



RYE
HERITAGE
PARK

RYE HERITAGE PARK
 The Rye Heritage Park is a beautiful green space in the heart of Rye, Ontario. It is a place where the community can enjoy the outdoors and learn about the history of the area. The park features a large wooden sign, a tennis court, and a playground. It is a great place for families to spend time together and enjoy the beauty of the park.

BRITISH HOME CHILDREN
 Approved by parliament, the Church of England and other agencies in Britain and Canada, Mrs. Macdonald's Home for Children in this town was staffed and after 1850, the church of England's High and Holy Jessey orphanage children mostly girls from adoption, had been and continued service in western Canada by 1945. Over 80 percent of them were trained as teachers through here. They came from New York's Home for Caring Children in Yorkville, London, or from workhouses throughout Great Britain. Most of the institutionalized children received a wage from age 15. Mrs. Macdonald was one of the most prominent organizers of emigration was supported by the British government as one means of expediting the new frontier in the country. It enjoyed much popular approval and charitable generosity.
 Formed in 1913 by the Niagara Historical Society and Mrs. Macdonald with the support of English Services Children Group Incorporated and the British Home with the love of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Home Children Immigration & Their Lives Niagara-on-the-Lake ON

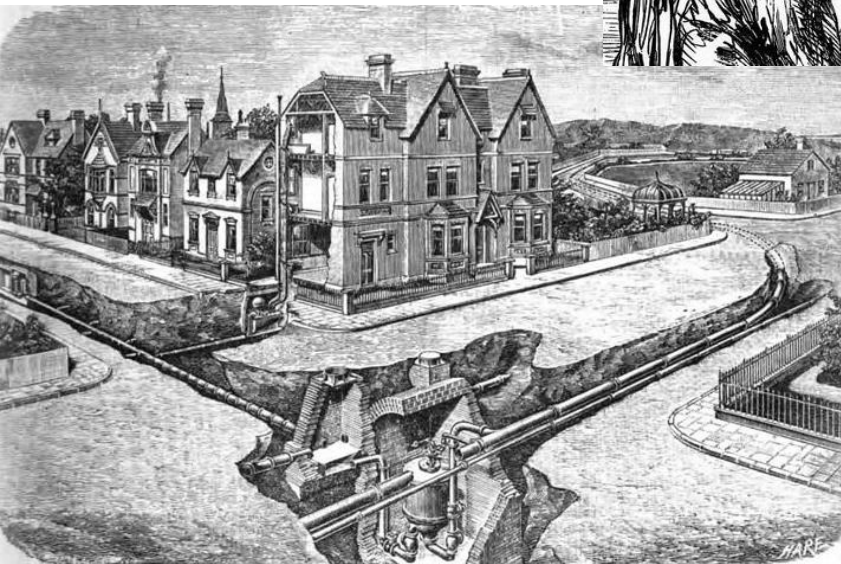
The Great Stink in London



Joseph Bazalgette
Sewer System: 1858-1875
82 miles; 2.5M people.



Common Diseases:
Cholera, Typhoid,
Smallpox, Typhus,
Scarlet Fever, &
Consumption (TB)

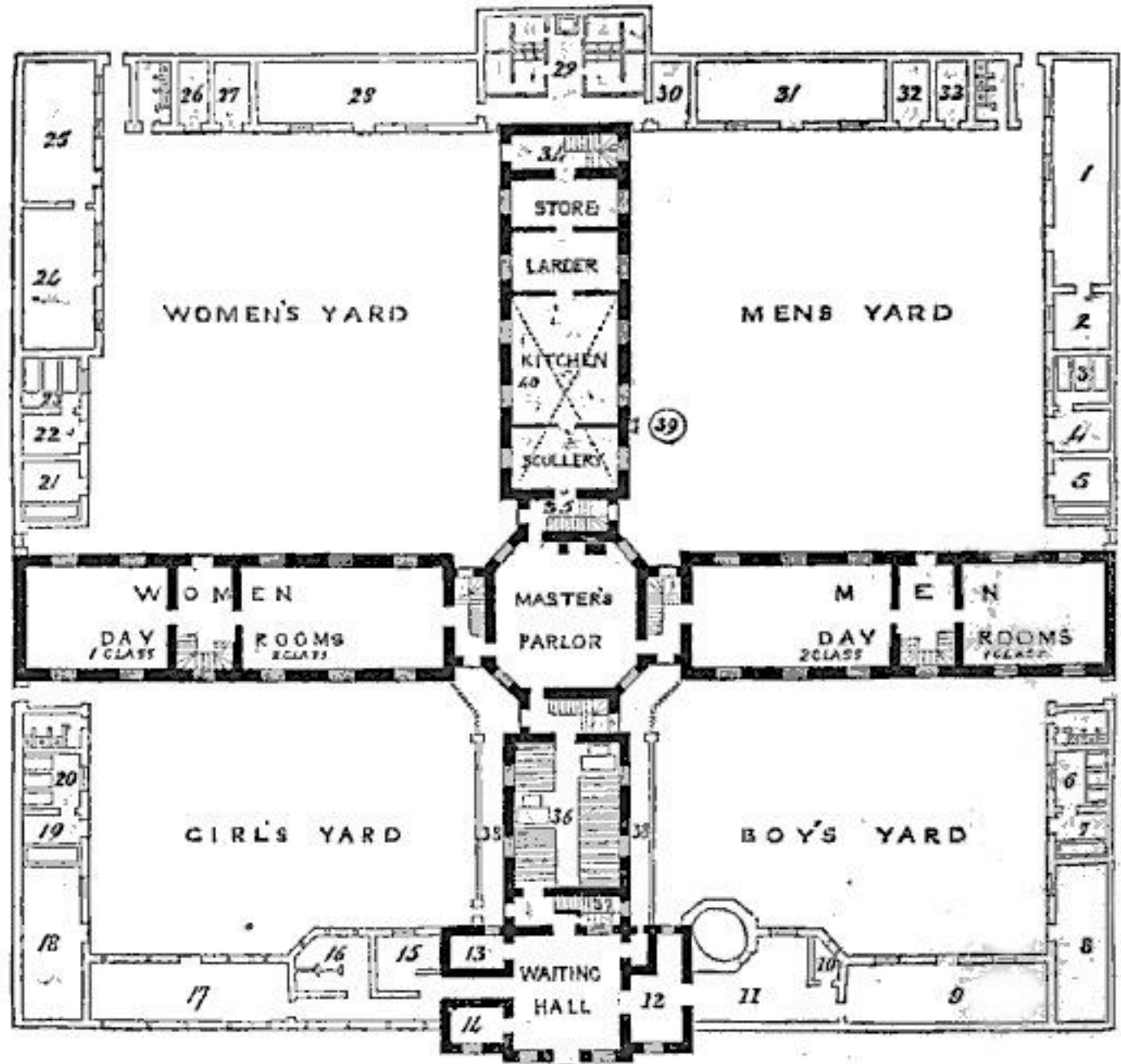


Slum Conditions for Children



Typical Workhouse

*300 paupers;
3 stories high.*



Workhouse Conditions

10 hours work/day; 2 prayers + meals



Women and other events in the 1800s

- Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) founded the Nightingale School and Home for Nurses in London in 1860.
- Ada Lovelace (1815-1862) was first to describe a computer.
- Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) was the first modern sociologist, who described the impact of self-reliance and personal control over one's health.
- Isabella Mayson ("Mrs") Beeton (1836-1865) was the author of Household Management in 1861.
- Dr. James Barry (Margaret Anne Bulkley, 1795-1865), Surgeon General of the British Army and later the Inspector General of Hospitals (Lt. Col.) in Canada in 1857 – 'woman' after death.
- Vatican (1867) was warding Catholics away from English seats of learning such as Oxford University, not relaxed until 1895.
- Canada became a self-governing dominion of Great Britain on 1 July 1867 – NB, NS, ON, QC, with parliament in Ottawa.

Major Social Laws in Britain

- 1861: Chronic sick separated from other workhouse inmates. Nurses started to be appointed.
- 1864: Metropolitan Houseless Poor Act for London.
- 1866: Labouring Classes Dwelling Act – 1st mortgages for poor.
- 1869: The Charity Organisation Society – 1st family casework.
- 1889: Prevention of Cruelty to, & Protection of, Children Act – prohibited boys under 14 & girls under 16 from begging.
- 1800s: Universal use of Workhouses (or Unions).
- 1897: Jubilee Year – “Public Health” was seen to be improving.
- 1930: Workhouses renamed Public Assistance Institutions.
- 1948: National Assistance Act, closing workhouses.

Maria Rye's Family

Edward Rye (1803-1876, *Attorney*) London, England, married 1828
Maria Tuppen (1804-1882)

Children:

- i. **Maria Susan Rye** (1829-1903, *Pauper emigration leader*)
- ii. **Elizabeth Rye** (1830-1916, *Pauper emigration*)
- iii. **Edward Caldwell Rye** (1832-1885, *Entymologist*); married 1867
Isabella Sophia Waterhouse. 5 children.
- iv. **George Rye** (1834-1836)
- v. **Mary Ann Cubitt Rye** (1837-1919, *Pauper emigration*)
- vi. **Charles Rye** (1839-1854)
- vii. **Walter Rye** (1843-1870, *Attorney*); married 1870 **Georgina Eliza Sturges**.
10 children.
- viii. **Clara Louise Rye** (1846-1933, *Pauper emigration*)
- ix. **Francis Rye** (1848-1884, *Attorney*); married 1875 **Amy Louisa Haslam**,
St. Mark's Church, NOTL. 2 children.

Maria Rye



Building support for Maria Rye

- Being tall, less than good-looking, formidable and rather fierce, Miss Rye had become a successful entrepreneur in the positioning and employment of young women.
- Women's rights gained momentum in the 1850s. The public interest in female emigration to colonies peaked in the 1860s. She also received real encouragement, approvals and fund-raising arrangements with Archbishop of Canterbury, Earl of Shaftesbury, and Workhouse Guardians.
- In 1861 she founded the Female Middle Class Emigration Society.
- Between 1860 and 1868, she sailed with her young adult, middle class women and domestic servants to Australia, New Zealand, and Eastern Canada, and she visited these colonies to establish (i) local protection committees & employer arrangements, and (ii) longer-term fund-raising liaisons with charities there.

1867-1869: Early British Home Children to Canada

- By 1868 there was an overwhelming drive by the governments and donors in Canada and Britain to encourage the emigration of girls from the age of 5 to 17 years old to Canada (a closer colony).
- Maria Rye cut a deal with Allan Line of ships, leaving Liverpool, with 80-150 girls per voyage, in steerage - starting in 1868. Early voyages lasted 2-4 weeks in sailing ships. Uptake in Eastern Canadian could not have been more enthusiastic; girls were adopted, fostered, hired (depending on age) within days of arrival.
- As a result, Maria Rye acquired 'Our Western Home' in NOTL and 'Avenue House' in Peckham, South London – with 2 sisters.
- The intake were “gutter children” from British urban streets, and poor girls from workhouses.

Allan Line Ships in the 1860s & 1870s

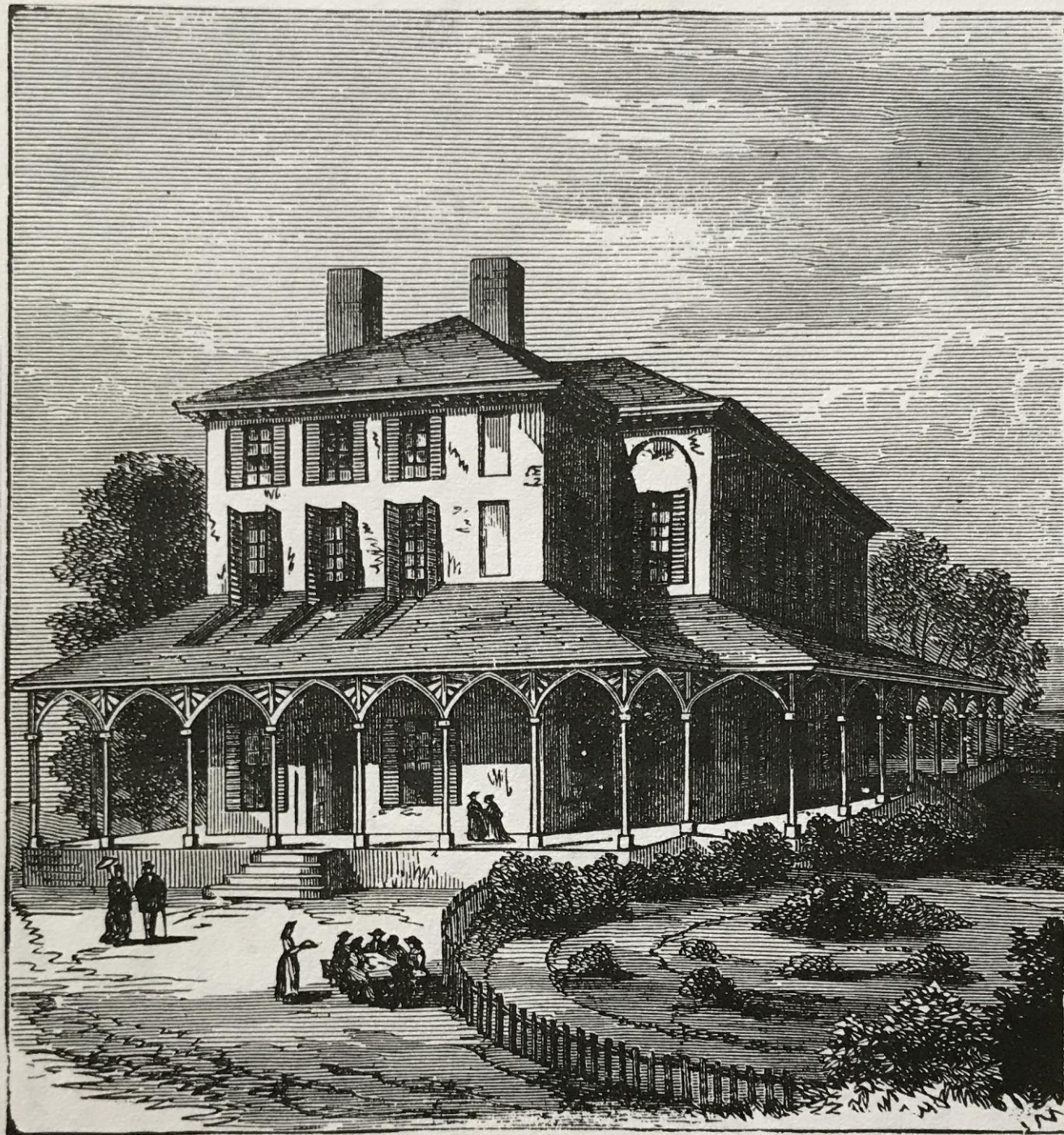


SS Hibernian



SS Sarmatian

Our Western Home, NOTL [North side]



N side.

Emily Bayley, Superintendent.

Our Western Home – West side

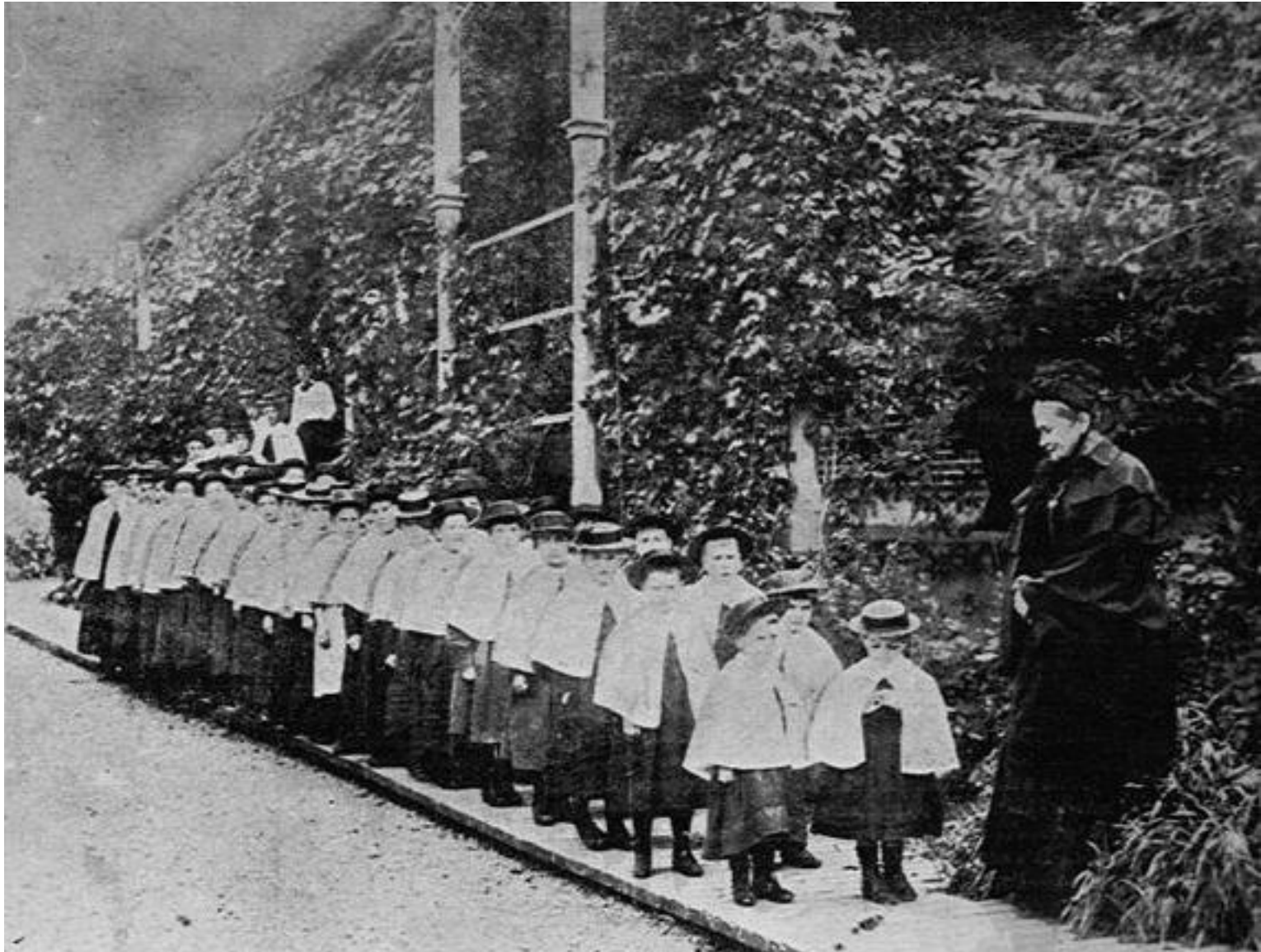




BHCs at OWH: from the Museum's Collection



Sunday Morning at OWH: Off to Church



Mrs. Hannah Soffe, Travelling Matron.

BHC Emigration Movement, up to 1928

Over 10,000:

- Marchmont Home, Belleville (Annie MacPherson) 1870
- Catholic Emigration & Cardinal Manning, St. George's, Ottawa & PQ 1880
- Dr. Barnardo, Toronto & Winnipeg 1882

3,000-10,000:

- Maria Rye & Church of England Waifs & Strays, NOTL & Sherbrook 1868
- Sir J.T. Middlemore, Halifax NS 1873
- National Children's Home, Hamilton 1873
- J.W.C. Fegan Home, Toronto 1884
- William Quarrier, Brockville 1890
- The Salvation Army 1905

Others

- Started in the early 1900s, some to escape WW1.

***Avenue House,
Peckham, South London***



Commemoration Plaques in Rye Park, NOTL, 2018



THE HERITAGE WORKING
The Heritage Working is a group of people who are interested in the history of Rye and the surrounding area. They are working to preserve the heritage of the area and to make it accessible to everyone. The group is made up of people from all walks of life and is dedicated to the study and promotion of the area's history. They have been successful in securing funding for the Heritage Working and in establishing a museum in the area. The group is also working to create a heritage trail and to develop a heritage centre. The Heritage Working is a great example of how a group of people can work together to preserve and promote the heritage of an area.

**RYE
HERITAGE
PARK**

BRITISH HOME CHILDREN
Sponsored by subscribers, the Church of England and public generosity, in Britain and Canada, Miss Rye founded the British Home on this site in 1868. She, her staff and other staff of the Church of England's Baff and Sisters Society placed over 5,000 impoverished, abandoned or orphaned children (mostly girls) into adoption, foster homes and industrial service in eastern Canada by 1914. Over 80 percent of them were trained or trained through here. They came from Miss Rye's home town of Gosport, Children in Peckham, London, or from workhouses throughout Great Britain. Most of the indentured children received a wage from age 15-18. Maria Rye was one of the most prominent organizers of British child emigration in the 19th century. Child emigration was encouraged by the British government as one means of populating the new continent in the Empire. It enjoyed much popular approval and charitable generosity.
Erected in 2018 by the Niagara Historical Society and Museum with the support of Elizabeth Squires and David Murray, the assistance of the British Home Children Group International, and in collaboration with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Two new plaques in Rye Park, 28 Sep 2018

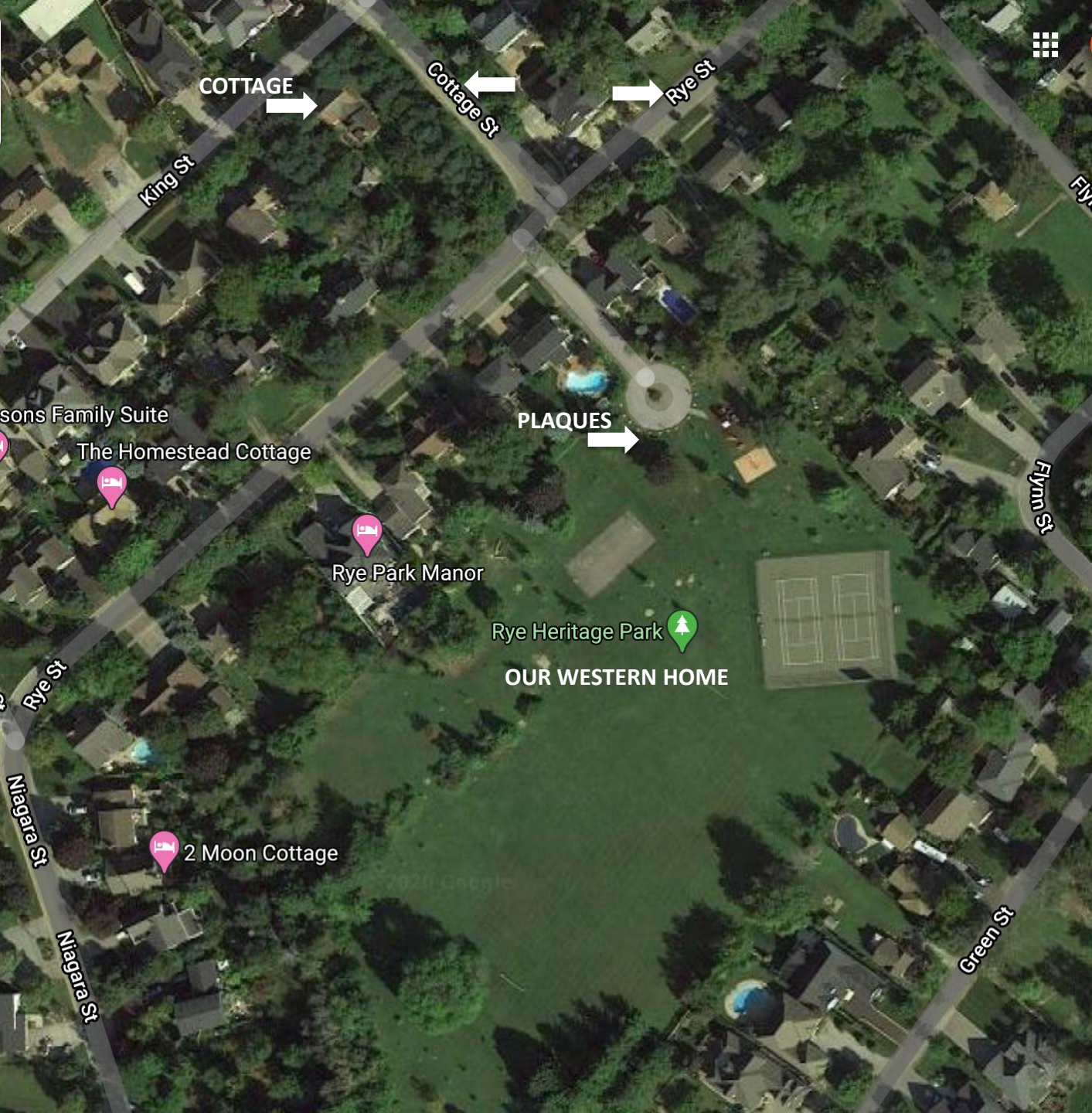
BRITISH HOME CHILDREN

Sponsored by aristocrats, the Church of England and public generosity in Britain and Canada, Maria Rye founded *Our Western Home* on this site in 1869. She, her staff and, after 1896, the Church of England's *Waifs and Strays Society* placed over 5,500 impoverished, abandoned or orphaned children (mostly girls) into adoptions, foster homes and indentured service in eastern Canada by 1914. Over 80 percent of them were trained or transited through here. They came from Miss Rye's *Avenue House for Gutter Children* in Peckham, London, or from workhouses throughout Great Britain. Most of the indentured children received a wage from age 15-18. Maria Rye was one of the most prominent organizers of British child emigration in the 19th century. Child emigration was encouraged by the British government as one means of populating the new countries in the Empire. It enjoyed much popular approval and charitable generosity.

OUR WESTERN HOME

On this 2-acre site once stood the Town's Court House and Gaol. In 1869 the property was purchased by the London social reformer Maria S. Rye (1829-1903), after whom adjacent Rye Street is named. She converted the premises into a home for orphaned or abandoned British children and named it *Our Western Home*. It had a capacity of up to 120 (mostly girls) aged typically from 5 to 18. By the time of her retirement in 1896 over 4,000 children had been housed and received training here. Subsequently, the Church of England acquired the premises and a further 1,500 British Home Children came through the premises before WW1. The home attempted to be self-sufficient with a vegetable patch, a small greenhouse, an orchard, and a poultry coop. In 1916 the building briefly became a residence for Polish Army officers and staff in training at Camp Niagara. It was demolished in 1923.

Our Western Home in Rye Park





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COLLECTION & RESEARCH

[Collections Database](#)

[NOTL History](#)

[Society Publications](#)

[Niagara Research](#)

[Essays & Notes](#)

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2

COLLECTION & RESEARCH

In this section, explore the many areas of Niagara's past that make this such a unique experience. Check out the books, publications and essays linked on the left hand side of the page or view our collection and publications in the other repositories below.

The Collection

Our Western Home - Rye Home

-  [Home Children On-Line Database](#)
-  [Young Immigrants to Canada](#)
-  [Maria Rye from London Illustrated News](#)
-  [Database of Maria Rye British Home Children, v.2, June 2020](#)
-  [Research on Miss Rye British Home Children, v.2, June 2020](#)

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Immigration Database for Rye BHCs

#	Surname	First Name	Date (Arrival)	Age (or DOB)	Status, and: UK Origin & how long there? [yrs]	Rye's placement notes (+ recipient details, if known). Later updates from Govt. Inspectors (e.g., 1877). + Marriages	How placed	Ship	Port - UK	Port - Can.
2332	B.(Barker)	E.(Elizabeth)	Feb 1880	10	Sister to the above	H.J. S---, tailor, Clarke, ON	Adopted	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2333	C.(Clark)	E.(Emily)	Feb 1880	14	Ma dead; Pa gone	W. H---, stationmaster, Simcoe, ON	Bound in service	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2334	C.(Callagan)	F.(Florence)	Feb 1880	10	Pa & Ma gone	W.T. H---, farmer, Thornton P.O., ON	Adopted	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2335	D.(Darby)	J.(Jane Amelia)	Feb 1880	11	Ma dead; Pa drunkard	Wesley Long, farmer, Newton Robinson, ON	Adopted	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2336	E.(Everett)	E.(Esther)	Feb 1880	13	Pa dead; Ma paralyzed & in WH	W. C---, farmer, Hillsboro', ON	Bound in service	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2337	F.(Frazall)	L.(Lydia)	Feb 1880	14	Stepmother cruel	A. T---, farmer, Thedford, ON	Adopted	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2338	J.(Julian)	M. A.(Mary Ann)	Feb 1880	10	Ma gone; Pa out of work	W. W---, farmer, Chatham, ON	Adopted	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2339	L.(Lewis)	C.(Caroline)	Feb 1880	11	Ma dead; Pa drunkard	H. T---, farmer, Thornton, ON	Adopted	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2340	McK.(McKeown)	M.(Mabel)	Feb 1880	12	Pa dead; Ma has spinal complaint & out of work	T. P---, farmer, Orono, ON. 2nd Rye girl to be raised; the 1st left to be married.	As one of the family	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2341	M.(Moore)	A.(Annie)	Feb 1880	15	Pa dead; Ma gone	H. B---, solicitor, Galt, ON.	Bound in service	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2342	M.(Miller)	E.(Eliza)	Feb 1880	16	Ma dead	Rev. S. S---, Forest, ON.	Servant	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2343	M.(Martin)	E.(Emily)	Feb 1880	13	Pa & ma incapable with children	J. R---, map publisher, Port Ryerse, ON.	Bound in service	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2344	P.(Porter)	E.(Eva)	Feb 1880	18	Pa gone; Ma depraved	Rev. E. B---, Ingersoll, ON.	Bound in service	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2345	P.(Pitzey)	(Harriet)	Feb 1880	15	Pa dead; Ma kept by parish	Mrs. C---, Clifton, ON. Removed from 1st home- S.B---, Port Robinson, ON.	Servant	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax
2346	S.(Smale?)	E.(Emelie or Emily?)	Feb 1880	10	Pa dead; stepmother cruel	Mrs. L., farmer, Homer, ON. Mrs. L. has had another Rye girl.	Bound in service	Peruvian	Liverpool	Halifax

Updated Immigration Database for Rye BHCs

1182	Bell	Sarah	Aug 1871	8			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1183	Bishop	Mary Ann	Aug 1871	11		Mary Ann Bishop & William Short married on 29 Oct 1882 in Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, England	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1184	Black	Rachel	Aug 1871	8		Died single in 1904.	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1185	Black	Frances	Aug 1871	6		Frances Black & Frederick Ellis married on 3 Jun 1893 in London, ON	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1186	Bryant	Selina	Aug 1871	12		1877: at York - Mrs Milton Bradt can give address	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1187	Bunny	Laura	Aug 1871	11			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1188	Carote	Elizabeth	Aug 1871	13			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1189	Clancey (Coansey)	Ellen	Aug 1871	11		Probably died in New York City in Mar 1895.	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1190	Cole	Martha	Aug 1871	10			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1191	Coleman	Elizabeth	Aug 1871	9			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1192	Coleman	Ann	Aug 1871	11		1877: Ontario Co., ON.	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1193	Collins	William	Aug 1871	13		To Grantham, Lincoln Co., ON. 1877: Wentworth Co., ON. William Collins married Clara Caroline Couzens - both Rye BHCs - in abt 1882 in St Catharines, ON.	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1194	Cooles	Sarah	Aug 1871	12			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1195	Corder	Harriet	Aug 1871	10		1877: Durham Co., ON.	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1196	Cummings	Andrew	Aug 1871	11		1877: USA.	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1197	Cummings	Henry	Aug 1871	8			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1198	Davies	Alice	Aug 1871	10		Alice Davies and Henry G. Sage married on 6 Oct 1886 in East Oxford Co., ON	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1199	Davies	Mary Ann	Aug 1871	8		Mary Ann Davies & John Wheeler married on 25 Feb 1884 in Toronto, ON	Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1200	Davies	Ann	Aug 1871	8			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec
1201	Davies	Hannah	Aug 1871	11			Prussian	Liverpool	Quebec

Immigration of Rye's British Home Children

- 4,585 BHCs (85% girls) in 1868-1896, brought by the Rye organization through NOTL.
- Church of England Waifs & Strays Society brought an additional 712 BHCs (96% girls) in 1896-1914 through NOTL.
- Of these 5,297 BHCs, the lives of 493 married and 94 single BHCs (total 11%) have been identified to date (Jan 2021). The target is to identify the lives of 1,200 BHCs (or 22.5%) by 2022.
- "Immigration" represents about 6 months in the life of a BHC - recovered from poverty in Britain, trained in domestic service basics, transported to Canada, and placed in homes & farms in North America.
- This begs the need for a study of these BHCs' lives.

Database of Married Rye BHC Lives

MARRIED RYE BHCs	ARRIVAL	AGE @ ARRIVAL	AGE @ 1st CHILD	# KNOWN CHILDREN	AGE @ DEATH	HUSBAND OCCUPATION	SPOUSE BIRTH	FAMILY LOCATION	COUNTRY
Beattie Fleck - Jane (Jennie)	1868	19	n/a	0	77	Sailor	EN-UK	Cambridgesh.	UK
Booth Peers Walker - Louisa M	1868	15	21	5	56	Contractor	IRE	Montreal	CAN
Bretherton Head - Elizabeth	1868	16	18	2	33	Carpenter	EN-UK	Toronto	CAN
Burnett Laplante - Isabella	1868	18	32	4	62	Fisherman	ON	Simcoe Co.	CAN
Campbell Long – Marian	1868	20	24	4	87	Ag. Labr.	ON	Toronto	CAN
Dyer Wells - Mary J	1868	14	22	4	32	Ag. Labr.	ON	Ontario Co.	CAN
Edsall Etsell - Jemima	1868	36	n/a	0	40	Farmer	EN-UK	Bruce Co.	CAN
Hampton Smith - Harriet	1868	21	n/a	0	29	Machinist	EN-UK	London	CAN
Hart Brown - Emma E	1868	30	n/a	0	82	Farmer	ON	Peterboro'	CAN
Haynes Ryland - Mary	1868	26	n/a	0	40	Farmer	EN-UK	Simcoe Co.	CAN
Job Kenny - Mary Ann	1868	21	n/a	0	46	Journalist	QC	QC	CAN
Jones Stevens - Caroline	1868	11	19	8	81	Farmer	EN-UK	Hastings Co.	CAN
Kelly McGill – Ellen	1868	18	27	5	51	Carpenter	ON	Hamilton	CAN
King Morrill - Rosina	1868	24	24	4	72	Ship builder	EN-UK	Simcoe Co.	CAN
Large Hill - Louisa	1868	11	24	4	62	Blacksmith	EN-UK	Toronto	CAN
Lingley Nickling - Rebecca H	1868	21	22	9	70	Iron Planer	EN-UK	Hamilton	CAN
Newman Chick - Esther	1868	19	27	1	72	Sadler	EN-UK	Devon	UK
Organ Stout - Eliza	1868	21	29	5	63	Labourer	NY-USA	Ontario Co.	CAN
Rogers Mansell - Elizabeth	1868	19	22	7	67	Butcher	EN-UK	Toronto	CAN
Shaw Cammidge - Sarah	1868	17	22	7	66	Farmer	EN-UK	Grey Co.	CAN
Tate Sandles - Rhoda Rose	1868	24	31	1	87	Carpenter	EN-UK	IL	USA
Wall Moth - Alice L	1868	19	20	7	70	Teamster	EN-UK	Toronto	CAN
Warren Nash - Ellen	1868	18	22	2	85	Bricklayer	EN-UK	Toronto	CAN
Watkins Dieffenbach - Selina	1868	14	18	5	72	Farmer	NY-USA	Essex Co.	CAN
Webster Wismer - Julia	1868	20	28	5	69	Sch. Teacher	ON	MI	USA
Welsh Ashton - S Annie	1868	27	n/a	0	78	Labourer	EN-UK	Kent Co.	CAN

The Lives of Rye's British Home Children - 1

- This research study has three phases:
 - (a) the period 1868-1874 before the Doyle Report, when the Rye organization brought 2,007 BHCs to Canada by Allan Line ship from Liverpool, England & CP Rail;
 - (b) the period 1877-1896; and (c) the period 1896-1914.
- Of these 2,007 BHCs in the period 1868-1874:
 - The lives of 384 married BHCs (19.1%) and 92 unmarried BHCs (4.6%) have been identified. *This first phase is complete.*
 - In the later periods the lives of an additional 109 married BHCs and 3 unmarried BHCs have already been identified.
- Each identified BHC has a folder of records, a small family tree to support her/his line item in the Lives database.

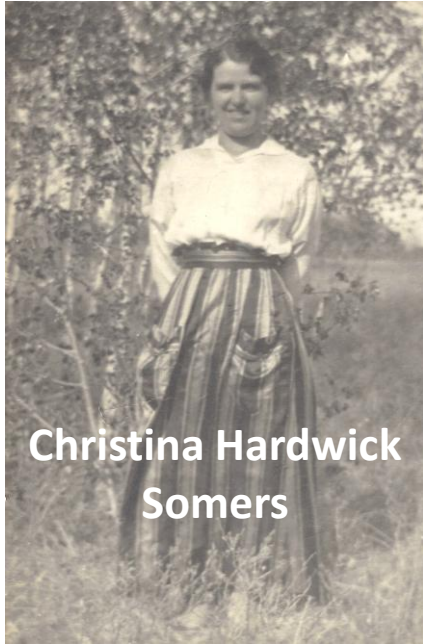
The Lives of Rye's British Home Children - 2

- Rye offered a transatlantic “chaperone” service.
- The Doyle Report caused the emigration of BHCs by the Rye organization to be stalled for 2 years until its restart in 1877.
- Of the 384 married BHCs in the Lives database for 1868-1874: 3% returned to Britain & 19% raised their families in the USA; 34% chose a spouse born in England (or 40% for spouses born in Britain or Ireland); 9.6% had no children in their marriage.
- The average life span of the identified married Rye BHCs of the immigration period 1868-1874 was comparable to other contemporary Canadians.
- Ancestry.ca has been used to conduct this study.

Some of Miss Rye's Expectations Met – All Married.



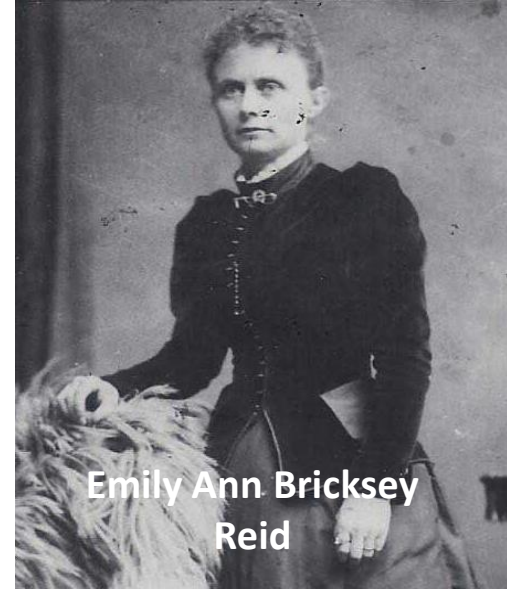
**Eliz. Emily
Button Tarling**



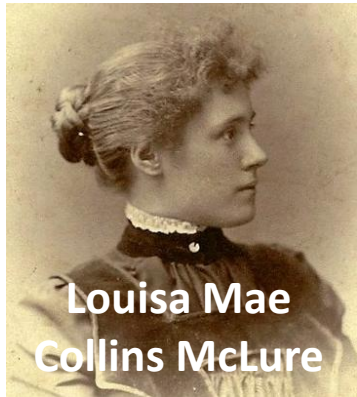
**Christina Hardwick
Somers**



**Matilda Lavers
Vanderlip**



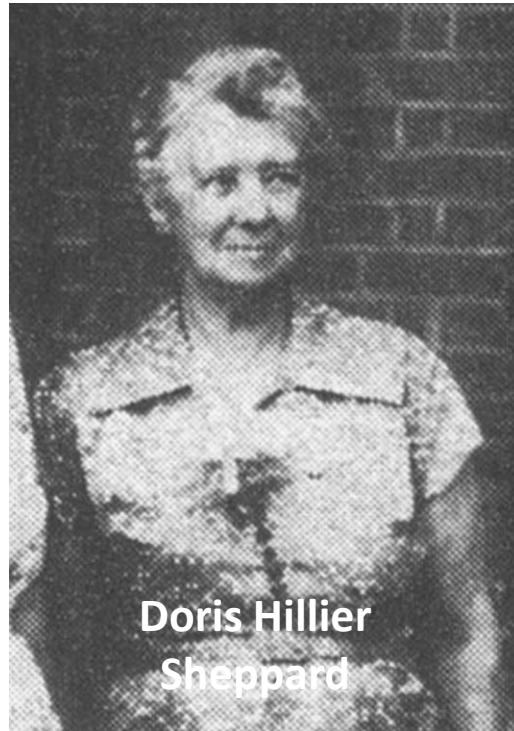
**Emily Ann Bricksey
Reid**



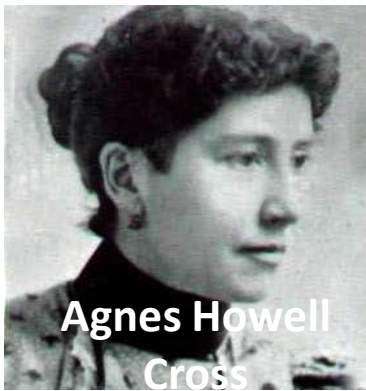
**Louisa Mae
Collins McLure**



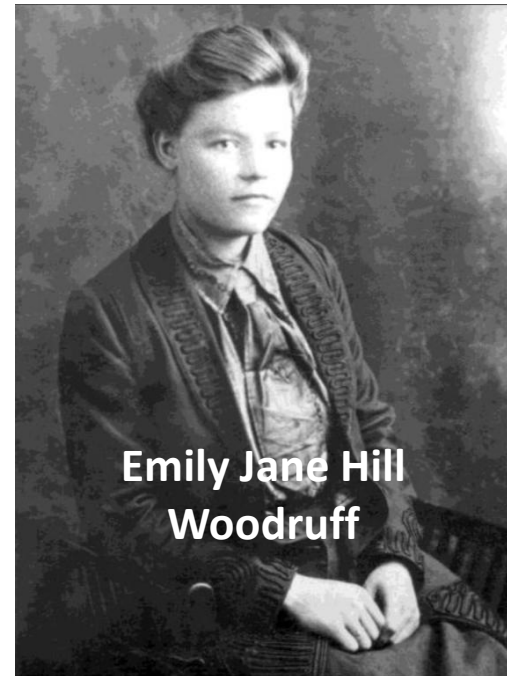
**Irene Meaghen
Thomson**



**Doris Hillier
Sheppard**



**Agnes Howell
Cross**



**Emily Jane Hill
Woodruff**

NOTL Museum Artefacts



Caroline Newbold caught typhoid fever while working for a family. She was transported back to Our Western Home where she later died of the disease. She was 14.

BHC in Canada web site

Newsletter Archive

Media

Schools

BHC Memory Quilt

Home

2019 Events

BHCARA Registry

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BHC Film

CLICK HERE: to find out if you are a BHC descendant and start your search for information



Maria Rye Home Children Database

Maria Rye Home Child Database

Niagara Historical Society published a new comprehensive Maria Rye database on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum website in late 2018, This project aims to include all known BHCs in chronological order in the charge of Maria S. Rye from 1868 to 1896, and in the charge of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society from 1896 to 1914 that were administered by the Our Western Home staff in NOTL. The few unknown exceptions, the following complete documents are in the author's electronic backup document files, having been extracted and included in the new Rye BHC database:



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Home Children Guide

Maria Rye

Research online

- [Home Children Records](#) database
- Niagara Historical Society database:
 - [Maria S. Rye's British Home Children, 1868-1898](#) (includes *Church of England Waifs and Strays to Niagara, 1897-1914*)
 - For information about that database, see [Research on Miss Rye's British Home Children \(BHC\)](#).
- [Letters from Maria Rye children](#)
- [First Report of the placing out of pauper and other orphans in Canada and the United States of America](#), [PDF 4.13 MB] by Maria S. Rye (AMICUS 43955183)
That report lists the names and details of children sent out in 1869.

Her achievements

- Migrated 4,500 gutter girls (& some boys) from British urban streets and workhouses to adoptions, farms and good houses in Eastern Canada.
- Was the first to do this work from Britain to Canada.

Her faults

- Inadequate tests of placement suitability and limited inspections of children's welfare at their placements.
- Relied more on the demand for low-wage servants than acceptance as another family member.

What made her develop as she did?

- She was the eldest daughter in a large Victorian household. She lived by her own wits.
- Her leadership, writing and organization skills were outstanding. She was an evangelical Anglican.

What were the turning points in her life?

- As a teenager she saw the lack of employment opportunities for girls in the 1840s & 1850s.
- After demonstrated experience, she obtained important people's backing.

What motivated her adult life?

- Migrating gutter children from the filthy streets of Britain to the open farmlands of British North America.
- Providing greater opportunities for females to have a good Christian married life.

What (if anything) should she have done differently?

- More detailed annual inspections of her immigrant children.
- Required greater reporting by those taking in the children.

What was her context (political circumstances, peers, rivals, family influence, schooling, matrimony, etc.)?

- Urban poverty in Britain. No welfare state.
- Within the umbrella of the Church of England. Ven. William McMurray of St. Mark's Church, NOTL also had at least 2 BHC girls.

Would you have liked to be this person as a friend/comrade/sibling?

- Yes, as a friend. William Kirby dedicated his most famous book to Maria Rye. Ven. McMurray conducted her brother's marriage.
- Her deeds paid for her living; she did not grow rich on her work (Last will: £3,555)

Has history treated her fairly?

- No, largely because our current views are coloured by conditions in the post-WW2 'nanny state'.
- Also, for the general public, a lack of understanding of conditions in the Victorian underworld make context difficult to understand.

Towards the End of this Emigration Chapter...

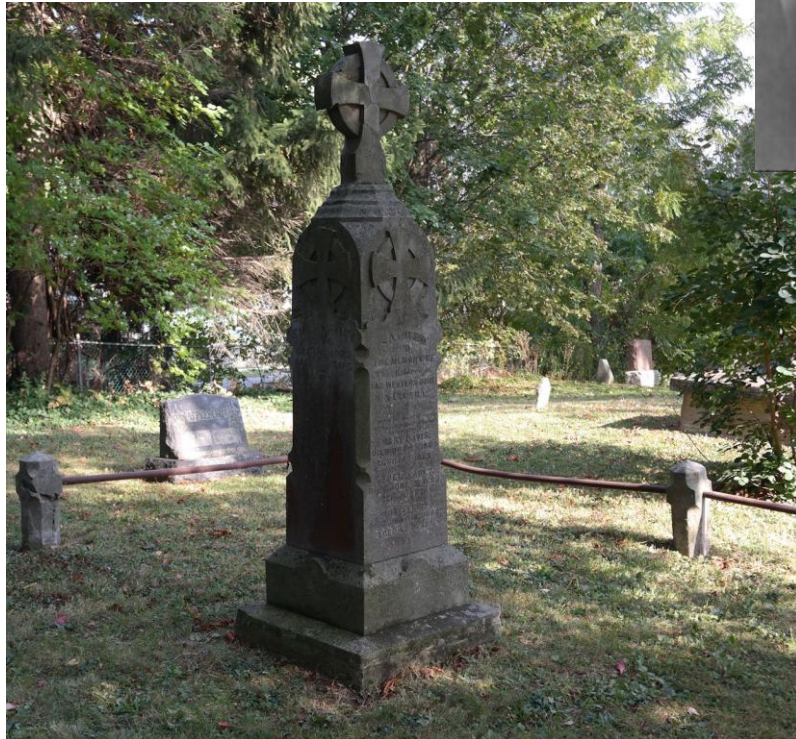
- From 1868 through 1896, when Maria Rye retired, she and her assistants had emigrated about 4,500 children to Canada.
- Our Western Home was then passed to the Church of England who sent another 750 children through the doors of that building by the start of WW1 in 1914. The Home was closed in July 1915. Emily Bayley retired to Prideaux Street, NOTL.
- The building was demolished in 1923 after wartime occupancy by 65 Polish officers in 1916-1919.
- In 1924, the “Elizabeth Rye Home” in Toronto became the new receiving home for girls. It closed around 1934. Now designated.
- The CoE Society continued to send boys over until the start of the WW2 in 1939. It is now called the Children's Society.

Some Made It...

(in Hamilton, ON)



Florence Jane Lucas
Passmore (mother)



And Some Didn't.

(in St. Mark's Cemetery)

Further Assistance

The NOTL Museum website (www.nhsm.ca) is loaded with useful social history data files, including the British Home Children administered through Our Western Home in Niagara-on-the-Lake by Miss Maria Rye for the period 1868-1896, and the Church of England Waifs & Strays Society for the period 1896-1914.

If you have any questions or require assistance ...

Email me at: **hemmingsdd@gmail.com**

or Call me at: **289-783-2772**