

was a brute."

In the latter half of the 19th Century, a number of British social reformers began juvenile emigration schemes to bring destitute boys and girls to Canada. Among these were Anne Macpherson, Maria Rye and Thomas J. Barnado.

The children, after a short stay in a reception centre, were placed in foster homes to be trained as farm workers or as domestics.

Several homes were established in Canada, among them the Marchmont Home. It was founded by Annie Macpherson. The home had outbuildings to house the horses, cows and chickens. There were gardens, an orchard and a vineyard to support the needs of the occupants of the Home. There was a chapel to fulfill their spiritual needs.

The Marchmont Home and the chapel still stand, although the chapel has been altered to a private dwelling and the home into apartments.

At the age of 23, Macpherson, a convert to evangelical Christianity, decided to work among the London poor. In 1869, she announced she was opening a fund to send families and children to Canada. That summer 500 were sent. Many of the adults got jobs on the farms around the town of Belleville.

In the spring of 1870, she herself brought 100 boys to Canada, landing in the last week of May in Montreal. The boys were housed

summer, Macpherson went back to England and soon returned with another party of children. By 1925, when the immigration of children ended, it is said that more than 80,000 children had come to Canada under the auspices of 50 organizations similar to that run by Macpherson.

Dr. Barnado used Annie Macpherson's agency to send his children to Canada until 1882 when he set up his own organization.

Charles West, 70, of Belleville, was 13 when he arrived with a group of 50 girls and boys at Marchmont. He was among the last group to be received before the orphanage was closed.

He still has the small wooden trunk — the traditional wooden box of the immigrant trade — that contained his new clothes, footwear and a Bible, provided before he left England.

"I was in Marchmont House for a few weeks and then I was placed on a farm at RR 2, Madoc, and I was brought up there. I was treated just like one of the family.

"I had no complaints after I came to Canada, not like the kids in Bagnell's book," said West.

In England, West had been in three different orphanages. "At one orphanage in England they never called you by name. It was like being in jail. I was number 22. My clothes and my locker were all marked with the same number. This was in Essex at the Stepney Children's Home."

Aurania for Canada.

"I was sick enough to die coming over. I could have thrown my-



STORRINGS: 'Swung pail'

self overboard, I was so ill."

His sister was placed on another farm, two miles away, with two elderly people who had taken her in to keep them company.

"Charlie and his sister both got into good Christian homes," said Mrs. West. "Unlike some others we have heard about."

At Madoc, Charles learned to make cheese and he later worked in a cheese factory in Cherry Valley where he met his wife.

"My first impression of Marchmont Home was of freedom. We could run and play freely and take what little money we had to

the police because their father, a wounded war veteran, was unable to work. Their mother had taken to the bottle.

Six of the children were put on the Franconia bound for Canada: Horace, 11, Kathleen, 14, Violet, 12, Alfred, 10, Gladys, 7, and finally, in the arms of someone he didn't know, his baby sister, Beatrice. Another brother, Lewis, had been found to have ringworm and was left behind in England to come the following year.

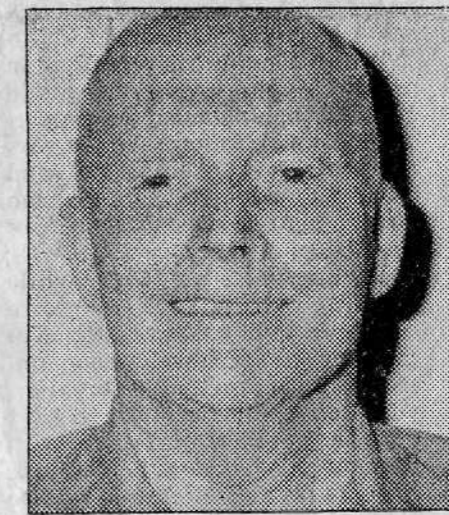
When the ship landed at Halifax, in the rush or confusion, or as Bagnell speculates, "perhaps it was planned that way to avoid the sadness of it all," Horace did not see any of his sisters or brothers to say goodbye. He was put on a train for the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia. His brothers and sisters were placed on other trains headed for other places, the names of which he would never be told.

Mrs. Storring had three brothers. When her mother died she was 11 months old and she and the youngest boy were placed in an orphanage by their father because he was not able to cope with them all.

In 1907, at the age of 13, she was sent to Canada. She was told her health, never good, would improve there.

In later years, from the farm at Fuller, near Thomasburg, where she eventually settled and later married, she saved enough money to bring her younger brother, Joey, to Canada.

Albert Edward George Hutchinson, 76, of Corbyville — his given names read like a roll call of Kings



WEST: 'Three orphanages'

of England — came to Marchmont Home in April, 1920, with a group of boys. He was 15.

"I had been in an orphanage near Hastings, Sussex since I was six years old. My mother had died and my father was too poor to look after me and my three sisters."

While the three girls stayed in England, Hutchinson was given the choice of joining the navy or going to Canada as a farmworker. He chose the navy, but failed the examination to become a signaller and was sent to Canada.

"A farmer from Sydney township, driving a horse and buggy, collected me from the Home right after I arrived. I worked on his farm for two years. He was supposed to pay me \$100 a year and also send me to school."

Hutchinson said he never did get sent to school and only got paid 50 cents, although he was given a straw hat and a pair of boots for his year's work.

"I left there at 17 to work for another farmer," he said. "He paid me."

Hutchinson never came across any of his "mates" who came over to Canada with him from England in 1920. He hopes to find some of them at the reunion luncheon on Oct. 4.

"After my first wife died I went to England to visit my sisters. They wanted me to stay over there. I said no. I said it would be like pulling up a big tree that had been successfully transplanted."

John Coggins, 71, of RR 1, Warkworth, came to Marchmont in 1922 with his two sisters, Anne and Jennie. He was 12 years old.

"I was sent to a farm at Hoard's Station with my sister Anne. Jenny went to another farm about three miles away. We were all treated very well and I stayed there for 15 years." Coggins also stayed in farming and now owns his own farm.

Although the three were not

wanted to go to Australia and she now says I talked her out of it although I don't remember that. She says I told her things were so good in Canada that you could pick money off of trees. Actually, it was a long way from that and we had to work hard, especially when the depression came along."

Coggins, and his sister Jenny intend to go to the reunion and Anne, who now lives in Toronto, may also be there.

"It was a fantastic juvenile emigration scheme," said Mary Simonds, curator of the Hastings County Museum, which is sponsoring the reunion.

"Dr. Barnado was an entrepreneur of the first class. He knew the power of the media at a time when social reform was usually done in a small way."

The program to send children overseas was supported by influential people in England and in Canada, "and it just grew and grew," said Simonds.

"Not all will admit to having been in a Home," she said. "For a long time there was a stigma attached to being a Home boy. It was a traumatic experience for them all. They were not always orphans but some had families that could not afford to keep them. Sometimes the families heard their children were going to Canada after they were already on the boat. The children had to be tough to survive and to come out on top."

Children at that time, "like wives," were considered chattels, said Simonds.

One of the problems in Canada was that the country was so big and the number of inspectors so few that follow-up calls were rarely made.

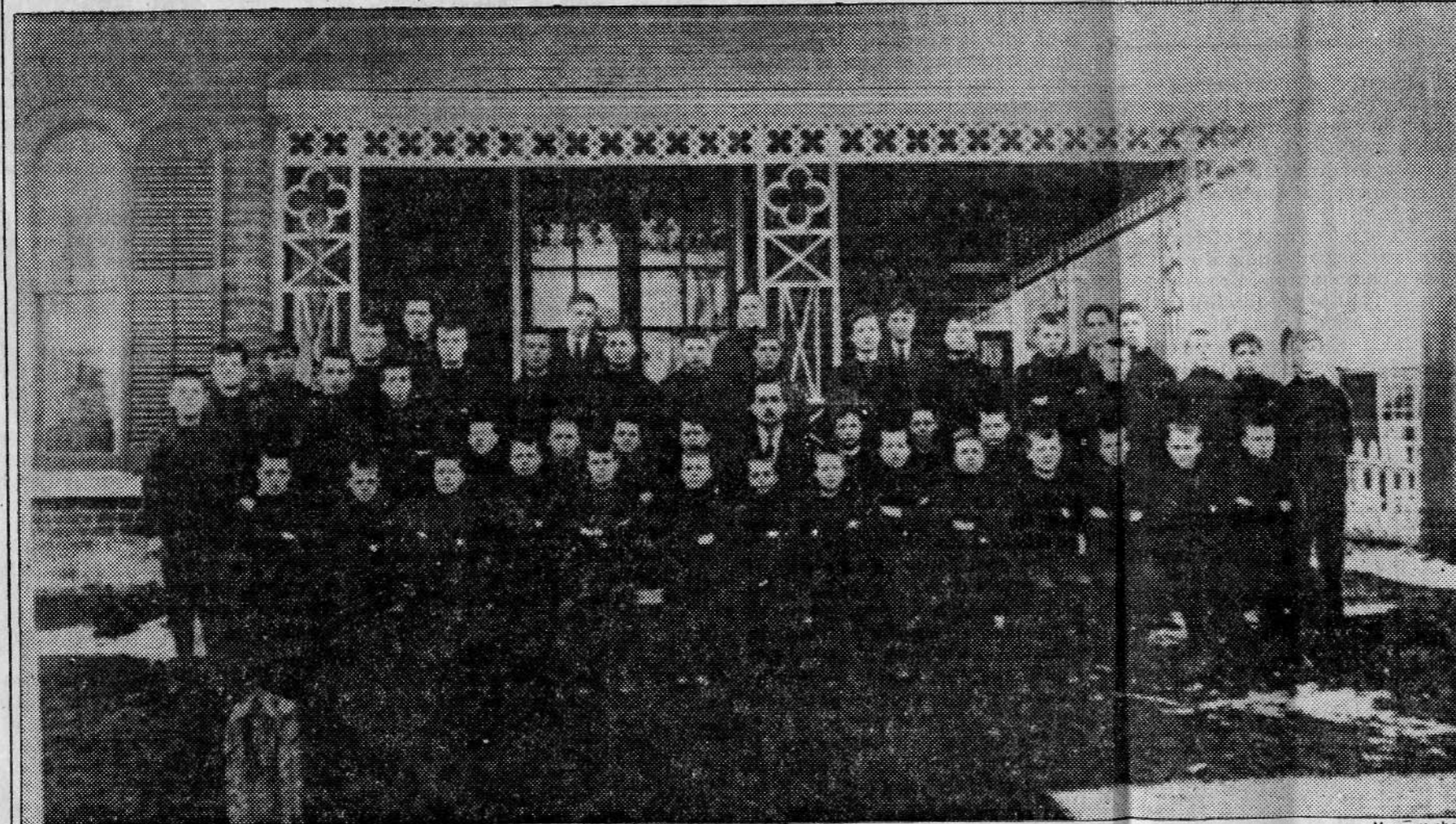
"When the inspector did call they would often interview the child in front of the family. In many cases the farmers had taken the children in as a source of cheap labor although, in many cases, the children were taken in as part of the family. The younger ones tended to fare better."

Marchmont Home was originally called the Anne Macpherson Home of Industry, said Simonds. It was expected that the children would work.

In many cases, however, the children were totally unprepared and unsuited for the work demanded of them and many households were cold and unsympathetic.

The first Marchmont reunion was held at the Hastings County Museum in 1977 in conjunction with a touring display entitled "The Camera and Dr. Barnado," said Simonds.

"The people who were at Marchmont Home are now getting up in years and we felt it was time to hold another reunion," she said.



A reunion of the people who stayed at Marchmont House is planned for Oct. 4 at the Hastings County Museum

Museum photo