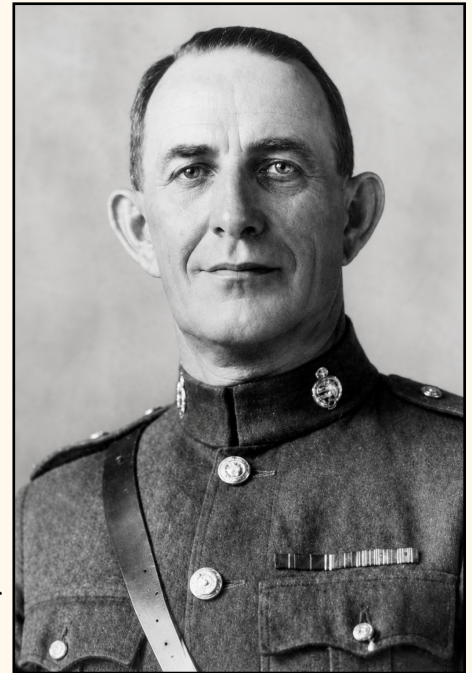
Charles became Acting Chief of Police in Dunnville before joining the Ontario Provincial Police. His career took him first to Hamilton on special assignment and later to the Department of Highways motorcycle patrol, serving in Brantford, Blenheim, and finally Brampton after the patrol became part of the Ontario Provincial Police in 1930.

Tragedy struck in 1928 when Susanna, whose health had deteriorated while living in Canada, returned to her native South Africa in hopes that the warmer climate would aid her recovery. At first the change appeared successful, but Charles was later summoned by cable after she suffered a sudden relapse. Granted leave from his police duties, he sailed to South Africa to be at her bedside, but Susanna died on 30 August 1928 at the age of just forty. She was buried in Johannesburg, leaving Charles to continue raising their family alone.

Despite this profound personal loss, Charles remained devoted to public service. On the evening of 12 May 1932, while patrolling Highway 10 near Derry Road West on his police motorcycle, he approached an intersection with his siren sounding—a standard precaution before the days of traffic lights. As he entered the crossing, a motorist drove into his path, later stating that he had never seen the officer approaching. Charles attempted to avoid the collision, but his motorcycle struck the rear wheel of the automobile with tremendous force, throwing him headfirst onto the pavement.

He was rushed to Peel Memorial Hospital suffering from a fractured skull and severe internal injuries. Surgeons fought to save his life, but he never regained consciousness. Early the following morning, 13 May 1932, Charles Archer Hefferon died at the age of fifty-four.

His funeral drew fellow officers from across Ontario, led by O.P.P. Commissioner General Williams. Charles was laid to rest in Hamilton Cemetery, remembered not only as an Olympic silver medallist and distinguished police officer, but as a British Home Child whose extraordinary life had taken him from the streets of London to farms in Ontario, battlefields in South Africa, the Olympic Games, and ultimately a life of service to the country he proudly called home.



Sources and Credits:

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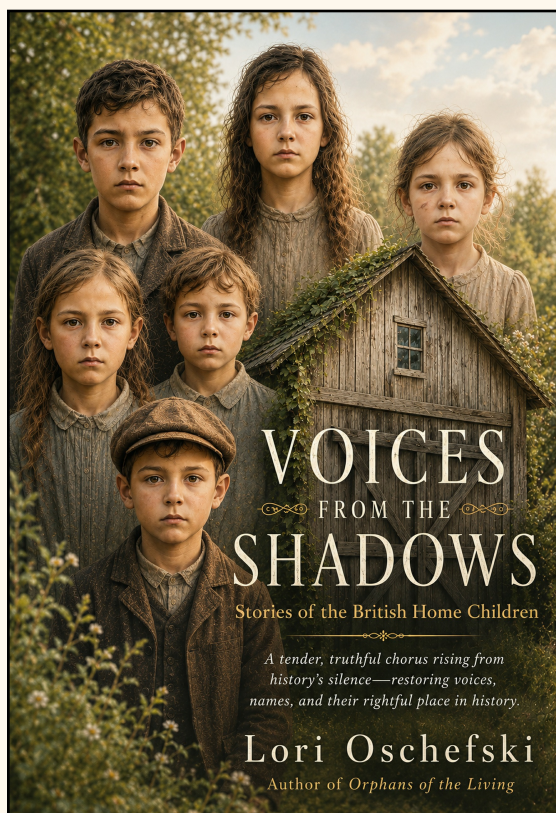


COMING IN 2027



Voices from the Shadows

Stories of the British Home Children



For generations, the voices of Canada's British Home Children were too often lost in the shadows of history. More than 100,000 children were sent from Britain to Canada, leaving behind families, communities and everything they had known. They arrived carrying few possessions and facing uncertain futures. Their lives became part of the fabric of Canada, yet for decades many of their stories remained untold.

Coming in 2027, Voices from the Shadows brings some of those voices back into the light.

Written and compiled by Lori Oschefski, founder and president of Home Children Canada, the book goes beyond names, dates and passenger lists to reveal the children themselves. Drawing on historical and genealogical research, archival records, photographs, newspaper accounts and family histories, it shares stories of separation and loss, hardship and survival, courage and remarkable resilience.

Some children endured loneliness, exploitation, neglect and abuse. Others found kindness, opportunity and belonging. Most went on to build families, serve their communities and contribute to the country they now called home. Together, their stories reveal a history that is complicated, deeply human and deserving of remembrance.

At its heart, *Voices from the Shadows* is about remembering the child behind every record—restoring names, faces and stories to those who were too often reduced to numbers on a page.

The book will also have a special purpose. Voices from the Shadows will be a fundraising book for Home Children Canada, with proceeds divided between author Lori Oschefski and Home Children Canada. The charity's share will help support its continuing work in research, education, advocacy and remembrance, ensuring these stories are preserved for generations to come.

Indentured Servants

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

Dr. Barnardo, April 1900 *Ups and Downs*

Based on the books "Labouring Children" by Joy Parr and "Uprooted" by Roy Parker | Written by Lori Oschefski

Canniff Haight wrote in 1885 that the secret of a successful farm lay in "the economy, industry and moderate wants of every member of the household." It is generally recognized that, in earlier years of Canadian and British history, all members of a farm family, including the children, worked. Haight was simply repeating the conventional wisdom of the age: every member of a farm family contributed to the successful functioning of the household economy.

As Joy Parr states in her book *Labouring Children*, "It is not surprising that the child immigrants went to work when they came to Canada."

Roy Parker, in his book *Uprooted*, notes that although the 1871 Census showed 80 per cent of the Canadian population living in rural areas, this percentage decreased as young adults moved away to seek education and non-farm employment or to acquire cheap land in the West. By 1911, 56 per cent of the population lived in rural areas.

This population shift, coupled with growing legislation and the increasing popularity of education, left a serious shortage of family labour, particularly children aged fourteen and under, on Canadian farms. Parker notes that between 1901 and 1911, imported children replaced farmers' sons at a rate of about 27 to 80 per cent. The 1911 Census shows that BHC constituted 80 per cent of the growth in male wage labourers on Ontario farms during the same period. Parker also notes that between 1901 and 1911, Ontario farms lost 49,000 sons while gaining 13,000 BHC.

Not all BHC were placed in Ontario; demand throughout Canada was equally high. Alfred Owen, the disgraced superintendent of Barnardo's, stated in 1897 that the demand for children aged twelve to fourteen in Manitoba was "practically unlimited."

Ontario's rapidly expanding, labour-intensive agrarian economy meant that pauper apprentices were a cheap and readily available source of labour during a period of farm labour shortages. As a result, the organisations involved in apprenticing children regularly received more applications than they had children available.

A letter found in the Canadiana.org Héritage files from the Dr. Barnardo Homes, dated 4 October 1901, states that during a recent twelve-month period, 889 children were emigrated while 4,415 applications for children were received. It is also worth noting that an application fee of \$3 was charged by the sending organisations, particularly Dr. Barnardo's.

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

There is not an agency engaged in the work that does not receive more applications than they have children. Each party of fifty, seventy-five or one hundred children is almost completely disposed of within two weeks after arrival, and the requests for children seem to increase rather than diminish as time goes on.... The reason for this would appear to be that small families prevail as a rule in the agricultural

*Barnardo Boy Samuel Usher
Uncle of Lori Oschefski*

districts, and when there are four or five sons and daughters it is seldom more than one or two remain on the farm. They go off to the colleges, professions, and to the city shops and factories, to be typewriters or conductors on street cars, and as help is imperatively needed on the farms the boys and girls from the Old Country take the places of sons and daughters.

The Indenture System

In Canadian farm families, children contributed their labour to the household and were often eventually bequeathed the family land through their parents' wills. This system of inheritance, however, was not considered an appropriate means of compensating non-family members such as the Home Children.

As Parr noted, British children needed indenture contracts to protect their rights rather than extinguish their liberties.

Indentured labour was a form of contract employment, usually lasting between three and seven years. A person became an indentured servant by agreeing to work off a debt during a specified period. "Debt slaves" is another phrase used to describe the arrangement, particularly in the case of prisoners and young people who had little choice and no other means of repaying the debt. (Source: June Payne Flath, "Indentured Servants in Canada.")

The intention of indenturing BHC was to provide fair wages for their work and promote fair treatment. In practice, however, the system did not work well for many BHC.

In *Labouring Children*, Parr clearly outlines the framework under which the BHC worked. Their indentures were based upon age, physical strength, dexterity and judgement—qualities expected to develop as a child grew older. The "fair market value" of a child's work was assessed according to these criteria, and farmers were expected to pay accordingly.

One difficulty facing BHC was that they did not have family ties in Canada. Many had not been raised in farming families and had little or no knowledge of farm work. The organisations attempted to address this by creating three stages of indenture.

Barnardo's used the terms "boarding out," "board, clothing and school," and "wage." The National Children's Home used "adoption," "raising," and "service," while Catholic organisations used "boarders," "helpers," and "service."

The term "adoption" was particularly misleading, as most BHC were neither formally nor legally adopted. Webster's Dictionary defines indenture as "a contract binding one person to work for another," while adoption means "to take into one's family through legal means and raise as one's own child."

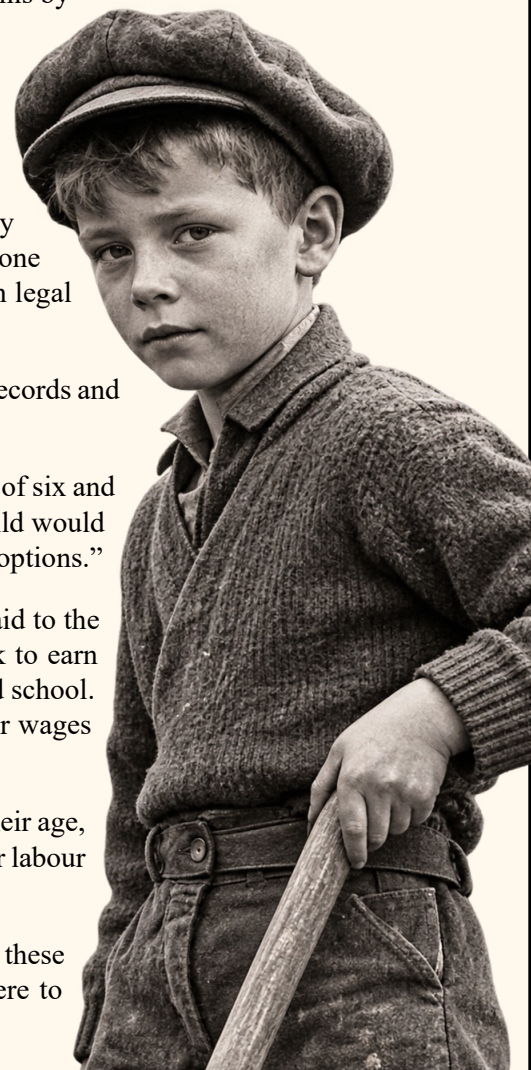
This three-level terminology helps explain the different descriptions found on census records and why identifying a BHC can sometimes be difficult.

Typically, although practices varied between organisations, children between the ages of six and ten were boarded out. Farmers were paid \$5 a month, with the expectation that the child would not work. Other homes placed children between the ages of three and eight in trial "adoptions."

Children between eleven and fourteen were more difficult to assess. No board was paid to the farmer for these children, as they were considered old enough to perform light work to earn their keep. They were expected to be given time off during the winter months to attend school. Older children performed heavier work and were therefore expected to receive higher wages for their efforts.

Clearly, the children's placements were determined largely by economic criteria. As their age, strength and ability to work increased, they were often moved to placements where their labour had greater value.

As Dr. Barnardo himself acknowledged in the April 1900 edition of *Ups and Downs*, these children were not being placed in Canadian families simply for love—they were here to work.





Parr also notes that BHC changed situations frequently throughout their indentures. On average, Barnardo girls moved four times during their first five years in Canada, while boys moved an average of three times. She notes that the patterns among children sent by Marchmont, Birt and Macpherson were similar.

When the System Failed

Indenture contracts did not, in many cases, work as intended for the BHC. Primarily, the indentures marked the children as distinctly different from the farmers' own children. They were servants of the household rather than members of the family.

They could become, in effect, throw-away children. If they did not meet the expectations of the farmer, or if they outgrew a particular stage of indenture, they could be returned to the Home. Younger children could be sent back once they reached the age when the farmer no longer received the \$5 monthly boarding payment and was instead expected to begin paying for the child's labour.

Many children bound by these agreements were moved from farm to farm.

As Parr noted, "the indentures destroyed the illusion that all the BHC must have entertained at some point, of being like family."

They were transient children who could never truly feel settled—or even maintain the illusion that they would be. The possibility of being uprooted and moved again loomed constantly over them throughout their formative years.

Mary Taylor, aunt of Lori Oschefski, was moved twenty times in eight years.

Some farmers were negligent in fulfilling the terms of the indentures. Young children were sent to perform heavy work, while others were not adequately protected from neglect and abuse. Some were made to sleep in barns, while promised wages went unpaid.

Frostbite, beatings and neglect were suffered by many. Too often, BHC were treated merely as commodities.

These indenture contracts were enforceable under Canadian law, binding children through the Masters and Servants Act until the age of eighteen. This further distinguished BHC from Canadian-born children, who were free to make their own choices at fourteen. Canadian-born children working on farms could move on of their own free will and potentially escape a difficult or abusive situation; an indentured BHC might be trapped.

Deserting an indenture could leave a BHC open to imprisonment or a fine. The child had to demonstrate just cause for leaving. A demanding master or bullying by the master's children was not considered sufficient cause.

The distance between the children and the Home offices was often considerable, and promised inspections could be infrequent. This left BHC particularly vulnerable to unscrupulous masters.

Children were sometimes denied schooling. Young children could be forced to work beyond their capabilities. Inadequate clothing left some freezing and frostbitten, and worn-out clothing was not always replaced. Some children slept in barns and, in the case of George Green, he was made to sleep with the pigs.

Children were subjected to various forms of abuse, sometimes with life-altering or even fatal consequences. For some, suicide was seen as the only escape from circumstances in which neither the laws nor the Homes adequately protected them.

Wages Earned but Not Always Received

Many BHC were even denied the small amount of money they were supposed to receive in exchange for their work. Children typically did not receive their accumulated earnings until the age of twenty-one, and the payment of these wages could itself be problematic.

Quarrier documents found in the Héritage files show that children had to apply for their wages. Money from the children's contracts was sent to the Quarrier office in Scotland and could be difficult to have returned to Canada when the time came to pay out an indenture.

Many children never understood that they were entitled to receive wages and, therefore, never received their money.

Many BHC boys enlisted in the First World War before reaching the age of twenty-one, and many died before they could ever claim the wages they had earned. Life insurance was also heavily promoted by some sending organisations.

Apprenticed or Adopted?

Parr closes her chapter, "Apprenticed or Adopted," with a powerful observation:

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

It is perhaps this distinction that lies at the heart of the British Home Child experience. The language surrounding the schemes often spoke of homes, families, opportunities and fresh beginnings. Yet the economic reality of the system meant that thousands of children arrived in Canada not simply as children in need of homes, but as a much-needed source of labour.

For many, the difference between being "adopted" and "apprenticed," between belonging to a family and working for one, would shape their entire childhood.



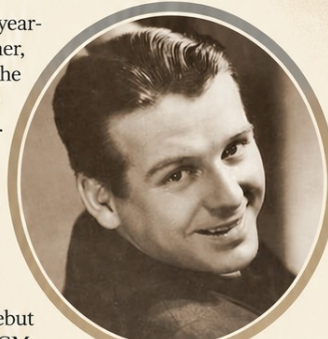
WALLACE FORD

Born Samuel Grundy Jones

Wallace Ford's impressive career is even more awe-inspiring when considering the dreadful start to his life. Separated from his parents at a young age, Samuel Jones (his real name) was placed in Barnardo's at age three. In 1905, at the age of seven, Samuel was sent to Canada to the organization's location in Toronto along with a group of 163 other children.

Samuel was placed in 17 different homes before he ran away at the age of eleven after the last farmer he was with mistreated him. He then joined a Canadian Vaudeville group, known as the Winnipeg Kiddies. He performed with this group for three years before leaving with a friend to ride the rails in the United States. Unfortunately, tragedy struck and his friend was crushed to death in a railway car. At this point, Samuel Jones took his friend's name and became Wallace Ford. Under this name, he found work in theatrical troupes, repertories and vaudeville.

During this time, he began his 21-year-long search for his biological mother, something that was unheard of at the time. The only information that he had was her name: Catherine Jones.



By 1920, he started to work on Broadway and soon after he married his life-long bride, Martha Harworth. They had one daughter together: Patricia.

Wallace Ford got his Hollywood debut in 1932, signing a contract with MGM. He appeared in over 200 films alongside Joan Crawford, Bela Lugosi, Boris Karloff, James Stewart, Richard Widmark and Henry Fonda to name a few.

"From Barnardo's to Hollywood"

It was during the 1930's that Wallace did find his mother through his film connections. Los Angeles police contacted Scotland Yard who narrowed the search to Lancashire. The aunt, Mrs. Mary Beddoes who originally placed him in Barnardo's, came forward and identified his mother, Catherine Jones, known locally at "Mam Kit." She was living with her husband, a match seller, known as Blind Dan in a trailer beside a river in Cheshire, England. Wallace visited her, his actions garnering world-wide attention, and bought his mother and her husband a little house. "She has had a hard life," he said.

Wallace Ford played a number of character roles throughout his career, acting in 'B' horror films before graduating to Westerns. He had roles in five of John Ford's films and also was in Alfred Hitchcock's film, *Shadow of a Doubt*. Wallace also appeared alongside Henry Fonda in a TV series, *The Deputy* and on the *Andy Griffith Show*, as well.

Wallace's last appearance as Old Pa was with Sidney Poitier in the highly successful *A Patch of Blue* before his heart gave out in 1966, shortly after his wife Martha passed away.



MOVIES
CHANGE LIVES



“We didn’t know what to expect”

By Andrew Simpson

British Home Children the story from Britain
Visit Andrew's Blog: <https://chorltonhistory.blogspot.com/>

All of us who are descended from children migrated to Canada will have wondered at their feelings, their detailed everyday experiences and just its lasting impact on their personalities, hopes and future lives.

Some of us will have letters or personal accounts that have come down to us, and of course there is a whole tranche of recorded material from young people which offer up the bigger picture.

So, from the archives of the Manchester and Salford Boys’ and Girls’ Refuges which sent children across from 1870-1916 we have the letters and records of some of the young people they migrated.

Young Lizzie had written how she missed her sisters when she first arrived and found it difficult to settle but later professed she “likes this country.”

And for those who were unhappy or couldn’t adjust, there were others who settled, like Harriet who expected to “take a medical course and then go on to China or Japan” or the young couple who met in Canada, fell in love and married.” *

My family has no real insight into the feelings of our Roger.

We have a few letters from him to Middlemore.

To these we can add the memories of his sister which were written down over 60 years after he was migrated.

They hint that he and my grandfather were wild, almost running feral which led the authorities to place them in a training ship which was designed to give boys a mix of sound discipline and training to fit them for the sea and perhaps unfairly I have always regarded them as akin to a naval boot camp. Granddad went but great uncle Roger appears to have opted for migration to Canada.

What we do know about this 16-year-old was that he was unable to settle, frequently rebelled against any form of authority or direction.

And as a result, was sent back from the first two farm placements, ran away from the third to enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1915, and was court martialled four times for insubordination, striking an officer and being absent without leave while on active service. Just why he went AWOL is not clear from the army records, but he did it three times and heavy drinking features in the reports.

Added to which he lied about his age on enlistment, changed his name and chose not to cite the name of his mother as next of kin.

We lose him after his return to Canada at the end of the war and know only that he struck out for British Columbia. One of my Canadian cousins has dug deep into the archives, and we think we have him living in B.C. back with his given name in the 1930s, but that is about it.

It is a loss which with the passage of time has reduced his presence to almost just a name and a footnote in the ever-expanding story of our family. But as I return to the memory of Roger Hall and his adopted name of James Rogers I am reflecting on the experiences of those children who 87 years ago were ripped from their homes and placed on war time trains with no clear idea of where they were going and how long they would be away from their parents.

They were part of the wartime evacuation from British cities at the outbreak of the Second World War.

Since Guernica during the Spanish Civil War there was that powerful idea that the “bomber would always get through” and so even before the outbreak of war preparations had been made for the mass removal of children and expectant mothers out of the danger areas.



A group of children arrive at Brent station near Kingsbridge, Devon, after being evacuated from Bristol in 1940

The evacuations began in early September, experienced a lull during the Phoney War when some children returned home and picked up again after the Fall of France and the beginning of the Blitz.

But there were enormous regional variations with cities like Manchester and Liverpool evacuating large numbers of children while other urban areas sent fewer to neighbouring towns and villages.

Eleven years ago, I interviewed Bevan Taylor who along with some of his friends from Burnage High School in south Manchester were sent to two villages outside Leek in Staffordshire. **

It had begun in the spring of 1939 when his parents attended a meeting at the school "which they assumed was about Air Raid Precautions, and while there signed a form which it became clear gave permission for me to be evacuated.

There were approximately 450 other lads whose parents had done the same, and we were all told to arrive at school with a packed bag.

Now I turned up with one of those fibre suitcases while my friends had rucksacks, and I did envy them those rucksacks.

We didn't know what to expect but perhaps not just to be put in the school playing field under the supervision of some prefects.

There was nothing to do except play cards.

At the end of the school day, we were sent home, only to return the following day for more of the same.

In all we had four days on the playing field, and I can say I'd had my fill of playing cards by the end of it.

And then on that fifth day, Friday September 11th some double-decker buses drew up outside the school.

We were told we weren't going home and with that we trooped aboard the buses and went off to the station.

There was no chance to say goodbye to my parents, the buses arrived and we were off to London Road Station and three months in the country as evacuees arriving at Leek and on again by bus to the village of Longsdon.

There wasn't much to the village. I remember the church, the corner shop, a telephone kiosk and a hall belonging to the Women's Institute.

I had teamed up with my friend, and we reckoned that we would accept the first person who offered to take us because we didn't fancy being there all day.

As it was, we didn't have to wait long because about half an hour after we arrived a severe looking man with dark eyes, wearing a bowler hat and carrying an umbrella walked up to us and said, 'Would you like to come with me?'

He gave my mate his briefcase and umbrella and me the bowler hat and then with us on either side of him we walked off out of the hall and up the road to a house opposite to Salt's farm."

The village still exists and is still a small collection of houses with that memorial hall, but has lost the shop, the telephone box and one of its three pubs.



Bev's account 76 years after the events was fresh and detailed but came through the filter a confident boy out for "a lark" which may have coloured those deeper feelings of anxiety and home sickness. Or as was the case with his generation and the two immediate ones was influenced by that simple approach that just got on with it and made light of the experience afterwards.

The collected memories of those wartime children do as you would expect cover a vast range of emotions and experiences.

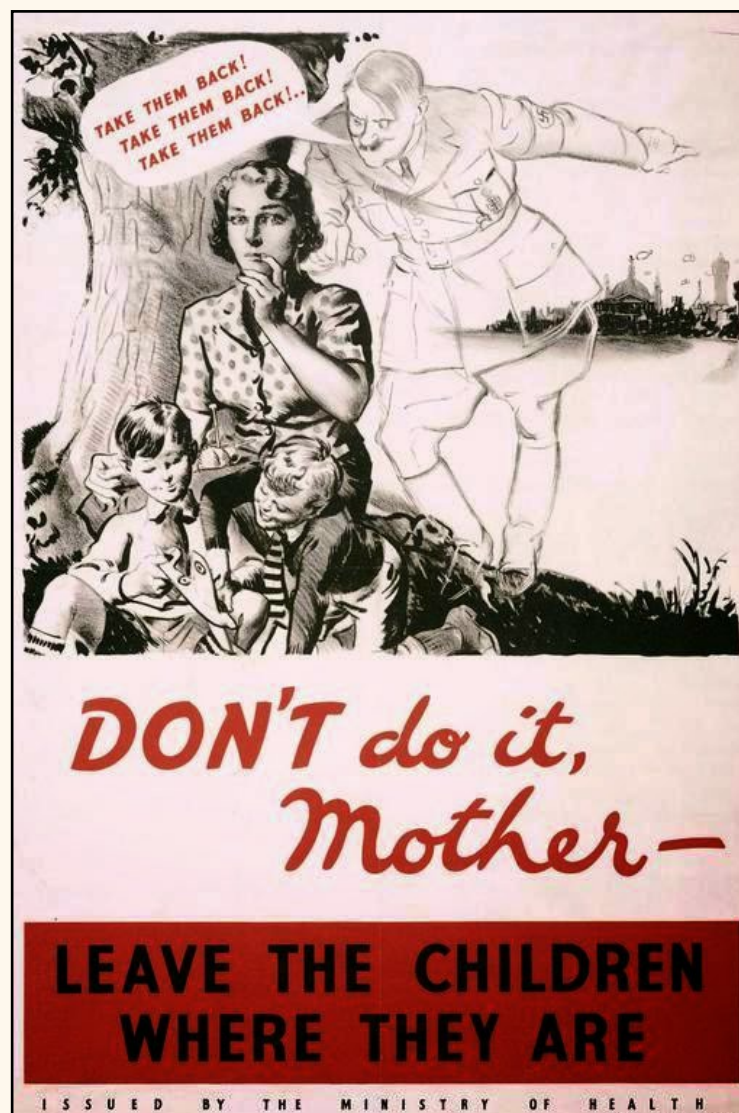
Some good, some bad and lots in the middle, encompassing everything from seeing a real live cow for the first time, to watching and hearing German aerial raids on nearby towns.

Sadly, such experiences are all too present today, whether it be in the border settlements of Israel, or the rubble of Gaza or many other conflict zones around the world.

*From the archives of the Together Trust formerly the Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges, reproduced in The Ever-Open Door, 150 years of the Together Trust, Andrew Simpson, 2020

**In conversation with Bevan Taylor May 8, 2015

Picture; A group of children arrive at Brent station near Kingsbridge, Devon, after being evacuated from Bristol in 1940. Don't do it Mother, Ministry of Health, 1940, "Swing high, swing low – and away go their cares. Evacuated children from Chorlton (Manchester) enjoying themselves 'somewhere outside Manchester.'" Manchester Courier, 1939, courtesy of Sally Dervan





Between Rescue and Separation

— Understanding the Complexity of the British Home Child Story —

By Lori Oschefski

The story of the British Home Children is sometimes told in absolutes.

They were rescued from terrible lives in Britain.

Or they were taken from their families and exploited as cheap labour in Canada.

Neither statement, on its own, tells the whole story.

More than 100,000 children were sent from Britain to Canada through numerous organizations over many decades. They did not come from identical circumstances, they were not sent for the same reasons, and they did not share the exact same experiences after arriving here.

To understand what happened, we first have to understand the world from which these children came.

When Families Had Nowhere to Turn

Poverty in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain could be desperate.

Unemployment, illness, industrial accidents, the death of a parent, desertion and family breakdown could leave a household without enough money for food or rent. There was no modern social safety net to catch a family when circumstances suddenly collapsed.

For a widowed mother with several children, an unemployed father or a parent incapacitated by illness, there could be painfully few choices.

Children could be hungry, inadequately clothed or living in overcrowded and unhealthy conditions. Some lived on the streets. Others were exposed to neglect, violence or circumstances in which their families simply could not safely care for them.

Charitable organizations stepped into this enormous gap.

To many reformers of the period, removing a child from extreme poverty and placing that child in the countryside—or eventually in Canada—was not conceived as an act of



cruelty. It was seen as rescue.

Canada appeared to offer clean air, plentiful food, agricultural employment and opportunities unavailable in Britain's overcrowded industrial centres. Canadian farmers, meanwhile, needed labour.

For some children, emigration genuinely did provide a new beginning.

But Not Every Child Came From the Same Circumstances

This is where the story becomes more complicated.

We cannot take the records of one organization and use them to describe every British Home Child.

The Middlemore Homes, for example, dealt extensively with some of the most difficult and desperate cases. Approximately 5,000 children associated with Middlemore were sent to Canada—a significant number, but only a fraction of the more than 100,000 children who came through the wider British Home Child movement.

When we read Middlemore case files describing severe poverty, neglect, family instability and children in desperate need of intervention, those records are important evidence of the conditions faced by those particular children and families.

But they cannot automatically be applied to the other tens of thousands of children.

Organizations such as Barnardo's received children under a wide variety of circumstances. Some children were orphaned or abandoned. Some came from profoundly troubled homes. Others had living mothers and fathers who were struggling with poverty, unemployment, illness, widowhood or temporary family crisis.

That distinction matters enormously.

A child being admitted to an institution did not necessarily mean that the child's parents no longer loved or wanted them.

And poverty should not automatically be interpreted as abandonment.

When Help Meant Separation

Parents sometimes turned to charitable organizations because they needed help.

The organizations themselves were working within a society that offered families very few alternatives. Their supporters believed that they were saving children from hunger, poverty and dangerous environments.

In many cases, intervention was desperately needed.

But the solution increasingly became centred on removing the child rather than asking what could be done to strengthen and preserve the family.

Instead of asking only, "How do we rescue this child?", we can now also ask:

"What might have happened if greater resources had been available to help this family remain together?"

And when a family's circumstances improved, why were systems not always in place to return children to parents who wanted them back?

These questions do not require us to portray everyone involved in child migration as deliberately cruel. Many sincerely believed in what they were doing.

But good intentions do not automatically make a system good.

When Does Rescue Become Exploitation?

There is another uncomfortable question we cannot avoid.

These were vulnerable children.

They were transported across an ocean, separated from their families and homeland, and placed into the homes and farms of strangers, frequently with an expectation that they would provide labour.

There is historical evidence that the movement of vulnerable children was discussed in terms of "traffic" and trafficking, and concerns about child trafficking existed in Britain in the late nineteenth century.

Two Families

BRITISH HOME CHILDREN



The Cheesman Family

These children were taken into care after their father deserted the family. The Cheesman children were sent to Canada as British Home Children.



The Taylor Sisters

These children were taken into care due to serious neglect and abuse. The Taylor sisters were sent to Canada as British Home Children.

Testimony presented to a UK House of Commons committee in 1998 explicitly described agencies as "trafficking in exported children" and discussed the financial incentives surrounding child emigration. The Canadian government itself describes the British Child Emigration Movement as sending more than 100,000 children into indentured labour in Canada.

That does not mean that every child was trafficked in the modern legal sense, nor does it mean that every receiving family exploited the child placed with them. Historical systems must be understood within their own legal and social context.

But we should not allow historical language such as emigration, placement or rescue to prevent us from asking difficult questions about what actually happened.

Children were recruited or taken into institutional care. They were transported great distances. They were separated from their normal family and community protections. Many were placed in situations where their labour had economic value to the adults receiving them. And once in Canada, they were extraordinarily dependent upon those adults for food, shelter, clothing and their very ability to remain safe.

The fact that these arrangements were organized by respected charities and supported by governments does not make those characteristics disappear.

And this leads to perhaps the most fundamental question of all:

Since when is exporting vulnerable children a good solution to poverty?

If the children were suffering in Britain, then surely the answer should have been to ask how they and their families

could be helped—not simply how the children could be removed from the country.

Poverty did not make these children disposable.

Nor did it make them a convenient source of labour for another country.

Canada Could Mean Opportunity

It is equally important that we do not erase the positive experiences of British Home Children.

Some children were welcomed into Canadian households where they were treated with kindness and affection. Some received education and opportunities that had seemed impossible in Britain. Some became deeply attached to the families with whom they were placed.

They grew up, married, raised families, established farms and businesses, served their communities and helped build Canada.

For some, coming to Canada may indeed have changed the course of their lives for the better.

Those stories deserve to be told.

But a good outcome for one child cannot justify a system that left another child vulnerable to exploitation or abuse.

Vulnerability Did Not Distinguish Between Organizations

The circumstances that brought children into care in Britain varied enormously. Their vulnerability after arriving in Canada did not.

It has been estimated that a significant majority—often cited as approximately 75 percent—experienced some combination of abuse, exploitation, neglect, loneliness or other hardship.

The risks did not stop at the doors of any particular sending organization.

Whether children arrived through Middlemore, Barnardo's, Macpherson, Fegan's, the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society or another organization, once they were placed in Canada they could be exposed to the same fundamental dangers.

They did not arrive as adopted sons and daughters. They arrived as children expected to work.

Boys were commonly placed on farms. Girls were frequently placed in domestic service. Some worked extremely long hours. Most received inadequate schooling. Too many were moved repeatedly between placements.

An estimated 75% suffered physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

Others experienced something less visible but no less real: profound loneliness and loss.

Imagine being eight, ten or twelve years old and finding yourself thousands of miles from your mother, father, brothers and sisters, living among strangers and perhaps not knowing whether you would ever see your family again.

Even a child who was adequately fed, clothed and housed could carry that separation for a lifetime.

The System Created the Vulnerability

This is why the discussion cannot simply be about whether individual sending organizations were good or bad.

The structure of the system itself placed children in vulnerable circumstances.

More than 100,000 children were eventually scattered throughout an enormous country. Their welfare depended upon the people receiving them and upon the effectiveness of inspection and follow-up.

Where safeguards failed, children had very little power.

They were young.

They were far from home.

They were dependent upon adults.

They often had no family member nearby to advocate for them.

And many had nowhere else to go.

That vulnerability existed regardless of the name of the organization that had sent them.

Two Things Can Be True

This history becomes distorted when we insist upon choosing only one version of it.

It is possible that a child was living in terrible poverty in Britain and was badly treated in Canada. As was Mary Taylor. She came from abject poverty. In Canada she was moved 20 times in 8 years, she was beaten, raped, gave birth to a still born baby at the age of fourteen! Nobody stepped in to stop the extreme abuse she suffered.

It is possible that another child came from equally desperate circumstances and found a loving Canadian home and opportunities that changed their life.

It is possible to recognize the enormous challenges faced by impoverished British families and question whether permanent separation and migration should ever have been the solution.

These ideas are not contradictory.

They are the British Home Child story.

What We Know Now

With the benefit of more than a century of records, research, family testimony and official investigations, we can see things that those living within the system may not always have understood.

The United Kingdom's Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse later examined the broader British child migration programmes and identified serious failures in the protection of children. Australia and the United Kingdom have formally apologized for their roles in historic child migration.

We also understand much more today about the importance of maintaining family relationships, identity and connection.

For descendants, those losses can still be felt.

Many, if not most, Canadian families grew up knowing little about their Home Child ancestor because the subject was never discussed.

Others inherited stories of hardship, shame or rejection. At the same time, families in Britain sometimes lost track of children who had been sent thousands of miles away, leaving generations of relatives wondering what became of them.

The Whole Story

Perhaps the greatest mistake we can make is trying to force more than 100,000 children into one category.

They were individuals.

Some desperately needed intervention.

Some came from loving families overwhelmed by circumstances beyond their control.

Some were removed from appalling conditions.

Some found loving homes in Canada.

Some found opportunities.

Some were treated primarily as workers.

Some were exploited.

Some were abused.

Many were terribly lonely.

And many lives contained a complicated mixture of opportunity, loss, hardship and resilience.

When we study individual case files, passenger lists, placement records, inspection reports, correspondence and family histories, the simple labels begin to disappear.

In their place are children.

We should not judge this history only by its worst placement, just as we should not judge it by its happiest success story.

But neither should we accept the argument that because children were poor, hungry or vulnerable in Britain, sending them thousands of miles away and placing them in situations where they were vulnerable to exploitation was inherently an act of kindness.

Vulnerability should have been a reason to protect these children—not a reason to export them, to exploit them and to abuse them.

The responsibility of historians, researchers and descendants is not to choose the version of the story that makes us most comfortable.

It is to preserve all of it.

The poverty. The desperation. The good intentions. The opportunities. The separation. The loving homes. The labour. The exploitation. The successes. The failures. The loneliness. The abuse. And, above all, the children themselves.

Their resilience deserves our admiration. Their suffering deserves acknowledgement.

And their history deserves the whole story.



BEACONS OF LIGHT



BEACONS OF LIGHT

NATIONAL BRITISH HOME CHILD DAY

SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Confirmed Tributes • 2026



ALL CONFIRMED PARTICIPATING TRIBUTES — LISTED BY PROVINCE & COUNTRY

ALBERTA

- **Claresholm** — Presentation Susan Hillman Brazeau — In-person Claresholm & District Museum • 2026-10-03 | 2-4pm
- **Edmonton** — Illumination — High Level Bridge • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- **Lloydminster** — Presentation Susan Hillman Brazeau — Lloydminster Public Library • 26 Sept 2026 | 1:30pm-3:30pm
- **Lloydminster** — Display — Lloydminster Public Library • Month of Sept | All Day
- **Lloydminster** — Media — Lloydminster Weekly Bean Newsletter • 15 Sept 2026
- **Red Deer** — Proclamation — City of Red Deer City Hall • 28 Sept 2026
- **Red Deer** — Illumination — City of Red Deer City Hall • 28 Sept 2026

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- **Ladysmith** — Illumination Karen B & Pat S — Town of Ladysmith Agricultural Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- **Ladysmith** — Illumination Karen B & Pat S — Town of Ladysmith City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- **Ladysmith** — Illumination Karen B & Pat S — Town of Ladysmith Sign • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

MANITOBA

- **Winnipeg** — Online Media Jordan Makichuk — Manitoba's Receiving Homes • 28 Sept 2026
- **Winnipeg** — Illumination — The Esplanade Riel Bridge • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

NEW BRUNSWICK

- **Hartland** — Presentation by Norma Cook — Central Carlton Nursing Home • 28 Sept 2026 | 10:30:00

NOVA SCOTIA

- **Halifax** — Display — Halifax Central Library • Month of Sept | All month
- **Halifax** — Illumination — Province House • 28 & 29 Sep 2026 | Dusk
- **Plymouth Pictou Cty** — British Home Children Reunion — Plymouth Fire Hall • 19 Sept 2026 | 9:30am-5pm
- **Sydney** — Illumination — The Big Fiddle, Port of Sydney Dev. Soc. • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

- **Charlottetown** — Proclamation — Charlottetown City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- **Charlottetown** — Flag Raising — Charlottetown City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

ONTARIO — BY CITY

ALNWICK-HALDIMAND TOWNSHIP

- Proclamation — Municipality of Alnwick-Haldimand Township • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

AMELIASBURGH

- Presentation by Sheila Dodd — Marilyn Adams Genealogical Centre • 14 Sept 2026 | 5 - 7pm

BANCROFT

- Proclamation — Bancroft Proclamation • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

BELLEVILLE

- Proclamation — City of Belleville • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

BRACEBRIDGE

- Illumination Dan Maloney — Bracebridge Falls • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

BRAMPTON

- Illumination — City of Brampton Clock Tower • 28 Sept 2026
- Presentation by Lori Oschefski — Brampton Historical Society • 17 Sept 2026 | 6:30-8:30

BRIGHTON

- Proclamation — Town of Brighton, ON • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

BURLINGTON

- Proclamation — Burlington City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Illumination — City of Burlington Pier • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

CAMPBELLFORD

- Display — Trent Hills Public Library • Month of Sept | All month

CARLTON PLACE

- Proclamation — Town of Carlton Place Town Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Illumination — Carlton Place Bridge • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

KINGSTON

- Proclamation — City of Kingston • 28 Sept 2026 | all day

LINDSAY

- Display — Kawartha Lakes Library Lindsay Br. • Month of Sept | All Month
- Display — Kawartha Lakes Museum & Archives • Month of Sept | All Month

LONDON

- Illumination — J. A. Taylor Building • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- Illumination — London City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- Illumination — RBC Place London • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

MADOC

- Proclamation — Town of Madoc • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Social Media Blitz — Madoc Public Library • 28 Sept 2026

MARKHAM

- Proclamation — City of Markham • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

MIDHURST

- Presentation by Lori Oschefski — Springwater Library, MIDHURST Branch • 12 Sept 2026 | 1pm - 3pm

MISSISSAUGA

- Illumination Janice Savini — The Mississauga Clock Tower • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

NAPANEE

- Proclamation — Town of Napanee • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

NEWMARKET

- Proclamation — City of Newmarket • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Illumination — Fred A. Lundy Bridge • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- Illumination — The Riverwalk Commons • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

PETERBOROUGH

- Illumination — Centennial Fountain Little Lake • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- Illumination — City of Peterborough City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

PICKERING

- Proclamation — City of Pickering • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

PICTON

- Proclamation — Municipality of Prince Edward County • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

PORT HOPE

- Proclamation — Town of Port Hope, ON • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

PORT PERRY

- Proclamation Lake Scugog H. S. — Municipality of Scugog Township • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

SAULT STE. MARIE

- Proclamation Tasha Leanne — Sault Ste. Marie City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

STIRLING

- Proclamation — Town of Stirling, ON • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

STONEMILLS

- Proclamation — Stonemills Town Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

STRATFORD

- Proclamation — City of Stratford • 28 Sept 2026

TILLSONBURG

- Illumination — Town of Tillsonburg Clock Tower • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- Presentation by Lori Oschefski — Annandale National Historic Site • 19 Sept 2026 | 14:00:00
- Presentation by Lori Oschefski — Annandale National Historic Site • 19 Sept 2026

- **Summerside** — Proclamation — Summerside City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- **Summerside** — Illumination — Summerside City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

QUEBEC

- **Canterbury** — Illumination — Christ Church Canterbury Anglican • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- **East Angus** — BHC Wreath laying — East Angus, Quebec • 28 Sept 2026
- **Senneville** — Presentation by Sheila Dodd — St. Anne-de-Bôut-l'île Historical Society • 23 Sept 2026 | 1:30 - 3:30
- **St. Anne De Bellevue** — Special BHC Mass — St. Anne de Bellevue RC Church • 27 Sept 2026 | AM Mass
- **Stanstead** — Flag Raising Sheila Perry — Standstead East Museum • 28 Sept 2026 | AM

ENGLAND

- **Birmingham** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Birmingham Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Bristol** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Bristol Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Chester** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Chester Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Chester** — Bell Ringing — Chester Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Chichester** — Illumination Laura Harper — Chichester Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Coventry** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Coventry Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Derby** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Derby Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Exeter** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Exeter Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Gloucester** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Gloucester Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Lichfield** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Lichfield Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Liverpool** — Prayers at Communion — Liverpool Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026 | 12:05:00
- **Liverpool** — Social Media — MP Kim Johnson - Liverpool Riverside • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- **Norwich** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Norwich Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Oxford** — Prayers at Mass — Christ Church Cathedral • 27 Sept 2026 | AM
- **Oxford** — Bell Ringing — Christ Church St. Aldates Bell Tower • 27 Sept 2026 | AM
- **Portsmouth** — Illumination Request — Spinnaker Tower UK • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- **Ripon** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Ripon Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026 | Evening prayer
- **Rochester** — Illumination Laura Harper — Rochester Cathedral Spire • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- **Salisbury** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Salisbury Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026 | Evening prayer
- **Wakefield** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Wakefield Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Winchester** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Winchester Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026 | Evening prayer
- **Wirral** — Illumination — The Leasowe Lighthouse • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- **Worcester** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Worcester Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- Media - BBC Article Liverpool Monument- Angela Ferguson — Weekend Edition on Sept. 27 • 28 Sept 2026

SCOTLAND

- **Aberdeen** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — St. Andrew's Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026 | AM
- **Bridge Of Weir** — Flag Raising — Quarriers Village Bridge of Weir • 28 Sept 2026 | AM
- **Glasgow** — Prayer at Mass Laura Harper — Glasgow (St. Mungo) Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026
- **Glasgow** — Ring Cathedral Bell — Glasgow (St. Mungo) Cathedral • 28 Sept 2026 | Before 1pm

MEDIA / NATIONAL

- CBC interview with Lori Oschefski • 28 Sept 2026

CLARINGTON

- Proclamation — Municipality of Clarington • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Illumination — Clarington Town Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

COBOURG

- Proclamation — Northumberland County • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Proclamation — Town of Cobourg, ON • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Illumination — Northumberland County Headquarters • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

CRAMAHE TOWNSHIP

- Proclamation — Municipality of Cramahe Township • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

DWIGHT

- Flag Raising — Municipality of Lake of Bays • 28 Sept 2026 | 11:00:00

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP

- Proclamation — Municipality of Hamilton Township • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

HAVELOCK

- Proclamation — Town of Havelock • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

HUNTSVILLE

- Flag Raising — Town of Huntsville • 28 Sept 2026 | 12:30:00
- Illumination — Huntsville Town Hall Clock Tower • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- Presentation by Sheila Dodd — Muskoka Heritage Place Museum • 28 Sept 2026 | 5 - 7pm

NIAGARA

- Illumination — Niagara Falls Canadian & American • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

NORWOOD

- Proclamation — Municipality of Asphodel-Norwood • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

OMEMEE

- Display — Kawartha Lakes Library Omemee Br. • Month of Sept | All Month

OTTAWA

- Proclamation - Kim Roberge — City of Ottawa • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Illumination — OTTAWA Sign Byward Market • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk
- Reception - invitation only — British High Commission • 25 Sept 2026
- Special BHC Mass — Queen of the Most Holy Rosary RC Church • 27 Sept 2026 | AM Mass

PELHAM

- Zoom Presentation Janet Hodgkins — Niagara Peninsula Branch Ontario Ancestors OGS • 18 Sept 2026 | 7-8pm

PEMBROKE

- Proclamation — City of Pembroke City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Flag Raising — City of Pembroke City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | AM
- Illumination — Pembroke City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

- Special Exhibition — Annandale National Historic Site • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

TORONTO

- Illumination — CN Tower • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

TRENT HILLS

- Proclamation — Municipality of Trent Hills • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Flag Raising — Trent Hills Municipality • 28 Sept 2026 | Morning
- Illumination — Trent Hills Clock Tower • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

TWEED

- Proclamation — Tweed, Ontario • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Fountain Illumination — Tweed, Ontario • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk

UXBRIDGE

- Proclamation — Municipality of Uxbridge • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- In-Person & Zoom Presentation — Uxbridge Genealogy Group • 17 Sept 2026 | 19:00:00

WHITBY

- Proclamation — Whitby Proclamation • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day

WINDSOR

- Proclamation — Windsor City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | All Day
- Illumination — Windsor City Hall • 28 Sept 2026 | Dusk