Home Children Canada

Fall Remembrance Issue – Reflecting Back

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Edward William "Cheerful Charlie" Foster

A Life That Refused to Break

Edward William Foster entered the world on October 23, 1886, in a small house at 63 Lightwood Street in West Derby, Lancashire. His beginnings were marked by hardship long before he could understand it. His father, Richard Village Foster, died when Edward was still an infant. His mother, Margaret Ann Cotter, was left widowed with several young children and few resources. Within only a few years, Edward became what the Waifs and Strays Society would call a "veritable waif and stray"—a child with no family left to claim him, no home to return to, and no future that anyone could yet imagine.

He entered the Church of England Home for Waifs and Strays in Seaforth, where he spent the rest of earlier years. Elm Lodge became, in time, the only true home he ever knew. The staff remembered him as eager, earnest, and determined. Edward grew into a boy who looked outward rather than inward, who asked not for sympathy but for opportunity. And when he became old enough—just fourteen years old—he expressed one wish with unmistakable clarity: he wanted to go to Canada.

In June of 1901, he sailed aboard the Parisian with a party of Waifs & Strays emigrants destined for Gibbs' Home in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Like countless British Home Children before him, he arrived on Canadian soil with only the possessions the Home allotted him: a Bible, a small bundle of clothing, and the expectations of a new life. There was no family waiting. No prepared future. Only the vastness of a country that would demand far more of him than childhood had already taken.

Making Good

The young teenager was placed on farms, first in Ontario and later farther west. The work was difficult, but Edward adjusted as so many Home Children did—by learning to endure. Over time he carved out a place for himself, earning the respect and affection of those around him. In the years that followed, he farmed in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and eventually began to put down his own roots. By his early thirties he had secured a homestead—land of his own, the first thing in his life that truly belonged to him.

At some point, Edward began using the name Charles Edward Foster, though the reasons are lost to history. Whether it was an attempt to remake himself,

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to distance his new life from the stigma of being a Home Child, or simply the name he felt suited him better, he signed it proudly and consistently. It was the name he would carry into the First World War.

A Soldier's Duty

On October 25, 1916, at the age of thirty, he enlisted in Winnipeg under the name Charles Edward Foster. His attestation papers describe a man of modest height, fair hair, blue eyes, and sturdy constitution—an unremarkable soldier on paper, but one who had already survived more than many men ever would.

He joined the 107th Overseas Battalion, later attached to the 200th and 107th Pioneer Battalions in France and Belgium. Life in the trenches exposed him to the worst horrors of the Western Front. It was there, in the mud and cold and poison-laden air of France, that he developed the tuberculosis that would slowly destroy his body.

By early 1917, he was already showing signs of lung and bone infection. By 1918, the damage was irreversible.

He was discharged as medically unfit and transferred to the care of the Invalid Soldiers' Commission. On March 16, 1919, he entered St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg. He would never leave it alive.

"Cheerful Charlie"

What followed defies ordinary human endurance. For four years and four months, Edward lay in a hospital bed—first losing his mobility, then his legs, then nearly the rest of his movement as tuberculosis spread through his bones and intestines. He was only in his early thirties, but his body was crumbling under a disease born in the trenches.

Yet the newspapers of the day give us a portrait not of a broken man, but of a remarkable one. The soldiers in the ward called him "Cheerful Charlie." The Winnipeg Tribune wrote: "He met every day with a bright smile… having no friends or relatives to call on him, Charlie took it upon himself to cheer others." His comrades, nurses, and doctors all said the same: he refused to complain. He refused to darken the ward with despair. He refused to let his suffering define him.

This Home Child—abandoned early, alone in the world, fighting illness without family—became the emotional anchor of an entire military ward.

And yet he died with no relatives at his bedside. But he did not die without love.

The nurses wept. The soldier-patients felt his loss "keenly." His death reverberated far beyond the quiet room where his final breath escaped.

A Legacy of Quiet Grace

Before his death, Edward wrote a will—simple, thoughtful, and deeply revealing.
He left his homestead to a friend, Herbert Machan. He left the remainder of his estate to his closest companion, Archibald Provan, the man he named as his executor. But his most touching bequest was this: He left the entire proceeds of his $1000 life insurance policy to Elm Lodge Boys' Home, the Home that had raised him, the only true family he had ever known.

In 1925, the Waifs and Strays Society wrote with profound emotion: "Our dear boy never forgot the only real home he ever knew and which he loved so dearly."

For a child who had been sent away at fourteen, who crossed an ocean alone, who lived his entire adult life without kin, that final act of gratitude speaks more loudly than any monument.

Final Rest

Edward—"Charlie"—died on July 21, 1923, age 37.

His funeral was attended not by family but by the men whose lives he had brightened: soldiers from the ward, nurses, doctors, and members of the Great War Veterans' Association. They carried him to Brookside Cemetery in Winnipeg, where he rests in the military plot.

On that day, even the newspaper recognized the significance of his passing: "The nurses, doctors and patients of the ward have obtained wreaths for the grave of one whose fortitude they all admired."

He had no family to mourn him—so others stepped into that role, willingly and lovingly.

Lori's Reflections

When I think of Edward William "Cheerful Charlie" Foster, I am struck by how easily he could have slipped into silence—another Home Child whose story was scattered by time, distance, and loss. He had no family to speak for him, no descendants to keep his name alive, no one left to remember the sound of his laugh or the courage in his smile. Yet he lived a life of such remarkable grace and generosity that it feels profoundly wrong that he should ever be forgotten.

And that is precisely why our work matters.

At Home Children Canada, we have become the keepers of stories like Edward's—stories that would otherwise vanish into the shadows of history. Our researchers, volunteers, and community members stepped into the very space where family once would have stood. We pieced together the fragments of his life from archives, newspapers, military records, and Home Children files. We followed the breadcrumbs he left behind—the will he wrote with careful thought, the homestead he built with his own hands, the legacy he gave to Elm Lodge out of pure gratitude.

In doing so, we found the man behind the records.

We found the child who crossed an ocean alone at fourteen.

We found the soldier who fought bravely in France and Belgium.

We found the patient who lay suffering for four long years and still managed to brighten the lives of everyone around him.

We found the human being whose kindness endured, even when everything else had been taken from him.

Today, through our registry, our books, our research, and our collective remembrance, Edward's story is carried forward—not by blood relatives, but by a community that refuses to let these lives be lost again. It is one of the greatest honours of this work to be able to say: He is remembered. He is known. He is cared for.

Home Children Canada has become the family that so many of these children never had. And in telling Edward's story, we return to him something that life denied him—a place where his name is spoken with respect, where his journey is honoured, and where his courage is acknowledged at last.

This, I believe, is the heart of our mission: to gather these forgotten lives into the light and to hold them there, lovingly, for the world to see.

Sources:

Researched by Sarah Francis, assisted by research team members
Home Children Canada Research Group
Records found on Find my Past & Ancestry.com
Newspapers.com
Library and Archives Canada Military Records
BHC Registry ID #: 38471
Written by Lori Oschefski for the upcoming book "Voices From the Shadows" - due out late 2026/2027

Home Children Canada's 2025 Memorial Wreath

With Deep Gratitude

A heartfelt thank you to Bradley Childe for laying the Home Children Canada wreath on November 11th in Victoria, British Columbia, at the Cenotaph by the Parliament Buildings.

Bradley shared that when he was asked to lay the wreath, he was taken aback and deeply honoured to do so. His great-grandfather, Arthur Buckmaster, came to Canada in 1890 as a British Home Child. Although Arthur never served, his Métis son did. Bradley's grandfather, William Childe, trained at Camp Hughes, and married his grandmother just before being deployed overseas.

For Bradley, this moment was not only a tribute to the 25,000 British Home Children who served, but also a personal act of remembrance for his own family — and for all those who have served, past and present, in every branch of the military.

Thank you, Bradley, for representing our British Home Children that served with such pride and heart.

War Orphans?
By Lori Oschefski

Often, when asking people if they have heard of the British Home Children, the answer is, “Yes, they were the children who came over because of the War.” This is a common misconception. Children in England at the beginning of the Second World War were indeed brought to Canada to live with strangers for their safety, but those were not British Home Children. Officially, the immigration of the British Home Children ended in July 1939 when the last party of Barnardo children arrived in Canada.

Negotiations between Canada and Britain began in June 1940 to bring evacuee children overseas. The very next month—exactly one year after the last official group of BHC arrived—the first of these “Guest Children,” as they came to be known, reached Canadian shores. Elected to the council for the Guest Children in Canada was Charlotte Whitton, then Director of the Canadian Council on Child Welfare. Charlotte had been instrumental in the 1925 legislation limiting the age of unaccompanied children entering Canada to 14. She had concluded that the BHC schemes, which provided a steady supply of cheap labour, came perilously close to a form of slavery. She is often credited with bringing those schemes to an end.

When the Order in Council was passed allowing the Guest Children into Canada, officials were determined that this new juvenile immigration movement would avoid the abuses suffered by the BHC. Working closely with Canadian Immigration Director F. C. Blair, Charlotte Whitton fought to ensure this would not be a revival of the BHC system. These children were to come as guests into Canadian homes, not as indentured labourers expected to work for their keep.

From the onset, sending children across the Atlantic during wartime carried grave risks. On August 30, 1940, the Volendam, carrying 321 evacuee children, was torpedoed off the west coast of Ireland. Miraculously, all of the children were safely evacuated into lifeboats and brought back to the U.K., shaken but alive. A little more than two weeks later, the City of Benares left Liverpool carrying ninety evacuee children, including many who had survived the Volendam attack. At 10 p.m. on September 16, three days into the voyage, the City of Benares was torpedoed. This time the loss of life was catastrophic.

Some children were killed instantly in the explosion; others were swept into water-logged lifeboats. Within half an hour the ship sank, taking with it many who had initially survived. Still more children died of exposure during the eighteen-hour wait for rescue. In a final desperate discovery, six boys were found alive in a lifeboat eight days after the sinking. In total, seventy-three of the ninety evacuee children aboard the City of Benares perished.

Overseas evacuation of the Guest Children ended abruptly after this tragedy.

Caring for Canadians ……

By Andrew Simpson

By Andrew Simpson, Author of "The Ever Open Door"

British Home Children ..... the story from Britain

Visit Andrew's Blog: https://chorltonhistory.blogspot.com/

November in Southern cemetery is always a special time of year.

It is one of our largest municipal cemeteries and is in the south of the city.

And amongst the grand monuments to the good and the great and the more modest rows of gravestones there are some to our war dead.

During the run up to the Armistice commemorations each year I will visit the gravestones of those members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and particularly those who were British Home Children.

They left Canada in 1915 with all the hopes and expectations of "doing their bit" in the Great War.

And having been wounded in France and Gallipoli they returned to the large military hospitals in Britain to be treated, then spending months of recovery in smaller auxiliary hospitals run by the Red Cross.

It is the story of their treatment that I want to think about.

But first there are those young Canadians who didn't make it and are buried in Southern Cemetery.

Most died in the Nell Lane Military Hospital which looked out on the cemetery.

It was one of those public buildings requisitioned by the government at the outbreak of war and had been the infirmary of the Chorlton Union Workhouse.

1 Red Cross Nurses and soldiers

But today I want to explore those other hospitals staffed by volunteers from the Red Cross who were known at the time as V.A.D.s and share some of the experiences of our young Canadians.

The story begins in 1909 when the War Office began preparing for a major war in Europe. The last time Britain had been engaged in a vast continental conflict had been during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars at the start of the nineteenth century.

The in between time had mostly involved the British army fighting in small colonial conflicts and while the Crimean War and the South African wars had seen serious loss of life, the War Office reasoned that a new European war would be larger, and the armed forces would need help in dealing with the vast number of casualties.

To this end in 1909 the War Office issued its "Scheme for the Organization of Voluntary Aid in England and Wales".

The scheme established Voluntary Aid Detachments drawn from both male and female volunteers who would be trained by the St. John Ambulance Association and organised by the British Red Cross Society.

This was followed in the August of 1914 by the formation of the Joint War Committee between the Red Cross and St. John Ambulance which organised volunteers and professional staff both at home and on the battlefields.

Here in Manchester a large part of the work was carried out by the East Lancashire Branch of the British Red Cross which very early in the war described its role as "a voluntary organisation supported by public subscriptions ..... to supplement the medical services of the army and navy and to supply comforts to soldiers and sailors in addition to those provided by the authorities."

The branch had been formed in 1910 and at the outbreak of war, had a total membership of 3,000 men and 1,000 women along with forty Comforts Sections.

In the first few weeks of August 1914 it experienced a surge of interest from the general public leading the Society to report that at its headquarters in the YMCA on Peter Street, "it took the efforts of the County Director and numerous staff to cope with the continuous stream of callers and with

the postal and telephonic inquiries," adding that "offers of assistance are pouring in on all sides."

In the first three months of the war the branch was responsible for 17 auxiliary hospitals across the city and into the neighbouring areas of Salford and Trafford offering a total of 657 beds, had another 1,100 "beds almost ready" and in conjunction with the St John Ambulance was managing twelve more hospitals in the surrounding towns.

All of this represented a huge commitment on the part of local communities who not only supplied the staff but provided comforts, entertainment and considerable financial support.

In the first few months of the war there was some confusion amongst the public of the role of the V.A.D.

The term V.A.D, applied both to a detachment and an individual volunteer who could be involved in a variety of tasks from nursing to cooking, to working in the laundry or as a typist, telephonist or driver.

And their uniforms reflected both their roles and their ranks. So, nursing staff wore a pale blue dress, cooks a pale brown and quartermasters were in grey while commandants wore scarlet.

They were drawn from all social classes with many living close to where they worked.

And because the Red Cross kept detailed notes which have now been archived it is possible to track these volunteers across the years of their service and place them in the bigger picture of the rest of their lives.

Central to their work was their commitment to the young men in their care and given that the War Office was a tad stingy in apportioning resources for the auxiliary hospitals, the staff and the wider community were involved in raising extra money to pay for both basic essentials and luxuries as well as concerts and special events especially at Christmas.

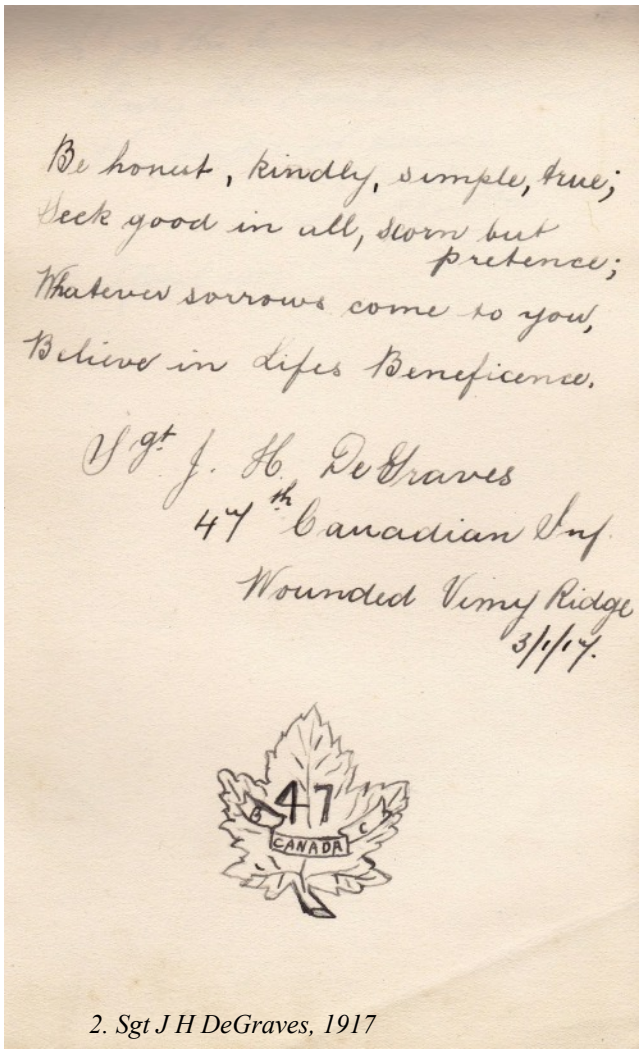
These extras even extended to the purchase of hospital beds by both individuals and businesses, an act of charity which was recorded in notices above the beds.

Here in Chorlton where we live one soldier wrote a letter of thank you to the children of a local church for the present of a "special embroidered pillow" while another group clubbed together to present an engraved silver cup to the Wesleyan Church which had donated its Sunday school building as an auxiliary hospital.

And it is worth noting that these auxiliary hospitals were in buildings which had been donated by the public for the duration of the war, and included Sunday Schools, private homes as well schools. In Manchester eight schools were requisitioned with the loss of over 3,800 school places.

The same Red Cross notes provide a detailed breakdown of what the men were recovering from and the duration of their stay.

Looking across the hospitals in Manchester most men were suffering from bullet, shrapnel and gas wounds while others had contracted trench foot and an array of complaints.
While in hospital the men wore a very distinctive blue uniform known as "Hospital Blues".



2. Sgt J H DeGraves, 1917

Parts of their stay are well documented in the form of letters, photographs, some newspaper reports and in the scrapbooks made by Red Cross nurses and it is remarkable just how many of these scrapbooks have survived.

One in my possession comes from St John's Auxiliary Hospital in Cheltenham and is a unique record of some of the men who spent time in the hospital, comprising 29 entries ranging from poems, and pictures to short passages expressing gratitude for the care the men received.

One of my favourites was written by Sgt J H DeGraves, of the "47 Canadian Infantry Wounded Vimy Ridge January 1 1917."

My friend Susan Brazeau in Alberta went looking for his service records and we now know he enlisted in Vancouver in the July of 1915 and was 31 when he was wounded.

There is much more that I could include, but it seems fitting to end

where we began with one of the men of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

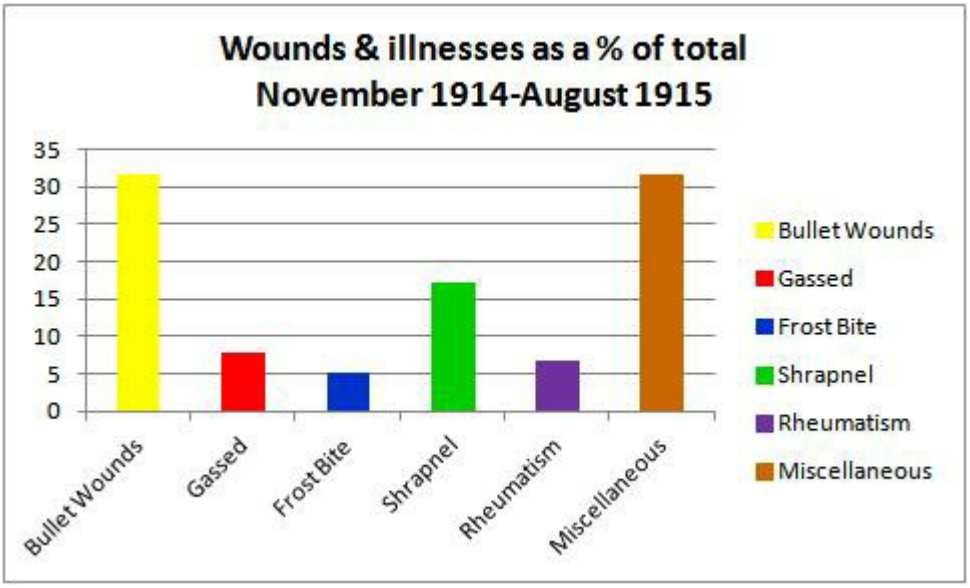
Images and Captions
1.Red Cross Nurses and recovering soldiers in their Hospital Blues, 1915
2. Sgt J H DeGraves, 1917
3. The Xmas Silver Cup donated to the Chorlton Wesleyan Church by soldiers of the Auxiliary Hospital
4. Wounds & Illnesses Woodlawn Auxiliary Hospital 1915

Sources for information:

1) The Red Cross in Lancashire, Manchester Guardian, September 12, 1914
2) Preparing Voluntary Aid in Manchester, Manchester Guardian, August 17, 1914
3) The Red Cross in East Lancashire, Manchester Guardian, November 27, 1914

3. The Xmas Silver Cup donated to the Chorlton Wesleyan Church by soldiers of the Auxiliary Hospital

4. Wounds & Illnesses Woodlawn Auxiliary Hospital 1915



Membership Matters

We're thrilled to announce that as of today, we have 266 active paid members supporting our mission at Home Children Canada!

Your paid membership isn't just a number — it's a powerful force behind the scenes. The funds we raise help us maintain our website, databases, and cover vital operational costs that allow us to continue providing accurate, essential research and information about the history of Home Children in Canada.

We rely on the generous support of our paid members, donations, grants, and the dedication of countless volunteers to keep this important work going.

A huge THANK YOU to each of our loyal members and to all the new faces who plan join us in 2026! Your involvement makes all the difference.

Don't forget to renew your membership this year! You'll receive a reminder when it's getting close to expiration — so you won't miss a beat.

Ready to join or renew? Head to https://www.homechildrencanada.com/ and sign up today!

“Home Boys” by Tim Harrison: Honouring Home Children Through Music

Story and interview by: Kerry Jarvis.
Kerry is a British Home Child descendant and HCC Area Rep for Nova Scotia

Canadian folk music has a long tradition of re-imagining and re-telling historical events. “Canadian Railroad Trilogy,” penned by legendary Gordon Lightfoot in 1967 tells the tale of the building of the coast-to-coast railway to link a nation. The song portrays a nation of industrial fortitude and entrepreneurship, yet fails to mention that the construction of the railway was accomplished with the displacement of Indigenous land and cheap immigrant labour. https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/1.6066135

Similarly, The Bands’, “Acadian Driftwood”, depicts the discriminatory expulsion of thousands of Acadians from the Maritimes beginning in 1775.

“They signed a treaty and our homes were taken
Loved ones forsaken, they didn't give a damn
Try to raise a family, end up an enemy
Over what went down on the Plains of Abraham”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GoV52WsmDG4

Julian Taylors’, “Seeds,” sings about the grim discovery of 215 children in unmarked mass grave at a residential school in British Columbia.

“They knocked you down, erased your name
You stood your ground and wouldn’t change
You’ve found your place now, standing alongside the trees
They tried to bury us but they didn’t know we were seeds”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNbZteb_Ycw

There have been many songs written about British Home Children from both sides of the ocean. Notably, “The Ballads of Child Migration: Songs for Britain’s Child Migrants”, is an entire album devoted to the cause. In particular, English folk singer, Jez Lowe’s song, “Snow to Nova Scotia”, portrays the story of Freddie Snow and his journey to Canada, complete with the dream that there would be no worries or woes once in Canada.

“Freddie Snow with his life in his suitcase,
Number 47 in a single file,
Caused the stone-faced date stamp clerk to smile.
He said they’re sending snow to Nova Scotia
Far across the ocean deep and wide
There’ll be open arms to welcome the Home Children
When they reach the other side
No worries and no woes in Nova Scotia
They’ll melt away upon that morning tide
When there’s no-one there to wave a last goodbye…goodbye”
https://youtu.be/Kk09_WIWnJU?si=WFZd36IsttH8xqk6

Canadian folk singer, Tim Harrisons’, “Home Boys”, -- complete with historical accuracy, sheds light from the Industrial Revolution, the Work Houses to the mass exporting of children to Canada.

I first heard “Home Boys” in 2003 and thought it was a good story song depicting poor and destitute children in England and sending them abroad to Canada for a better life. But, I really didn’t grasp the significance of the song, and to be honest, I didn’t know at that time what a Home Boy was. All of that changed for me when I discovered that my Grandmother was a Barnardo Girl. The significance of the song now resonates clearly
with me.

Since becoming an Area Rep for Nova Scotia I was motivated to contact Tim Harrison to discover more about “Home Boys” and what inspired him to write about the mass migration of children to Canada from the United Kingdom.

Who is Tim Harrison? Tim Harrison is a professional musician and author, who hails from Owen Sound, Ontario. His first album was produced by folk legend Stan Rogers. Tim started Summerfolk, one of the premiere folk festivals, in his hometown of Owen Sound which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. https://www.timharrison.ca

What follows is my interview with Tim Harrison.

1. **First of all, I have to mention that "Home Boys" is an historically significant song that is masterfully and thoughtfully crafted. It says it all from the Industrial Revolution, to the Work Houses to exporting of children as indentured labour to Canada and how society dealt with the poor.**

Tim: Though I am not a Home Child myself, I became very interested in the whole story, primarily I think because I am always in wonder when I see those people blessed enough to have plenty in this world still fear or want to take advantage of those less fortunate. I know Dr. Barnardo and the church felt they were helping society on many levels and assisting the children themselves, but to me it would have been easier to look after the less fortunate than to ship them away. So in short it was my sense of politics that led me to investigate and research the Home Child situation which then led to the writing of the song.

2. "Home Boys" was released on your 2003 CD, 'Wheatfield with Crows'. What was the creative spark that inspired you to craft this song?

Tim: I heard about the Home Children through my connections with folk
music and traditional music. As you know there is quite a body of folk music and ballads from the 19th century of British origin, and it was among stories and song of the industrial revolution that the notion to find out more about the poverty, and to write about the "Home Boys" originated. I have to say
that the vivid writings of Charles Dickens put a particular focus on the plight of the poor during that period. Initially, it was thought that the Home Children would be an interesting topic for a song as I was seeking a relevant story for the album "Wheatfield With Crows," a work which mixed the dark and light just as Van Gogh's painting of the same name.

3. Was "Home Boys" a song that came quickly to you, or did it take a while to craft it?

Tim: To answer your question about the writing in more detail, because it was a song where accuracy of information was important and research was involved, and though there may have been more room for poetic license, I wanted the piece, for the sake of those in the subject, to have integrity, and so it took some time to craft.

4. British Home Children, is one of the many hidden secrets of our Canadian history. Today, we have genealogy apps and the formation of British Home Children Canada association to assist people in learning and discovering about their descendants. In the early 2000's when you wrote this song, the same information was not readily available. Can you share with us how and where you conducted your research?

Tim: Though not openly discussed in public, there was a great deal of information on the web about Dr. Barnardo, and his idea to displace the children and his ties with orphanages.

5. What was the initial reaction to the song from your fans, fellow artists?

Tim: Home Boys became a favourite of some of the folks who booked me for concerts. The story seems to resonate, even if you are not a Home Child yourself. Songs of social awareness were always appreciated, in fact sought out, by the audiences for which I played.

6. The chorus of "Home Boys" is powerful. I couldn't help but think of all the children who lived in shame and in a code of silence of being a home boy or home girl. The transcript from my Grandmothers last interview with Barnardo, as that she "did not want to be known as a Home Girl" … she was then 21 and no longer indentured.

"And they called us home boys A bitter irony
They called us home boys
As they put us out to sea They called us home boys

As they broke our families
But Home Boy that's no fitting name for me".

7. Thanks Tim for writing this song about British Home Children. The legacy of all the children who came to Canada needs to be told in song, words and video. You have shared their story and memory in "Home Boys".

Tim: I am very honoured that you have taken an interest in the song. And what a discovery and then journey you have had in regard to Home Children.

Home Boys
©Tim Harrison and Second Avenue Songs 2003

It was from England that I came
On a ship laden with blame
For the bloody, dirty need
Made by industry's new greed

We came in from the country side
To find work in the city slime
Where fathers broke sons' arms
So they'd fit the beggars' charms

It was the work house for us all
And like cattle in a stall
Fathers, mothers, daughters, sons
Were separated and undone

The righteous thought it best
To rid London of its pests
So we were plucked for God's bouquet
One hundred thousand sent away

And they called us home boys
A bitter irony
They called us home boys
As they put us out to sea
They called us home boys

As they broke our families
But Home Boy that's no fitting name for me

And those of us who did not die
On the briny ocean wide
All landed over here
To Canada land of our fear

We were sent out then to work
For stoop labour and a perk
For the landowners who knew
That we did not get to choose

Bridge:

And I was sent out to Ontario
And worked a farm through the rain and the wind and snow
And what I learned put innocence to shame
For things that happened there cannot be given any name

And is this the only way we can deal with poverty
Some live in wrack and ruin
And some live in luxury

The rich and poor they struggle
Though there's lots to go around
Still we scatter one another
Just like dry leaves on the ground

YouTube link to "Home Boys"

Album Cover: Wheatfield With Crows, by Tim Harrison. Cover painting by: Vincent van Gogh

This album can be purchased here
https://www.timharrison.ca/discwheatfield.html

The van Gogh museum writes that, "Van Gogh did want his wheatfields under stormy skies to express "sadness, extreme loneliness", but at the same time he wanted to show what he considered "healthy and fortifying about the country-side."

How fitting is this interpretation for British Home Children coming to Canada with sadness and loneliness, yet arriving, with a glimmer of positive hope for a new beginning in a new country.