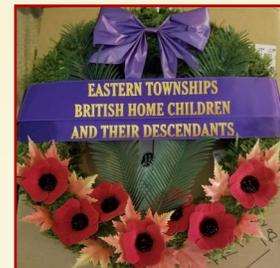




# HOME CHILDREN CANADA

## November 2021 Newsletter

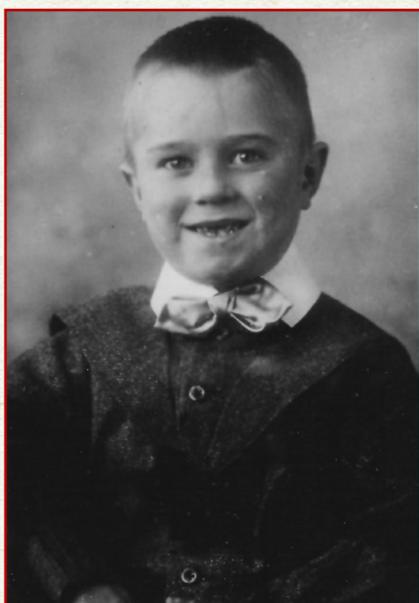
- Two World Wars ..... but the work of caring for children continued.....  
By Historian and Author, Andrew Simpson
- Good Conduct Medals by the late Brian Rolfe
- William McNab by his Granddaughter Sherri Lynn Farthing



First Wreath laid in Quebec for the BHC

## Humble Beginnings - Ronald Chamberlain

By his daughter, the late Doreen Young



ALTHOUGH RONALD CHAMBERLAIN lived in Canada since he was sent here by Barnardo's at the age of ten, served in the Royal Canadian Air Force in the Second World War, married and had children in Canada, it wasn't discovered until much later in his life that he wasn't a



Canadian Citizen. He had to apply for and finally received his Citizenship in 1976

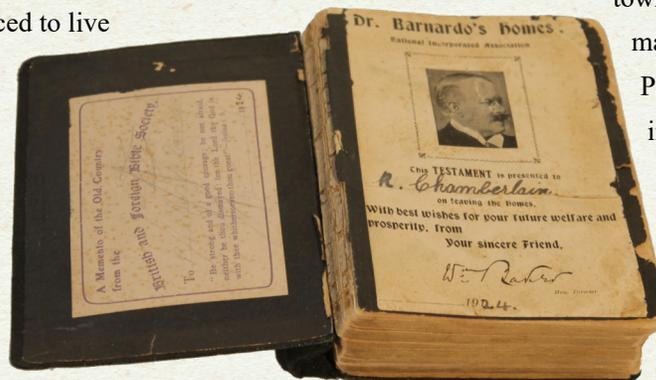
Ronald's father, and his mother Maud's fiancée, Jack Bradshaw, was a British soldier who was killed in action during the First World War. Maud, who already had another child, Reginald Jack Chamberlain, was not receiving child support ordered by the court from his father, was forced to live with her elderly father, John Chamberlain. They lived in abject poverty – the only means of support was her seventy-five year old father's old age pension. Maud was only able to get occasional odd work. "She was proved to be of weak will

and totally unfitting to bring up her two boys" (Barnardo's admitting papers). Ronald was described as being of good behaviour at school, but quite uncontrollable at home.

On August 5, 1920 Maud signed the "full agreement" for the Dr. Barnardo Homes, admitting both children. She was hoping then that she could seek work as a domestic. It is not clear that Maud understood that by signing a "full" agreement, she had given her consent to send the boys out of the country if Barnardo's saw fit. Martha, Maud's sister, who was married and had family of her own, was willing to raise the boys along with her sons however she was denied custody by Barnardo's.

On March 27, 1925 Ronald was placed aboard the Montclare headed for Canada. Sadly ten months prior, his older brother Reginald was shipped to Australia, departing January 4, 1924 aboard the Euripides. The brothers never saw each other again.

On the farms in Canada, Ronald had good and bad experiences: His placement in Georgetown, Ontario. They would take him to town with the family each weekend, and make him wait outside the Ice Cream Parlor while they went inside and indulged. They gave him his week's compulsory allowance once back at the farm. Ronald was required to wear rubber boots on the farm, presumably throughout the winter, with no socks. As a result he



Reginald's Dr. Barnardo Bible



Ronald while in service

suffered trouble with his feet the rest of his life.

But there were also kind people – people who treated him like family. His fonder memories were of the Pettman’s family in Ingersol, Ontario who treated him as one of the family. Ronald’s family came to know them as Aunt Elma and Uncle Fred.

Ronald and his brother Reginald just missed seeing each other during their respective service in the Second World War. They both visited the home of their Aunt Martha, apparently missing each other within minutes of each others visit!

After the war, Ronald enjoyed a wonderful family life with Beatrice. Together they had six children and seventeen Grandchildren. They were married for over fifty years!

The injuries Ronald suffered in the war, as well as the injuries to his feet as a child on the Canadian farms plagued him the rest of his life. Severe debilitating arthritis set into his hips causing him constant pain. He also suffered with heart problems and poor circulation. Ronald underwent at least three heart operations.

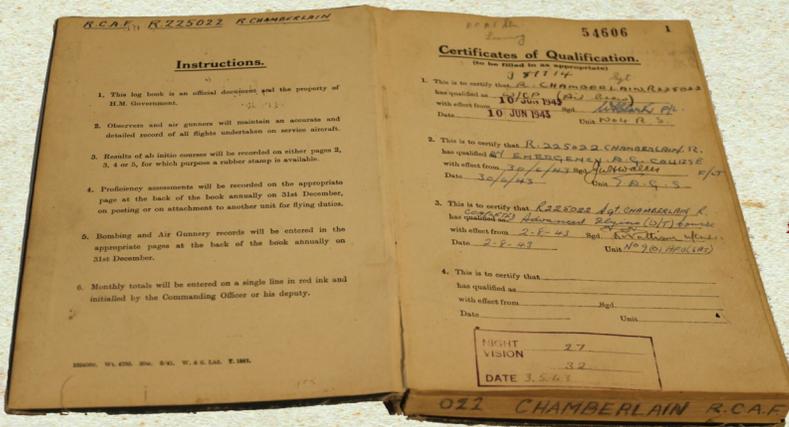
His kindest treatment came from the family of Mary Mitchell, a kind spinster, and her father from Port Perry, Ontario. Friendships he nurtured with this family and community members continued throughout his lifetime.

In 1937 Ronald met and married Beatrice Laura Demman in Kitchener, Ontario following which they moved to Toronto. In January of 1940 Ronald joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. He served in the Second World War as a Wireless Operator and Gunner on a Halifax Bomber, which was shot down over Germany in April, 1944. Ronald parachuted out of the plane, landing on railroad tracks and injuring his hips and back. He was taken as Prisoner of War where he remained until liberation in May, 1945.

Although Ronald suffered many hardships in his life, he was a wonderfully loving, kind and caring husband and father. He rarely had a bad word to say about anyone, a true gentleman. Ronald passed away June 1, 1996.



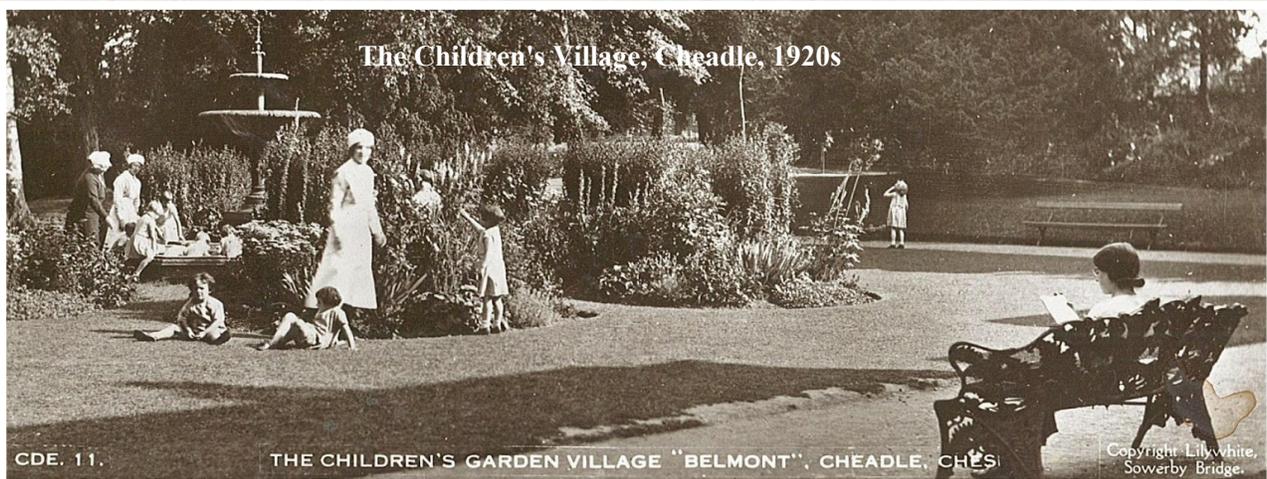
Ronald and Beatrice



Ronald’s flight log book from the Second World War



Doreen Young



## Two World Wars ..... but the work of caring for children continued..... By Historian and Author, Andrew Simpson

This month with the backdrop of a Remembrance Day I have been thinking of those two world wars and their impact on the charities engaged in caring for young people.

And because I have become connected to one of the Manchester societies this piece will focus on how it adjusted to wartime conditions, the story of the staff and young men in their charge who went off to fight, along with how it faced a post war Britain

It was the Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girl's Refuges, which had been set up in 1870, and with a few name changes along the way and a vast widening of its responsibilities is still going today as the Together Trust.

The Great War touched the Refuge in many ways. Like other charities it had to adjust to a loss of revenue at a time when it was extending its provision of care, was forced to close some of its homes and faced the loss of some young people and staff it held dear.

By the end of the War, its Roll of Honour extended to over 400 men, which included committee members and staff as well as those who had been helped by the Charity. Of these 400 men, 55 enlisted in the Manchester Regiment and 83 were youngsters who had been migrated to Canada and either returned to Britain to serve or volunteered for the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Of these 400, 29 were killed.

Harold Moss was one of those who never returned. He had been admitted to the Charity in 1906 where he stayed until he

was 14 when he began work in a drapery shop as an apprentice. Enlisting at the beginning of the war he was sent to France with the 15th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers.

He was killed on March 17 1916, aged just 20.

News of his death was reported in the Manchester Evening News, which wrote that Private Moss, formally of Rusholme was 'killed by a rifle grenade.'

His housemother Mrs. Howarth on hearing the news of his death recorded;

"We were very grieved to hear of his death, he had always been such a good lad in every way, as he grew older, we always felt he was a real elder brother to the younger boys. It was most touching many times when he

has been home, to see him with the little ones, he was never tired of them, and they used to love to have him with them. We shall miss him very much, but it is a comfort to know he has died as he always tried to live, doing his duty and helping others."<sup>1</sup>

Likewise the Second World War saw members of staff and former "Boys" join up, with the added impact of the Blitz which resulted in the children's homes being bombed, some children being evacuated to more rural areas, and the opportunities for the young people in the charities charge to participate in growing

<sup>1</sup> *Children's Haven, 1916*

**Harold Moss**



food as part of the “Dig For Victory Campaign”.

Equally profound for the charity was the squeeze on charitable donations. During The Great War the Charity experienced a severe short fall in contributions as the public increasingly

channeled their money toward charities directly connected with the War. The Charity made regular appeals highlighting the shortfall. In the October of 1915 it announced that “there is a deficiency of £10,000 on Manchester and Salford Boys’ and Girls’ Refuges maintenance account, the institution having been most unfavourably affected by the War and leading to a further appeal to “the community which it serves in caring for its most needy member.”<sup>2</sup>

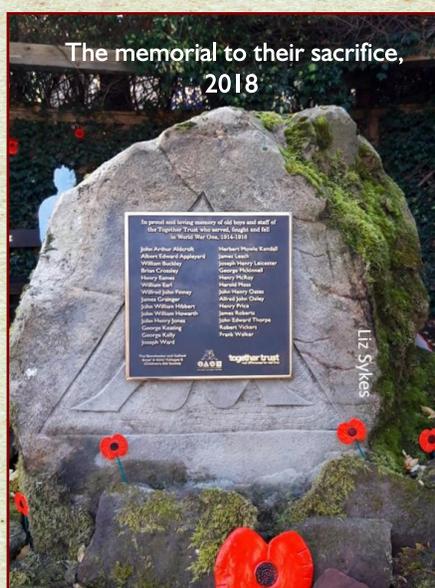
Already some of the buildings had been closed partly as a cost cutting exercise but also because they were no longer needed. These included the Young Men’s Institute and the Sir William Stevenson Emigration Training Home, while the loss of so many of the Refuges’ workers to the armed services saw a reduction in the income from the workshops just as the price of food, clothes and fuel continued to rise. Only the shoemaking department was maintained and after the War, none of the other workshops reopened.

All of which was at a time when the Charity increased its activities. In 1914, they had decided to “receive motherless children whose fathers had been called to the Front [and noted that] already quite a number of such children had been received into one of the homes.”

Equally profound and challenging were the adjustments the charity made with the return of peace.



The end of the Great War saw the Refuge begin to move out of the city into rural Cheshire, and begin a change of direction in how young people were cared for, with greater emphasis on smaller “family size” units, while after 1945 it



pretty much went into partnership with the State.

For over half a century the State had been broadening its responsibilities to care for the citizen from “the cradle to the grave”, and in 1948, building on the recommendations of the Curtis Report, the Government passed the Children’s Act, which set out that local authorities should assume control for children under 17 who had been “abandoned by their parents or guardians, or were lost, or whose parents were incapable of providing “proper accommodation, maintenance and upbringing” .

In pursuance of this new responsibility local authorities had to set up a Children’s Committee with a Children’s Officer.

The Curtis Report had been established to look at the provision of children “who are deprived of a normal home life with their own parents or relatives and to consider what measures should be taken to ensure that these children are brought up under conditions best calculated to compensate them for the lack of parental care.”

The report was critical of the poor conditions it encountered in some institutionalised homes along with a general lack of training given to carers. It recommended that where possible young people should be adopted as a first choice and fostered as an alternative, but if they

were placed in a home, these homes should contain a maximum of twelve children and ideally have no more than eight.

It also proposed that everything should be done to maintain contact with relatives, develop friendships outside the home and that siblings be kept together. Finally, it recommended that children should be entitled to a religious upbringing, which was appropriate to its background.

The Curtis Report had found some childcare wanting and looked to serious changes, while the Children's Act altered the relationship between all those charities working with young people and brought them into a national system of childcare overseen by the State.

As the Chairman of the charity Peter Gaddum noted at the time, "The State in fact took over our job, and our reaction, without a thought of jealousy, can be summed up by the words, "And about time too!"

The upside for the Charity was that it now received higher levels of funding, which reduced the need to rely on generating its own income. Before this, the Charity had been almost entirely self-funded, relying on public support and individual donations to run its services.

The Charity also embraced the Curtis Report and from 1957 into the 1960s embarked on a programme of creating a Family Group of Homes, known as the Belmont Group. This moved away from the institutionalised style cottage homes of old to the principle of homes based on family style life. These homes were typical residential buildings out in the community where the young people could lead an ordinary family life.

This was accomplished in part by converting existing properties on the estate and by the purchase of new homes across South Manchester.

*Adapted from The Ever Open Door 150 Years of the Together Trust, Andrew Simpson, 2020*

*Pictures; Some of the young men from the charity who fought in the Great War, 1914-18, and the memorial to their sacrifice, 2018, The Children's Village, Cheadle, 1920s, an appeal for funds, 1957, the programme of the Belmont Garden Fete, 1971, courtesy of the Together Trust*

**1957** Nowadays, the Home is registered as a Special Residential School for Physically Handicapped Children. To it come children from the whole of England and Wales, to be educated and trained.

It is our conception that education for these children is more than formal schooling ; it involves training them in family and social life to a greater degree.

The Society feels that this is best carried out by the children living together in small family groups, each with its own house. How else can a child, away from its own home, possibly assimilate this social sense ?

We are pioneers in this method, and we ask you to help us in our effort. We need £20,000 to provide new bungalows and the school unit, together with the physiotherapy department.

**Please Help**

*An appeal for funds, 1957*

**Article by Andrew Simpson  
Historian & Author of**

**"The Ever Open Door - 150 Years of the Together Trust**

[www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.com](http://www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.com)

[British Home Children.....The Story From Britain](#)

**Some of the Barnardo Boys who served from the  
December 1942 Barnardo Magazine  
"Ups and Downs"**



**Alfred Day**



**Albert E. Olah**



**Richard Mallett**



**Archibald Barrington**



**Henry Road**



**W. R. McGill**

# First Wreath for the BHC laid in Quebec

## And a bid to save the Gibbs Receiving Home

### The Laying of The Eastern Townships British Home Children Wreath

As a result of the diligence of Joel Barter of the Bury Historical Society and the founder of Eastern Townships Roots, this year saw the first time a remembrance wreath honouring the service of the Home Children in the wars was laid in the province of Quebec. This was the culmination of a collaboration between Joel and the late Judy Neville. Judy was instrumental in determining that this would be the first wreath in Quebec.

The wreath was laid by Joel on November 6<sup>th</sup> in Bury Quebec, Canada. Joel plans on a tour of the Eastern Townships with the wreath. Second on the tour was the Church of England, Waifs and Strays (CEWS) receiving home at the boy's former receiving home located at 465 Lawford Street in Sherbrooke, Quebec.

The CEWS were heavily influenced in child emigration by Maria Rye, who received their first parties of girls at her receiving home, Our Western Home, in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Boys were first sent through Louisa Birt to Knowlton, Quebec. 117 Bowen Street was purchased as their first receiving home for girls in Sherbrooke in about 1884. It was named the Gibbs Home after one of their major benefactors and was located on the banks of the River St. Francis. A second home, located at 136 Bowen Street was purchased for boys. This home was known as the Benyon Home. In 1896 Maria Rye handed over her receiving home in Niagara-on-the-Lake to the CEWS, who then used the home as their receiving home for Girls and the Gibbs Home was then used for the boys. At about this same time, the Gibbs Home moved to Lawford



Joel Barter at the Bury service Street.

The wreath was laid at an event at the Lawford Street location on Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. In attendance was the press, local MP's, the new Mayor of Sherbrooke, Historical Societies from the region as well as descendants of Home Children. The home is currently occupied by the Actions Culturelles who informed Joel that the building is in a sad state of disrepair, and prior to their occupation in 2019, the building was slated for demolition. Actions Culturelles is moving to a new location in one month and they fear that the Gibbs Home could be right back on the demolition Block again just like it was a few years ago. After the wreath-laying and Joel's speech on the significance of the wreath and its history, Actions Culturelles spoke on the history of the building as well of the British Home Children that passed through.



The Gibbs Home

Through these combined efforts and the resulting media coverage, Joel, Actions Culturelles, the late Judy Neville, all supported by Home Children Canada, may very well have saved another receiving home from the wrecker's ball.

Media coverage:

[You-tube: Remembrance Day - Bury Quebec, Canada - November 7, 2021](#)

[Special wreath ceremony honouring Canada's British Home Children in Bury](#)

[Sherbrooke honours British Home children - CBC Interview](#)

The Sherbrooke Record also published a lengthy article on the significance of saving the Gibbs Home

The Sherbrooke Record - Wreath Ceremony keeps Gibbs Home on the Radar

# LEST WE FORGET

Remembering the over 25,000 British Home Children who served in our Wars. In the First World War alone, over 1,100 never returned home. They are now recognized by Veterans Affairs Canada as an individual group of Canadians who Served. We have 1 surviving BHC who Served, George Beardshaw. He served with the Queen's Own Rifles. Once again this year, we were pleased to see wreaths being laid across Canada honouring our Home Children who served.



Home Children Canada laid a wreath at the National War Memorial in Ottawa this year. Photos were taken by Kaitlin Gallant, our Student Achievement Award recipient from 2018.

Katlin is now a third year student at the University of Ottawa and continues to incorporate the Home Children in her studies.



Carolyn Clark, Granddaughter of Simeon Bloomfield lays a wreath in Thedford, Ontario in honour of Simeon, his brothers Bertram & Harold and on behalf of all BHC and their descendants.

Special thanks to Simeon's daughter Sharon Bloomfield-Clark



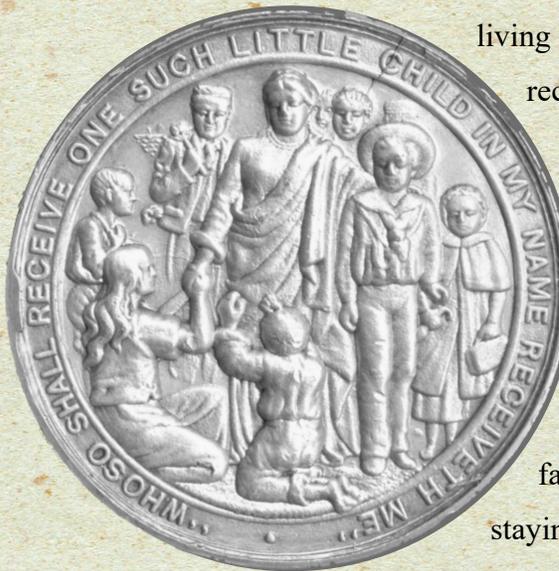
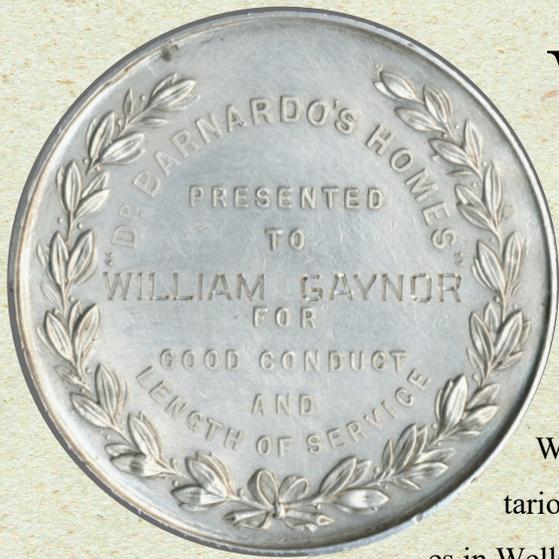
Bertram



Harold & Simeon



# William Gaynor



William Gaynor was born December 13, 1894 in Egremont, Cheshire, England. He was the son of John Gaynor and his wife Mary Whittaker and was the younger sibling of Henry and Sarah. William appears to be the only child sent to Canada by the Dr. Barnardo Homes. Also unclear, is the reason he was sent to Canada. William arrived aboard the Dominion on May 31, 1908 and was received at the Barnardo's Farley Avenue home in Toronto, Ontario.

William was placed with the family of Nellie Hinton of Welland, Ontario. On August 23, 1917, William enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces in Welland, Ontario. His next of kin was given as Mary Gaynor, his mother, living on Alliston Street in Liscard, Cheshire, England. Later in his service records, it is recorded that his pension was to go to Mrs. Nellie Hinton, living in St. Anns, Ontario. St. Formally called Synder Mills, St. Anns still is a rural farming community situated on the banks of the Twenty Mile Creek in the Niagara Region of Ontario. Nellie, nee Horton, became the wife of Henry George Hinton, married three months after William arrived in Canada. It is not likely they were his first placement family, nor is it know when he arrived with this family. William was awarded Barnardo's Good Conduct Medal for staying with his first placement for a minimum of three years. After his service, William returned to Canada and settled back, for a time, with the Hinton

family in the area of St. Anns, Ontario. There is no evidence to suggest he was ever married or had family. William died in 1969. Shortly before his death, a woman visited the Hinton's on behalf of a man who used to be their boarder. This woman was there on behalf of William, looking for a burial place for him. William is buried in the Hillside Cemetery in the Niagara Regional Municipality, with members of the family who treated his so kindly in Canada. His Good Conduct medal remains in the collections of Home Children Canada.



# Dr. Barnardo's Good Conduct Medals

## By the Late Brian Rolfe

**O**n the front of each medal is a quote from the King James Bible, Matthew 18.5, "WHOSO SHALL RECEIVE ONE SUCH LITTLE CHILD IN MY NAME RECEIVETH ME." Inside this ring of words is a picture. Divide the face of the medal into two halves with a diagonal running from the upper left to the lower right. Above this constructed line are seven standing figures, one of whom is central to the whole design and wears classical garb, a toga-like wrap hanging loosely from one shoulder and flowing down to the ground. The form of a breast evident behind her clothing and her long hair clearly identify her as a female. Those who stand at her sides or behind her are young people neatly and substantially clothed, are usually capped or hatted and with one exception are all facing in precisely the same direction, i.e. towards the viewer. Many show evidence that they have employment: a teenage boy holds a hammer and has a basket over his shoulder that holds some tools or material of his trade; a boy in a sailor outfit complete with lanyards; a young girl wearing an overcoat with shoulder cape holds a handbag and umbrella; the head of a young woman behind the central Grace-figure has her hair up and contained in the cap of a housemaid or cook.

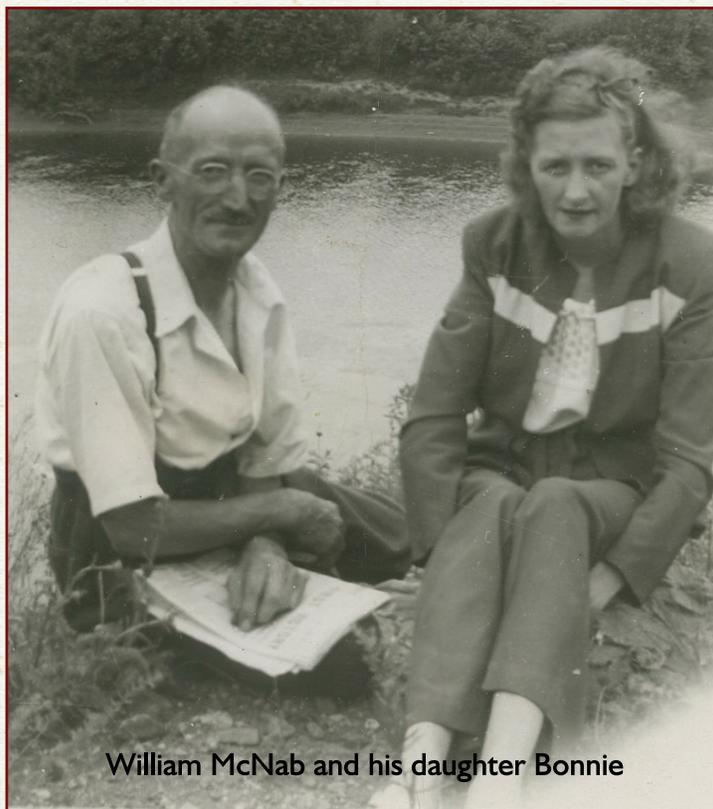
Beneath the imagined diagonal are 3 more figures, a man and woman and child, all thinly clad, bare-headed and tousle-haired. The woman and child sit or kneel apart on the ground at the feet of the Grace-figure, the woman clasping the Grace's hand; the child, his back to the viewer (of the ten in the picture he alone has no face visible) has arms and hands raised in a "Pick me up. Please." gesture. The man, though standing, is no taller than a child. Both adults of this trio have faces that are creased with age or care. This alone is enough to distinguish them from the youthful faces of the group of seven. Together these 3 figures below the diagonal, poorly dressed and begging, represent a family. The begging boy and his mother are pleading with the Grace-figure to "Please!" take the boy under her administration, to include him in the ranks of her cohorts, the sturdy, well-dressed, adequately-fed, employed young people at her sides. The father, though one hand is raised is pretty static. By far the most dynamic of the ten is the boy; second most is the mother, though her posture appears to be something she has grown weary of. The Grace-figure and her cohorts are all posed and still, with emotionless mask-like faces. On the reverse side of both medals is: "For good conduct and length of service." All though it stated that it was awarded for long service and good conduct, or some such thing, it was really given to the boys who stayed in their first placements for three full years. The medal was an instrument of the drilling into the children the disgrace of being returned to the Agency for any reason.

## William McNab by his Granddaughter Sherri Lynn Farthing

As a child the only thing I knew about my maternal grandfather's past was that he was from Scotland. He never spoke of his childhood to anyone most likely because he had no recollection of his early years in the U.K. or possibly because he felt shame for being one of those "unwanted orphans". I stumbled across his name in a 1910 Quebec census record and immediately realized he must have been a home child. My journey of discovering who my "Grampy" had been in a previous life began that very day. My grandfather's and his siblings' experiences mirror thousands of vulnerable children taken from their homes due to poverty, loss of a parent, abuse, etc. These innocent victims were sent to a foreign land where they had to fend for themselves in situations they were too young to understand. The lucky ones ended up in decent homes where they were loved, cared for and became part of a new family but many were not so lucky and suffered greatly in fear and silence. I believe my grandfather eventually turned out to be one of the lucky ones while each one of his siblings were not so fortunate. The following information is what I was finally able to discover of the McNab children.

Margaret Carstairs and Andrew McNab had six children. Margaret was the daughter of a sheep herder (William Carstairs) and a weaver (Eliza Webster) from Fife, Scotland. At a very young age Margaret followed in her mother's footsteps by becoming a weaver as well. Andrew, the son of a Scottish police officer (Andrew Aedie McNab) and a housewife (Harriet Greene) from Ireland was born in Liverpool, England. Margaret and Andrew married in June 1883 two months before their daughter, Mabel, was born. Three years later their son, Alfred, was born in St. Andrews, Scotland where Andrew worked as a coachman. Edith, child number three, arrived in 1888.

By the time my grandfather (Frederick William McNab) was born (August 21, 1889) the family had relocated to Dysart, a



William McNab and his daughter Bonnie

mining community just a few kilometres outside of Kirkcaldy, Scotland. Still living in Dysart another two years later Margaret gave birth to her daughter Florence.

Sometime after 1891 Andrew moved the family to Liverpool, England where his mother and siblings were living (his father having died of tuberculosis in 1866 at the age of 33). This move must have been difficult for Margaret as she was ill, separated from her own close knit family, and would soon be expecting child number six. In July 1893 Margaret gave birth to her daughter, Fanny, who unfortunately survived only a few days. One week after the loss of her newborn Margaret

succumbed to tuberculosis. A case worker described Margaret as a wonderful mother and respectable woman who took very good care of her children. The children were said to have been "exceedingly nice and had a good training until their mother's death".

After Margaret's death the children's paternal grandmother (Harriet) made it very clear she would not be of any assistance to the young family so the responsibility fell upon 9 year old Mabel's shoulders to take care of her four siblings. During the following three years Andrew was imprisoned three times for neglect and abandonment of his children. The excuse given for his neglect was "he was busy working at the stables so late that he could not look after them". The case worker's reply was "he could have tried especially to the eldest girl, Mabel". In July 1896 the children, except oldest son Alfred, were taken from his care and sent to various workhouses or orphanages. The youngest child, Florence, was admitted to hospital but I was unable to discover the reason. My grandfather (who is known by his middle name, William), apparently not knowing his date of birth, was assigned the date of admission to the orphanage as his new birth date (July 13th).

On February 18, 1897 William (age 7) and sister Edith (age 9) left Liverpool on the Numidian (Allan Line) and arrived in

Halifax on April 4<sup>th</sup>. They were then sent to the Liverpool Sheltering Society “distribution centre” in Knowlton, Quebec.

On July 17, 1897, just three months after their siblings landed in Canada, Mabel (age 14) and Florence (age 6) arrived in Quebec City aboard the “Parisian”. They too ended up in Knowlton but William and Edith would have moved on by then so they most certainly had no idea their siblings were that close to them even for such a short time.

Mabel and Florence were placed separately. Mabel was chosen to go with a woman (Mrs. Porcheron) who took her to New York to work as a domestic and six year old Florence was placed with Eugene and Hattie Snow who soon moved to Prairie Phelps, Nebraska taking her with them. Information on both children is extremely limited but I learned Mabel was back in Quebec shortly before she died at the age of 19 of tuberculosis. Florence was listed in the 1910 American census still living with the Snow family but I lost track of her after that. I unfortunately have no idea what happened to her.

Alfred was the only child to stay with his father probably because he was the oldest boy and, at the age of 11, was earning a living as a flower shop assistant. In September 1902 when Alfred was just 16 his father was admitted to the Walton workhouse hospital near Liverpool where he died of tuberculosis. The following April (1903) Alfred was working as a seaman out of New South Wales, Australia. He travelled the world (San Francisco, New York, Cape Town to name a few). In May 1908 his ship, The Thetis, returned to Sydney, Australia. Alfred was immediately admitted to the Liverpool Asylum on May 6<sup>th</sup> but died three weeks later on May 27<sup>th</sup> of pulmonary tuberculosis at the age of 22. He is buried at the Presbryterian Cemetery in Liverpool, New South Wales, Australia.

William and Edith were thankfully kept together and assigned to a 70+ year old widow (Adeline) who required assistance to run her small farm near Stanstead, Quebec. Certainly neither child had ever seen a cow before but they seemed to get by fairly well according to various inspector’s reports. Edith was described as “a very lovely child and well liked by her schoolmates”. She excelled in school and enjoyed going to Sunday school each week. Sadly Edith, as both her parents and two of her siblings, became a victim of tuberculosis in

September 1901 at the age of 13 leaving her grieving brother on his own. Adeline, describing Edith as “the sunshine of her home” took Edith's death very hard. I found an on-line photo of her gravestone where she is buried at the Coaticook Mount Forest Cemetery.

After his sister's death William began acting out. Adeline may not have realized how much his sister's death affected him and possibly had no idea how to deal with an angry and grieving 12 year-old boy. She wrote multiple letters to the Sheltering Society complaining about his behaviour claiming he was behaving badly at school and often refusing to attend. He started hanging out with the children down the road that she did not approve of and refused to return home when asked. At times he “forgot” to milk the cows or complete his many daily chores. He began breaking into the pantry at night looking

for food and apparently stole money out of Adeline’s purse to buy food for himself in nearby Coaticook. Some of

Adeline's complaints were minor such as William's refusal to go into town with her to buy shoes or

when he “stole” his dead sisters watch that Adeline was planning to lend to her niece. In one of her last letters, possibly feeling quite vulnerable, she claimed he was untrustworthy and dangerous and wanted him removed from her home immediately so William was put on a train back to Knowlton to await

reassignment. The inspector (Mr.

Thompson) wrote that “William was actually a good lad and not at all as bad as Adeline had indicated and hoped to find the young man an appropriate placement”. Apparently the move was very good for William as his new employer was extremely happy with him and even paid him a bonus

for his hard work at the end of the year. William also

learned how to drive a team of horses which he was quite proud of. The last inspector’s report on file stated that William had found a job working as a cook for the railroad and was looking forward to learning a trade (possibly plumbing) and had already saved up enough money to get himself started.

In 1911 William married my grandmother, Mary Hannah Whiting. William actually did become a plumber and during the next 11 years he and Mary had six children before she died of cancer. He married his second wife, Ethel Lowry, three years after Mary's death. I was only three when Ethel died but I remember her as a very loving and kind woman. After Ethel's death in 1959 William began living with one of his sons, Clayton, until his death in September 1969. I am very proud to claim William McNab as my grandfather.

