



HOME CHILDREN CANADA

JULY 2021 SUMMER NEWSLETTER



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Behind our new name

The British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association (BHCARA) is excited to announce a new structure and a new name!!



David Lorente

From July 1st, 2021, the BHCARA organization moved forward as a government-registered not-for-profit under our new name of "Home Children Canada" (HCC), with a board of elected directors. These changes are reflective of our growth and the need

to create a permanent organization in Canada that represents the Home Children across the world. This new structure will enable us to achieve sustainability by providing new channels for funding.

David Lorente founded the first structured organization for the BHC in 1991 - and named it "Home Children Canada." David, with his beloved wife Kay at his side, ran HCC until shortly before his death in January of 2021.

We are grateful and honoured that we have received his family's blessing to carry on our good work under the name HCC. We continue his legacy and our commitment of offering free help to descendants, caring for our last few surviving British Home Children (BHC). We will ensure that the voice David gave to the BHC is never, ever silenced again.

A new Facebook page for HCC has been created, however our very active group, of almost ten thousand remains active, under the BHCARA name - running now as a program of HCC. The name BHCARA will no longer be used as the name of our official organization.

For full details and how you can help, please visit:

[Home Children Canada - Announcing our new name!](#)

Read about David Lorente's contribution to the Home Children and his legacy on page 6 of this newsletter.

ALICE, THE CHILD WHO NEVER SMILED

Written for the descendants of Alice Frazee (Fraser) Hayes

Penetanguishene, Ontario

by Tilly Meyer, granddaughter-in-law of Alice Hayes, March 2021

Alice, a motherless child, just ten years old, arrived in Montreal, Canada, having voyaged on board the *Tunisian* with twenty-one other BHC on June 15th 1901. She then travelled by train to Hazelbrae, Peterborough, Ontario, the Barnardo, receiving home. Her disheartening moving around did not stop as soon as she reached Canada. Her first work placement was at Niagara-on-the-Lake, in June 26, 1901. Alice received a Barnardo care service person visit mid-August. Her comment was that the child was lonely, with no smile. The next visit was not until May 1902, the comments about that visit were disturbing. She was listed as being "ragged, dirty, barefooted, a grimy white faced, sad child. Place is too solemn for the mite, even though she does not complain, I question if she could laugh".



British Home Children, was a term I had never heard until I started researching Alice Hayes, my grandmother-in-law's history. I had so little to go on when I started the search; I had her name, the year she had died, and that she lived the last years of her life in Penetanguishene, Ontario. By word of mouth, I knew that she was English. She was buried in the Saint-James-on-the-line, Anglican graveyard, so that told me she most likely was from the Church of England. After several years of research, this is what I have learned.

In the 1891 census from England, she was listed as less than two months old and her name appeared as Julia, but everywhere in the Barnardo documents I later read, they have her recorded as born 1890 and went by Alice; Julia could be her middle name. Also, the British census of 1891 shows she was born in Romford, Essex, England. This was a great start to a long journey of discovery. Alice Hayes was admitted to the Barnardo's organization on December 30th, 1898, she was 7 years old, although they wrote her down as 8 years old. She did not know her birth date and place of birth, her religion was known to be the Church of England, and she was baptized. Alice's physical description; when she was received at the Barnardo home; colour of hair-brown, colour of eyes-grey, height-3ft 11 1/2", chest measure- 22", complexion-pale, vac marks-4, weight-51 lbs, condition of body-fairly well-nourished, remarks by medical -pale, blepharitis, to attend infirmary, Ilford. (Blepharitis is inflammation along the edges of the eyelids.)

A few of the notes from Alice's admission documents to the Barnardo's receiving House note that a written application was received from a district visitor, on behalf of this motherless girl; the name of the brother Thomas was included with his age of 6 years old. In addition to the very full particulars from the applicant letter, the inquiry officer, reports as follows, the mother Mary Jane Hayes, died from a broken blood vessel on May 23, 1898, 35 years old, address St. Andrews Road, Romford. Until three months, the father, who is a builder's labourer lived at that address. He was then compelled because of illness to enter Romford infirmary; the three youngest children went into the workhouse with him. At the end of a week, the father was removed to Brentwood Lunatic Asylum. His illness has been brought on by excessive drinking. Formerly a soldier in India, drink had affected his head in such a way that it rendered him irresponsible.

Seven weeks before the application was made, the father was discharged from the Asylum, but left the children at the workhouse. He found that all his goods had been detained for rent, and thus he was rendered homeless. He took a furnished room, but the landlady refused to have the children there. Meanwhile, the Union Guardians summoned him to remove the children from the workhouse; but he had nowhere to place them. The eldest boy lived with his maternal grandfather, a feeble old man, and no other relatives were able to take the children in.

The inquiry officer called to interview the father one Saturday at noon. He had just been paid and was found in the public house. The agent describes him as a sleepy-headed, rough, ignorant man; and considered his offer to pay the institute something, if the children were admitted, as utterly worthless. The relatives all agreed that Alice's father was unfit to take charge of her.

It was decided to admit her only. Alice Hayes was moved around several times in England following her birth on February 23, 1891 in Romford, Essex, England. In 1898, prior to May 23, she lived with mother in Romford Essex; sometime after May 23, that year, she was sent to the Workhouse in, Romford. By December Alice had been admitted to Dr. Barnardo's. In January of 1899 she was living in Dr. Barnardo's Girls Village Home. From there, on October 27th, she was out in Thornton. By May 17th, 1901 she was back at the Girls Village Home and on the 6th of June that year, she was sent to Canada with one-hundred-five other British Home Children.

Alice, a motherless child, just ten years old, arrived in Montreal, Canada, having voyaged on board the Tunisian. She then traveled by train to Hazelbrae, Peterborough, Ontario to the Barnardo girls receiving home. Her disheartening moving around did not stop when she reached Canada. Her first work placement, in June of 1901, was at Niagara-on-the-Lake. Alice was visited by a Barnardo care service person in mid-August. Her comment was that the child was lonely, with no smile. The next visit was not until May 1902, and the comments about that visit are disturbing. She was listed as being "ragged, dirty, barefooted, a grimy white-faced, sad child. Place is too solemn for the mite, even though she does not complain, I question if she could laugh". Also noted was that she was not attending Sunday school, church, or school, as required by Dr. Barnardo's. Alice was returned to Hazelbrae in June 1902. From there she was placed on a farm in Islington. On a care service visit in October, the worker noted Alice as looking stronger but sad-faced. It was also noted that she was going to Church and School. The farmer's wife was a grandmotherly figure and things looked pleasant. However this ended too, Jan 1903, when the farmer's wife passed away.

Once again, Alice was moved to another farm in Islington. This was a miserable place for her and the comments from there were summed up as a very sad child. There came written complaints from the farmer to Hazelbrae; Alice was not old enough, too small, inefficient, and unhappy. The care worker's comments in the records were that she cries a great deal at nothing and that it was a nice well-kept farm. In June she was taken away from this place and brought to a new place.

In June of 1903, Alice went to work for Miss Maria Bell, in Stayner. Maria was a seamstress. The next visit from Hazelbrae care worker, the situation was so different. She found a healthy smiling, nice tall looking girl in a very cozy farmhouse. It was confirmed she was going to Sunday school and Confirmation class. So it had taken two years but Alice was now reported as having grown so much and had a real smile on her face. After two years in 1905, Miss Bell married Mr. George Clay and moved to Byng Inglet, and, happily, Alice went with them. She had found her place.

In one of the last comments in the documents from Hazelbrae, it was noted that Alice said her brother was coming to Stayner. In the Canadian June census 1911, of Byng Inglet, I found Alice still living with the Clays, listed as domestic help. Ten years later she is on the 1921 census as married to Edward P Frazeau (Fraser). Edward was a box cutter at one of the factories in Byng Inglet, so they would have met in the little town somewhere. Edward had been in World War 1 overseas. They were married in Parry Sound on April 10, 1920. On Nov 22, 1922, Alice and Edward were blessed with twin boys, Norman and Howard.

Alice with twins, Norman and Howard



The Great War has now passed out of living memory.....

B y : A N D R E W S I M P S O N

Historian & Author of "The Ever Open Door - 150 Years of the Together Trust



www.chorltonhistory.blogspot.com

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



But it remains an area of serious historical study, the subject of books, plays, and films, and has been embraced by the heritage industry.

The last of my direct family to have lived through that war died over twenty years ago, and so that link to the conflict has been severed.

Not that he, or my other uncle, great uncles or my grandparents ever spoke of their experiences or those of my great grandfather and the German side of the family. They never mentioned those four years and I never asked.

One of my great uncles was a BHC, migrated in the May of 1914 to Canada. He enlisted the following year, having run away from his placement, changed his name and lied about his age, and after a short stay in Britain was shipped out to the Western Front.

Much has been written about the Great War, but I doubt that much research has focused on its impact on the children's charities responsible for young people in care.

My own interest is the Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges which was founded in 1870 and quickly became involved in many aspects of child welfare including the migration of young people to Canada, between 1870 and 1914.

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



Harold Moss, 1914

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 Harold, 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." [1]

By 1916, the Charity was experiencing a severe short fall in donations as the public increasingly channelled their money toward charities directly connected with the War.

These covered everything from the National Fund to relieve hardship, to sending comforts to the troops and those aimed at Refugees. The Charity itself contributed to the war effort, not only through the sacrifice of its young men and

buildings, but also through socks and comforters, knitted by the elder girls of the Homes and sent out to those at the Front.

As the conflict dragged on, the Government found a whole range of ways of raising funds and these took money away from donations to charities.

The Manchester Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges 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." [2]

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."

And as the Juvenile crime rates climbed they were acutely aware "that funds were urgently needed" to tackle the problem.

But amongst the gloom and anxiety, the Charity did decide to run the summer camp in 1915 with the help of generous donations from Southport and later in the war began to plan for the future.

It was a future, which envisaged a move out of the twin cities, and was in part brought on by financial pressure. In 1916, the Committee reported that "if the empty buildings can be sold a probable consequence will be the transference of part of the Institution's work to a more

desirable situation in the country." [3]

Looking back at those crisis years it is perhaps surprising that the Charity could plan for that future given its perilous economic situation, but survive it did.

And so does the memory of some of those young Canadians who fought in the Great War and are buried here in Manchester.

They include 26 men of the C.E.F., who are buried in Southern Cemetery which is just ten minutes away from where I live.

One of those was Thomas John Loveland was a British Home Child who enlisted in the August of 1915 and was in the First Battalion of the Canadian Machine Gun Corps.

I had suspected he was a British Home Child because his Attestation Papers showed that his next of kin was an Eliza Loveland living in London and she was his sister. Their father who had been a gas labourer had died in 1903 at the age of 35 leaving his wife Eleanor to bring up five children on her own.

Thomas was a Barnardo Boy who arrived in Canada onboard the SS Dominion in 1907.

Like my great uncle he was the only one of the direct family to have been sent to Canada.

Somewhere there will be the records of how that migration came about and the decisions which led him to Canada but his siblings to stay in the UK. Some of these will be locked away in the Barnardo records and as I am not a family member I will never get to see them.

He was buried in Southern Cemetery having died on November 6th 1918, and I suspect had been a patient at the military hospital which was very close by.

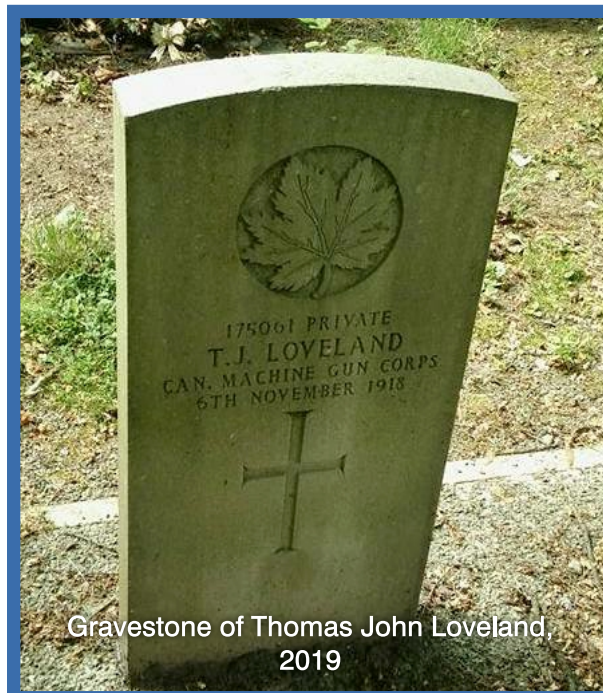
It is now 103 years since his death and the end of the Great War, and it is fitting that we should continue to remember his contribution along all those BHC who served, and the wider impact on the organizations that cared for young people.

Pictures; Harold Moss, 1916, courtesy of the Together Trust, and other images from the collection of Andrew Simpson

[1] Children's Haven, 1916

[2] Urgent Need of Financial Help, Manchester Evening News, December 24, 1914

[3] Manchester and Salford Boys' and



Gravestone of Thomas John Loveland,
2019

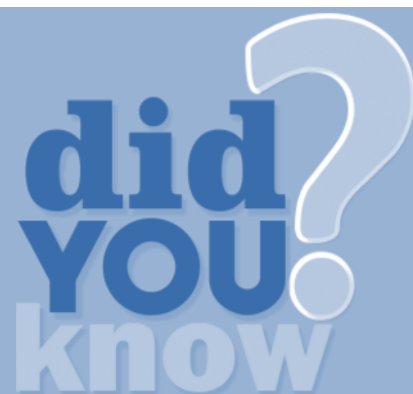
A very special donation to our Collections



Home Children Canada is thrilled to have received a wonderful donation of a collection of First World War uniform items, many of which belonged to British Home Child Charles Richards.

Charles was born in Gorey, Wexford, Ireland. He was admitted to the Birds Nest children's home in Dublin and emigrated to Canada by the Smyly Homes to the Coombe Home in Hespeler, Ontario. Charlie, as he was called, enlisted in July of 1918. After the War he became a milkman for the Galt Dairy. Charlie married Margaret Lawson and in 1943 their son Douglas was born.

We are greatly appreciative of this donation from Charlie's family, especially his daughter-in-law Sharon Fraser-Richards. It is with the greatest trust that she donated his uniform and items so that they can be used to continue telling the story of our British Home Children and their exceptional contributions made in service to our country. Sharon also gave us quite a bit of information regarding Charlie which will be published in a longer story in an upcoming newsletter. Thank you Charlie for your service and to your family for this wonderful gift.



HCC President Lori Oschefski spent six years advocating for formal recognition of the service of our BHC in the Wars by Veterans Affairs Canada. This goal was achieved in November of 2020. The British Home Children's service now appears in a place of honour on the VAC's website. Click on this link to visit our pages on VAC! <https://rb.gy/khfrlr>

The Man Behind our Name - David Lorente



Founder of Home Children Canada

1991 to 2020 Edited by Kay Lorente and her family.

David Lorente, a pioneer in the work for Home Children in Canada, will be forever remembered and respected for his years of service to their memory. David's own father, Joseph, was a Home Boy. But like many, traumatized by their experiences, he never told his family. One day, in 1963 David drove his father to Killaloe, not knowing that was where his father was placed. His father seemed to become more agitated and upset the closer they got to their destination. Passing the train station his father said "That's where they left...the boy..." Joseph's agitation heightened as they drove by the ghost town of Brudenell. The source of his father's pain lay hidden until 14 years after Joseph's death. At that time, David had read the Phyllis Harrison book "The Home Children: Their Personal Stories", realized that his father must have been a Home Child - and that took another 11 years to prove.

His research showed that his father Joseph had been born in Cardiff, Wales but was living in London, England when his parents separated, leaving his mother unable to adequately support her family of six. Joseph was sent to Canada, at the age of 15, to work on farms by the Roman Catholic Emigration Society's Westminster Branch. He was placed with a farmer in Killaloe, where he waited to be picked up by him at the train station for four hours. Joseph was treated badly here and left without proper sleeping accommodations. One

day, after he was attacked by a farmer with pitchfork, he ran away and stayed on his own in the forest for two days. After neighbours found him, he was returned to the St. George's receiving home in Ottawa and reassigned to a new farm. Here he found a better home and a better life.

David, after speaking about the Home Children at the local heritage society in Renfrew realized that these children were stigmatized. A man in attendance recalled that as a child he was not allowed to play with Home Children. David knew he needed to do something about this. He organized a reunion for Home Children and their families, where over two hundred people showed up, both Home Children and their families. When he offered free help with finding their records, he was swamped with requests.

With the help of his lovely wife Kay, for the first time, Home Children had a voice, Home Children had support, and Home Children had somebody who cared what had happened to them. Thus in 1991 "Home Children Canada" (HC) was born.

From 1991, until shortly before his death in January of 2021, David worked tirelessly to promote this story and to help the people involved. He has held and attended hundreds of meetings and events and was in attendance when the then Prime Minister Gordon Brown apologized to Home Children on behalf of England.

David, a respected teacher for over 30 years, was also a wonderful husband and a beloved father of six children and many Grandchildren. We are grateful and honored that we have received his family's blessing to carry on our good work under the name of Home Children Canada. We continue his legacy of offering free help to descendants, caring for our last few surviving British Home Children (BHC), and ensure that the voice of David for the HC is never, ever silenced again.

A special note from Judy Neville:

I will always consider one of the biggest accomplishments in my life was meeting Dave Lorente. Although I didn't meet him until about 10 years ago I know just how dedicated he was to everything British Home Child-related. His wife Kay was a constant as they both worked to assist others. Dave and I had communicated by phone several times, as I worked with a group of local British Home Child descendants organizing the first British Home Child Day - September 28, Ontario event in 2011.

Since the early 1990s, he had been helping anyone who asked, trace their British Home Child roots. This meant many hours spent at Library and Archives Canada pouring over ship manifests, immigration records, etc. I could never begin to calculate how many letters he sent and records he requested from various child saver organizations in the UK on behalf of others. Dave traveled around the world to speak to various groups regarding British Home Children. He and several other British Home Children and descendants traveled to Britain in 2010, to witness the apology offered by Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

The first meeting I had with Dave, in my home, in 2011 was so rewarding. He called me his kindred spirit. This was a huge accolade. I knew my work with British Home Children and their descendants would be a lifelong commitment. Rest in peace Dave, your work will carry on.



Sources:

Highway of Shame, Highway of Hope by Maria Henry <http://www.pinecone.on.ca/MAGAZINE/stories/HomeChildren.html>
Finding Home Children by Ruby Cusack <http://www.rubycusack.com/issue136.html>



The Ships That Brought Them

A Series by Ralph Jackson of Winnipeg

The RMS Bavarian

THE BAVARIAN.

During its abbreviated life span, the R.M.S. Bavarian conveyed 2,178 British Home Children from Liverpool to the port cities of Quebec and Montreal. While the total number of Home Children transported by the Bavarian may not rival many other vessels, its storied history and ultimate connection to Canada makes it worthy of inclusion.

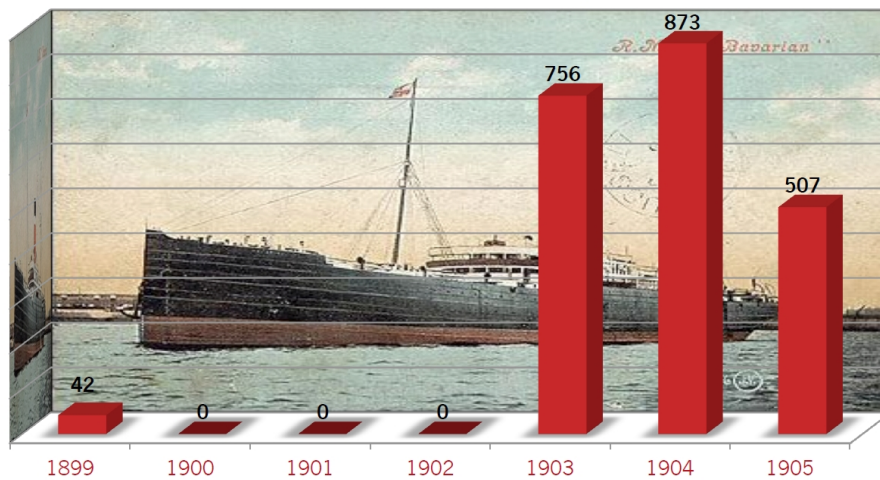
On August 17th 1899, shipbuilders William Denny & Co. delivered the Bavarian to its owners, Allan Line, in Liverpool. Seven days later, the ship departed Liverpool for its first Atlantic crossing; arriving at Quebec in the early morning hours of September 1. On board were sixteen boys; sent to Canada by the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society. A second voyage from Liverpool to Quebec took place on September 21st, 1899, carrying with it twenty-six boys from Southwark Catholic Emigration Society. This proved to be the Bavarian's last Atlantic crossing for several years.

Upon its return to England, the ship was chartered by the British Admiralty to transport troops, nurses and munitions to the Second Boer War in South Africa. For the following three years, the ship transported troops to and from The Cape. Most homeward voyages returned sick and wounded soldiers to England.

The Bavarian also operated along the coastal waters of South Africa; moving troops, equipment and Boer prisoners between Cape Town, Queenston, Las Palmas and Durban. On September 8th, 1900, the ship arrived in Ceylon with 1,291 Boer prisoners of war.

Following the end of the war in May 1902, the Bavarian arrived at Southampton on September 6th, 1902 with 2,000 officers and men aboard. The Admiralty then released the ship, allowing it to return to its intended route

Number of Children Transported



between Liverpool, Quebec and upriver to Montreal. It resumed its transatlantic voyages in October of that year and maintained a steady schedule of crossings until October of 1905.

On October 28th, 1905 the Bavarian arrived in Quebec with sixteen British Home Children aboard. The children were from the Catholic Emigration Society of Coleshill, Birmingham; bound for St. George's Home in Ottawa. Nobody could have foreseen that this was to be the Bavarian's last Atlantic voyage.

THE WRECK OF THE BAVARIAN.

On the night of November 3rd, 1905, the Bavarian began its homeward journey from Montreal with a full list of passengers and freight. The vessel stopped at Quebec to take on the pilot, Paul Lachance. Once aboard, Lachance took charge of the ship's navigation from Captain Brown. It was the pilot's responsibility to navigate the Bavarian safely along the St. Lawrence River.

The night was moderately clear with a few light snow flurries when Lachance began to guide the ship down the St. Lawrence. Contrary to good seamanship, the pilot was relying solely on lighted buoys to determine his route, paying little attention to his compass bearings.

The electric lights of the Grosse Ile Immigration Station were clearly visible. Situated just offshore was the gas-lit Quarantine Buoy, its intended function was to enable ships to anchor for quarantine purposes; however, pilots were in the habit of using it as a leading buoy going downriver. Sadly, Lachance was unaware that the buoy had been extinguished for several days, leaving him to believe that the next lit buoy he saw was the Quarantine Buoy

when it was in fact the light on the St. Thomas shoal.

At this point, Lachance must have begun to question his position because he ordered the ship stopped and the lead cast to ascertain the water's depth. Strangely, before the order could be carried out, he changed his mind and countermanded his own instructions.

Had the pilot considered the positioning of the lights of Grosse Ile or consulted the ship's compass, he should have realized that he was off course but relying solely on what he mistakenly perceived to be the Quarantine Buoy, he steered the Bavarian even further away from the channel. Shortly thereafter, Lachance fully realized his mistake and put his helm hard to starboard and ordered the ship stopped, unfortunately, not in time to save the ship. The Bavarian struck Wye Rock, leaving the vessel aground to be stranded there for fourteen months.

A court of enquiry found Paul Lachance fully responsible for the wreck and Captain Brown and his crew blameless. Taking his previously unblemished record into account, the court suspended Lachance's pilot's license for eighteen months.

FREEING THE BAVARIAN

For well over a year the Bavarian languished on Wye Rock during which time Allan Line spent large sums of money trying to free the stricken vessel.

Salvage companies were brought in from the U.S. and Britain but none could achieve success. Marine engineers from Scotland said that the ship might possibly be floated but the expense of the work would not justify the result. Men who spent their lives on the river suggested that the only way to dislodge the vessel would be to blast the rock on which it was stuck but



acknowledged that this procedure would result in fatal damage to the hull itself.

W.B. Lesslie, a wrecker from Kingston, Ontario, asserted that he could free the Bavarian using bags of compressed air. He had previously used compressed air to free the Scottish King, a vessel that had run aground on the shore of Newfoundland.

International experts and locals alike ridiculed his statements and went to great lengths to explain why his proposal wouldn't work. The more vocal his detractors, the more determined Lesslie became. At this stage, Allan Line was prepared to entertain any reasonable proposals and awarded Lesslie the contract. His payment would be half the salvage value of the vessel should he succeed in freeing the ship.

Lesslie's crew of sixty men spent three months building platforms around the hull under which airbags were positioned. Divers worked below the surface to secure the bags in place and monitor the ship's underwater condition.

With preparations complete, the airbags were filled in readiness for high tide. As the tide rose, the ship regained buoyancy and with the assistance of several tugs, was towed off the rock and pulled clear of the hazard.

With the freeing of the Bavarian, this Canadian accomplished what international experts had deemed impossible. For fulfilling the contract, he cleared a profit of \$100,000, a fortune in 1907. This extraordinary feat of engineering garnered W.B. Lesslie global acclaim and recognition as the world's leading expert in marine salvage.

As for the Bavarian, once released from Wye Rock, she was towed to Wolfe's Cove to winter there. In 1907 the vessel was moved to Quebec where she was ultimately broken up for parts and scrap, a sad end to the Bavarian's brief service.