

# April 2016 Newsletter

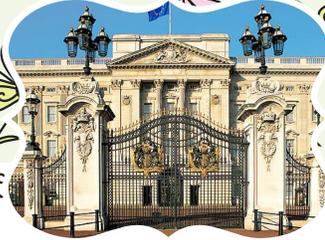
Lori Oschefski, Andrew Simpson  
and two guest writers



BHCARA CEO

# Spring Garden Party at Buckingham Palace

Lori Oschefski has graciously accepted Barnardo's invitation to attend their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration to be held at Buckingham Palace, on May 12, 2016 in England! Details on page 4!



## Katie May Sanderson

"My Great Aunt Katie"

by Jacque Kalar

(Kathleen May Sanderson Read Browne)

Katie May Sanderson was born in England on May 19, 1896 at Shepherd's Bush, London. She was baptized on February 21, 1897. Her father was Alfred Richard Sanderson, a pianoforte fitter and her mother, Kate, was a dressmaker.

Mr. Sanderson died of consumption on March 17, 1897 at the Brompton Hospital. Following his death, his widow married again to a gardener by the name of Mr Gill. According to records obtained from Barnardo's, Mr. Gill was immoral and of an intemperate nature. He regularly beat both his wife and step-daughter. By this time the mother, Kate, had started to drink. She eventually left Mr Gill and moved herself and her daughter in with a Mrs Macrae, who was identified as a woman of questionable morals (for that time). The two women would go out drinking and carousing, leaving young Katie at home, alone, to fend for herself. According to the information that we have been given, Katie led a wretched life. Had to go without meals and was kept ragged and dirty. Katie contracted a mild type of typhoid fever and while suffering, was left alone for 12 hours. She was admitted to a hospital and remained there for 7 weeks. I believe it was during this time that her aunt, Mrs. Fox, contacted the Barnardo people to see what could be done for Katie. It seems that Katie's mother agreed that she did not have the ability to properly care for her daughter and agreed to have her entered into the Barnardo program.

Following Katie's admission to Barnardo's she spent one night at the Receiving House in Stepney Causeway, East London and on August 8, 1906 was transferred to the Girls Village Home. On July 11, 1907, Katie left England's shores aboard the SS Kensington and sailed to a new life in Canada. She arrived in Quebec on July 20, 1907. She was 11 years old.

Katie was placed in the home of Mrs Wm. Robertson, Uptergrove, Ontario.

Opening April 5th, 2016 at the Huron County Museum in Goderich, Stories of Immigration & Migration - story of Bernard Brown featured in the exhibit on page 5

The first entry date on the ledger shows a date of July 28, 1907. The ledger of correspondence between Barnardo's and Canada is quite hard to read. It appears that Mrs Robertson wanted a younger girl than Katie, but Katie settled in so well, that she agreed to keep her. Around December, 1907, Mrs Robertson writes of a potential "transfer" of Katie to a Mrs. David Elder who lives just a few steps away on the next concession. We have to remember that Katie is a "servant", therefore, money must be exchanged and whatever happens to her, has to be agreed upon by Barnardo's. In early January, 1908, notations are made that Katie and another girl living at the Robertson home (it's unclear if this was another "home child" or a daughter) are not getting along. In February, 1908, Katie moved to the Elder farm and worked for them. Mrs. Elder agreed to keep Katie in her employ for 3 years. A copy of a letter written by Mrs. Elder to Barnardo's was included in my package. I will type it exactly as it was written:

Rathburn, (Ontario) Aug 13 (1912)

Dear Miss Kennedy the Lady from the Home visited us yesterday and we didn't come to an understanding so thought I would write to you we have had Katie so long we have grown so attached to her we don't like to part with her and she don't want to leave she is so well acquainted with the young folks you see we live quite near the church she never misses a Sunday she is in the choir and has a class in the Sunday school I have always treated her kindly and kept her as well dressed as I could since the last of May I have



Mary Elder

## British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association



got her a white dress \$2.75 a pair of long white gloves \$ -corsets ? a pair stocking ? a collar ? three pairs of shoes one pair \$2.00 one pair \$2.50 one pair \$1.75 will have to get her another pair of corsets first time I go to

Orillia the Lady thought I should give Katie extra since June what do you think If you leave her another year I will put \$15 in the bank & some of her teeth needs filling I will pay for that and if you have a nice little girl & good looking 7 or 8 years old she would be company for my own girl going to school and I will do my best to make as fine a young girl of her

as I can I suppose you would allow me the same as you do others for a little girl of that age

Yours faithfully

Mrs D. W. Elder

Katie stayed with the Elder family, becoming part of their family. She never took their surname but considered their children her siblings for the rest of her life.

Katie became a nurse, taking her training at Orillia General Hospital, where she graduated on March 16, 1921. It was during this time that she and James Read, a farmer who lived on a nearby farm, became close. Although she said she did see others, it was "Jim" who she married on September 6, 1922. They were married in Fairvalley, Ontario. Jim was always a lover of politics. He became Reeve of Mara Township, which later led to his appointment as the youngest Warden of Ontario County. In the year 1932, Jim applied to the position of Governor of the County House of Refuge in Whitby, Ontario. Out of 25 applicants, he got the job. His wife, Katie, assumed the role of "Matron" of the home. This was in 1934. On July 27, 1947, Jim died from a combination of heart trouble and the asthma that he had been troubled with all his life. In 1951, the "Old County Home" had its residents relocated to a new building, one of the first of its kind in Ontario...a "nursing home". Katie became the first Superintendent of this new age facility called "Fairview Lodge". That building was demolished in 2014/2015 and another new facility is now in its place.

In 1953, Katie married an old friend of Jim's by the name of Fred Browne. Mr. Browne lived in Toronto so Katie moved there. After his death in 1956, she moved back to Whitby where she lived for a few years. Katie belonged to many organizations. Some that we know of were: Order of Women Free Masons; Order of Eastern Star. She was also always involved in the United Church of Canada. Katie travelled the world with these organizations.

Although our family always knew that Katie had come from England at a young age, and had been taken in by the Elder family, we never knew her real story. In reading about British Home Children and, in particular, Barnardo's, I realize why she chose to keep that part of her past to herself. We have another family member who was also a British Home Child. She was adopted by one of Katie's "siblings", George Elder and his wife, Jenn. Jenn was Katie's husband Jim's sister-in-law. George & Jenn kept their adopted daughter's true identity a secret for many years. I suspect that Katie felt if her story was widely known, it may have caused damage to her "niece". My mother, who is 90 and Katie's "niece", Muriel, is now 93, are first cousins. Muriel had no other siblings. My mother had 4, but they have all passed. Oh how they would love to know Katie's story. As well, Muriel's story was only revealed quite recently.

Sometime in the 1970's Katie returned to the Elder farm where some of the family still lived. They eventually sold the farm and bought a house in Orillia. Katie, once again cared for some of her Elder "siblings". She continued to travel whenever possible

In March, 1985 Katie took a fall while hanging some clothes up downstairs. Her eyesight had not been very good for some time now - she had glaucoma. It was later discovered that she had taken quite a blow to the head and had a hematoma on her brain. She was sent to Toronto to be operated on. After the surgery she lapsed into a coma and when the doctors in Toronto felt they had done all they could for her, they sent her back to the Orillia hospital, virtually, to die. On June 14, 1985, about 9 weeks later, she awoke from her deep sleep wondering where she was and why she was there. She remembered nothing - not going by taxi to the doctor in Orillia - not being taken by ambulance from Orillia to Toronto - nothing of her stay in Toronto, during which time she had visited with some family members, quite coherently, prior to her surgery. She later remembered the fall, but anything after that day was a blank. Her eyesight, which was pretty poor before this ordeal, had gotten worse. Within a few months it was gone completely. As it turned out, she required drops every day for the glaucoma and while she had been "asleep" these drops had not been administered. It was obvious that Katie could not go back to her home in Orillia, so on November 5, 1985, she came back to Whitby to live at Fairview Lodge, this time as a resident. I live close to Fairview Lodge so I visited her a lot. She was quite angry at the incompetence of the nursing staff who didn't administer her eye drops. Ever the efficient nurse. We talked about her travels but I never thought to ask her about her past. It was something that just wasn't spoken about, so I guess out of respect for her, I chose not to bring it up. It was at Fairview Lodge where she died on December 20, 1989 at 93 years of age.

Her desk came to our house, and in it were some newspaper cutouts, passports and a tiny leather prayer book, with a copper cover. On the inside cover is written "With love & best wishes for your birthday from Mrs Macrae. Hoping you will be a good girl. May 19, 1906". I had always wondered who Mrs Macrae was. I now know. She is the lady of "questionable morals" that her mother became friends with. I think that Mrs Macrae had a kind heart.

Who would have thought that the little girl, whose beginnings were so tragic, would make such a life for herself. I want to thank Lori Oschefski for encouraging me to delve into her story.

**The Elder Family had many connections the British Home Children. BHC Muriel Oschefski nee Elder was adopted by Mary Elder's son George and raised as a niece to Katie.**



# The decision that made a British Home Child

## By Andrew Simpson

Visit Andrew's blog at:  
[www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca](http://www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.ca)

**M**ost of us will never get to see the decision that actually set one of our family off on that journey across the Atlantic and made them a British Home Child.

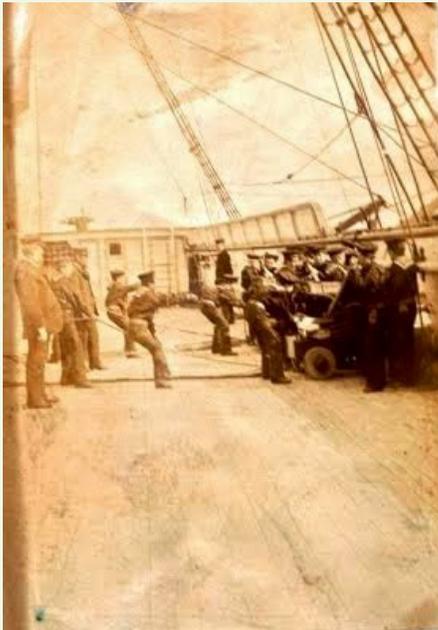
It could be the stark minutes of a meeting of the Poor Law Guardians approving the migration, the report from the police detailing a case of neglect or most telling of all that final letter from a parent saying goodbye which tries to explain why they agreed to the move to Canada.

Long gone and never to be discovered will be the thoughts of the parent prior to the decision, that "Sophie's Choice" weighing up the advantages of what seemed a better life set against the bitter reality of losing a loved one to an unknown future.

Now I don't have any idea whether my great grandmother was consulted about the decision to send one of her sons to Canada, but I think not, for in the spring of 1913 her three youngest were taken into care.

According to the records of the Derby Poor Law Union she was judged "unfit to have control."

The information is fragmentary and amounts to no more than the admission records for all three which state WILLIAM HALL, entered on 8 May 1913, age 14, reason given as mother unfit to have control. To be placed on TS Exmouth until the age of 18.



LAURA HALL, entered on 8 May 1913, age 11, reason given as mother unfit to have control. To be put to domestic service until 18.

ROGER HALL, entered 30 Dec 1913, age 15, no reason given. To be sent to TS Exmouth until 18.

The TS Exmouth was a training ship for disadvantaged and in some cases wayward boys who were taught seamanship in a strict environment.\*

But for whatever reason great uncle Roger declined the placement and I can only think the Poor Law Guardians either decided or offered him the alternative of a passage to Canada.

All of which makes the reasons for his arrival in Canada a little different. He was not homeless nor was he an orphan and there does seem to have been some attempt to keep him here in Britain and not foist him off across the Atlantic.

But judging by what his sister said over sixty years later both he and my grandfather were running wild and were challenging children.

The part played by my great grandmother is unknown. There is evidence that both her and my great grandfather were themselves challenging adults, who after a number of years together separated leaving her to bring up three children under the age of five while having their last child on her own in the Derby Work House.

All of which has left me chasing a paper trail which is all but ephemeral. Apart from the letter written by my great aunt all I have is that one entry from the Derby Poor Law Union and the admission record of the TS Exmouth for my grandfather which is in the London Metropolitan Archive.\*\*

Like so much it says so little and leaves many questions unanswered.

As for great uncle Roger the last British record is from the passenger list of SS Carthaginian for May 1914 bound for Halifax from Liverpool. He is there with 174 other passengers most of whom were young people ranging from the age of six up to sixteen.

They were travelling 3rd class and if I have read this correctly eight of them shared a cabin.

And that is pretty much all I have. The remaining documents consist of a few reports written by the farmers he stayed with, his military records following his enlistment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1915 and a few letters sent back to Middlemore during the war.

One of these letters hints at the reason why he ran away from his last placement and joined up but having changed his name to James Rogers and lied about his age he didn't seem over keen to explain his decision.

So like so many of us I am left with just vague explanations of the decisions that made him a British Home Child.

Pictures; a training ship, from the archives of the Together Trust, courtesy of the Archivist, <http://togethertrustarchive.blogspot.co.uk/p/about-blog.html>

\*Training Ships, Children's Homes, Peter Higginbotham, <http://www.childrenshomes.org.uk/TS/>

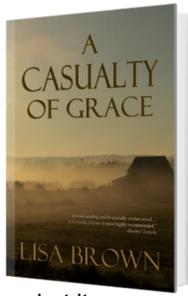
\*\*London Metropolitan Archives, [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma)

Credits, a training ship, from the archives of the Together Trust, courtesy of the Archivist, <http://togethertrustarchive.blogspot.co.uk/p/about-blog.html>



# Book Donation!

Author Lisa Brown has donated 6 copies of her book "A Casualty of Grace" to the BHCARA, proceeds are to go towards our work. A Casualty of Grace is based on the BHC story of Oliver and Simon. They are young brothers who are unexpectedly orphaned and left alone in the world with nobody to care for them. Now, all they have is each other, and the threat of being torn apart becomes painfully real. The promise of a good home together in distant Canada eases their fears, but it is a promise that is destined to be broken.



Read about this excellent book and for purchase details visit Lisa's web site at: [www.lisabrownbooks.com](http://www.lisabrownbooks.com)

## Our England visit and trip to the Palace

Lori Oschefski, CEO of the BHCARA has graciously accepted Barnardo's invitation to join them at their 150th Anniversary Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in May. Attending this event as Lori's guest will be her sister Gayle Oschefski. Gayle has travelled with Lori on several occasions abroad while researching their family history. Gayle has provided Lori with outstanding support in her work and therefore she was chosen for this honour, with Lori's greatest thanks for her unwavering support.

The Garden Party will take place on Thursday May 12. The following day Lori & Gayle will tour the Barnardo's offices and archives to see first hand how things tick! In the afternoon, on Friday May 13, Barnardo's will be hosting a small gathering of BHCARA members who wish to come and see the BHCARA Memory Quilt, which will be in England for this trip. The tentative location, pending confirmation by Barnardo's will be the Children's Church at the former Barkingside children's village. Space is limited so please contact Lori at [info@britishhomechildren.com](mailto:info@britishhomechildren.com) to reserve your spot!

Visit our new Ship Registry and see pictures and information about the ship your BHC came over on!

[The Ships the BHC Arrived On](#)



**\$11,834** of \$16k

Our monument fund raising for the seventy five Barnardo children buried in two graves in the Park Lawn Cemetery grew enormously this past month with many donations which included on very generous donation of \$5,000. We have now almost hit the two thousand dollar mark! Our

plans for the monument are moving into the designing stage months sonner then expected!

Thank you to everyone who donated so far!

TO [DONATE NOW](#)



## Afternoon Tea - Fit For The Royals

*Don't miss the Royal Celebration in Canada!!*

Lori's hometown gals are hosting a Royal Tea Celebration at the White Lion's Tea House in Orillia, Ontario in honour of her charitable work with Barnardos and the BHC families. The tea, hosted by Orillia's Rev Carmen Agius, is a fun, lighthearted fund raising event for Lori's trip. The BHCARA 2016 Memory Quilt will be on show for this event! Also, copies of Lori's book "Bleating of the Lambs" will be available for purchase.

Wear a fabulous hat and come enjoy Lori's adventure and add some coins to her purse for the trip over the pond.... TICKETS \$30.00 - for ticket information visit the [facebook event page](#)

White Lions Tea House  
33 Westmount Dr. N., Orillia, Ontario L3V 6B9

## BHCARA 2016 Memory Quilt

Our 2016 event season started off with a capacity crowd of 200 at the Erin, Ontario Legion. Shown for the first time was our new Memory Quilt. The quilt is scheduled to be shown in Ontario, Winnipeg, Halifax and England this year. For our schedule visit [www.britishhomechildren.com](http://www.britishhomechildren.com) or contact us at [info@britishhomechildren.com](mailto:info@britishhomechildren.com).

Web site with stories on it [BHC Memory Quilt](#)



# Bernard Brown

**B**ernard Brown's story started similarly to many other children who found themselves in the care of a Barnardo's Home, but he probably never imagined that his story would continue to be told and included in a museum exhibit so many years later.

According to Barnardo's Home records, Bernard Brown was born in 1896 in Lurgan, County Armagh, Northern Ireland. The second of four children, his life changed in 1900, when his father died following cancer surgery. His mother worked as an ironer in a shirt factory and earned extra money caring for other working women's babies. In 1904, his life was changed again, when he and his brother Edward were admitted to Barnardo's Home in Belfast. For two years they moved between a series of homes before traveling to Canada with a group of 200 other home children on the Dominion.

Although Bernard and Edward had made the journey across the Atlantic together, in Canada the brothers were divided and placed in different homes: Edward with the Bell family in Ripley, Bruce County and Bernard with the Leitch Family in Tuckersmith Township, Huron County.

Bernard stayed with the Leitches until he enlisted on January 1, 1916 with the 161st Huron Battalion, volunteering to serve with the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force in the First World War. Wounded in June 1917, he spent many months in hospital before working temporarily as a musketry instructor. He rejoined active service with the 58th Battalion, landing in France in August 1918. On September 12, 1918 he was killed in action at the age of twenty-two and was buried at Sun Quarry Cemetery in Cherisy, Pas-de-Calais, France.

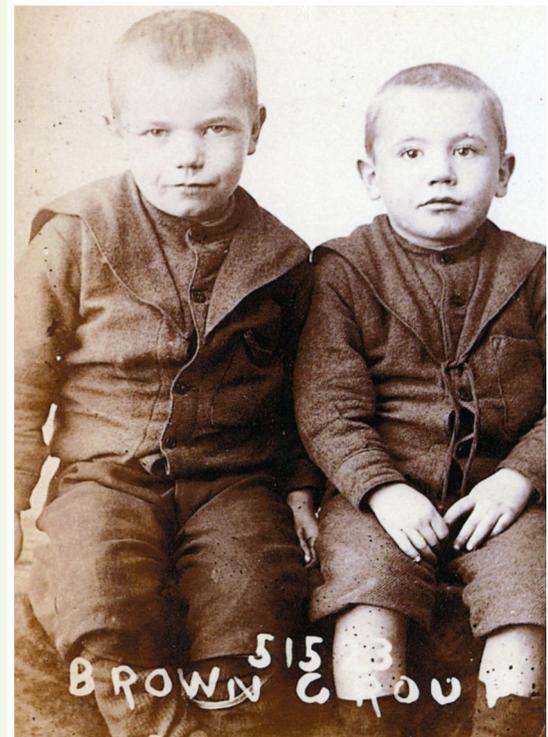
Bernard's younger brother, Edward, had also served with the CEF and returned to Canada following the War. Visiting the Leitches in Huron County, Edward met a young woman from Egmondville, married her and stayed. Although Bernard Brown never returned to Huron County, today he is the great uncle to Edward's many descendants in the Huron County.

So what does all this have to do with a museum exhibit? Opening April 5th, 2016 at the Huron County Museum in Goderich, *Stories of Immigration & Migration* tells the stories of seven people from various places in the world as they made their new homes in Huron County. The story of Bernard Brown joins those of six others in the exhibit: a newly married step-mother to six from Ireland in 1840, a young German woman immigrating in 1865, a young Japanese-Canadian man forcibly evacuated from British Columbia in 1942, a six-year-old girl and her family from the Netherlands in 1948, an Austrian couple looking for a better life in 1951, and a man from India in 2007 who had dreamed of Canada as a small boy. The stories featured in this exhibit are only a small selection of the journeys that have shaped and continue to transform Huron County as new neighbours arrive to this day, and illustrate the strength and diversity of our residents.

Explore *Stories of Immigration & Migration* and learn more about Bernard Brown at the Huron County Museum, 110 North St., Goderich until October 15, 2016. For more information, check our website at [www.huroncounty.ca/museum](http://www.huroncounty.ca/museum), or follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/huroncountymuseum](https://facebook.com/huroncountymuseum)) or Twitter (@hcmuseum).

Submitted by Elizabeth French-Gibson  
Senior Curator  
Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol

110 North Street  
Goderich, ON N7A 2T8



*Bernard Brown in uniform,  
Courtesy of the Brown Family  
Bernard & Edward Brown, Courtesy of Barnardo's  
Children's Charities*



# Ernest Ford

by Lori Oschefski

Ernest Ford was born in St. Marys, Birmingham, Warwickshire, England on May 3rd, 1891. He was the son of Sydney Ford and his wife Letitia Smart. He had a brother, Walter Ford. Sidney and Letitia, married in 1887. At the end of March 1901, when the English census was taken, Sidney and Ernest were living at 82 Dartmouth Street in Birmingham. Sidney was listed as a widower and working on his own account as a "Smith Key". They were residing with Ernest's Grandmother Harriet, a widow, and his uncle, Walter Ford. His brother Walter is not listed.

On June 19, 1901, ten year old Ernest was admitted to the Middlemore Homes in Birmingham. The Middlemore admission register states:

*S. FORD is a widower. His mother who lives with him is too decrepit to work. S.F. is a locksmith in a very small way. The boy is said to be a thief and he sleeps out nights together. The father says he cannot manage him. The father has been cautioned as to beating the boy, but as he certainly to some extent deserved it no summons was issued for cruelty. The father has not been judicious in his treatment of the boy. Father to pay 2/- (2 shillings) per week for 2 years.*

It was further remarked:

*Mother dead. Boy thief and sleeps out. Father to pay 2/- (= 2 shillings) weekly for 2 years. (later addition states "can't obtain any money, father a burglar")*

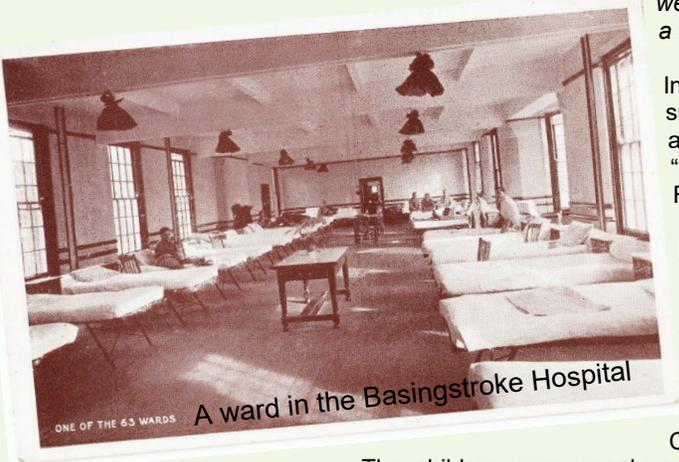
Case no 2220  
To Canada May 24/02

Ernest Ford was deported from England, in a party of one hundred and seventeen boys, on May 24, 1902. They sailed to their new lives aboard the SS Siberian. Ernest was received at the [Middlemore Home](#) in Fairview, Nova Scotia before being indentured out for work.

His father, Sidney remained in England, enlisting to serve in the First World War on September 12, 1914 at the age of forty two. On his attestation papers his NOK is listed as Ernest, in Canada and Walter. He stated his occupation as "White Smith" and, contrary to Middlemore's declaring him a thief, Sidney denied having served time for any crimes. He served fifty four days before being discharged.

On May 4, 1915, in Toronto, Ernest enlisted in the First World War. His next of kin was listed as Thomas Dillon, a friend from Toronto. Ernest claimed he was born in King's County, New Brunswick. Eventually Thomas's daughter Amy would be listed as NOK in the service records.

Ernest's health did not hold up during service. He was in and out of the military hospital many times. In 1916 he was admitted for influenza, infection of his glands and malaria. April 7, 1918, Ernest was admitted to the No. 4 Canadian General Hospital, Basingstroke with tonsillitis. April 22 1918 he was admitted again to the same hospital diagnosed with malaria, an illness which lasted seven weeks. Ernest was admitted again later that fall with tonsillitis and three times with Pyrexia of Unknown Origin (PUO). PUO is generally defined as: "A temperature greater than 38.3°C on several occasions, accompanied by more than three weeks of illness and a failure to reach a diagnosis."

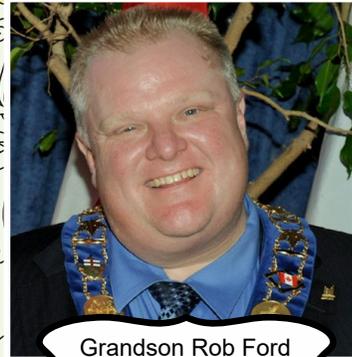


In addition to his PUO, he was suffering from malaise, headache and general pain all over his body. On May 13 1918 an irregular heart beat was discovered, missing every fifth to eighth beat, with the "cardiac area enlarged". In spite of this, he was declared medically fit for service. February 5, 1919, Ernest had four teeth filled.

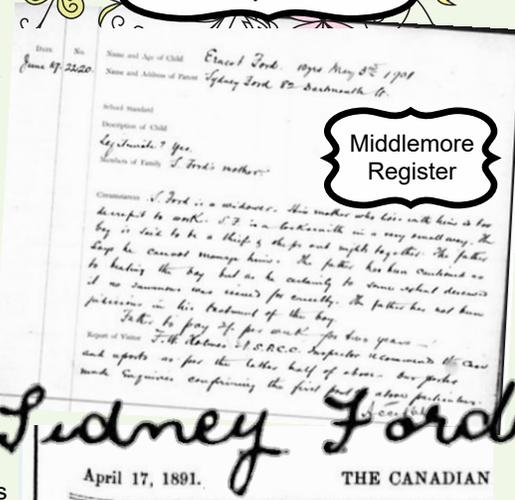
In April of 1919 he was once again admitted to hospital, diagnosed this time with VDH - Vascular Disease of the Heart. VDH is an abnormal condition of the blood vessels of the heart. Ernest was declared medically unfit for service and returned to Canada. Ernest arrived back in Canada aboard the Megantic on June 2, 1919.

In 1924, thirty five year old Ernest married twenty three year old divorcee, Celia McNicol, in Toronto. Ernest, once again, gave his birth place as New Brunswick, Canada. Being "labelled" a BHC in Canada carried a very negative stigmatization.

The children were openly called "gutter snipes" and "Street urchins". In the 1891 Canadian Manufacturers Association magazine, published by a Member of our Canadian Parliament, [Frederick Nicholls](#), called these children "tainted and corrupt with moral slime and filth" among other disturbing things. Many BHC lied about their origins, not wanting to disclose the fact they were BHC, so it is hardly surprising Ernest did also. Ernest arrived in Canada at the height of the negative propoganda spread about these children.... *Continued on page 7*



Grandson Rob Ford  
1969 - 2016  
Former Mayor of Toronto



FROM ALL SUCH, GOOD LORD DELIVER CANADA.

DR. BARNARDO prays with much fervor that God will put it into the hearts of people to give him money with which to gather up the "waifs and strays" of the slums of London, wash off the slime and filth from their bodies, put clean clothes upon them and dump them down in Canada. These "waifs and strays" are tainted and corrupt with moral slime and filth inherited from parents and surroundings of the most foul and disgusting character, and which all the washing and clean clothes that Dr. Barnardo may bestow cannot possibly remove.

There is no power whatever that can cleanse the lepers so as to fit them to become desirable citizens of Canada. Dr. Barnardo is probably doing a good thing for London in decreasing as far as he is able the vicious and criminal classes there; but he is certainly doing a great wrong in dumping his human warts and excrescences upon Canada. Under the most favor...

## Ernest Ford...continued

Ernest and Celia had nine children, who were raised in the Danforth area of East York, Ontario. Their youngest child, Douglas Bruce Ford was born on February 27, 1933. When Doug was just four months old, Ernest succumbed to his heart ailments brought on by his Military Service. After a three day stay in hospital, Ernest died of Mitral Stenosis, leaving Celia to raise their nine children alone. Ernest was buried in the Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto. Two years after his death, tragedy once again struck the family when six year old Henry Edsel Ford was accidentally electrocuted in the TTC Subway Station located on Queen Street in Toronto.

Despite the disadvantages, being born during the depression, raised without a father and growing up poor, Doug Ford did well in his life. He along with Ted Herriott, co-founded Deco Labels & Tags Limited of Rexdale, Ontario in 1962. Doug was also the Progressive Conservative member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from 1995 to 1999 who represented the riding of Etobicoke—Humber. Doug married Ruth Diane Campbell. Their children are Randy, Kathy, Doug Jr. and their youngest, the late Rob Ford, born May 28, 1969. Doug did not talk about his father much, not surprising as he didn't know the man. The story of Ernest's struggles with being a BHC was never passed down to his children or his Grandchildren. In fact, his Grandchildren never knew his history.

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAMES
987	Private		Ernest
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	8. RELIGION
C.A.M.C.	Jul	649-F-18129	Baptist
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
Died at Toronto, Ontario. Cause - Mitral Stenosis, etc. Death was due to service, auth.BPC.4.10-8-33.		Mrs. Celia Ford, (widow) 80 Wayland Avenue, Toronto, 13, Ontario.	
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			



CONTRACTOR'S ROLL FOR THIS SOLDIER'S GRAVE DESPATCHED NOV 24 1933

Despite Rob Ford's desires to become a professional football player, he would enter into the political life, serving three terms as city councillor from 2000 until October 2010. Rob represented Ward 2 Etobicoke North. He was elected Mayor of Toronto in 2010. Rob served as Mayor until the fall of 2015 when failing health forced him to withdraw from running for Mayor again. Rob lost his battle with Cancer on March 22, 2016.

I am sure that we all do not need to be reminded, once again, of the flaws which plagued Rob Ford. Despite the recognition given to him now by many, after his death, as being one of the best mayors of Toronto ever, he was very much scorned and maligned. One article written by Don Peat of the Toronto Sun in 2012, began the character attack, by calling his Grandfather Ernest Ford "unruly" and that these "unruly" roots ran deep in the Ford family. The true meaning of this article was quickly completely overlooked in people's haste to sneer at the scorned mayor once again.

The stigmatization which was so strongly felt on an overwhelming majority of our BHC, a pain that is still felt to day by surviving BHC, is clearly being perpetrated by today's press and clearly seen in this article by Don Peat! Had any such thing been written about one of the Native Children, Mr. Peat would have been widely vilified for ever writing this! To have written such an article about a veteran of the First World War whose life was shortened as a result of the war, leaving his wife to raise their children as a single mother, is beyond shameful. I shudder to think any of our surviving BHC read this article!

Giving into the members of our group who were against contacting Rob Ford about the BHC with the view of having him speak out on our behalf,



**4 NEW CITY HALL**

The Toronto Sun

# FORD ROOTS REVEALED

## 'Unruly' grandfather sent to Canada but redeemed himself in war, website says

**DON PEAT**  
City Hall Bureau Chief

Turns out an "unruly" streak may run deep in Mayor Rob Ford's family. According to Ancestry.ca,

Ford's first paternal ancestor in Canada may have been sent here at age 11 because he was "unruly."

The site traced out the history of Ford's paternal grandfather, Ernest Ford.

No one was more surprised to hear about Ernest Ford's history Tuesday than the mayor himself.

He said his own father, Doug Ford Sr., rarely talked about his dad and didn't have many details about him.

"It blows my mind," Ford said. "I wish my dad was here to see this."

Ernest Ford came to Canada from England as part of the

child immigration scheme, according to records uncovered by Ancestry.ca.

The website determined Ernest Ford's mother died in 1900 and he was listed in the 1901 British Census as living with his widowed father and grandmother in Warwickshire, England.

### Born in England

Despite having next of kin, Ernest was sent to Middlemore Homes — an institution known "for taking in children who were either truants, disorderly or orphans for the purpose of being sent to Canada."

An 11-year-old Ernest Ford was listed on the Canadian

passenger lists as a Home Child migrating to Canada in 1902. Ford came to Canada on the ship *Siberia* with 32 other kids in steerage class.

Ernest Ford later claimed he was born in Canada, according to Ancestry.ca.

In his military papers and marriage certificate, Ford reported he was born in Portage Vale, N.B.

"Ernest's birth and christening records show he was born in Birmingham, Warwickshire, England," according to ancestry.ca.

Ernest Ford fought in the First World War. As a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, he was awarded the Good Conduct Badge in 1917

for military service, a 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal, and the Victory Medal.

The site found a marriage certificate from 1924 showing Ernest Ford married Celia McNicol in Toronto.

A death certificate shows Ernest Ford died in Toronto in 1933 and was buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery — the same year Doug Ford Sr. was born.

Two years later, another death certificate uncovered by the site shows one of Ernest Ford's sons, Henry Ford, died at age 6 after being electrocuted in a TTC substation on Queen St. E.

I did not contact Mr. Ford until September of 2015. He responded with a letter in October, acknowledging an event planned for Etobicoke, where he was serving as a City Councillor up to the time of his death. Shortly after this letter was sent, Mr. Ford announced that two tumours had developed and his Cancer fight would continue. Mr. Ford lost this fight, his funeral scheduled for Wednesday March 30, 2016.

Like him or not, Mr. Ford had a strong following and a strong voice and we had every right ask him to speak out on behalf of his BHC Grandfather. My only regret is that I did not do this soon enough. Rob Ford was first and primarily so, a husband and a father of two young children. Those children are like us, British Home Children Descendants.

*On the Critics speaking about Rob Ford following his death: [Reid: Reflections on Rob Ford, the politician and the man](#)*

[We should have shown more compassion for Rob Ford – while he was alive](#)