

My search for information on the British Child Emigration Movement, which has resulted in this book, *The Home Children*, began in 1968. I had noted references to these immigrant children in an earlier research project undertaken for the Children's Aid Society in Ottawa. Who were these children, why had they been brought to Canada, and were any of them still living?

In Belleville, while seeking information on the Marchmont Macpherson Home founded in 1870, I interviewed Miss Nellie Merry, a descendant of Annie Macpherson's sister, Mrs Rachel Merry. Miss Merry, a retired school teacher then in her 79th year, had spent her childhood in these Homes. Her grandparents lived in Canada as superintendents of both the Stratford and Marchmont Homes. From her I learned that the Marchmont records had been sent back to England when Marchmont Home was closed. In 1925 the Macpherson-Birt organizations had been amalgamated with Barnardo Homes and all the records transferred to the Barnardo Homes at Barkingside, Ilford, Essex.

In 1969 I visited the Barnardo Homes where everything, except the new administration building, looked exactly like the sketches in annual reports from the 1880s. Immaculate gardens and attractive cottages with climbing roses conjured up visions of small girls in pinafores. But one was abruptly brought back to the present by the happy shouts of girls and boys — many of them black children of West Indian background — dressed in jeans and jerseys.

A statue of Dr Thomas J. Barnardo, its great size indicative of the respect he still commands, stands within sound of the children's laughter. While the village is for homeless children, none will be sent off alone to make a new life in Canada. Still the largest private child-caring agency in Britain, the Barnardo Homes have adjusted to modern ideas and understanding of children's needs. A large staff strives to fulfil that policy set down so long ago by Dr Barnardo: 'No Destitute Child Ever Refused Admission'.

The Quarrier Village of Bridge-of-Weir, Scotland, was also visited. As I arrived a large bus had just discharged a