



The Bellman Sisters

By Claire Nicholls of England

Six Years ago my search began on my mother's family. My mother now is the oldest living family member. All I had to go on was that Great Granny had had an accident in Canada, the result of which, she was deaf and that she returned home following her accident. With that information the search began.

Minnie, as we knew her, was actually named Camillia Christina Haban Bellman. On her marriage certificate she was down as Minnie, but as my mother's middle name was Christina, I was able to find her birth certificate, with that her mother's name and then her parents marriage.

I did not look for any siblings as none were ever spoken of. I found a passenger listing from the SS Oregon going to Canada in 1892 with Minnie (12) and then discovered two sisters, Elizabeth Emma (Lizzie) (9) and Lilian Susan (11). Then I found the passenger listing of Minnie's return in 1897 age (15), alone. That's as far as I went 'til Christmas 2014, when I received a forwarded email from a relative who has my information on her tree on Ancestry. The email was from Lori Oschefski. She had been looking into the National Children's Home cemetery plot in the Hamilton Cemetery and had come across a Lizzie Bellman, age eleven, buried in 1894. Just two years after arriving, Lizzie died of complications of heart disease.

I contacted Lori and everything just snowballed after that. Lori had done some research that confirmed some of what I knew, but she also gave me new information to go on. I found Lillian in service on census in 1901 and 1911 as a housekeeper.

I could not find any death so at Lori's suggestion I contacted Elizabeth at Hamilton Cemetery. Elizabeth was fantastic she emailed me back within hours with so much info and pictures. Lilian had died at the Aged Women's Home in Hamilton, now known as Idlewyld Manor. Lilian had never married and had no next of kin on her death certificate. She died the same year as Minnie, 1966 and is buried in Woodland Cemetery section 4 (Aged Women's Home plot) near Burlington Ontario. The cemeteries of the two girls overlook each other over the Burlington Bay. As far as I know Minnie never had any contact with her sister after returning home.

Further research brought to light that the girls where sent out to Canada shortly after their Mother died in 1891. Their Father remarried in July 1892, three months after the girls were shipped out to Canada. He went onto have seven more children (can't describe how that makes me feel). I will never know if Minnie ever made contact with her Father when she was returned to England, at the tender age of fifteen, and all alone. I have no idea if she ever knew that Lizzie had died before she left. Lilian not knowing what happened to her eldest sister, so many unanswered questions. But thanks to Lori's and Elizabeth's research I now feel my three girls are reunited.

Without Lori's email and the research of both Lori and Elizabeth this would have been a family story never told.



Grandmother's wedding day in 1932 Minnie is seated on the left with Great Granddad Thomas Clare standing directly behind her.

Written by Lori Oschefski
Author Andrew Simpson
Special features by:
Claire Nicholls
and Author Jim Gilchrist



John in England reunited with his Father's family

The century-long family secret . . .
and a 30-minute unravelling

When John Jefkins joined the BHCARA Facebook group in July of 2014, little did he know that his family mysteries would unravel before his eyes!

Not long after entering some of his family information, researchers, led by Georgina Sales, started putting the fragmented pieces back together!

Twenty-four minutes later, Georgina posted the key piece of information which would result in the reuniting of a family fragmented, a century after the family was divided.

In June of 2015, just over 100 years after his father Bert arrived in Canada, September 1914, a sad boy with slumped shoulders and forlorn eyes, John arrived in England to finally be reunited with his family.

Toronto Star reporter, Katie Daubs, writes a compelling and heart wrenching THREE page article on this story and our British Home Children. Published in the Sunday June 21 edition of the newspaper, the story is available for reading on their on-line site. [CLICK HERE TO READ](#). The Sunday edition of the Toronto Star is read by 640,000 people, stats say!

Of hope and horror

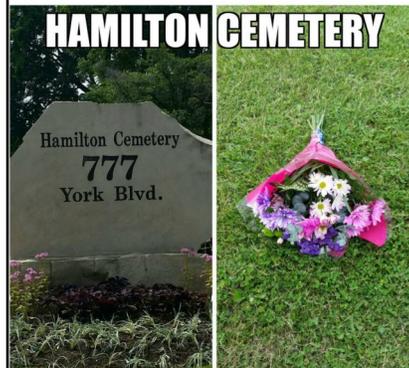
Orillia Packet and Times readers also learn of the British Home Children in June!

Thousands of Orillia, Ontario readers opened their newspapers on June 12 to an almost full page article which told of the family story of Lori Oschefski's mother, Muriel Oschefski. Muriel was reunited with her lost family in her later years. Muriel's story is told in the newly released "Bleating of the Lambs" written in honour of her 93rd birthday, celebrated in June of this year.

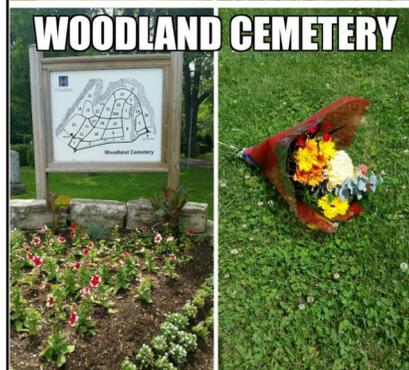
[CLICK HERE TO READ ARTICLE](#)

Flowers for lost sisters

On Thursday June 25, BHCARA member Beverley Schulz visited the cemeteries in Hamilton to lay flowers on behalf of the girls family in England.

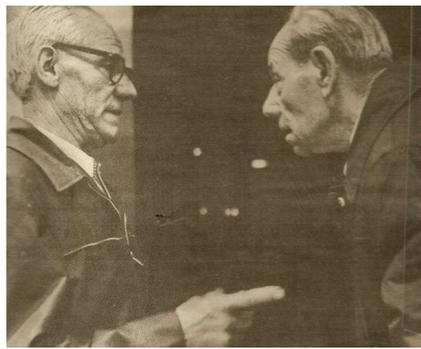


Lizzie Bellman gravesite



Lillian Bellman gravesite

In the green squares over the next few pages are older stories of reunited siblings. Today's technology allows for easier searching and at times, instant results in locating family members. In days gone past, this task of finding family torn apart by these migration programs, must have seemed next to impossible. Yet, some BHC did manage to find their family!



*Alfred and Frederick Stearn
The face is familiar, but is it
you??*

This article was run in the Spectator in Wellandport. The reunion of two brother who haven't seen each other in 60 years is an occasion for smothering hugs and the odd tear or two. It might happen that way in story books, but Frederick Stearn and his brother Alfred have a whole life time to squeeze into two months - and its not going to be easy. When Alfred finally arrived five hours late from London, England, Thursday night, neither his brother's granddaughter nor Frederick himself were really sure it was him. They furtively tried to match faces in the crowd with the photographs clutched in their hands. I was chasing old men around asking them if they were Alfred Stearn, says Denise Z--, Frederick's granddaughter. But Alfred had no trouble recognizing his long lost brother. I came up the stairs, looked over the rails and saw him. And I knew it was him. The rainy ride back from Toronto International Airport was more like a banter of British music-hall jokes told in Alfred's rich Cockney accent than a nostalgic reunion. "If the weather had been a bit better" he quipped "I'd have gotten out of the plane and walked". The two brothers were reluctant to speak of the past that they shared in a London orphanage shortly after the First World War. Neither is sure what happened to their parents but "apparently my folk's couldn't look after us at the time so they put us in a home" says Frederick. In 1920, a 13 year old Frederick answered the call of adventure in the new world and was shipped to Dr. Barnardo's home for boys in Toronto. Alfred, who was 11 at the time, wrote to his brother for a few years until he moved. "And then I lost track of him for good. In the meantime, the orphanage in England burned down and all the records were destroyed. Any hope that Alfred or Frederick might have had for reuniting the family of four more brothers and two sisters went up in flames with it. A few years after his arrival in Canada Frederick took up farming as a hired hand in Wellandport. Sometime during the 20's he went west to help with the harvest for a year. When he returned East he eventually found himself a job at Union Carbide in Welland where he remained until his retirement eight years ago. Alfred left the orphanage where he was 14 and doesn't care to ever look back on those years. A few years ago, Alfred's wife died, leaving him without any family at all until he was contacted by the Salvation Army missing persons bureau in 1980. Now he has suddenly acquired a sprawling Canadian family of nine nephews and nieces, 20 great nephews and nieces and three great great nephews and nieces, to name a few. So far Alfred has found Canadian habits a little peculiar. He thinks the natives are all overfed and drive tremendous sized cars. His brother adds they have been talking a blue streak since Alfred arrived with so many years to fill in. And they don't expect conversation to subside much during Alfred's two month stay.

One family separated by misfortune and united a century later

Andrew Simpson©

In the story of British Home Children we will all have some event, some hurt, or some wrong that jumps out at us.

For most it starts with a family member and the empathy we feel for a young person cut a drift from all they knew, coming to terms with the difficulties of life in an institution and the uncertain journey across the Atlantic to a new start which was not always what had been promised.

Then there is that bigger story of poverty and class inequality set against a backdrop where ill health, unemployment or just sheer bad luck could pitch a family into destitution and the workhouse.

And the shadow of the workhouse will be there in many family stories. Nor will it just be related to a relative who was sent by the Guardians to Canada as a BHC.

Many working people during the 19th century would have sought relief from one of the Poor Law Unions and found themselves admitted either as an inmate or a patient. And given the frequent periods of trade and agricultural depressions the workhouse was one of those short term expedients which many fell back on.

The petty dehumanising rules of these institutions and the harsh conditions are well known as is that simple and most awful first requirement that on entering the "Poor Law Bastille" a family were split up.

The segregation of the sexes extended from the young to the old and from the sick to those judged to be lunatics.

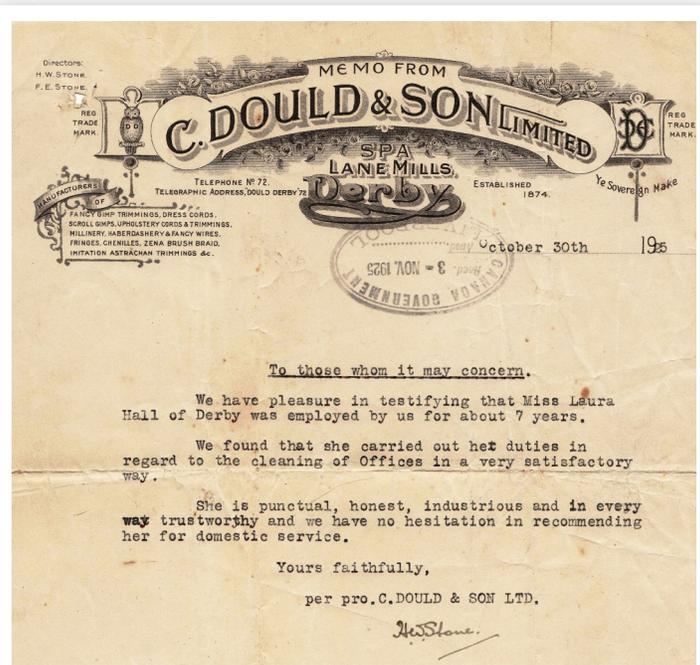
In the Stretford Road Workhouse in Hulme there were twelve exercise yards for the 300 inmates each dedicated to a particular group where behind tall walls no man or boy could gaze on the opposite sex. This was not a new policy and was followed by the Manchester workhouse before the new poor law.

The policy of segregation was particularly hard on elderly married couples who may have spent their entire adult life together but were now forced apart. Of the 17 couples in the work house in the summer of 1841 most were in their sixties. But it was no less hard on those with young families seeking help.

They too were split up. Boys were accommodated next to the old men and girls beside the old woman while the younger men and women were housed beyond the infirmary at the back of the workhouse.

Twenty-four children in our workhouse had been admitted with their mother's. These mother's were mostly in their thirties or forties, were there without their husband or partner and most had entered with two or more children and as we shall see they would be separated from the children they had brought into this world.

What constituted a child had been set down in the original classification back in 1834. This specified that females under 16 were girls, while males below the age of 13 were treated as boys, and those under seven were regarded as a separate class. In certain circumstances a child under seven could be left with their mother and even share her bed. Other than that mother's were supposed to have access to the child. This was easier if the child were in the same workhouse and only a possibility if it were in





Jack Hall c1950

a different institution. As to the length of the interview this depended on the Guardians.

In all there were 66 under the age of 16 of which a full 42 were there on their own. Their ages ranged from just a few days through to 15. Some were there with siblings but most had no one except the friends they could make. *

And a full 70 years later and just 63 miles further south my family suffered the same segregation when my great grandmother was "deemed unfit to have control" of my grandfather and his three siblings.

They were taken in to the care of the Derby Poor Law Guardians settled in separate institutions and eventually found work hundreds of miles away from each other and in the case of my great uncle Roger across the Atlantic on farms in NS and NB in the summer of 1914.

And yet families bonds do have the power to overcome such adversity, and in 1925 he managed to persuade and help his sister leave Derby and start her own new life in Canada.

But as all of us know not all BHC stories travel a happy route and she was reluctant to follow him out to British Columbia where he settled after the Great War.

Her few letters suggest that they lost contact but those very letters were what alerted us to the fact that we had a British Home Child and from there my cousins in Ontario and me here in Manchester have been united in our continued to search for more information about.

All of which I suppose remains an odd twist in the story of families.

*The Story of Chorlton-cum-Hardy", Andrew Simpson 2012



William Hall c1930

[Click here to visit Andrew Simpson's blog](#)

Thomas Richens and the story which began with a medal

On June 27th at 8:37 am, Lori Oschefski posted in the [BHACRA Facebook Group](#), that she had discovered the First World War Medal belonging to BHC Thomas Richens in an online auction. Pondering the question if there was family around, UK researcher Georgina Sales posted his marriage record, time now 8:38 am. Quickly the two ladies posted information leading to the location of Thomas's family names at 8:42 am. At 8:58, Lori reported that she was now on the phone with Thomas's daughter-in-law, and that the correct family had been found. In less then 10 minutes this team had found the family, found out they had no knowledge of Thomas's background as a British Home Child, but did know about these children because Thomas's daughter-in-law's father was also a BHC! Thomas's Grandson has now joined the BHCARA Facebook group and he is bidding on the medal with hopes it will return to the family.

UK historian Andrew Simpson picked up on the research with Georgina, publishing this remarkable story on his blog, www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca

We are not always successful in finding family's but the BHCARA group has reunited many families and are committed to continuing this work to the very best of their abilities.



Ben & Bessie Burford

When the Burford's father died in 1912, the children were sent to a home. In 1922, 15 year old Bessie was emmigrated to Canada through the Dr. Barnardo Homes. Bessie lost touch with her brother Ben. One day, she was helping her son search for a job in the local papers when she saw a message from Ben asking her to contact him. Bessie flew to England where, after 40 years, she was reunited with her brother. In this photo, Bessie, in England, shows Ben some of her family photos.

Alice Carney

A British Home Child's Story - 1861-1951

By James S. Gilchrist, Grandson

She was one of the pioneers who made an initial sacrifice for the generations that followed her.

Alice Carney was one of nine young girls chosen from the Kensington Union workhouse, London, England by Maria S. Rye to be brought out to Canada in August 1872. Seven of them were deserted, as was Alice, one orphaned and one's father in the workhouse. They helped make up a party of 100 young girls like themselves chosen from different places in the London area. 14 boys were included in the party leaving Liverpool on the Peruvian August 1st. arriving in Quebec the 11th. Alice was nine years old the other girls were from eight years to fifteen. The 1871 Census of England indicates that Alice was attending North Surrey School in Anerley. This may have been in preparation for coming to Canada.

Maria Rye was a social reformer, concerned about widows and orphans, surplus women and young girls who had a poor chance of success in English society. Maria Rye was the first person to organize and bring out a large number of children (mostly girls) starting in 1869. The children would be taken first to a distributing Home at Niagara-on-the-Lake (called Our Western Home) and then placed out from there. However, we do not think Alice ever saw this home at Niagara but was dropped off in Ottawa and delivered to her first placement in Pontiac County, Quebec by an Anglican Clergyman.

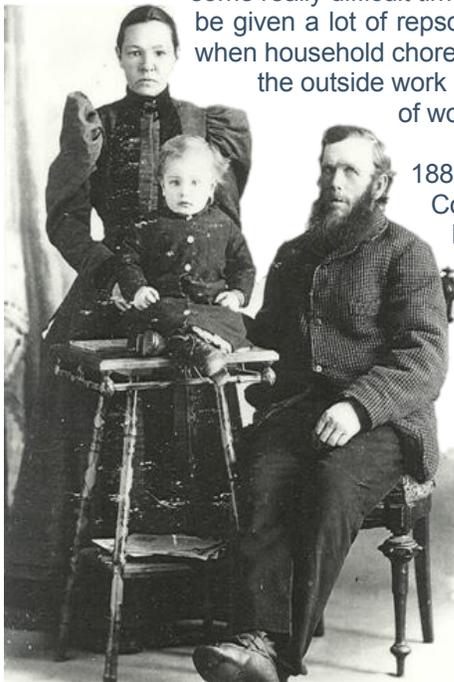
The information in Maria Rye's list of 1875 for Inspector Andrew Doyle, suggests that Alice had been placed out with a Norman and Jane McCuaig family of Bryson, Upper Litchfield. She is still with them when the 1881 census was taken. There is a lot we do not know about her life in this period but this probably was a good family and she had to work hard but had a stable place to mature. There were a couple of young girls in this family and a picture we have would suggest that she probably had some care for them as an older person. By the time of the 1891 Census we find Alice in a new place with a Thomas and Ellen Wilson family of Ross Township which is just across the Ottawa River from Litchfield Township. He was a blacksmith and Ellen was a teacher. They have four children. This is ten years later and she may have been in several different homes and work situations in that length of time. One suggestion is that she worked with a family who were tailors by trade for several years. Our Aunt Gladys one of the younger girls in Alice's family believes there were some really difficult times for Alice in these years. These girls would be given a lot of responsibility in terms of household chores and when household chores were done they could be expected to help in the outside work as well. Around farms there was always plenty of work of one kind or another to apply oneself to.

Reuben Gilchrist married Marion Black in 1880 and they were living on the old government road (Kerr Line), Ross Township, Renfrew County. They had two boys Reuben James 1883 and Robert George 1888. Marion died in child birth 1891. I think we can presume that Alice probably came to help Reuben and his family at this time and whatever transpired they were married May 4th. 1892 in Forester's Falls. There were no names put into the registration for Alice Carney's father and mother and it was this that created a great interest for us genealogists in the family. No one seemed to be talking about these things in our family. The question was, who was Alice Carney and where did she come from and what was her background. It took us some time to sort it out.

They would go on to have eight children, my father the oldest in the family. Mathew Andrew was his name. Some suggest he might be the child in the picture to the left. They lived and farmed on the Government Road near where the Cheneaux Electric Generating Station is now providing electricity for many people. Reuben and Alice Gilchrist were kept busy with these eight children and with farm life in rural Ontario and this went on for several years before there was a break in the family. Reuben James, in ignorance, got on the wrong train in Renfrew going west. When he realized it was not going to stop at Haley's Station he decided to jump at the station and of course he died from his wounds a short time later. Another trial came when in 1907 Reuben died and left the family with only one parent, Alice. By this time several children were old enough to fend for themselves but Alice and the younger ones had to face difficult times ahead with some support from the grownups. She moved to Cobden, where she would live until her death in 1951. The Gilchrists were mainly



Leslie Griffiths, Alice and Charles
In 1953, After 44 years of separation, Leslie Griffiths (in photo) was reunited with his sister Alice. Through efforts of the Salvation Army, Leslie managed to find his sister, whom he had not seen since he was nine years old! Brother Charles Lucas, was equally surprised to find out that his sister had been located. Alice travelled to Canada to reunite with her brothers! In 1972, sixty years after Charles was sent to Canada, he returned to England for the first time to visit his sister and her family.



Reuben Gilchrist and Alice Carney with one of their children - 1890s

Presbyterians but when Alice and family moved to Cobden she joined the Anglican Church becoming one of the founding members. Alice was buried in Cobden Cemetery- Reuben was buried in the Presbyterian cemetery Ross Twp. The spelling of the last name is not in accord with the historical records for some reason.

Annie Gladys Gilchrist our father's sister lived in Cobden and married Patrick Winters, and in the latter part of her life took in aged people to care for them in her home. Her mother was one of those people she cared for until her death. My sister and I just happen to be visiting our Aunt Gladys at the time of Alice's death. And that was just about all the time we had ever spent with our grandmother Alice Carney. Little did we know about her history as a British Home Child from England and what that must have been like for a 9 year old little girl coming out to Canada as a young immigrant to a new and strange place. Little did we know about her abandonment by her parents. Little did we know about the struggles she must have faced in the backwoods of rural Ontario in those early years. Little did we know of just how difficult it must have been to be so young facing the difficulties of working under strangers with heavy demands and challenging expectations.

When one reads Alice's Obituary from the newspaper one begins to realize how important her life has been. She has left a large legacy of children and grandchildren and great grandchildren and if she had not come I would not be here. If she had not come the generations following her would not have the great life we now have in Ontario and Canada. She has helped to give us a great heritage and a great legacy of love and respect for her children and others. She was one of the British Home Children who helped to build our Country. She was one of the pioneers who made an initial sacrifice for the generations that followed her.



A tragic ending to a family's search A Marchmont Home Boy's Story Archibald Henry Stewart 1906 - 192 By James S. Gilchrist

There is small, old and gray, square grave marker in F block of Stirling, Ontario, cemetery. It leans to one side pushed over by wind and weather of many years. The simple inscription indicates the end of a young man's life. It reads: Archie H. Stewart, 1925, Stirling. I was drawn to this place by my search for more information about one more British Home Child and to help his niece in Churchdown, Gloucester,

England have more information about his life and death in Canada. Mavis Mills, had been in touch with Richard Hughes of the Quinte West Genealogical Society and he had sent her some information from my book on The Marchmont Home of Belleville, Ontario. He also suggested that she contact me, which she did.

The initial information about Archibald Henry Stewart takes us back to London, England at the beginning of the 20th. century. He was the youngest child in a family of six children. The first child by the same name died shortly after birth. The other children were; Sarah Agnes, David, Margaret, William, and Archibald Henry. Archie was born in 1906 in England and died in Canada in 1925. Archie's father was a lithographer. He died at the young age of 40 years from a stroke in St. Bartholomew's Hospital - Sept. 2, 1916, leaving his wife with five children to fend for. From all we can put together they would have ended up in a workhouse and Archie was in a workhouse in the Holborn Union district for 8 years and had some time in school there. He was probably there until the 1920s, when he was moved to the Liverpool Sheltering Homes in Liverpool before coming out to Canada in 1922.

Government immigration records tell us that Archie was part of 99th. Band of children and youth sent out to Canada from the Liverpool Sheltering Homes. The 30A form is brief in detail. The ship is the Montrose -date of sailing is 30 - 6 - 22. Archibald Henry Stewart, was 15 yrs. old, present occupation student, intended occupation was farmer, birthplace London, race English, Church of England religion. self improvement, was his object for going to Canada. Do you intend to stay in Canada permanently -yes. By whom was your passage paid - The Liverpool Sheltering Home. Destination - Marchmont Home, Belleville, Ontario. Nearest relative in country from which you came - nil.

Archie was first placed out in Colbourne, Ontario with a farmer but did not stay there very long. The barn burned down and this created some problems for the farmer and he wasn't going to need his helper until he got his barn rebuilt. Archie was sent back to the Marchmont Home before being placed out again this time with a farmer near Harold, a village a short distance west of Stirling. He remained with this farmer until 1925 even though the relationship was not always a good one. The notes kept by the Marchmont Home, as well as letters sent back and forth tell about the struggle between the two parties and suggest that Archie wasn't afraid to stand up for himself. The farmer complained that he was not worth much to him because he did not know how to milk cows and could not drive a team of gentle horses for farm work. He complained that Archie was also temperamental and hard to manage and work with. His employer thought Archie was a slow learner in relation to farm work and by the end of the first years was ready to send him back to the home in Belleville.

By 1922 the youths sent out to Canada were a little older than previous and Archie being 15 was old enough to have a mind of his own. He probably had his own ideas and there is the suggestion that he was capable of discussing his salary with the farmer and wasn't afraid to ask for an increase. All this time Archie seems to have made friends in the community and it is suggested that he was a congenial person and liked by many people. The farmer changed his mind as time went on and he seemed to get use to Archie and kept him on despite the ongoing differences. Archie did get increases in his wages over the time. There is also a letter found in the records to suggest that he had a girlfriend. As it turned out the time was short for Archie. His adventure in Canada did not last long.

The Belleville Intelligencer of June 8th. 1925 announced what happened; Archibald Stewart Drowns While Bathing - Was Seized by Cramps in Bull Rush Marsh. Another article of the time is titled: Youth Drowned Sunday Morning. - Archie Stewart, Employed for Some Years by Rawden Farmer, Victim. Both articles describe the sense of loss and the sadness felt by both, the farmer he worked for and the community at large. And a special sadness among his young friends with whom he worked and played with was noted.

The first article makes this statement about Archie that says a whole lot about his character:"His untimely death is much regretted. He was a lad possessed of a kind and genial disposition, making friends wherever he went. That he was overcome with a cramp is apparent as he was a fairly good swimmer."

The notes in the Marchmont Home file tells the story of how Archie Drowned: "On Sunday June 7th, after having done the milking, he went with other lads for a swim *"this being his first dip of this season he had not been in the water but a few minutes when he sank and before help could reach him he was drowned."* Mr. Wm. H. Merry, the superintendent of the Marchmont Home heard about the fatal accident about 10:30 AM, June 7th and immediately drove out to the scene of the drowning and obtained the following information.

"They went for a swim, as the enclosed statement makes plain, in the Bulrush Marsh, which in the neighbourhood is considered a dangerous place owing to the deep holes which had been made in the Marsh for digging out marl. Archie was warned by his companions not to cross but he attempted to swim across and before help could reach him he went under."

It took an hour or more before searchers found Archie's body. The funeral took place Monday afternoon in Stirling Cemetery, following a brief service by Rev. B. Byers in St. John's Church.

For some time I had been in touch with Mavis Mills in England by e-mail and I feel we share a sad family story of a young man whose life was cut off too soon because he had so much potential and possibilities for a rich and full life in Canada. He had much to give to his new found country. When I found that Archie was buried in Stirling Cemetery I immediately went out to find his grave marker and when I arrived and found it I felt a strong sense of his presence. I took pictures which turned out fairly well considering it was an overcast cloudy day and when the sun finally came out the batteries in my camera had given out. However, I got a good picture of Archie's grave marker. I sent a copy by e-mail to Mavis in England and her response was nothing less than one would expect. She shared some tears and wished her father could be alive to see where his brother Archie was buried. She also sent this sonnet by Rupert Brooke, which is really about English military dead in other lands but also speaks of the English left behind in many lands.

Rupert Brooke - The War Sonnets: V The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by the suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,

Permission given to write this story by: Ms. Mavis Mills of 13 Andorra Way, Churchdown, Gloucester, England GL3 2BS, UK On the other two sides of Archie's gravemarker there are the names of two brothers who also died from drowning, one in Stirling and one in Foxboro. Frederick John Prince (Foxboro) 1909-1929, and Thomas E. Prince 1911-1926. They were both Marchmont Home children and there was another William George Prince came out in 1925 to the Marchmont distributing Home.

The Marchmont Distributing Home, Belleville, Ontario 1870-1925. The Epic Press, Belleville. Ontario, 2003. 224 pages. Author - James S. Gilchrist, B.Th.

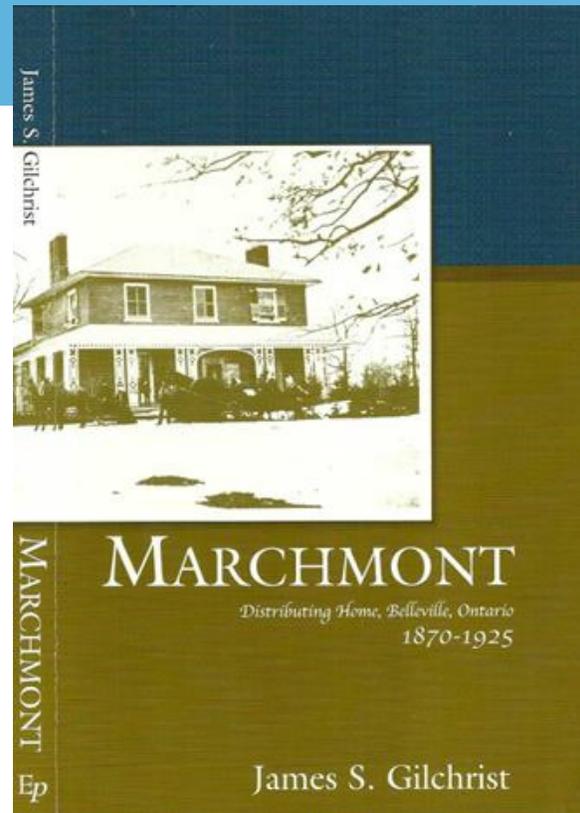
In searching for information about our British Home Child grandmother Alice Carney I went to the Belleville Library and Archives. Even though we found out that our grandmother was not a Marchmont Home girl but a Maria S. Rye girl and from a different agency, there was much learned about the BHC. It was interesting to get into the old records about the The Marchmont Distributing Home in the city. Newspaper records were particularly helpful, with so much ready information about all aspects of the story. Many other sources used are mentioned in the Bibliography. The people of Belleville and Hastings County were very receptive and were in support of the people who created the distributing home and the coming of the children. The demand for these young workers was almost always greater than the supply. Annie MacPherson and her two sisters Rachel Merry and Louisa Birt, from London England were looking for a place in Ontario as a reception center and residence for their children until placed out as farm labours and domestics. Over the 55 year period ten thousand deserted, orphaned or depraved boys and girls were placed out to different foster homes from this site in Belleville.

My book is about the people who were involved in this emigration project starting with Annie MacPherson and her sisters. One cannot talk about the Marchmont Home without mentioning, Ellen Agnes, Bilbrough, who came out with the first group of boys in 1870 and became the Superintendent of the Home. Ellen spent thirty years of her life involved in the supervision of this home. Rev. Robert Wallace came out to join Ellen in 1882. He and Ellen married in 1887 and they worked together each giving much of their lives to this work. And then there were the many others who worked in the home in support of the children as they passed through it to a new life in Canada. It is about their motivation and their purpose in trying to save some of these children from poverty, hardship and deprivation.

This book is also about the children and their journey into Ontario and Canada and what happened to them. Many faced loneliness and feelings of isolation and difficulty adjusting to their new environment living with strangers and hard work. There are many sad stories about accidental death, abuse and hardship but also a great number of success stories about a productive life. Many of these children grew to participate in the success of this Country and made a great contribution to the progress Canada. They became successful farmers, ministers, nurses, teachers, lawyers and so on. Many of these youth who were at the right age at the time enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force by the thousands and returned to England and France to fight under Canadian Colours in the First World War. Inspector G Bogue Smart, visiting Marchmont in 1918 reports that there were 800 youth on record under the care of the home at that time. 400 had enlisted in the Canadian Military. Many sacrificed their lives there and many showed great courage and were honoured by their home country of Canada.

I have tried to tell the story of Marchmont, with as much objectivity as possible, letting the readers decide for themselves as to the success of the program. I believe it was quite successful in many ways. My hope is that in reading this account of the life of the Marchmont Distributing Home, it will help us all to see something of our beginning as a Country and how far we have come.

Marchmont, is available through Jim Gilchrist at, marchmont.jim@sympatico.ca and or [Global Genealogy.com](http://GlobalGenealogy.com)





British Home Child Muriel Oschefski turns 93

On June 27, British Home Child Muriel Oschefski celebrated her 93rd birthday in Orillia, Ontario. Born Olive June Cheesman, Muriel was brought to Canada at the age of two by the Salvation Army. She arrived in Canada on June 27, 1924, her second birthday. Her recent birthday also marked the ninety-first anniversary of her arrival to Canada. Muriel, one of the lucky children, was formally adopted and lovingly raised by George and Jenn Elder of Orillia. Muriel was educated and became a Nurse. She would Nurse all her career at the Orillia



George, Muriel, Jenn

Soldiers Memorial Hospital in Orillia. Through out her life, she never spoke about her past until, at age 86, she could no longer hold it inside. Muriel's story, written by her daughter Lori for this special birthday, is told in the newly released book "Bleating of the Lambs - Canada's British Home Children". Visit www.britishhomechildren.com to purchase.



Muriel with her nine children at her birthday. Lori's large family have been very supportive of her work with the BHC.



Muriel receiving her copy of the book "Bleating of the Lambs". She often said "I just wish I could write a book about this."

Event Update: Black Creek Pioneer Village BHC Day Celebration

Black Creek Pioneer Village British Home Child Day Celebration - September 27th 2015

Headlining this event is Author and Historian Kenneth Bagnell who worth the widely read book "The Little Immigrants - The Orphans who Came to Canada". Mr. Bagnell will be speaking at the opening ceremony that morning and will graciously be on hand to speak with guests and to sign books. If you already own a copy, bring it along to the event and he will be happy to sign your copy.

John Sayers will be on hand with his vast collection of information. He will be available through out the day to help with research, answer any questions and to meet our guests.

Also on hand will the be the Ontario Genealogical Society SIG Chairperson, Dianna Hanson Fulton. Mrs. Fulton will be speaking at the event and will also be hosting an event table with information and researching help.

The day will feature day long events, speeches and activities. People wishing to participate, an afternoon Tea & Open Mic will be held indoors. Hosted by Cory-Lee Maddock-Stiles, this afternoon tea will be an chance to enjoy a light lunch of freshly baked scones, whipped butter, preserves, creams, house pickled vegetable tray, assorted fancy tea sandwiches and sweets, while listening to descendants share their stories. Guests are invited to bring their information and artefacts. Tables will be provided to display larger items, such as trunks. This tea is a ticketed event, price will include parking, admission and lunch. Our 450 square foot exhibit in the McNair Gallery will also be open this day.

More information will be released soon at: www.blackcreek.ca or on the BHCARA Black Creek Facebook Event Page

A Quiet July

The BHCARA has no formal presentations scheduled for July as CEO Lori Oschefski's son is to be married this summer. MS. Oschefski will be busy the month of July with wedding events and with her family. Notable will also be a decreased time with the Facebook group as she enjoys this very special time with her family. The BHCARA boasts a super team of excellent researchers who will be there to offer help. The BHCARA would like to extend our greatest and deepest gratitude to those who offer help to our members. Topping 2,276 members, the largest BHC group, it depends upon the goodness of others to continue our work for our British Home Children.



Cory-Lee Maddock-Stiles

Interior Designer/Owner at Stiles Interiors
Publisher/CEO Your Town Magazines
Granddaughter of BHC George Maddock