

REVISED 2017

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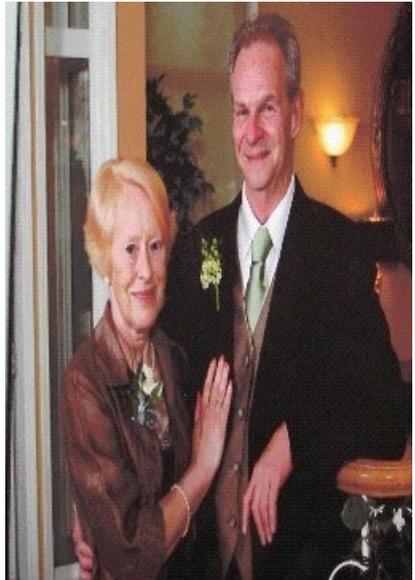
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RE-DEDICATION: IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Frederick Snow 1909 - 1994 (Age 85)
Gertrude Snow 1913 - 2000 (Age 87)
Bonnie Snow 1945 - 2015 (Age 69)

Married 59 years
Married 59 years
Married 47 years





**IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Frederick George Snow**

(September 17, 1909 - September 17, 1994)

My Mother loved my Father for who he **was** - not for **who** he was. My Wife Bonnie had faith in all my projects, when sometimes I did not. My Daughters Charlotte and Elizabeth assisted as editors and supporters. My Nephew Alan Auld provided his computer expertise.

My English friend Robin devoted three years of his life to help me with my quest. He restored the Snow family faith in the "kindness of strangers." Gary, Karen, Sandy, Rodger, and Wendy have made me proud to be their Brother. To those who helped in the search, and those who did not, "What goes around comes around."

***Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure,
pressed down, and shaken together, and running
over shall men give unto your bosom.***

***For with the same measure that ye mete withal it
shall be measured unto you (Luke 6:38).***

Author's Notes

This book is unique in many ways. It is partly an autobiography, as I transcribed my Father's journal of his experiences while 'in care.' Far too many BHC never spoke of their lives 'in care' let alone wrote about it.

It is partly a biography as I chronicled my Parents' lives together from a son's perspective – a son of a British Home child - and transcribed their +50 years of correspondence with the Waifs and Strays Society.

It is also an account of my personal experience with trying to get his records from the Waifs and Strays and my Uncle's records from Barnardo's. That took far too many years, and far too much opposition.

Finally, it is a thesis based upon my 40 years as a Clinical Psychologist. I examined the British Child Deportation Scheme from the perspective of the unspoken motive to the scheme - irrevocably severing family ties using brainwashing techniques.

The scheme was not about rescuing children from neglect and abuse and providing better lives in Canada for them, but rather one of creating a domestic servant and farm labouring class of British children in Canada.

To achieve this goal, the organizations' primary mission was one of doing 'all things expedient' to assist the emigration of children' (Stroud 229). They wanted to permanently place children in Canada to prevent them from 'drifting back' when they were no longer 'in care.'

The entire emphasis was upon permanently and irrevocably severing all family ties. The Waifs and Strays Society regarded their efforts as wasted if children re-established contact with their families.

This goal was accomplished by brainwashing techniques of stripping children of their identities and supplanting a new one as a Barnardo Boy, Quarrier Kid, Middlemore Girl, Old Boy, Waif, who belonged to the organization/cult leader.

These children were 'orphanized' which means 'to make an orphan of.' They were separated from their family and siblings both in England and Canada. This ensured that children as adults could not find their families.

My Father's story is unique, but is distressingly similar to every other BHC's story. Every BHC experienced the same treatment in the UK foster homes and Boys/Girls Homes (Orphanages).

And, in terms of restoring family ties, every British Home Child Descendant experienced the same run around from the organizations.

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Introduction

My Father was a reserved and solitary man, who quietly stood at the fringe of conversations when others spoke of their past or families. He knew nothing of his family. He did not know who he was. He never had a Birth Certificate, and for the first 33 years of his life, had nothing to verify who he was, or if his name was really Snow. He wondered if someone had simply invented it and assigned it to him.



Fred Snow (33) Sandra (2) Karen (4) Gary (6) 1942

From the age of 33-48, he carried a tattered 'To Whom it May Concern' letter for identification. It stated his name and identified him as 'of British nationality.' When he was 48 years old, he obtained a Baptism Certificate that confirmed his name, and identified his Mother, but not his Father. From the age of 48-64, this was all he had for identification.



Gert Snow (45) Fred Snow (48) Thunder Bay Ontario 1957

When he was 64 years old, he received his Canadian Citizenship, just in time to collect his Canada Pension. All his life, he tried to identify his Parents and find out if he had any siblings - and find out who he was. He became a ward of the Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays when he was four years old in 1913. They placed him in a foster home in a small village in England from the age of 4-12. They transferred him to a Home for Boys from the age of 12-15.

When he was 15, they gave him the 'choice' of emigrating to Australia or Canada. He was not given the option of staying in England. No one wanted him in England. They shipped him to Canada and sent him to work on farms in Ontario and Quebec.

He was part of the little-known British Child Emigration Scheme. Fifty child-care organizations emigrated 125,000 children for +100 years to Canada. These children ranged in age from 6-15 years old, and were known as 'The Home Children.' The organizations professed a dominant motive of providing children with better lives than what they might have had in England, but they had other ignoble and pecuniary motives.

Children worked as indentured farm labourers in harsh conditions until they were 18 years old. Canadian farmers bought them for \$2 each. Many were not allowed to go to school nor entitled to medical care. They had little protection under the law. Many were not paid for their farm labour of 16 hours per day and six days per week.

Half of these children were neglected and abused, because the organizations did not provide adequate inspections of their placements. They operated outside the control of the fledgling colony of Canada.

The British Home Child Deportation Scheme

I was the first to add 'British' to the phrase 'Home Children' simply because it was their scheme. I replaced 'Emigration' with 'Deportation' because 'Emigration' implies the voluntary choice of an adult to leave a country and move to another.

Children under the age of 18 cannot make this decision. Euphemisms such as 'sent, transported, shipped, emigrated, and migrated' are inadequate.

Parents who gave their consent could not make a fully informed consent as they were misled as to how their children were to be cared for. Many organizations made their admittance of children contingent upon parents' signing a Consent to Emigration.

Thousands of children were deported without parental knowledge or consent. They were commodities that were deported because they were unwanted in Britain.

It cost a lot of money to have children 'in care' over many years. The sooner the organizations could rid themselves of these children and profit from their sale - the better.

It had an element of punishment in that if the poor could not care for their children, then they should suffer the shame and loss of their children. The organizations expelled, banished, abandoned, and forgot them once they were in Canada.

A 'scheme' can be defined as a visionary plan, a foolish project, or a self-seeking, and underhanded plot. Once I discovered the unspoken motive of irrevocably severing children's familial ties, I found I cannot in all conscience refer to the scheme without putting 'in care' in quotation marks.

Hereafter, I prefer to call it the British Child Deportation Scheme that persisted for over a hundred years and culminated with the disastrous and scandalous revelations of the British Home Children Deportation Scheme to Australia 1947-1967. These children are ironically referred to as 'Child Migrants.'

From the age of 17-18, my Father was in a hospital after he severely mangled his arm in a conveyor belt. He worked for a short time as a Timekeeper after they released him from hospital, but this work did not last long. From the age of 19-20, he enlisted in the Reserve Army Service Corps just to ensure he had a place to live and regular food to eat.



Fred Snow (19) RAS Sherbrooke Quebec 1928

He travelled to Western Canada to seek his fortune at the beginning of the Great Depression. From the age of 21-22, he was one of hundreds of thousands of single young men who rode freight trains in search of work.



Fred Snow (20) 1929

He met with 'Help Wanted - English Need Not Apply' signs when he sought work of any kind. This was directed at the British Home Children. He learned to disguise his English accent.

From the age of 22-25, he lived in a highway construction Relief Camp in North-Western Ontario. He was an exile in a foreign and frequently inhospitable country. No one knew who he was. No one knew where he was. No one cared about a despised British Waif.



Fred Snow (25) 1934

His life was irrevocably transformed on the Victoria Day Weekend of 1934 when he met and fell in love with my Mother. From that day on, he was never alone again.

They married in the middle of the Great Depression in Port Arthur, Ontario. He began to live rather than subsist. For the first time in his life, he had someone who loved him, and someone for him to love. He had been deprived of so much love and human kindness in his life.

In spite of this deprivation he succeeded in becoming a loving husband to his wife and a devoted father to his six children. Their early years of marriage were a struggle just to survive.



Fred Snow (26) Gert Snow nee Perry (23) 1935

They had two children during the Great Depression, three during World War II and one late in life in the 1950's. Their 59 years of marriage were a testimony of how their faith in God and their devotion to each other helped them overcome many challenges and adversities.

My Parents celebrated their Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary in 1985 in Thunder Bay, Ontario. My Mother wrote a book about their lives together entitled 'One Set of Footprints' that provided much of the material about my Father's life as a British Home Child.



Gert Snow (72) Fred Snow (76) 50th Wedding Anniversary 1985

My Father confided bits and pieces about his early life to me as I grew older. To his credit, I don't recall him ever saying the words, "When I was your age . . ." The more I learned of his life, I found myself thinking, "When Dad was my age . . ."

My Parents believed they had a love story to tell that might be of interest at least to their family. They had an everlasting faith in God. They firmly believed they were never alone, and a kind, loving God helped them along their way. In all things, they gave, 'Thanks.'

If I asked you to identify yourself, how would you answer? Invariably, you would volunteer your name. Although many others might have the same name, it is the first step in identifying yourself apart from others.

Next, you might tell me your date of birth, because although many others might have an identical name, few others would have been born on the same day.

Then you might tell me your parents' names. Many others might have your name. A few might have been born on the same day, but no one - apart from your siblings - could have your parents. You can only have one biological father and mother, and your moment of birth is unique to you alone.

You might then specify where you were born. No one else on earth could have been born with your name, to your parents, at a specific time, and in a specific place. You might produce a Birth Certificate to validate your claim to be who you say you are.

My Father was riddled with doubts every time he identified himself. All he could say was what his caretakers led him to believe was true. When he said, "My name is Fred G. Snow," he thought to himself, "I think."

When he said, "I was born on Larch Road, Balham, London, England on September 17, 1909," he thought, "I have no birth certificate to prove this." When he said, "My Parents were John George Snow and Annie Gifford/Snow," he thought, "at least that is what they told me."

Your identity allows you to value yourself as a unique person of some worth. The absence of an identity contributes to your devaluing yourself as a useless thing.

If you know who you are, you feel like a 'somebody.' If you do not know who you are, you feel like a 'nobody.' The majority of the British Home Children were labelled as worthless, and believed they were worthless.

How can you feel like a person of worth when you have doubts that your name is really yours? How would you feel about yourself if you believed you were an orphaned, abandoned, unwanted, illegitimate, and inferior nobody?

My Father was an intelligent and resourceful man who succeeded in overcoming his early childhood experiences, but many others did not. They were permanently marked by their traumatic experiences.

Most lived their lives burdened with the disparaging identities that had been assigned to them. They were shamed throughout their childhood and lived with these feelings all their lives. Most died not knowing who they were.

My Father died on his unconfirmed 85th birthday in 1994. Shortly after his death, I told my Mother of my limited research of the Snow family the year before. I asked her for any information she had, and she gave me a file of their correspondence with England.

I was shocked how thick was the files of correspondence. I asked her why she didn't share this with the family before then. She simply said, after you read all that, you'll find that there is very little information to share - just many unanswered questions.

Until then, I was completely unaware of their attempts to establish his identity over a period of 60 years. After my Father's death, I promised my Mother I would find his family. She said, "I know you will, Perry."

My Father's past was rarely a topic of family discussion. It was never a taboo subject, but rather one about which he could say so little. I read his file and concluded the Waifs and Stray's Society for Providing Homes for Children had lied to them and given them the 'run-around.'

They would not have persisted in writing to the Waifs and Strays for 60 years if they believed what they were told. After I read the file, I didn't believe what they had been told either.

I eventually obtained his records that proved the extent to which they lied to him, withheld information from him and attempted to lie to me and withhold information from me.

Why didn't they want him to know who he was? Who his parents were? That his parents were still alive? That he had at least one brother and perhaps more? That he had his aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins?

There was, and continues to be an insidious and dark side to the BHC Deportation Scheme. Why was it so important to the BHC Deportation Organizations to ensure that family ties were so irrevocably severed?

I combined information from my Parent's book and their correspondence file to write Part I: 'A Life Without an Identity.' It describes the life he had - rather than could have had - if he had known who he was.

I had not intended to write a book about my search. At the start, I fully expected to find a few answers to his lifelong questions, and end the search by thanking his caretakers for their efforts on his behalf. It is the 'Snow' way.

Regrettably, my research led me to much different conclusions. The Waifs and Strays Society for Providing Homes for Children never gave my Father the information that would have allowed him to know who he was, and to find his family.

I entitled my book as a search for **stolen** identity. When someone takes something valuable from you and refuse to return it to you, then they have stolen this from you. My father had an identity when he was living with his family.

They Waifs and Strays stole this identity from him, replaced his name with a number, tried to replace his beliefs about himself and his family with beliefs of their own. He resisted their attempts to brainwash him.

I could have written this book by simply presenting my discoveries as just another genealogical search. My Parents' lifelong search required more than just a summary of results.

I wrote it as it unfolded, and how the secrets and lies were revealed. The pieces of the puzzle did not come in an orderly or sequential fashion.

If one purpose of the British Child Deportation Scheme to Canada was to simply rid Britain of an unwanted element of their society, they only partially succeeded.

They underestimated the strength of needing to know who you are. I hope the successful conclusion of my search will inspire others to persist until they re-establish their familial ties. No one should live their lives without knowing who they are and to whom they belong.

PLAY: Born of Good Intentions Video

Another reason for updating my book was to challenge the inaccurate narratives that have distorted the history of the BHC scheme.

The literature indicated that British Child Deportation to Canada was interrupted because of WWI, but only after two ships with British Home Children cargo were stopped and detained by German destroyers (Bagnell 1980a 215). Somehow, four children were shipped to Canada in the second year of WWI in 1915 (Stroud 154).

This is highly inaccurate. As of 2017, Passenger Lists showed 2000 BHC were sent in 1914, 1200 in 1915, 500 in 1916, 2 in 1917, and 2 in 1918. Almost 4,000 children were shipped between 1914-1918 in spite of 5,000 ships being sunk in those years!

Does it really matter that only 800 ships were sunk in 1914-1915 compared to 4000 in the last 2 years? Why were children being shipped to Canada at all during a war?

Because Canada was flooded with requests and were prepared to sell these BHC for \$3.00 each. How many children were killed while being transported to Canada during WW1? Why do people 'Don't Want to Know?'

PART I: A LIFE WITHOUT AN IDENTITY (1913-1994)

Chapter 1: The Life of a Waif in England 1913-1925

My Father had very few memories of the first four years of his life and could only retell this unvarying story.

"I was born on Larch Road, Balham, London, England on September 17, 1909. My Mother was Annie Gifford and my Father was John George Snow. Something must have happened to my Mother.

She may have died. That left my elderly Father to look after three young children by himself. Times were hard and there were no services available to help people in these situations.

I remember when I was about four years old being surrounded by 'Bobbies,' and taken away from my family. I

might have been lost or perhaps I had run away. I never saw any of my family again.” (Snow Gertrude 3).



Croydon 1913

Imagine you are a four year old child living with your family in London, England in 1913. Your world is limited to your home and family. You are just beyond the toddler stage. All you really know is that your Parents love you. They would have told you this. You believe everything your parents and other adults tell you.

One day there is a knock at your door. Some Policemen and strangers enter your home. All the adults argue and shout. They frighten you. You wonder why Policemen are in your home. You ask yourself what you did wrong. You try to understand what is going on, although all you can see is adult knees.

A Policeman picks you up and carries you away. You struggle and cry out, 'Mommy!' The strangers shove your family out of the way. The Policeman carries you out of your home and away from your family. The last thing you see over his shoulder is your family crying and reaching out to you with outstretched arms.

He tells you to stop crying. As they take you away, the image of your home and family gets smaller and smaller. When you look around, you realize that you have never been this far away from them before. You are terrified.

You are afraid you will never see them again. You will wonder for the rest of your life why this happened, and why you never saw your family again. These people take you to strange surroundings. You wet your bed. They punish you. They are mean to you. They tell you that your Parents did not want you anymore. You do not believe them.

You cry out for your Mother. They tell you, "She is gone!" You do not know what that means. You know she is somewhere. They tell you that your Parents abandoned you, but you know the truth. They call you a 'Waif,' but you know you have a name and Parents who love you.

You might be able to speculate a little how this experience might have felt. You can imagine being frightened and alone. You can imagine being taken forcibly away from your family at the tender age of four. At best, you can only imagine it as a temporary experience with a happy ending of a return to your family.

Only orphaned, abandoned, and kidnapped children can truly appreciate the actual trauma of being permanently separated from their families at a tender age. This was the experience of 125,000 British Home Children.

Dr. Thomas John Barnardo was one of the evangelical 'Child-Savers.' He believed he could save their souls by removing them from their families and emigrating them to Canada (Bean 42-43).

He was never affiliated with any established Church, and was a self-proclaimed Doctor who forged his Physician's title (Wagner 1979 307-308).

He notified parents he deemed 'respectable,' before he emigrated their children. He notified those parents he regarded as 'not moral,' after their children had sailed.

For the first 25 years of the scheme, he boasted that he had conducted 'Philanthropic Abductions.' He took almost half of the children into his care on 'moral grounds,' or because he decided, they were in the care of a 'not respectable' guardian.

In many cases, it was sufficient for them to label the families as 'bad.' He forcibly removed one quarter of the children in his care from their families. He proclaimed that children would be damaged if left in circumstances of which he disapproved.

Such evangelical 'Child-Savers' believed poor families reflected only an 'unintelligent and almost animal affection' for their children. Barnardo

argued that only emigration to Canada would save them from their families' evil influences (Parr 67).

Parents took him to court over 80 times on charges of kidnapping. When he lost a case and the courts ordered him to return the children, he emigrated them anyway (Wagner 1982 147).

As a young child, my Father's options were very limited. He could have believed what strangers told him about himself and his family. Alternatively, he could have believed only what **he** knew to be true of his first four years of life.

In retrospect, I can only assume that he opted not to believe what strangers told him. Throughout his life, he always tried to make the best of the situation at hand.

As a child, he must have told himself constantly that he was not an orphan, his Parents did not abandon him, and that they loved him. All he would have to hold on to were his vague memories of his Parents.

He knew he was not a 'Bastard' or an 'Orphan.' He knew he was not inferior. He resisted others' efforts to convince him otherwise.

I can only speculate how he survived his childhood traumatic experiences. I imagine when he was in foster care he saw a semblance of ordinary families. He observed them and recalled memories of how his Parents treated him. This painfully reminded him of his loss, but he focused on the future when he would be free of his caretakers.

He vowed to himself that someday if he ever became a Father, he would love his children as he had observed parents displaying their love for their children. He noted how brothers and sisters related to each other.

He imagined that if he ever had children of his own, he would make sure they would treat each other as he had noted. He knew he was on the outside looking in, so he decided that he might as well learn what he could from this. He sought solace in the Church, where he learned that God loved him and would take care of him. There was no one else.

Organizations saw the children as only living **things** - a little more intelligent than animals. They treated them accordingly, and the children learned to regard themselves as things. The 'Waif and Stray' label reinforced these attitudes.

It is not enough to simply provide for only the physical needs of children. The medical diagnosis, 'Failure to Thrive,' describes children whose physical, cognitive, and emotional development is drastically arrested.

This is a result of caretakers who exclusively provide for the child's physical needs of food, clothing, and shelter, but completely ignore the child's emotional needs. The literature describing the scheme rarely acknowledges the injurious effects upon young children of separation from their parents.

One author offered the rationalization that the child-care organizations did not realize that children had emotional needs, and it would take three generations before parents became aware of this (Stroud 106). I cannot accept the despicable assertion that no one knew children had emotional needs.

The most 'primitive tribe' knows that a child's survival depends upon love and affection. Six centuries before the British Child Deportation Scheme, people knew that infants could die if caretakers only attended to their physical needs.

In 13th Century England, a ruler conducted an experiment to assess the effects of rearing children under psychologically deprived conditions. He wanted to know what speech children would develop if no one ever spoke to them. He speculated that children might speak Hebrew, Greek, Latin, or their Parents' language.

He allowed foster mothers and caretakers to only look after infants' physical needs. They were not allowed to talk to them. All the children died of emotional starvation (Mussen et al. 163). Their bodies slowly shrivelled as if they died of food starvation.

The twinkle of life in their eyes dulled and then extinguished. Their last breaths were sighs of longing for any sign of human affection or attention.

Did those employed by the child-care organizations not have children of their own? Perhaps they regarded the children in their care - not as someone's children - but as pieces of owner-less property.

The medieval term 'wayves and streyves' described abandoned things. These things became the property of the Lord of the Manor, if their owners did not reclaim them. Edward de Montjoie Rudolf adopted the phrase for his child-care organization in 1881. The selection of this name was touted as a stroke of genius, because it opened Victorian hearts and purses (Stroud 62).

They generously made donations. Children in care were regarded as things that did not belong to anyone. It suited the organization's monetary motives to portray the children as foundlings. Who could not feel pity for the abandoned orphans?

The organization did not change their name until 60 years later in 1945 to the Church of England Children's Society. In 1982, it changed its name to The Children's Society, but the children formerly in their care are still commonly known as Waifs and Strays.

Vital learning experiences occur in the first three years of a child's life. The most important lesson children learn in the first two years is love and trust. These experiences are transformed into long-lasting neurological patterns. They are etched upon the mind and become part of the personality of the child - and the adult. Parents provide nurture, affection, protection, and love.

The quality and consistency of parenting in the first few years is critical to normal child development. This determines whether a child learns he is deserving/undeserving of love, and the world is a safe/frightening place.

I can only hope my Father's parents loved him enough to give him a tiny sense of his being worthy and deserving of love from others before he came into care. He was an optimistic man, who trusted himself and others. I can only speculate that these lifelong attitudes were a result of his early positive experiences with his family. I do not believe he learned love and trust from his caretakers.

My Father's caretakers never provided him with an accurate explanation how he came under their care. When he was a young child, they may have simply told him he was abandoned, or his parents were dead.

His simple choice as a young child was to either believe what he knew to be true, or to believe what they told him. Fortunately, he chose not to believe his family abandoned him. As young as he was, he knew he had been taken from his family.

He did not believe he was an unwanted Waif or Stray. I would like to believe that he sustained this belief in spite of how others treated him and what they told him of himself and his Parents.

His belief in his being worthy of love and his ability to love another must have remained dormant during his childhood and adolescence, and early adulthood. His faith and trust in himself and God were all that he ever had.

These beliefs allowed him to subsist, endure, and persevere alone for the first 25 years of his life. Falling in love with my Mother allowed him to extend his faith and trust to another. It must have taken tremendous personal strength for my Father to overcome his early feelings of abandonment and rejection.

As an adult, he had a long-acquired habit of looking through and beyond a situation. To others it may have appeared that he was simply 'staring off into space.' I learned that it was his method of ensuring that the immediate situation would never overwhelm him.

While doing this, he would also tilt his head back and raise his chin in a determined way. I believe he learned this as a young child, as a method he adopted to protect himself from the efforts of others to diminish him. He would not speak, but rather simply raised his chin. It was enough.

Fred G. Snow (4-12): Eight Years in a Foster Home Rumburgh
Halesworth Suffolk England 1913-1921

It was unusual that my Father had so little to say of his eight years in foster care. If there were anything positive to say about foster care, he would have said it. Out of painful necessity, he repressed or blocked out many negative memories of this time. I can only conclude that he was unable to find much to be grateful for in this situation.

"The next thing I remember was having a name-tag pinned to my shirt, being put on a train by myself, and going to Rumburgh, Halesworth, Suffolk, where I was met by a Social Worker. She drove the pony and cart to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Smith.

They lived about ten miles (16 km) from the train station. I stayed there eight years until I was 12 years old. I attended public school at Rumburgh.

I recall having to wear ladies' boots that were too small for me and pinched my feet for years. The Smiths were both white-haired and had no young children of their own, as their children were married and away from home.

I used to run to the store for tobacco for Mr. Smith who always seemed to be cranky. (Snow Gertrude 10)



Croydon Train Station 1913

The distance between Croydon and Halesworth is 120 miles (196 km) and would have taken 5 hours! Why pay for an escort for a Waif? Just put a 4 year old on a train by himself.

And then take him to a small village in a horse and cart for another couple of hours ride. Rumburgh had a population of 327 in 2011. In 1920 there were 300 people living there.

Your caretakers pin a name tag on your coat. You are too young to read, so you do not know what the piece of paper says. You have never been on a train before. A man plunks you on a seat. He tells you not to talk to anyone, and not to leave your seat. He leaves you there alone.

You have no idea where you are or where you are going. You have never felt so alone. You know the train is not taking you home. You only catch glimpses of buildings rushing by when you peek over the windowsill. You are very tired and want to lie down on the hard seat but are afraid that someone will punish you for that.

You know it is best not to look back where you have been, because something says you will not be going back.

You sit upright on the seat but your feet do not reach the floor and you are jostled back and forth by the train. You lean against the window. You pull your feet underneath you. You are frightened and suck your thumb. You have not done that in a long time.

You wet your pants, because you do not know if there is a bathroom on the train. You were told not to move. You find a rag tucked between the seat cushions. You use it to dry yourself as best you can. You are cold because all you wear is short pants and a thin shirt.

You peek out the window and no longer see buildings rushing by, but only trees and wide-open spaces. It looks very, very empty to you. The train slows down and a man tells you to get off when it stops. You tentatively step onto the train platform. A stern woman approaches and says, "Come with me!" She looks at your wet pants and wrinkles her nose. She shouts, "Filthy Guttersnipe!"

You have no idea what that means. She harshly takes your hand and leads you to a pony and a cart. She puts you in the back of the cart, instead of beside her. You feel like the bag of potatoes you sit upon.

You watch the countryside with interest. Something tells you to remember every detail of this trip. You worry that you might never find your way back to your Mother. You ride in the cart for hours.

Already, you have learned not to ask questions of these strangers. The woman stops the cart in a very small village. There are only a few houses. There is so much open space around you.

She takes you to a house and knocks on the door. An old man and woman answer the door. The woman says, "Here is the Waif!"

Does she not know your name? The white-haired couple tell you they are your parents now. You do not know why they say this, but you decide it is best for you not to say anything.



Pleasure Ground Rumburgh Halesworth Suffolk

You live with these old people for the next eight years of your life. They are poor. You quickly decide that you cannot afford to feel lonely. You decide just to feel alone instead, because it does not hurt as much. You wear shabby clothes.



They give you women's boots to wear that are too small for you. They cramp your feet. Your toes grow crookedly. Your feet will be a problem for you all of your life.



There is not much food to eat. The old people are not cruel, but they treat you no differently than the family dog. They speak to you in the same tone. They do not really talk to you, but just order you around.

You learn to make yourself smaller when you are in their home. You learn to make yourself invisible so you will not attract undue attention from them. You know they do not really want you there, so you try to stay out of their way.

Seven Christmas' come and go and you especially try your best to become part of the shadows on these occasions. You are not expected to participate.

Their family visits them and they act as if you are not there. The old people surprise you when they give you a handkerchief on your eighth Christmas there. It is not wrapped, but you are grateful all the same. There is no one at school whom you can call a friend, because to them you are 'the Waif.'

All the other children were born in the little village and live close to each other. Most are related to each other. You are the outsider who does not belong to anyone. They know you are not related to your foster parents. Everyone calls you a 'Waif.'

You wonder what you did wrong to deserve this. You know you belong to someone. You know you have a Mother and Father. Why do they not understand this? You go to Church and Sunday school and sing in the choir. The hymns are comforting. Outside Church, you hum these hymns very softly to yourself. You need to know that someone cares about you.

You wonder all the time, "Why doesn't someone take me back to my Family?" As the years pass slowly, you realize this will not happen. When you ask the old people where your Mother is, they tell you she is dead.

You do not believe them. You vow to find your Family yourself when you grow up and are free. No one ever told you when you were born and you never had a birthday. Every other child you knew in the village knew when they were born and had a birthday every year. You did not attend anyone's birthday, but you heard of them.



"I attended St. John's Church and sang in the choir at the age of six as a soprano" (Snow Gertrude 3).

The Waifs and Strays Society regarded village foster homes as ideal placements for their wards. They would not place children with their relatives. As early as the 1890's, it was obvious that children were neglected in the foster homes.

They were unwashed and wore ragged, dirty underclothes for months. They wore boots that were too small and permanently deformed their feet. They were infected with vermin, and years passed between inspection visits by local clergy (Stroud 68).

The organizations persisted in fostering children in small villages for the next 50 years. My Father's experience indicated that little had changed in the years he was in foster care.

The organizations were adamant that **any** circumstances were better than a child living with his natural family - his evil associations. And so my Father's life to date consisted of 3 ½ years with his Parents in Croydon, Surrey, England and 8 years in a remote village of 300 people.

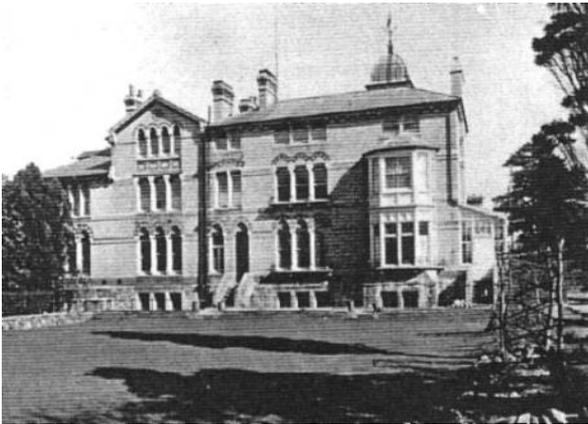
It was time again to be put on a train alone with a name-tag pinned on his shirt to journey 5-10 hours to London England with it's 1922 population of 7 million.

It was time for him to be 'trained' (brainwashed) in preparation for his inevitable deportation to Canada. He was expected to be a passive, submissive, servile, indentured farm labourer until he was 18.



Fred Snow (12) Rumburgh Suffolk England 1921

Brainwashing was accomplished by the Number System in which his name was taken from him and he was assigned a number. He was compelled to use his number at all times, or else a caning would result. The Rule of Silence allowed him to speak quietly for one hour a day. The Daily Punishment Circle (Caning) and inadequate food helped the process.



St. Augustine's Home for Boys Sevenoaks Kent England 1921-1925

You are surprised one day when the Social Worker knocks at the foster home door. She is the same one from many years ago. She says, "I'm here to pick up the Waif." Mrs. Smith invites her in.

The Social Worker says she is sending you to a Home, where you will be 'looked after.' You could not possibly have known that your placement in the foster home would only last until you were 12 years old. You do not know that being taken to a Home is for the sole purpose of holding you until you are old enough to be 'emigrated' to Canada.

She tells you to pack your tin trunk. It has been under your bed for all these years. When you pack your meagre things, you notice there is nothing new to add. What you put in the trunk is exactly what you took out of the trunk eight years earlier.

You put on Mrs. Smith's boots and grimace because you are older and have trouble fitting your misshapen toes into these boots you have worn for years. The Social Worker says you will have new shoes in 'The Home.'

The Waifs and Strays Society changed its 55-year old policy of handing second-hand shoes from one child to another in 1935. Each child was provided with new shoes (Stroud 198). Too late for my Father

You pass through the doorway and leave the only 'home' you have known. Mrs. Smith says, "Good-bye." Her face is expressionless. Mrs. Smith does not say anything and doesn't even look at you. The Social Worker tells you to get in the cart - the same one years before. She lets you sit on the seat beside her this time.

When you arrive at the train station, you remember the terrifying train trip you had many years ago. She pins a name-tag to your shirt. This time you can read and make sure your name is on it. She tells you someone will meet you at the next station. She leaves you there and walks away without saying anything.

You get on the train and try not to think of where it is taking you. You wonder what 'Home' you will be living in. As the train slowly pulls out of the station, you do not look back. You learned not to do that when you were four years old.

You are a little boy who doesn't know where he is, and doesn't know where he is going. There is nowhere for you to run. There is no one for you to turn to.

No one knows who you are. You do not know who you are either. As you watch the scenery pass by, you know you will not pass this way again.

As the train slows to a halt at a London station, a Porter looks at your name-tag and tells you this is where you get off. He smiles and gives you a wink. You are not used to having someone smile at you, so you give him a shy smile back. You do not know how to wink.

You get off the train. Another Social Worker hollers, "Here, Boy!" You assume that is yourself. He checks your name-tag and tells you to follow him through the station, and not to say a word. He puts you on another train, alone of course.

As it quickly passes through London, you wonder where your Family lives. You were too young to know where you lived when they apprehended you.

All the same, you tell yourself your Family is somewhere out there. You have thoughts that now you are in London, somehow, they will find you, or you can find them. The train stops and you get off. You wait for someone to holler, "Here, Boy!" Someone does. He does not need to tell you to be quiet. You are a quick learner. You follow this man. He takes you to your new 'Home.'

It is a large and imposing stone building surrounded by high stone walls. They cut your hair off in clumps. They 'delouse' you. You want to tell them this is unnecessary, but you know better than to speak. They give you clothes to wear that are more worn than the clothes you are wearing.

They give you old boots to wear. At least they are too large instead of too small. You wonder if your bent toes might still straighten out in time. You notice that all the other boys in the Home have 'empty eyes.' You wonder if they are sick. They have scabs on their faces and arms.

The adults take your name-tag, **and** your name away. One of the Sisters says, "You are now Boy Number 14." You put your tin trunk under your bed in the dormitory, and notice the straw mattress reeks of urine. The older boys in the dormitory do not look at you.

An eight-year-old boy sneaks a look at you. He looks like a frightened puppy. At least the dormitory has a window, and you can see a little over the high walls. At night, you wonder which chimney pot belongs to your Family's home.

You wonder why the Home is so silent. It absorbs the sounds of footsteps. It is a very strange place, full of very strange people.

"The Home held 48 boys who were 6-16 years old in six dormitories. We slept on straw mattresses. Master Jago was quite sadistic and treated us as if we were criminals or slaves.

I helped him fix some electrical wiring and he asked me if he knew anything about electricity.

I said, 'Not very much.' I stood on a ladder and he told me to grab hold of a pipe. He handed an electrical wire to me. When I touched it, the shock nearly knocked me off. Master Jago laughed.

At the Local Council School they used a form of discipline called the 'cross' system.' A Head Monitor kept daily track of your mistakes or 'crosses.'

At the end of the day, if you had eight X's you went up before the Headmaster of the school and got one strap. One X over, you got another strap.

You got the same number of straps again when you got back to the Home!



Caning

"For serious misdemeanours, you leaned over and touched your toes while they caned you on your bare back. If they considered the offences very bad, you had to lie on a table with one guy holding your hands and head and another holding your feet. They beat you with birch canes across your bare backside.

Running away, getting out of line while marching to school, talking back, were serious crimes. The Monitor was one of our classmates who kept track of our 'mistakes.'

Every night after supper, they lined us 48 kids - big and small - in a horseshoe formation in a big room. They punished kids in front of the whole school. They regarded running away, smiling, getting out of line while marching to school, and speaking back to your Head Monitor as very bad offences.

In addition to these punishments, they often put us on bread and water for 2-3 days. If a kid ran away, he was locked in the Tower and given bread and water for days.

I got the cane only once after my friend Leonard Knell and I cleaned up the big hall after a meeting of some kind. We had a game of floor hockey using brooms as hockey sticks.

Sneaky Sister Megan caught us and we both 'got the birch!' Sister Pickett and Sister Megan wore blue habits with white starched cowls. They were particularly mean. They would do anything to get us in trouble. They enjoyed punishing us." Snow Gertrude 6-7.

While caning was banned in the UK in 1998, there are many who propose bringing it back in schools as of 2017. **Michael Moore** produced a video of the history of caning in the UK.

One boy ran away from a Barnardo Home. They captured him and placed him in solitary confinement. They gave him a nightshirt and locked him in a room for seven days.

They fed him only dry bread and a glass of water three times a day. When the week of solitary confinement ended, four boys held him spread over the end of a table, and gave him six strokes of the cane over his bare buttocks (Harrison 203).

"We had soccer practice three times a week, no matter what the weather. They put us on bread and water for a couple of days when we lost a soccer game. Can you imagine playing soccer all day and coming home to that?"

If a kid ran away, they beat him and locked him in the 'tower.' They gave him only bread and water for days.



Breakfast invariably consisted of porridge and two slices of bread with butter. There was also jam and tea. Lunch was a bowl of soup and two slices of bread. There usually was no dessert.

If you did not eat all of your porridge at breakfast, they kept it and made you eat it the next day. If you refused again, they would keep this up for days until the porridge had meld on it. Still they forced you to eat it. Snow Gertrude 28).

One Home Child gave a piece of candy to another child. Someone told the Matron. She used large tongs to carry the young girl up a flight of stairs. She called the girl 'unclean (sinful),' threw her into a broom closet, and locked her in the dark. The rest of the children ate their meal in silence while the girl screamed and kicked her feet on the floor of the closet (Stroud 117).

"We did all the cleaning in the Home. We scoured the rough-wood gym floor with a scrub brush. We got many splinters in our hands and knees as we wore only short pants.

We mopped and scrubbed the kitchen. We scrubbed, waxed, and polished the linoleum on the front steps and big staircase. We scrubbed the marble back steps down to the basement.

We tended the gardens. The older boys polished the other boys' shoes.

Every Saturday night, three of us 14-year-old boys bathed 20 of the five-year-old boys.

I was a server at Church. Twice a week I went to Communion at 6:00 am. On Sunday, I went four times a day for early masses, Matins, Sunday school, and evening services. I felt safe in the Church." (Snow Gertrude 5-6).



St John the Baptist Church Sevenoaks Kent England

The Waifs and Strays Society operated on a food budget of 3s 6d per child per week (Stroud 45-46). My Father's account indicated that the diet established in the 1880's had not changed for 40 years. How would you subsist on this meagre diet?

Your weekday Breakfast is porridge, milk, and 'dripping.'
On alternate weekdays, it is porridge, water, and 'dripping.'
On Sunday mornings, you have bread, butter, and cocoa.
Monday Dinner is soup, bread, and milk pudding.
Every other Monday you have boiled apple, or rhubarb pudding.
Tuesday Dinner is Irish stew with rice and carrots, or a 'dripping crust.'
Wednesday, you have boiled suet (fat) pudding with treacle.
Thursday Dinner is meat, bread, and green vegetables.
Friday Dinner is soup, bread, and milk pudding.
Saturday, you have baked suet pudding with raisins, apples, or carrots.
Sunday Dinner is meat, vegetables, rice pudding, or stewed rhubarb.
You could have fruit in the summer.
Your Tea (Supper) during the week is bread, dripping, treacle, and milk. On alternate days, you had bread, dripping, treacle, and water.

The rules of the Home were rigid (Stroud 43-44). How would you adapt to this unvarying routine? You wake up every weekday at 6:30 am, in summer and 7:00 am, in winter. You strip your bed. You open the windows wide - 'a little at the top,' unless it is raining, snowing or foggy.

You kneel at your bed and say the Lord's Prayer. You wash your hands and face. You wash your chopped hair and 'rub it perfectly dry.' You bathe once a week. You help wash the younger children.

You say Grace before and after every meal. You say Prayers and read Scripture before breakfast. All of this takes about an hour every morning. You have breakfast at 7:30 am, in summer and 8:00 am, in winter.

After breakfast, you make your bed. You wash your bed-sheets every second week. You wash your blankets and quilts once a year - only in the summer. You work in the kitchen or laundry after breakfast.

You attend school in the morning and return to the Home for Dinner at 1:00 pm. You say Grace before and after Dinner. You attend school in the afternoon. You have Tea at 6:00 pm, in the summer and 5:30 pm, in the winter. You say Grace before and after Tea. You read Scripture and say Prayers after Tea.

You gather for the daily Punishment Circle after Supper every night. You watch other children being caned with birch twigs. It is hard to watch the younger children being punished, but if you close your eyes or look away, they cane you too. You unfocused your eyes so you do not see.

Once the caning is done, they send you all to bed. Children under eight go to bed before 7:00 pm Those under nine go to bed by 8:00 pm, and those under twelve go to bed by 8:30 pm You go to bed before 9:00 pm You kneel at your bed and say the Lord's Prayer.

On Saturday, you clean the Home 'from top to bottom.' You attend Church on Sunday morning and Sunday school in the afternoon. You can attend evening Church - but only in the summer. You spend as much time in Church as you can. It allows you some respite from this place, if only for a while.

Every Friday night, they 'dosed' the children with a mixture of castor oil and licorice powder. A single spoon was licked by one and passed to the next. Ringworm, vermin, and chilblains were rampant in the Homes. The children had a one-day outing per year.

They could not go outside the gates of the Home except briefly during school holidays. Children could go out on the large paved areas that were surrounded by high walls, but there were no toys with which they could play (Stroud 113).

They had to refer to themselves by their number at all times, or be caned.

Perhaps there was another motive to their numbering of children. In 1911, a Canadian eugenicist suggested all of humanity should be numbered. He contended that if numbers replaced names, over time everyone would develop pride in their assigned digit (McLaren 25).

I do not think many British Home Children developed pride in their digits.

I am surprised the organizations did not tattoo the children with, 'Waif Number xxxxx.' This might have made it easier for them to locate children, since they lost track of so many in Canada.

Barkingside Girls' Village Home Barkingside Essex
RULES TO BE OBSERVED 1891

Daily Routine:

Get up: 6 AM

Out of school girls 6:30 to 7

School Children 7 or 7:30

Breakfast & Prayers 12:45

Dinner 5:30 Tea & Prayers

Go to bed: 6 to 6:30

Girls under 10 8 PM

Girls under 14 8:30 to 9 PM

Out of school girls On Sunday all girls and children may get up one hour later.

1. Talking is strictly forbidden in the bedrooms both morning and evening.
2. No girl is to be kept from school without the permission of the Governors, except for illness.
School begins at 9:30 AM and 2 PM daily, except Saturdays which is a whole holiday.
3. No girl must be kept away from the Laundry or Workrooms for Cottage work without permission from the Governors.
4. The diet table is to be adhered to as closely as possible.
5. Mothers should be in the dining room when the children have their dinner.
6. Mother's are to take their children out for a walk every Saturday - weather permitting.
7. No girl is to be sent out of the Village alone. "Out of school" girls may be sent together to Barkingside or the Horns, with a pass signed by their Mother, to be given up at the gates. Girls are not to be sent to the Beehive or to Ilford.

8. No girls may go outside the Village Gates without hats on. Girls may go to the Pillar Box in caps and aprons.
 9. The Mossford Gates are to be used by members of the Staff only. Mothers must take their girls through the main gates.
 10. No girl is to be out of her Cottage, except with her mother, later than 6 PM in the winter (unless attending Club or Girl Guides) 8 PM during the summer.
 11. Slippers must not be worn outdoors.
 12. Girls are strictly forbidden to stand on the garden seats or to walk on the borders of the grass.
 13. "Out of school" girls must play their games on the Village Green, not on the drives or ornamental grounds, nor may they use the swings or giant strides.
 14. Girls are not allowed to pick flowers or shrubs in any part of the Village Home, nor must they be commissioned to do so under any circumstances.
 15. All articles sent to the Workshop for repair must have a label with the NAME of the Cottage firmly affixed.
 16. Girls are not allowed to sell, exchange or give away their property without permission.
 17. Mothers must take Bible Classes for their children every Sunday afternoon between 3 and 4 o'clock. All girls of 9 years of age may attend the Sunday evening service (6:30 PM)
 18. If a Mother is not well and is obliged to stay in bed, she should report at once to the Governors' Office.
 19. The report sheet is to be filled in monthly by the Cottage Mother in charge, and sent to the Governors by month end..
 20. Mothers have from 2 to 5 PM off duty daily (except Saturdays and Sundays), after which time they must be in their Cottages, except on their evenings off.
- 7.

Mothers? If they were all told their own Mothers were dead, then the children were 'Orphanized.' Still strange for 45 girls to all call the same woman 'Mother.'

The Waifs and Strays Homes strictly enforced the Rule of Silence, especially when children were outside the Home. They could talk quietly among themselves for an hour between tea and bedtime (Stroud 112-113).

The Punishment Circle was held every night after Tea, so there could not have been much time left for communication. What could they talk about after they were forced to watch other children being caned?

The organizations justified the Rule of Silence by saying that the prevailing attitude of the time was, 'Children should be seen and not heard.' If they were seen and heard at the wrong time and place, the organizations feared the loss of the gentry's goodwill - and their financial contributions (Stroud 106-107).

The dominant motive of the Waifs and Strays Society was to permanently isolate children from their families and deport them overseas. Their 1893 constitution stated their primary mission as one of doing 'all things expedient' to assist the emigration of children (Stroud 229).

They wanted to rescue children from their bad surroundings and permanently place them in Canada to prevent them from drifting back when they were no longer under their care. The entire emphasis was upon breaking 'old evil associations.'

The Waifs and Strays Society regarded their efforts as wasted if children re-established contact with their families.

Admission was made contingent upon the nearest relative handing over the child 'unreservedly' into their care (Stroud 80). The child-care organizations conducted a Holy Crusade against poor families.

They appeared to have modified their objectives in 1952 when they professed their first priority as one of providing financial assistance to families so that children could remain with them. The provision was whether they judged the homes as 'reasonably satisfactory.'

Their second apparent priority was adoption, if they decided it was 'inadvisable' for children to stay in their homes. Their third priority was to board children with foster parents, and their final option was to send children to the Homes until they were of employable age (Stroud 230).

There was no mention of child emigration in their policies, even though they were very much involved in the British Child Deportation Scheme to Australia from 1947-1967.

When I imagine St. Augustine's Home for Boys, I see only grey. I see the sun shining overhead - but not on this building. Inside, I see spirits frozen in the still air. They are images of children with hurt but tear-less eyes. They all wear numbers. I see cold stone walls saturated with their muffled cries.

I do not hear echoes of children's laughter, because this is a silent place. Instead, I feel the vibrations of their unspoken pleas. I feel a silent, 'Please help me.' I see my Father's dormitory, and imagine him sitting by the window, leaning on the sill, and praying to the night sky for deliverance. I see a children's prison.

Chapter 2: A British Home Child Deported to Canada 1925

The child-care organizations regarded the children as simply commodities for export. It cost them 10-15 £ each year to keep a child in their care. It cost them only 2 £ to emigrate each child.

They saved a great deal of money by exporting children at the earliest possible age - many as young as six years old. Not only did they save money, but also they profited. Canada's need for cheap farm labour was insatiable. For every child sent, there were requests for ten more.

The Canadian government paid the organizations \$2 for each child (Wagner 1982 154). The British Parish Guardians paid them \$75 for each child they emigrated. The Canadian government paid them a cash bonus of \$5,000 for every 1,000 they sent (Bagnell 1980b 69). For every 100,000 children deported, that amounts to about ½ million dollars.

The organizations sold the children as slave labour. The Canadian government bought them. The scheme was always about money and never about the best interests of children.

The Waifs and Strays Society saw Canada as a void to fill with their 'surplus' children. By 1919, the scheme had been in operation for 50 years. Fifty British child-care organizations sent 73,000 to Canada unaccompanied by parents or guardians (Stroud 78-79).

Between 1882-1908, Barnardo shipped 14% (4,500) of his children to Canada illegally - without parental consent. A further 9% (3,000) were sent because of court orders and the Home Secretary's authorization, but not parental consent. One quarter (7,500) of all Barnardo children were sent to Canada illegally (Parr 67).

Few of those in the UK organizations had ever travelled more than a few kilometres from their place of birth. They had no appreciation for what was involved in travelling across the ocean and could not comprehend the vastness of Canada.

Each Waif and Stray child had a metal suitcase that contained what the naive English considered necessary for survival in Canada.

The suitcase contained a cap, a suit, belt, ball of wool, boot brush, one pair of rubber boots, one pair of slippers, one pair of overalls, one pair of underwear, two long nightshirts, two pairs of woollen socks, two shirts, two handkerchiefs, some needles, and thread.

Each case also contained four books: The Travelers Guide, Holy Bible, New Testament, and Pilgrim's Progress (Corbett 123). The clothing was quite inadequate, especially for Canadian winters.

Many farmers did not replace children's clothes when they wore out or outgrew them, and many wore the same clothes for years. Their 'training' in the London based Boys Home did not include how to attend to farm animals and how to farm.

In 1925, Master Ernest Jago of St. Augustine's Church Home for Boys called my Father and 40 other boys over 14 years old to his office. He gave them the 'choice' of emigration to either Australia or Canada. He did not give them the choice of staying in England.

No one wanted them there. He gave them two days to get ready to leave the Home. No one saw them off on their journey. No one waved, 'Good-bye.' They led my Father to believe he would have a better life in a land of prosperity and opportunity. He could only hope that his life would be better than what it had been to date.

He was a young boy who had only known eight years of life in a foster home in a small village and 3½ years in a sequestered institution. All he had seen beside the inside of the Home and school, was the sidewalk he walked on from the Home to the school and back. The boys silently walked single-file, with downcast eyes.

They were punished if they looked around while they walked. He must have been a little apprehensive about what lay ahead. When they deported him from England, he faced the prospect of not being able to find his Family.

They say you will have a better life in Canada. Given what you had experienced to date, you think, "Anything would be better!" You choose Canada, only because one of your friends chose Canada before you.

Two days later, they gather you up and march you down to the train station. You feel a little strange, because they let you look around while you walk. Some people look at you, and you see a little sadness in their eyes.

You march up the gangplank, and Master Jago gives you a photograph of the ship 'SS Andania' is written in ink on the back of the photograph. You keep this picture all your life. You seem to know how important it is to keep a record of your travels. You go down many ladders into steerage class. The three-tiered bunk beds have metal frames with chains to support the mattresses. The space between the bunks is very narrow.

As the ship leaves the port and the shores of England, you go to the stern with the rest of the boys to have a last look. You silently say, 'Good-bye' to your unknown Family, and tell yourself you will be back someday.



SS Andania: London England to Halifax Nova Scotia 1925

You go to the bow of the ship to stare out over the grey sea and try to imagine what Canada will be like. You know you will have to work hard, but you are used to that. It is an awful trip. Everyone is seasick. The crew treat you as if you were livestock in the hold of the ship.

They open the door and leave food on the floor. At least it is better than what you usually ate in the Home. Master Jago stays in his quarters nearly all the time. You see him only twice in the two weeks it takes to sail to Canada. He is drunk both times and seasick the rest of the time.

For a few decades in the early part of the British Home Children Deportation Scheme, ship's passenger lists consisted only of a list of 'Boy age 12' etc. Why did their names need to be recorded when they were regarded only as commodities, or cattle?

When the ship arrives in Halifax, you march down the gangplank into a large shed. A man in a uniform asks you your name. You almost say, 'Boy Number 14'. He has a gold patch on his arm that reads, 'Department of Agriculture.' .

You were looking forward to using your name again as you had not spoken it aloud very often in the past 3½ years. Another man who looks like a Doctor goes down the line. He pulls your eyelids back and looks inside. He tells you to open your mouth and he looks down your throat. He must have seen a lot of rotten teeth.



SS ANDANIA 1925

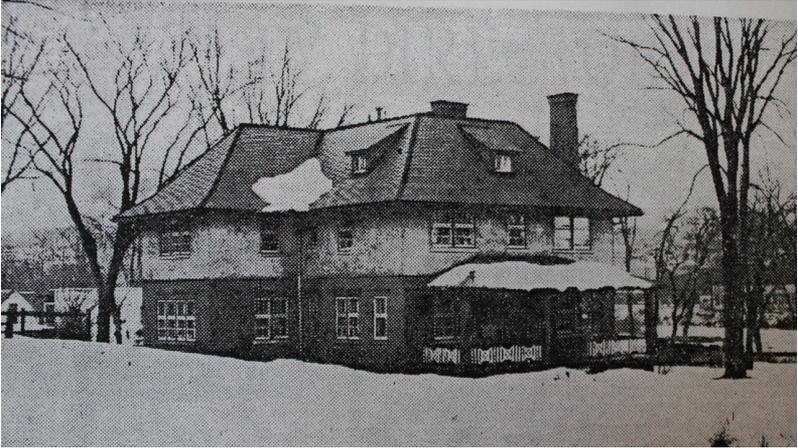
Video of Waifs and Strays on 'SS Andania' 1925

It is dark in the shed and you do not think he can see anything, but you know enough not to talk to your 'betters.' You were told everyone is your 'better.'

They told you never to forget you are a 'Waif,' and that your parents were 'vicious,' meaning 'evil.' The Doctor moves quickly down the line and only looks in a few boys' eyes. He announces, "Forty-five medically fit!" The man in the uniform notes this.

My Father arrived in Canada on April 17, 1925, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. They placed him on a train to Montreal. He may have had his name-tag on his shirt.

Someone met the boys in Montreal and put them on another train to the Gibbs' Home at Sherbrooke, Quebec - a Distributing Centre where they sent boys to work on farms.



Gibbs Home Sherbrooke Quebec

The vastness of the country must have been imposing to a young boy from London. When he rode the train for hours in the middle of winter, he must have wondered just how inhospitable the country might be.

He could not have anticipated the prejudice that would make the country all the colder for him.

Sir Francis Galton used the term eugenics in 1883 in England to describe a movement dedicated to the improvement of the human race by selective breeding. He automatically classified the upper and middle classes as fit, and the criminal, alcoholic, feeble-minded, and poor as unfit (McLaren 14-15).

The upper classes feared the growth of the poor working class. They believed paupers bred paupers, and the working class were mentally deficient, irresponsible, and negligent because of their biological destiny (Kevles 114).

The British Home Children suffered the imposed eugenic curse of 'tainted blood.' Canadians were contemptuous of their 'uncertain parentage,' and treated them abominably. Their attitudes towards these children persisted long after the scheme ended, and further reinforced their implanted shame..

The British organizations regarded them as a valuable, exportable, breeding stock that could improve the quality of the Canadian gene pool. At the same time, they did not want them in England because they believed they were tainted by their family origins.

Canadians welcomed them only as cheap labour, but believed these children carried inherited physical and moral deficiencies.

They saw them as a potential plague that threatened to contaminate the healthy Canadian gene pool (Bagnell 77-78). Medicine, Psychology, and Social Work exploited Canadian fears of the threat posed by British child immigrants.

Their onslaughts were clearly self-serving, and they ensured their careers and professions by appointing themselves as defenders of the race (McLaren 66-67).

Dr. C.K. Clarke was a Professor of Psychiatry who attacked the inferiority of the British Waifs. He announced that proof of their degeneracy could be found in their symmetrically shaped heads and their stunted bodies (Bagnell 1980b 206). Canadians labelled the British Home Children as criminals, imbeciles, paupers, Cockney sneak thieves, pickpockets, and Street Arabs'.

The Honorable Frederick Nichols stated that waifs and strays are tainted and corrupt with moral slime and filth inherited from parents. He regarded their original surroundings were of the most foul and disgusting character.

He concluded that these lepers cannot be cleansed of these characteristics. He accused the agencies of dumping their human warts and excrescences upon Canada.

A Master and Servant Act bound children until they were 18 years old. Girls were 'in service' until they were 21 years old. Those who ran away could be found guilty of desertion, fined and jailed (Parr 92).

Barnardo Indenture Agreement

Waifs and Strays Indenture Agreement

Ontario Police were convinced these children had criminal natures because depraved parents had raised them. This made them physically weak and unable to resist temptation.

The Ontario Prison Reform Commission in 1891 attributed an increase in drunkenness and prostitution to the presence of the British Home Children (Parr 53). These attitudes contributed to the extreme physical and social alienation of the Home Children.

It was common practice for farmers to make sure their children were segregated from the British Home Children. Ontario Physicians cautioned Canadian families about contact with British Home Children. They believed them to be carriers of syphilis that could be transmitted to Canadian children through simple play (Bagnell 1980a 80).

Many British Home Children did not see the inside of the farmer's homes. They ate and slept in the barn with the animals. The organizations were to provide Inspectors to frequently visit the children. Some children worked for years without ever seeing an Inspector. The rare meetings with Inspectors were usually at the farmer's kitchen table - with the farmer included. What were the children free to say?

In late 1924, the Bondfield Commission from Britain investigated the scheme and concluded the children suffered from loss of education, overwork, and non-payment of their labour.

They recommended - 40 years after the beginning of child deportation - that children should be given **long** winter pants to replace their short pants.

The British government finally decided that children under the British statutory school-leaving age of 14 years old should not be emigrated to Canada. The Canadian government complied, and the child-care organizations decided to keep children in their Homes until they were over 14 years old (Bagnell 1980 23-24).

The scheme still had enthusiastic supporters in 1925. Some proposed that Britain should ship 200,000 children between the ages of 14-18 to Canada. They hoped to reduce their unemployment rate at save 'dole (welfare)' money.

Over a twenty-year period, they wanted to send four million children to Canada. They regarded the English child as "magnificent material" who would ensure the racial unity of the Empire (Wagner 1982 232).

How did they plan to recruit four million children? Where would they find so many 'Orphans?' The Great Depression put a halt to this eugenic scheme.

Any trauma these young children experienced by being separated from their families and raised in institutions would have been compounded by their deportation. They were sent to a cold and inhospitable country. Children are more likely to reflect their traumatic experiences in their behaviour rather than their words.

Bed-wetting was a prevalent indicator of their responses to traumatic experiences. An Ontario Immigration official noted that two-thirds of the British Home Children suffered from enuresis.

He referred to this as their 'dirty habits' that were proof of their immoral parents' lives. Many children who did not overcome their enuresis were deported back to England (Parr 103-107).

"My first farm job was at East Angus, Quebec where they treated me as if I were a dumb farm animal. When the farm owner had visitors, he brought us English boys into the house. He ridiculed us because of our accents.

I was there for about a year. They took me by horse and wagon to Sherbrooke, where I saw Mr. Keeley to get another job.

My next position was with a young couple that were Agricultural College graduates. They kept bees and had an orchard.

I stayed farming for a few months but did not like it very much, as I had to eat in the kitchen in a corner with the dog apart from the family. I felt no better than a dog. (Snow Gertrude 10).

A Chief Medical Officer of the Canadian Department of Immigration in 1916 wrote that the rate of feeble-mindedness of British Home Children was twice as high as that of Canadian school children (McLaren 25, 59). This report strengthened Canadian beliefs that the British Home Children were not only genetically tainted but also intellectually slow.

The 1924 Social Service Congress of Canada concluded that the importation of child immigrants had added to the incidence of pauperism, vice, crime, and insanity (McLaren 46).

Some children like Amy Norris, who came to Canada when she was 12, were not kept in one place very long but were shunted from farm to farm all through childhood. Whatever the reason, the frequent moving from place to place left many of them bewildered, hurt, and unsettled for the rest of their lives. Amy Norris was moved 14 times in four years.(Bagnell 128)

12

Name Frederick Snow Age 9-14 File No. 204440

Year emigrated 1925 Union _____ Emigrated by Cyle

No. Report	Character of Home	Character of Children	Character of Children's Character	TERMS	EMPLOYER	P. O. ADDRESS	COUNTY	INSPECTOR
14	5-13-25	Home	Home	Home	Stewart Coates	East Angus, Compton	Compton	in file
	13-mo.	G. D. Wall	demmingford	Huntingdon				
15	10-13-25	Home	Home	Home	Wm Ruffey	Paul, Compton	Compton	in file
16	1-16-25	Home	Home	Home				in file
<p>Jan. 25 fractured skull in fall. In Sherbrooke hospital. See 17-24.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Completed</p> <p>discharge hospital Jan 16/25; arranged that he will spend his time at the home of two friends while convalescing, after he has been at the home for a few days -</p>								

Frederick Snow Waifs and Strays Inspection Report
 Sherbrooke Quebec 1926-1928

They noted that his arm was mangled in a pulley accident and that he was in Sherbrooke Hospital, discharge Jan 16, 1928. He was going to spend his time at the homes of two friends while convalescing after the has been at the Gibbs Home for a few days. 'Completed' means he was 18 years old and no longer 'in care.'

Fred G. Snow (18-19): A Lonely Year in Hospital Sherbrooke, Quebec, 1927-1928

My next work was for a sawmill operator. I was responsible for making sure the belts on the saw did not jam. I applied a dressing of resin and oil to the belts. It was dangerous work. I got my right arm caught between the belt and the pulley.

My elbow suffered a compound fracture. The nearest doctor was only five miles (8 km) away, but he came the next day. He looked at my elbow and said it was badly bruised and sprained.

He gave me a few painkillers, put my arm in a sling and left. After a week of unbearable pain, I insisted my employer take me to a hospital in Sherbrooke. After I was admitted, it took another week for the swelling to go down.



Sherbrooke Quebec Hospital 1927

I had two more operations. They broke and reset the bone and put a metal plate in my arm. I was in the hospital for a year, as I had nowhere to go, where someone could look after me while I mended.

While I was in the hospital, I met the General Manager of Ingersoll-Rand Company who was visiting someone in my ward. He asked where I was going to work when I left the hospital. I said, 'I don't know.'

He offered me a position as a Timekeeper. I was right-handed so I had to learn how to write with my left hand" (Snow Gertrude 11).

You are 17 years old and you work in a sawmill. You lubricate the belts on the saw. You carry a heavy bucket full of a sticky mixture of resin and oil. You dip a short, rag-covered stick into the bucket and carefully lubricate the rapidly moving belts.

They do not shut the machine off while you do this. You are not very tall, so you have to stand on an upturned bucket to reach one of the upper belts. You are hungry and tired. The sawmill is hot, dusty, and noisy. You step on the bucket, and lose your balance.

You fall. Your arm is caught on the lower belt. It quickly carries you along to the pulley at the end of its loop. Your elbow is crushed as it is carried completely around the pulley. The belt releases you from its grip. You are fortunate that the pulley has a smooth, flat surface. A slotted pulley would have severed your arm.

You howl with pain. A few men rush over to look at you. One says, "You are lucky to still have your arm!" Another is concerned enough to telephone the nearest Doctor 8 km away.

It is late afternoon, and he decides to wait until the next day to come. You tell him what happened and he raises his eyebrow when he hears your English accent. He gives you a disparaging look.

You are now used to people looking at you with disdain when you speak. He briefly looks at your arm and tells you it is only badly bruised and sprained. You already know that. You are worried the bones are crushed or broken. He gives you a few painkillers and puts your arm in a sling. He sees no reason to see you again.

The Foreman tells you to take a few days off - without pay. You stay in your rented room alone and suffer unbearable pain for a week. No one calls to see how you are doing. Your arm swells up and turns ugly colours of yellow, green, and brown. You cannot move your fingers. They swell to the size of sausages.

You hope your arm might heal itself, but you worry that you might lose the use of it, or lose your arm altogether. You are right-handed and it is awkward to use your left hand for shaving. You learn to write with your left hand.

It has been a week since the accident. You run out of food and painkillers. You have no money. Your weekly rent is due. You were last paid the day before the accident. You will not be paid for the week you have been off work. You cannot stand the pain any longer.

You walk 8 km down the long, dusty road to the sawmill. You carry your 'Waif' trunk in your left hand. Every step sends spears of pain through your right arm.

You set your sights on the road ahead, and plant one foot in front of the other. You are determined. Tomorrow, you have nowhere to live, and no way of providing for yourself.

You insist your employer take you to the hospital to have someone attend to your arm. He gives you, 'The Look' when he hears your accent. You hold your breath, and pray he does not say, "No."

If he does, you do not know what you will do. He notices your swollen hand and fingers. He sighs, and calls someone to drive you to the hospital.

They admit you the minute you take your arm out of the sling. They do not need to examine it. You are indigent, so they put you in a large hospital ward. There are only old men in the other beds.

The swelling in your arm gradually dissipates after the first week. The first operation on your arm is not successful. They perform another to break, and reset the long bones in your arm. They put a metal plate in your elbow to hold the shattered, smaller bones together. You are in this hospital for a year.

You spend most of your time learning how to talk like a Canadian and lose your English accent that identifies you as 'one of those orphan English kids'. The staff are kind and treat you like a person. This is a new experience for you. They seem to care. For the first time in your life, people call you by your name. You are very happy about that.

You observe how everyone acts. You are amazed the staff treat patients with the same respect they treat each other. The meals in the hospital are monotonous but balanced. You grow 1 ½ in. (3.7 cm) taller in a year and you become muscular.

You walk the hospital grounds every day, partly to get out of the confining ward, and partly to explore the environment, and observe people.

All you saw since you came to Canada two years ago were isolated farms. The only people you met were farmers and labourers. You spend Christmas in the hospital alone. They discharge the other patients to their homes for the holiday

A Nurse gives you a little wrapped present on Christmas Eve. It is a tin of Player's Cigarettes. You had always rolled your own cigarettes. The Nurse has a confused look on her face when she sees your face light up like a young child. She does not know this is the first wrapped Christmas present you have **ever** received.



Players Cigarette Tin

You are too ashamed to tell her, so you just say, "Thank you very much." You hold back the tears that well up in your eyes. It is amazing how small acts of kindness can have such a profound impact. There are no churches nearby. Even if there was one, you are not sure if they would allow you to attend.

You wonder what these Canadians have against you. Why is it so bad for you to be English? You find a little chapel in the hospital. You read every book you find, regardless of the subject matter. You find hope and comfort in the chapel and the books.

No one visits you. You have no money. You have nowhere to live. You worry about how you will be able to work with your mangled arm. The only work you have ever done is labouring. How will you provide for yourself if you cannot do that kind of work?

You have no one - other than someone at the Gibb's Home - to notify where you are. You are almost 18 years old. You will no longer be in their 'care.' They did not care much about you when you were in their care. Why would they care about you afterwards?

A man regularly visits someone in your ward. One day, he happens to notice you, and asks what happened to you. When you tell him, he notices your accent but does not give you, "The Look."

He asks you about your family, and you say, "I don't have a family." He changes the subject and asks where you will go when you get out of the hospital. You tell him you do not know where you will go, but you will try to find a job anywhere.

He offers you a job as a Timekeeper. You explain that your right arm might not work very well once the cast is removed. He tells you not to worry about that. You look out the window and up above the dense bush. You say a silent, 'Thank you!'

When they discharge you from the hospital, you pack your 'Waif' trunk. You had grown so much that your shirts barely fit. There is little material left in your socks as they had been darned so often.

My Father was fortunate to get any medical treatment at all. In 1924, a Manitoba farmer was accused of abuse and mistreatment of a British Home Child. The boy died of double pneumonia. The judge criticized the farmer for his 'harsh' and 'cowardly' treatment of the boy, but acquitted him of the manslaughter charge. He ruled the farmer had no legal

responsibility to provide medical care for the boy (Humphreys 126).

One man's kindness allowed my Father to work as a Timekeeper for a little over a year. I imagined how he spent his first pay cheque. He would have first bought a suit, shirts, and tie. Then he would have found the best fitting shoes he could.

He would have gathered all the clothes he brought from England and burned them. It would not be enough to just discard them. He would have watched the smoke curl up into the air and hope his past followed the same path.

He would have felt extremely proud of his work. He would have worn his suit, tie, and polished shoes. He would have replaced his British Home Child cap with a Fedora.

He would have walked tall, with his chin held high. The only remnant of his past would be his accent. He knew he would have to lose it if he was to survive in Canada. Others he met had English accents, but they were not branded 'Waifs.'

His job ended in late 1929 as the Great Depression began. .

He enlisted in the Reserve Army Service Corps at Sherbrooke, Quebec along with his friend from St Augustine's Home for Boys Leonard Knell. With the threat of the Great Depression, they were assured of a place to live and food to eat for a year.



Fred G. Snow (18-19) Reserve Army Service Corps
Sherbrooke Quebec 1927-1928



Fred G. Snow (19) Leonard Knell (19)
Reserve Army Service Corps Sherbrooke Quebec 1927-1928



Moth Biplane RASC Sherbrooke Quebec 1928

He was finally free to do whatever he wanted and go wherever he wanted. His emancipation coincided with the onset of the Great Depression. He was 21-30 years old through the Great Depression years of 1929-1939.

He travelled Western Canada by boxcar for two years and worked in a Highway Relief Camp for three years. He worked in a gold mine, , married, and had two children during the Depression years.



Fred G. Snow (20-22) "Headed West to Seek My Fortune"
The Great Depression 1929-1931



Fred G. Snow (20-22) Leonard Knell (20-22)
"Headed West to Seek Our Fortunes"
The Great Depression 1929-1931

The two million young, unemployed men who struggled to survive the 'Dirty Thirties' had the weather as an adversary. In 1930, there were blizzards and winters with record low temperatures of -34°C to -40°C . Spring droughts and dust storms caused crop failures on the prairies in 1931.



Dust Storm 'Dirty Thirties' Great Depression 1930

In 1932, the worst grasshopper plague in 50 years devastated Manitoba's crops. A cycle of droughts and severe winters ensued from 1933-1935. Normal weather patterns did not return until 1939. Travel by foot or boxcar through bitterly cold winters, broiling hot summers, dust storms, and grasshopper plagues, was daunting (Mennill 14).



Grasshopper Plague 'Dirty Thirties' Great Depression

Unemployment Rates in Canada: 1921-1940

1925	6 %		1931	10 %		1937	10%
1926	4 %		1932	12 %		1938	12 %
1927	2 %		1933	18 %		1939	12 %
1928	2%		1934	20 %		1940	10%
1929	2%		1935	15 %			
1930	8%		1936	12 %			

Although many would say he was not alone during these times - he was very much alone. Unemployed single men had families from whom they could derive a measure of support. The British Home Children were on their own through the Great Depression, as they had been on their own all of their lives before these times.



Boarding House 1930

My Father found work with a rubber company, seed supply store, and shoe store, until each of these companies went out of business. He got behind in his rent at a boarding house in Winnipeg and his landlady took his suitcase that contained all of his worldly possessions. He never saw it again.

He sold most of his clothes to get money to buy food. He bought a pair of overalls to wear over his suit while he rode the freight trains. He looked his best regardless of his circumstances.



'Riding the Rails' Great Depression Canada 1929-1939

Hundreds of thousands of men rode the freight trains during the Great Depression. They travelled everywhere to look for work of any kind. They chased and hopped on moving freight trains. They either found a place inside to curl up, or clung to the outside of a crowded boxcar.

It was very dangerous. If a man did not tie himself to the roof of the boxcar, he could fall asleep, and fall off to his death. His dangling feet could be amputated at a bridge crossing. A slip or fall under the wheels could be fatal. Men who crossed between the boxcars had to be careful that their feet would not be caught in the couplings.

The -34C to -40C temperatures of winter contributed to many deaths by freezing. Finding enough food was a constant problem. Men found companionship and a chance to wash clothes in the hobo camps (Berton 153).

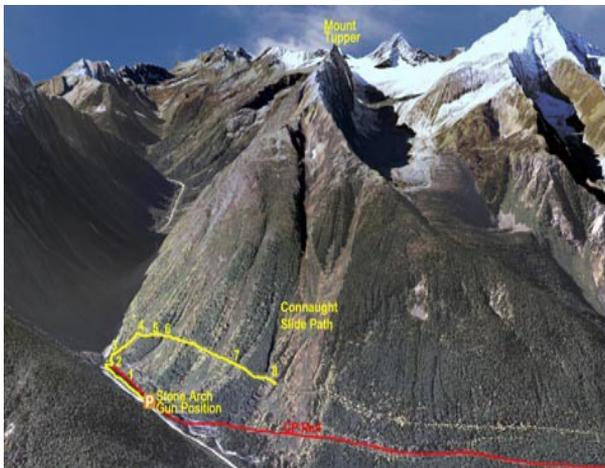
"Leonard Knell and I stoked and hauled grain from daylight to dark in Saskatchewan. When the sun set, we lit straw stacks on fire so we could see to work. We worked steadily seven days a week. The only way we got a break from work was to drop a pitchfork down into the beaters. It would take them a while to repair the machinery." (Snow Gertrude 31)

Men often were not paid actual wages. The farmers determined what to pay men in excess of their room and board, or what they could afford to pay them. My Father's farm work provided him with only a place to sleep and food to eat. Married men worked on the farms so their families far away could qualify for relief.

Any man who refused farm work was ineligible for relief. They were supposed to work 10 hours a day, 7 days per week, with every second Sunday off (Mennill 11).

"We finished threshing in the fall and moved on to Hatzic Island, BC to pick fruit. Secretaries and schoolteachers did this work during the summer. At the end of the fruit-picking season, we drove to the Okanogan Valley in an old car to pick peaches, apricots, and apples. We stayed there about a month and then headed to Vancouver.

We were only there a few days, as we could not find work or somewhere to sleep. We hopped a freight train in Vancouver to get to Winnipeg. It took days to cross the Rocky Mountains. We rode the freight through the long Connaught Tunnel that spiralled right through the middle of the mountains.



Connaught Railway Tunnel British Columbia

If you needed a rest or somewhere to sleep, you looked for a hobo 'jungle.' You cooked up a meal of sorts on an open fire and slept in your overcoats.

The RCMP pulled us off the train in Calgary. They lined fifty of us up in a row and made us put all of our belongings, identification, and wallets on the ground. I did not have any identification. They inspected our things, returned them to us, and let us go.

The group included educated people such as Doctors and Lawyers. We would have appreciated being locked up, as that would have provided us with a meal and a bed. The Mounties told us to, 'Get out of town!'



Looking for Work Great Depression Canada

We walked along the track for many miles to reach the outskirts of town to catch a freight train to the next town. 'Get out of town - don't stop here!'

This was the welcome wherever we went for the next few years. Some train engineers soaked us with water when we pulled up to a station. We were wet and cold the rest of the ride.

Once, I wore a long overcoat when I ran to jump into a boxcar. I slipped on the gravel and nearly went under the wheels. One of the guys in the boxcar reached out, grabbed my coat, and pulled me up. He saved my life.

By the time we reached Winnipeg, it had turned cold enough to make it very dangerous to run along the tops of the boxcars and jump from one to the other.

The best place to ride was in the 'icebox' (the refrigerator car). It was insulated and one could stand upright but the danger was that some 'car knockers' (trainmen) would lock down the lid.

We found ways to keep the lid from being locked. Even so, some men were locked in and froze to death. Deadly fumes could accumulate in the cars as well (Snow Gertrude 18-23).

He might have been killed while hopping a freight train. Who would have found his corpse? How would they identify his body? Whom would they notify of his death? He likely would have been buried as a 'John Doe' in some 'Potters Field.'



Riding the Rails Great Depression Canada



Riding the Rails Great Depression Canada

Have you ever slept, "rough?" You are on your own in a foreign country. Everyone speaks English, but your accented English prevents you from getting work.

You travel with one change of clothes you carry on your back. You no longer have your British Home Child trunk. You have no identification.

You are 21 years old and utterly alone. You sleep on the cold ground in your clothes every night, with only a thin blanket to keep you warm. If it rains, you are soaked.

If it snows, you shiver to keep warm. If it is hot, flying insects torment your sleep. At night, unknown animals howl in the bush and scurry around you in the dark while you sleep. You have only the stars to keep you company. You worry about being injured or sick, because no one would know where you were.

You wake up hungry. You eat whatever you carry with you. You trap small animals. You continue to tell yourself, "Things will get better." You live in hope - for that is all you have. To avoid crushing despair, you hum your favourite hymns to yourself.

If travelling alone, you sing these hymns at the top of your lungs. You hope God hears you. You hope another train comes along or you will have many kilometres to walk along the endless track. You study the weather, and become an expert at reading the sky for inclement weather.

You learn how to cook out of a tin can over a fire of twigs. You hop a freight train and hope for some companionship in the boxcar. When the train slows at the next town, you jump off and try to find work wherever you can.

**HELP WANTED
ENGLISH
NEED
NOT
APPLY!**

You are confused when you read posted signs saying, 'English Need Not Apply.' You wonder why. They now call you a vagabond and a hobo. You have been called a Waif, Stray, and Orphan before.

Others you travel with talk of their families. You keep silent while they talk. If asked, you tell them your parents are dead, and you have no family. They give you strange looks and continue the conversation without you.

"We arrived in Winnipeg and received a warm reception from the 'CPR Bulls' - the dirtiest of all cops. They chased us out of the train yards.

We bummed money and food and slept at the Salvation Army, or in the 'jungles' where all the 'boxcar travellers' hung out.

We had to walk many miles to reach the city limits. Some train engineers were kind enough to slow the train down when they saw 25 guys waiting to get on. We got off the freight at the outskirts of Fort William to avoid being picked up by the cops. I found room and board for \$10 a month in Port Arthur and tried to sell Life Insurance. It was a hard way to make a living so I quit that.

The landlady had a relative who owned a farm near Murillo. I worked there as a farm hand where I cleared land by digging and hauling rocks. I also worked at haying, threshing, harvesting, ploughing, and milking. The work was much the same as the farm work I had done when I first came to Canada six years earlier.

They treated me as if I was just another farm animal. I enjoyed going to Church and singing in the choir. I stayed at this job until the highway construction work began. I met some nice people on the farms. (Snow Gertrude 123-25).

My Father jumped off a boxcar outside Fort William and walked through the town to Port Arthur, where he rented a room in a boarding house. He could not have known, as he sat in his room overlooking the imposing lake, that he was destined to spend his life in this area.



The Sleeping Giant Thunder Bay Ontario

My Mother was 18 years old and had just finished High School. He may have passed her home while he walked to Murillo. She was used to seeing young men tramp the streets of Port Arthur looking for work, as her four Brothers were part of this 'army of the unemployed.'

Had she been looking out her window that day, she might have noticed one young man in particular. He would have been a clean-shaven, 22 year-old man who wore coveralls over his suit.

She might have noticed that he seemed determined as he walked with his eyes locked on the road ahead. While others walked with their eyes downcast, he walked with his head held a little higher. They were destined not to meet for another three years.

He had no proof of his identity, and officially did not exist as a person. There was no one in all of Canada how could 'vouch' for him.

How many lonely days did he walk the streets of Canadian towns and villages looking for work? How many lonely nights did he spend sleeping in a ditch alongside railroad tracks, or in fields in the middle of nowhere? How many times did he envy a family sitting at a supper table, or having a picnic in a park?

He felt different and inferior as a child in England. How did he feel as an unemployed, homeless, and unwanted foreigner in Canada? All he had for comfort was his belief that God knew where he was, and was looking out for him.

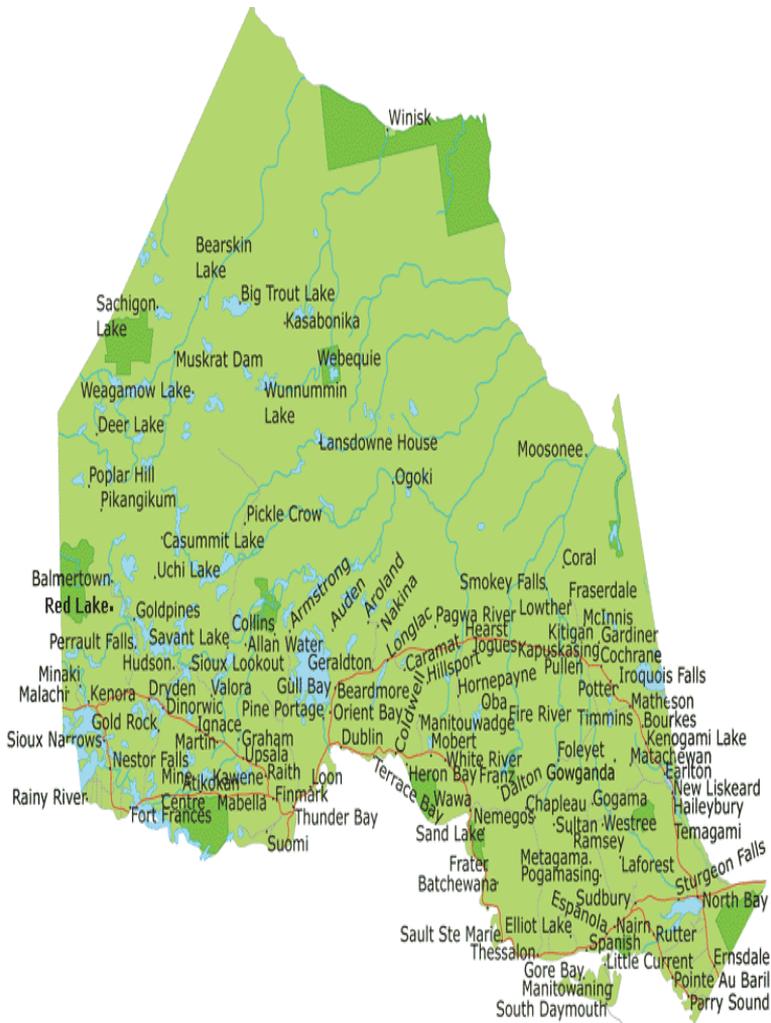
Only married men with families qualified for 'Unemployment Relief'. In 1931, a man had to prove he was unable to support himself and that no relative was able to help him. He had to turn in his liquor permit, license plates, driver's license, and telephone. He had to register for work on Relief projects (Mennill 10).

In 1926, a British biologist proposed compulsory sterilization as a punishment for parents who had to resort to public assistance to support their children (Kevles 114). In Canada during the Great Depression, one out of five Canadians subsisted on Relief and could have become the focus of attention for such eugenic ideas.

I am surprised that the British Home Children were not considered as candidates for compulsory sterilization. Canadians could have met their labour needs *and* eliminated the threat of contamination of their gene pool. The Home Children had no one to protect them from such prejudice.

Involuntary sterilization was not simply a hypothetical idea proposed by eugenic enthusiasts. Thirty US states passed compulsory sterilization laws by 1940. From 1907-1941, 60,000 people underwent involuntary sterilization in the US.

In Nazi Germany from 1933-1937, 400,000 institutionalized people were involuntarily sterilized. Most US sterilization laws were in effect until the 1960's (Allen 1999). In some Canadian provinces, these laws existed until the early 1970's.



North Western Ontario Population .4 per sq km

Fred G. Snow Great Depression Relief Camp
North-Western Ontario, 1931-1934 (Age 22-25)

My Parents lived their lives in the vast area of 777,000 square km known as North-Western Ontario. Residents affectionately refer to the thousands of lakes and dense forest as 'The Bush.' One predominant feature of the area is Lake Superior - the largest freshwater lake in the world. It is formidable in its fury and almost all of England would fit into it.

The region is sparsely populated, and 60% of the population live in the City of Thunder Bay. Port Arthur and Fort William amalgamated in 1970. Long distances from the nearest large cities contribute to the unique nature of its people. Thunder Bay is almost 1,609 km from Toronto, 321 km from Duluth, Minnesota, USA and 804 km from Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The region enjoys an annual 2,000 hours of sunshine, 50 cm of rain, 180 cm of snow, and temperatures that range from -40 C to +40 C. It requires a special resilience to adapt to both the land and the climate. They command respect from those who choose to live in this unique part of Canada. The phrase 'people need people to survive' takes on a literal meaning.

North-Western Ontario was very much undeveloped during the Great Depression. There were very few roads and only a single rail line connection to Eastern Ontario and Western Canada. It was an ideal location for the highway construction projects of the Great Depression.



These projects contributed to the development of the Trans-Canada Highway. The work was hard and monotonous. The living conditions were primitive. The summers were hot and plagued with flies while the winters were bitterly cold with heavy snowfalls.



Relief Camp 1930

The government created Relief Camps to isolate the huge single jobless population (270,000) because they feared a potential revolution. They considered interning men who refused to work in Relief Camps in special Discipline Camps.

These camps were to be located in isolated areas, and surrounded by barbed-wire fences. Men were to be confined in isolation cells and not allowed to speak for two weeks at a time. Fortunately, the government abandoned this scheme (Berton 275).

The camps would have been similar to the WWII Prisoner of War camps, and would have held young, single, men, who would have been guilty of no crime other than being unemployed.



Relief Camp Bunkhouse 1930

Relief work was called the “moving of dirt. The Relief Camps were designed to house 2,000 men but swelled to 11,000 in the first year and 170,000 men after five years.

If a man left, he would not again qualify for relief. He stayed or starved. Single, healthy, unemployed men over 18 years old were paid 20 cents per day.

In 1931, 88 men lived in one tar-paper shack. The air was foul, the outdoor toilets were unsanitary, and the food was bad. Two men shared one double-decker bunk (Mennill 11, 26).

When others complained of the living conditions in the Relief Camps, my Father kept quiet. He had lived under worse conditions.



Fred G Snow Relief Camp Niblock Ontario 1932 (Age 23)
Front Row Right



Fred G Snow Timekeeper
Relief Camp Niblock Ontario 1932 (Age 23)



Fred G Snow
Relief Camp Niblock Ontario 1932 (Age 23)

I became very ill in the Relief Camp. The Boss thought I was simply sick because of the poor food and only gave me some aspirins. Some of the boys thought I needed real medical attention. They hitched up a team of horses and a sleigh and took me to the nearest whistle-stop.

There was a lot of snow so it was tough going, so it took a couple of hours. They put me on a train and I was admitted to hospital in Fort William in very bad shape. They removed my appendix.

I developed pneumonia and was in the hospital for two weeks. I recuperated with friends at Murillo for two weeks before I returned to the Relief Camp. They put me to work in the commissary and I helped the illiterate fellows to read and write. Most had been signing their pay-cheques with just an "X."

I enrolled in an International Correspondence School course to upgrade my education and improve myself (Snow Gertrude 20).

Fifteen hundred Relief Camp workers went on strike in BC in 1935 to protest the living conditions. They intended to ride the freights for 4828 km to Ottawa to present their simple demands of a minimum pay of 50 cents an hour for unskilled labour and union rates for skilled labour.



Relief Riot Regina Saskatchewan 1935

They wanted adequate medical supplies in the camps, work to be insured by Workman's Compensation, and control of the camps to be taken out of the hands of the Department of National Defence.

They wanted the right to vote. The RCMP halted the strikers in Regina, Saskatchewan. This led to a two-hour riot. One RCMP and one striker were killed. After the riot, wages were increased to 40 cents an hour, and most camps were then controlled by the Forestry Department (Mennill 26-31).



Relief Camp Demonstration

Chapter 3: Love at First Sight Port Arthur Ontario 1934

My maternal Great Grandfather George Perry was a 33-year-old printer in London, England when he died in 1881. His wife was widowed with two young children - my Grandfather (4) and my Grandaunt (1).

Given the times, she was fortunate not to have her children taken and swallowed up by the British Child Deportation Scheme. She was born into a different class and a family that had money to support a single parent.

My Perry Grandparents immigrated to Canada and settled in Port Arthur in 1905. My Mother was born in 1913 - when my Father (4) was sent to the foster home in England. She was the fifth youngest of six children.



Charles Perry, Violet Perry, Frank Perry, Nellie Perry, Walter Perry
Thunder Bay Ontario 1910

My Father planned to rent a room at a boarding house in Port Arthur on the Victoria Day Weekend. My Uncle worked at the same Relief Camp and invited him home for a visit. He introduced my parents to each other.

My Mother knew the minute she saw my Father that he was 'the one' for her. He said of their first meeting . . .

"From that time on, I have never had to worry about having a place to hang my hat. We have always had a home with lots of love in it - even if there was not always a lot of money (Snow Gertrude 12).

He was inclined to understate. From the age of 4-25 years old, he never experienced the security of being loved by his Family. No one comforted him, paid attention to him, took an interest in him, kissed him, or hugged him. No one told him he was special, celebrated his birthday, or encouraged him to dream.

His lifelong and solitary anguish was one of being plagued by unanswered questions about his unknown family that began when he 'came into care.'

Who are my Parents? Do I have any Brothers and Sisters? Do I have any Uncles and Aunts? Is my name really Frederick Snow? Why did I never see my family again? Was I abandoned by my Family? Do I have 'tainted' blood? Why did those people take me away from my family? Is there something about my family I should not know?

Twenty-one of his 25 years of life to date had been dominated by subsistence and survival. He had lived a life devoid of love and affection. He had very little - if any - experience with women in his life before he met my Mother.

1-4 years old	1909-1913	Lived with his parents	England
4-12 years old	1913-1921	Lived in a Foster Home	England
12-15 years old	1921-1925	Lived in an Orphanage	England
15-18 years old	1925-1927	Indentured Labourer	Ontario
18-19 years old	1927-1928	Hospitalized	Quebec
19-20 years old	1928-1929	Timekeeper	Quebec
20-21 years old	1929-1930	Reserve Army	Quebec
21-22 years old	1930-1931	Riding Boxcars	Canada
22-25 years old	1931-1934	Relief Camp	Canada

It was a momentous meeting and truly love-at-first-sight. Perhaps my Mother saw a man who had not experienced love. Perhaps my Father saw a woman capable of infinite love. Each had found their soul mate.

For the first time in his life, he heard and said the words, 'I love you.' From the day they met, they spent the rest of their lives devoted to each other and their children.

When they first met, my Father spoke of returning to England to find his Family. Fortunately, he reconsidered this plan. The Victoria Day Weekend became for them, and our Family, a time as important as their Wedding Anniversary.

He must have been very apprehensive when he asked my Perry Grandparents for her 'hand' in marriage.



Charles Samuel Perry and Nellie Perry
Port Arthur Ontario 1934

My Grandmother was sympathetic to the plight of the British Home Children and regularly chastised a dairy farmer for how he treated these boys. They accepted my Father for who he was - someone who dearly loved their Daughter.



Gert Snow (21) Engaged 1934 Thunder Bay Ontario

Gert Snow (21) Fred Snow (25)
Engaged 1934 Port Arthur Ontario

The winter in North-Western Ontario can be brutally cold. As temperatures drop and the snow piles up, life in the bush can be miserable. The prospecting camps were separated by many kilometres of very thick bush. Prospectors wrote notes to each other on birch-bark and tacked them to trees.

He lived in a tent and slept on a bed of fir boughs covered with a blanket.



It was a lonely time for him in the barren and desolate wilderness. Prospecting for gold was not just a 'pipe dream.' Gold had been discovered in the area. Many years later, the largest gold deposit in Canada was found at Marathon. The present-day Hemlo Gold Mine has one of the richest sources of gold outside of South Africa.

My Parents had been together a few weeks when they were apart for four months while my Father prospected for gold. He kept a diary on 25 small scraps of paper. He wrote in pencil and fountain pen on both sides of the pages. There was very little money for envelopes and stamps. Mail deliveries to the prospecting sites were sporadic. My Mother knew how important her mail was to him. She knew she was all he had.



Hardrock Ontario 1935

Fred G. Snow Diary of a Gold Prospector 1934 Age 25

October: Left Jellicoe for Corrigan Lake - a 2½ hour hike. Made camp for the night. Four-hour-hike to Taylor's camp and then a 4-mile (6.4 km) hike to Maloney's.

I had a mishap at the Chute and had to make camp at the side of the river to dry out my clothes.

Finished the walls of the shack. Put in the floor and tent on the roof. Received a letter from my Sweetie. Wish I could see her. Slept in the bunk, felt like a sardine in the morning.

The plane landed 20 miles (32 km) off their course. Put them up for the night. Had another little accident today. Slid down the rock slide of a mountain for a ways and got scratched up some but no bones were cracked.

Laid up in camp all day and recuperated. Should have Skeets up here so she could doctor me up a little.

Had partridge for supper. Knocked it off with a rock. Primitive hunting, but it tasted good. The pilot and I went fishing and caught a pike. We cooked him - the pike - for supper.

I'm living in hopes of getting mail pretty soon. Cold, and no pan gold as yet. Made a pie, some tarts, and two cakes today. Gee, I miss you. Sent \$40 to my Sweetie to bank for us.

I'll have to start writing on the backs of these sheets, as this is all the paper I have. Your letters Darling keep me from going mad.

Every time I get lonesome for you, I'll read the words you underlined on that song sheet you sent me. I'll imagine you are saying the words to me.

Sweetie, I've got to write down my feelings. It's so hard to get mail out to you and I feel by doing this that i am keeping in touch with you. After receiving your loving letters, all I can say is that I love you and I always will.

It's hard for us to be apart this way, but then, it's all for our own good, someday. Darling, I've got to turn in. I dream of you. I still wear your initial, and have your picture on my watch, so every time I look at it, I see you.

November: *We found a vein just at quitting time. Not feeling so good tonight. Have a pretty bad toothache.*

Was up most of the night, but I guess I can stand it for a while anyhow.

I had to go into Jellicoe to get a tooth pulled. I only got back last night. The lake was partly frozen over and we had quite a time to get out.

I paddled across the lake and hiked to Nezah. Is it ever a tough road!

I made Jellicoe by 6:20 pm. Got my tooth all fixed up. I left Jellicoe this morning at 9:30 am and arrived at camp at 8:30 pm Only about 35-40 miles (56-64 km).

Was it dark! I thought for sure I was lost. I was never more glad to see camp than I was that night.

Well, Sweetie, back on the job - rather sore and stiff from the double hike - but I'm OK.

We caught a rabbit in a snare made out of my wire armbands. The lake is frozen over.

I miss you more every day. It seems a long way off until Dec. 15, but I'll make it. I'll have to. Boy, we found some swell mineralized quartz.

If only we could find just one speck or two of that stuff called GOLD!

It would mean so much to us. Imagine my name in the paper! Worked all day and panned for the 'bug' but was very disappointed.

I just snared a bunny. Andy cut my hair tonight with a razor. That is the first one I've had for about three months!

We just caught a weasel outside our door and Andy is skinning him right in the tent.

We went to Springer's camp to take over our mail and see if there was any for us. I guess mine must still be in Jellicoe. I might get it in a couple of weeks, if I'm lucky.

We walked over three lakes on the ice, and it was shaky in spots. You could just feel it bend underneath.

Today we left for Twin Falls. We sure had a tough time of it, too. We walked about 16 miles (19.6 km) and crossed the rapids on logs. They sure were shaky.

We are going to board at Rene's. Am writing this with pencil, as I have no ink. There was a knifing party on before we got here. Three guys got into the lemon extract.

No one was injured and of course, they got fired.



Jellicoe Ontario 1934

Hello Skeets, I'm not so hot myself on account of having the blues tonight. Today we trenched all day and didn't find anything. It's monotonous.

After receiving your letter, I feel like quitting and leaving for Port Arthur - but can't do that. Guess I'll have to hang on for a while yet.

Well, I'm not feeling too bad tonight as I have just received a couple of letters from you. If only it was nearer Christmas.

Oh well, another 30 days and I'll be seeing you - if I can just stick it out that long. I guess I can for our sake and what it means to us.

Well, here's the news from Sturgeon River coming over station L.O.V.E.

Your announcer is F.G.S. (Fred G. Snow) and we hope the only listener is G.M.E.P. (Gertrude Mabel Emily Perry).

About a foot of snow fell last night. Every day is like a nightmare. Now all I look for is seeing my Sweetheart. Found some viable gold today - not much though. I guess we'll be coming back here after Christmas.

December: *It snowed about two feet (60 cm), so we washed our clothes instead of working. Gee! I want to get out so bad. Some of the other boys are in a bad way, today.*

I miss you so much Dear, don't know if I'll make it yet or not. I sure am getting restless. Hope the plane will come in and take us out. If not, it will be a long hike - about 25 miles - (40.2 km) and a rough trail.

Two more days to work and then I'll be seeing you. What fun we will have! I want to make this the best Christmas yet for both of us. Mail came in by dog-team but none for me though.

One of the gang got 'bushed.' He quit at noon and got his time. He was sure fed up proper. It gets to a guy. He hiked 25 miles (40.2 km) to Jellicoe and left at noon.

Well, tomorrow we blow out of here, and am I glad! Guess I'll pack my 'Glad-Rags' and be all set to leave. I

'll finish off these pages tonight and whenever you read them, I'd like to you to think of me. I hope these pages will give you a little idea of what I have been doing out here, and the thoughts I have been thinking of while longing to see you.

*So, Darling, I hope you'll keep these and remember that First, Last, and Always
I Love You. Fred.*

My Father was very much 'Love-Struck.' My Parents were always at their best, as long as they were together. His constant search for work in the bush separated them far too often in the early years of their marriage.

He referred to 'having another little accident,' where he 'slid down the side of a mountain and was scratched up some.' What likely happened was that he fell a considerable distance and got severely bruised,

scraped, and cut. He always minimized incidents such as this. He struck partridges down with rocks, and trapped rabbits with metal armbands. He suffered a toothache for six days under primitive living conditions. He had a high tolerance for pain. He paddled a canoe across a lake, and then hiked 11 hours through 64 km of bush to the nearest town. He repeated the trip the day after he had his tooth pulled.

He crossed rapids by walking over slippery logs, and crossed frozen lakes with the rubbery ice undulating beneath his feet. A man on a prospecting crew had a mental breakdown. It was called, 'Getting Bushed.'

The job ended and he made his way back to civilization alone. Bush pilots often lost their way and landed planes on any available lake. Many have never been found.



Jellicoe Ontario 1935

Men often resolved their interpersonal difficulties with a 'knifing party.' These were hard times in a hard country. This is an intimidating part of Canada. Wind, rain, snow, and cold can easily take the life of the uninitiated.



Fred Snow (26) Jellicoe Ontario 1935

These months were particularly difficult for my Father, because he had fallen in love. Before this, he had no one to miss. Now he had to bear a new loneliness - missing someone he loved. It was a new experience for him.

They spent Christmas together, and he returned to the bush. He hopped a freight train and had a long, cold, and miserable trip in the dead of winter.



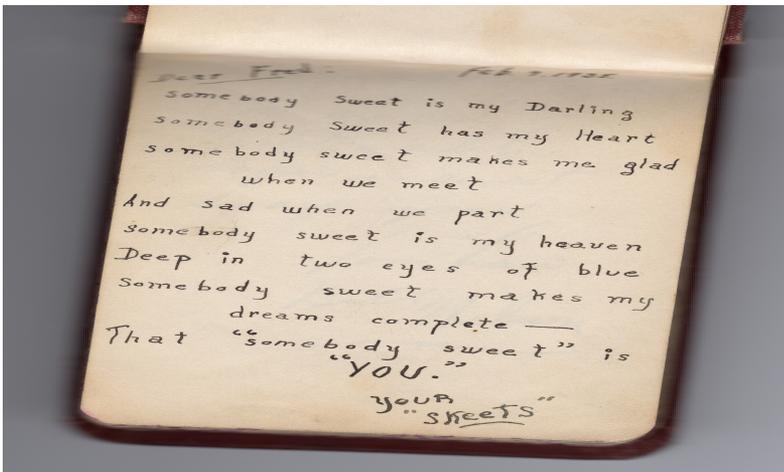
Fred G. Snow (25) Jellicoe 1935

There were no open doors on the boxcars, so he rode on the roof, or hung on to the ladder for the five hours it took the freight to cover the 209 km to Jellicoe.



Cutting Ice Jellico Ontario 1935

Diary of Cutting Ice and Prospecting for Gold



My Father's seeking work during the Great Depression meant they could only communicate by letters. This one is from my Mother in Feb 1935 before they married.

Dear Fred

Somebody sweet is my Darling. Somebody sweet has my Heart. Somebody sweet makes me glad when we meet and sad when we part.

Somebody sweet is my heaven. Deep in two eyes of blue somebody sweet makes my dreams complete – that "somebody sweet" is "you."

Your "Skeets"



Gertrude Perry (Skeets) Port Arthur Ontario 1935

His diary described his six months of cutting ice and prospecting for gold, and three months of labouring in a gravel pit in 1935. He slept on a pool table when he arrived in Jellicoe. When that was not available, he slept on the ground in the bush - regardless of the weather.

It took him four hours to hike 48 km through the bush with a 75-pound (165 kg) pack to get to a prospecting site, where he thought there might be work. There was not, so he turned around and made the same trip back! It was a hike through deep snow, rough bush, and frozen lakes.

He got a job to build a log shack in Jellicoe. When it was half finished, the tent roof caught fire and the shack burned to the ground. He started over and cut 47 trees down with an axe. He trimmed the branches, dragged the logs to the site, cut them to size, and fitted them together.

He chinked the spaces between the logs with moss and worked in snowstorms when the temperature reached -45 C. A strong wind could add a chill factor to lower the temperature to -56 C.

He found odd jobs loading and hauling freight by horse and wagon. He hopped a freight train to Port Arthur (220 km) to see my Mother in February. They went to a movie and a dance.



Riding the Rails Great Depression

He hopped a freight train to Jellicoe (220 km) and found work cutting trees. He was paid \$3 a cord for wood cut, split, and piled. The employer charged him \$1.25 a day for room and board, so he made \$1.75 per day.

In March, he had a contract to cut lake ice. He built an ice house and cut the ice with a long saw that he pushed and pulled vertically through the ice. The cakes of ice were awkward to move with only ice tongs.

He single-highhandedly cut 491 blocks of ice from the lake over eight days. They paid him four cents for each block, so he earned less than \$20, or \$2.50 a day.

He returned to Port Arthur for a few days and again rode the five-hour freight train to Jellicoe. He slept in the pool hall and got work, cutting trees. This work lasted a few weeks, and he was paid \$9 for cutting six cords of wood.

Cord Of Firewood



At the end of April, he hopped a freight train to Geraldton (20 km) and arrived at 3:00 am. He slept in the bush in the snow. He could not find work, so he returned to Port Arthur (220 km) but was unable to find work there, either.

During May, he hauled ice and freight until he found work prospecting again from June-July. It was an 8½ hour hike through the bush from Jellicoe to the prospecting site.

June- July: *A Black Bear visited me and came within 20 feet (6 m) of the camp! These bears are a damn nuisance!*

One woke me up at 0th am this morning. They are eating sugar out of my bag no more than 10 feet (3 m) from me! Too damn close for me!

Millroy came in last night from Nezah. The bear came again. Either he gets out or he gets us! Moved out of camp as the bear was in this morning. Going to Jellicoe for a rifle and ammunition.

Back at Corrigan Lake again with rifles. Went to work with a rifle. No sign of bear as yet at 7:00 pm A bear at Boylen's camp sure raised hell. Smashed the log camp all to pieces and broke open all the supplies.

Did some trenching close to camp. We eat our meals and go to bed with the rifles beside us. Stayed on guard all night. Slept most of the day.

Saw a bear close to the camp about 2:00 am. Well, we were in luck today. At 5:30 am, Mr. Bear woke us up by coming into our tent and getting a box of crackers for himself.

We jumped up and grabbed our rifles, and Millroy 'bumped him off.' We buried him and I cut off one of his paws for a souvenir.

Saw a bear swimming across the lake. I took off after him in the canoe but was too late to get a shot at him. Left Nezah for Corrigan Lake. 2½ hard hours walking in the rain. Still at the trenching. A skunk paid us a visit and swiped some pork and ham.

Packing up and leaving for Twin Falls. Leaving for Jellicoe in the morning. All through. Sent Skeets a telegram to meet me in Port Arthur.

After nine months in the bush, through a bitter winter and a scorching summer, he found work in the Ozone gravel pit just before they were to be married.

He worked all day with a pick and shovel, and spent every other available hour building a log shack that was to be the matrimonial home.

They charged him \$1.25 a day for board whether he worked the day or not. They paid him only 35 cents per hour or \$2.80 per day. The net pay for an entire day's work in the gravel pit was \$1.55.

He used the money he made from cutting ice to buy their first piece of furniture - a kitchenette set of a table, four chairs, and a buffet.

August: Hopped a freight train to Ozone. Helped unload freight. Tired tonight. Miss Skeets. Really hot here.

Nice gang to work with - all English-speaking. Worked shovelling gravel and loading wagons. Darn hot all day. Worked in the pit.

Sunday bummed around all day. Picked some blueberries for supper. Time drags on. Eight men laid off.

I'm not working. Board has to be paid at \$1.25 a day anyway.

Our engagement was announced! Moved to the clay pit. Really hot. Went to Port Arthur to see my Sweets.

Left for Ozone at 11:30 pm, arrived at 2:00 am. Worked in the clay pit all day. Hot as Hell! Received the tent roof from Skeets. Start on the shack tomorrow.

Put up the walls and put the tent on for a roof. Chinked one wall. Worked on the hill and in the pit. Finished the floor and will put in bunks tomorrow.

Put up bunks in our shack. It's going to be OK, too. Shack is almost finished. Arrived in Port Arthur 8 pm

***September:** Skeets and I went to the church tonight and saw the Minister. Got my check. Skeets and I went shopping. Bought a stove.*

***September 05, 1935 - MARRIED TODAY!
Skeets is now Mrs. Gertrude Snow.***

I do not know if my Father had any difficulty when he saw the Minister before being married. He was the same one who visited him after his emergency appendix operation a few years earlier.

My Father did not have a Birth Certificate or Baptism Certificate or anything for identification.

The Wedding Announcement stated he was the youngest Son of John Snow and the late Mrs. Snow, Dean Cottage, Dean Road, Croydon, Surrey England. He believed his Mother was deceased.



Fred Snow (26) In From the Bush Port Arthur Ontario 1935

His own wedding may have been the first one he ever attended. Their friends picked flowers from their gardens to make bouquets for the wedding party.

My Parents had only had enough money for one night in a hotel. They married at the height of the Great Depression when the unemployment rate was 15%. The marriage rate across the country had declined as the unemployment rate rose. My Parents had hope.



Mr. and Mrs. Fred G. Snow Thunder Bay Ontario 1935

They took the train to Ozone in the middle of the night. If they did not have money for tickets, my Mother readily would have hopped the freight train with him.

The train stopped just long enough for them to throw their things onto the ground. Her plain cedar 'Hope Chest' survived the trip.

A man appeared out of the darkness and took them to his tent for coffee. They visited until sunrise and walked through the bush to their new home. My Father carried my Mother across the threshold of their new home.

It had a small, hinged table that folded up against the wall and a camp stove with a small stovepipe that went out a hole in the tent roof.



Fred G. Snow (Suit and Tie) and Gert Snow
The Wedding Limousine Ozone Ontario 1935



Ozone Gravel Pit 1935



Nipigon Ontario Train Station 1935

**Chapter 4:
Honeymoon in a Tent Ozone Ontario 1935**



My Mother did laundry by hand in a tub with a washboard and hung clothes on a line strung between the trees. They hauled water from the Ozone Creek for washing and laundry.

My Mother had not spent a night in the bush before, but readily adapted to the primitive conditions. They stayed at Ozone for about three months until it was too cold to live in the tent.



The Matrimonial Home Ozone Ontario 1935

They returned to Port Arthur and found rooms to rent. They were very happy with the attic suite they rented because they were able to use their kitchenette set. He had worked so hard at cutting ice at Jellicoe to save up the money to buy this one.

They had some bedroom furniture so they were quite comfortable. They heated the place with short lengths of railroad ties they carried up three flights of stairs.

They carried their laundry to my Grandmother's home. They were always cold in this place and often the water in the kitchen pail would freeze overnight. They carried cooking and drinking water from the bathroom on the second floor.

They did not complain, as the owners were so kind to them. This was one step up from the tent in which they had lived. My Mother said, 'When you start out in a tent, you could only go up from there!'

Work was scarce, and my Father sold wringer washers and vacuum cleaners' door-to-door. He tramped around in the bitter winter without sufficient warm clothes. He was still forced to apply for Welfare Assistance. They were cruel to him because he was not a 'local.' I imagine they noticed his English accent.

They told him he 'should not have married if he was unable to look after a wife.' He found a job washing dishes for \$1 a day in a bush camp at Mobert - 281 km East of Port Arthur. Commuting was still by hopping freight trains. The food was awful and the working conditions were deplorable.

He did not stay long there as he felt they had been apart too much already. In the winter of 1935, my Mother was pregnant when they rented a two-room, single - story 'shack' across the street from my Grandmother for \$10 a month.



Algoma Street Port Arthur, Ontario, 1936

My Brother Gary Frederic Snow was born on June 01, 1936. He may have been the first newborn my Father ever held in his arms. After years of being told that his blood was 'tainted,' he must have worried more than most about the health of his firstborn.

There were no Snow's anywhere in the world for him to notify about his Son's birth. My Father had his first true Christmas for the first time in his life that year. In eight years in the foster home in England, he received an unwrapped handkerchief one Christmas.

I doubt Christmas was much of an event for him in his 3½ years at St. Augustine's Home for Boys. From the ages of 15-25, he worked on farms, spent a year in hospital, rode boxcars, and lived in a Relief Camp. I imagine that Christmas was a bleak affair for these nine years. This Christmas was special, because he had been married for a year, had a loving Wife, and a six-month old son. He was a Husband and a Father and had his **own** family, even if he had never had a family of **his** own.

Fighting Forest Fires Big Santoy Lake Terrace Bay Ontario 1937

In June 1937, he found work with a construction company in Beardmore, 184 km North of Port Arthur. The working conditions were terrible and the flies were awful. Men slept in tents without screens. Fly repellent - commonly called 'gravy' - was ineffective. The flies regarded it as a condiment.

Northern Ontario flies are famous for their ability to drive animals out of the bush and sometimes people out of their minds. Some people are immune to their torment whereas others - like me - seem to attract every fly within sight.

The smallest 'No-See-Ums' are the size of a grain of pepper. The largest are Horse Flies the size of a thumbnail. Mosquitoes rule the bush. Their Black-Fly cousins swarm around in clouds to attack any exposed flesh. They are adept at burrowing through clothing.

Men worked eight-hour days for six days a week in the camp. They had very little money to send home after they had paid room and board from their small wages. My Father tolerated these conditions longer than most, but finally quit.

Every summer in North-Western Ontario is fire-fighting time in the bush. Lightning strikes start many forest fires but humans cause as many or more. Perennial rumours circulate that desperate people start fires simply to create work for themselves. These fires destroy thousands of hectares of forest each year as they rage across the country driven by high winds.

There is little to stop them when they became airborne and crossed open lakes and highways. This part of the country is sparsely populated and there are few roads through the bush. Inaccessible fires are left to burn themselves out.

This work was often the only work available for men during the Great Depression. It was hot, dirty, and dangerous work.

My Father described fighting one forest fire at Big Santoy Lake - in Terrace Bay 248 km North of Port Arthur.

A crew of 50 men cut pulpwood at a camp on the Big Steele River. A lightning strike may have caused a fire in the bark piles. When the fire came close to the camp, the pulp-cutters ran away.

They packed up as much food and supplies as they could carry, but soon found out these slowed their escape. They dumped bread, bacon, and beans, as they fled along the Big Steele River.

Firefighters could 'commandeer' anyone to fight forest fires in an emergency. The pulp-cutters refused to help and argued it was not their job to fight forest fires.

Two fire-fighting bosses flew to Port Arthur to see our employer, because we needed everyone's help. He told his employees that any of them who refused to fight the fire would be fired.

The fire-fighting crew - that now included some pulp cutters - had to cross the lake to get to the fire. They tied four canoes of four men each together in a line. They attached a 'kicker' (an outboard motor) to the lead canoe.

No one ever did such a dangerous thing as this! One canoe overturned 20 feet (6 m) from shore. Two non-swimming pulp-cutters were swept away by the strong undercurrents.

They drowned in about 15 feet (4.5 m) of water. They were so close to shore!

Ontario Provincial Police divers recovered the bodies, but a bush pilot refused to fly them out. We left the bodies in the water overnight and tied them to trees on the shore.

Pulp cutters customarily shaved their heads while they worked in the bush. This prevented flies from getting in their hair, and cooled them down while they worked.

All I could see that night was their bald heads bobbing in the water in the moonlight. It was tough on all of us to stay there overnight knowing there were two corpses in the water.

A few days later, we found a bush pilot who agreed to fly the bodies out - for a price! (Snow Gertrude 138).

Harvie B. G.
Box 10
Jan 11/31

Answered
30/1/31

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you, at the advice of Mr. Kirby, Gibbs Home, Sherbrooke P.Q. requesting you if possible, to advise me, as to the whereabouts of my parents (if any). My name being, Frederic George Snow, age 21 years, Born Sept 17th 1909. As far as I know, I resided with a Mr. & Mrs. Smith, Pleasure Ground, Rumbourgh, Suffolk, Eng. at the age of 4 years, from there I was transported to St. Augustines Home, Turnoaks, Kent, until the age of 16 years, when I migrated to Sherbrooke P.Q. Can. I would more than appreciate your kindness, if in anyway you can throw light on this matter for me, and by so doing, help one who has been in darkness, and ignorant as to who he is.

I am, Sir,
Yours most Respectfully
Fred. G. Snow

My Father wrote to the Waifs and Strays Society in 1931 and had no reply while he was homeless without an address so he must have written again in 1937. They could have sent a reply c/o the Gibbs Home as that was the intermediary for contact with England.

My Father had learned to write quite well with his left hand after his right arm was mangled. Here is a transcription.

Dear Sir: January 11, 1931

I am writing to you, at the advice of Mr. Keeley, Gibbs' Home, Sherbrooke P. Que. requesting you if possible, to advise me, as to the whereabouts of my parents (if any).

My name being, Frederick George Snow, age 21 years, Born Sept. 17 1909.

As far as I know, I resided with a Mrs. M. Smith, Pleasure Ground, Rumburgh, Suffolk, England at the age of 4 years, from there I was transferred to St. Augustine's Home, Sevenoaks, Kent, until the age of 15 years, when I imigrated (sic) to Sherbrooke, PQ Can.

I would more than appreciate your kindness, if in any way you can throw light on this matter for me, and by doing, help one who has been in darkness, and ignorant as to who he is.

*I am, Sir,
Yours most Respectfully,
Fred G. Snow*

He received a reply in October 1937. He must have been somewhat intimidated by the letter which included Prebendary Rudolf, the Head of the Waifs and Strays Society for Providing Homes for Children.

OUR BOYS LEAGUE

PATRONS

*Sir Lancelot Aubrey-Fletcher
The Hon Edith Gibbs
Miss Maud Stevenson*

VICE PRESIDENTS

*Lt Col A M Addison
Dr Carruthers Corfield
Alderman John Williams
G F Woodroffe Esq
Alderman H W Norman*

*President: The Rev C De M Rudolf MA
Hon Treasurer: T E Price Esq
League Secretary & Editor "The Planet"*

Mr J C Mason

Dear Mr. Snow

8 Oct 1937

I was very interested in receiving your letter to note that you are happily married and have a little son, and am also glad to know that you are apparently doing quite well in Canada.

With regard to your enquiry concerning your antecedents, I am afraid I can add nothing to the letter which was sent to you from this office on the 30th January, 1931.

In this letter it was mentioned that you were deserted by your father and mother before coming under the Society's care and when you were actually placed with us in October 1913, you were living with Mr. John G Snow, Dean Cottage, Dean Road, Croydon, Surrey.

The only other thing I can tell you is that according to our records, you were born in September, 1909, at Larch Road, Balham, London, but as I believe you already know, we were unable to obtain a copy of your birth certificate, as your birth was not apparently registered.

I am sorry I am unable to give you any more helpful information.

*Yours sincerely,
J. C. Mason, Secretary*

They stated that his parents deserted him, but they did not identify them by name. My Father of course remembered being forcibly taken from his family.

They did not explain how he became a ward, other than using euphemisms such as, 'coming under the Society's care.'

Was John G Snow his Father, Grandfather, Uncle, or friend of the family? Did they really search for his Birth Certificate? This is apparently the only information they provided him from 1927-1937, when he was 18-28 years old.

This information must have been very disconcerting for him, as he may have received this letter while he was fighting forest fires.

It must have given him much to think about while he was in the bush. Given this information, the word 'abandoned' would reverberate through his mind all his life.

My Brother Gary Frederic Snow was born on June 01, 1936. He may have been the first newborn my Father ever held in his arms. After years of being told that his blood was 'tainted,' he must have worried more than most about the health of his son. There were no Snow's anywhere in the world for him to notify about Gary's birth.

When he received this letter, he was a Father of one, and had a second on the way - my sister Karen was due to be born in 1938.

My Father was to persist in writing for information for the next 50 years. He simply did not trust them to tell the truth.

Chapter 5: Hard Times in the Bush Peninsula Ontario 1938-1939

In 1937, my Father found work as a labourer for a few months at the construction of the Red Rock Paper Mill. He then found work at the CPR Peninsula Train Station. He was excited about the prospect of earning \$100 a month and having his Family with him.

My Mother was five month's pregnant and made baby clothes. Women were quite creative in the Great Depression. They knitted socks, mitts, scarves, and bleached cloth flour bags to make sheets, towels, and diapers.

Peninsula was located in a bay on the North-Western shore of Lake Superior. It owed its existence to construction of the CPR railway and it became a ghost town after the railway was completed.



Gert Snow (25) and Gary Snow (2) Peninsula 1938

In the 1930's, there were only 30 people living there and logging operations revived it. In 1944, it was named Marathon after the construction of the Marathon Paper Mill. The climate of the region is extreme.

Climate of Marathon Ontario

Month	Mean Daily Max.	Mean Daily Min.	Mean Month Temp.	Rain	Snow
January	- 1.5 C	-36.5 C	-17.7 C	Nil	91.0 cm
February	6.0 C	-32.5 C	-10.9 C	.1 mm	36.0 cm
March	8.0 C	-25.5 C	- 4.7 C	13.5 mm	28.0 cm
April	22.0 C	-14.5 C	3.7 C	71.8 mm	10.0 cm
May	23.5 C	- 4.0 C	9.8 C	81.1 mm	3.0 cm
June	25.0 C	2.0 C	13.7 C	96.0 mm	Nil
July	25.0 C	3.5 C	14.3 C	68.8 mm	Nil
August	29.5 C	2.5 C	16.5 C	53.2 mm	Nil
September	21.5 C	- 8.0 C	9.0 C	119.5 mm	Nil
October	14.8 C	-10.5 C	4.5 C	116.0 mm	19.0 cm
November	9.5 C	-23.5 C	- 4.4 C	31.8 mm	63.0 cm
December	- 4.0 C	-34.5 C	-11.0 C	7.0 mm	59.0 cm

The train to Peninsula took six hours. They moved into two rooms beside the train office. The warehouse held supplies for the Relief Camps. After a few months, my Father confronted the 'Walking Boss' with discrepancies he found in the inventory of supplies.

It was impossible for him to keep the books straight because the Boss took supplies and traded them for liquor. The Boss swung at him and my Father wired the Head Office in Toronto. They sent a young clerk to investigate, but ignored the issue of theft. It was easier for them to replace my Father rather than deal with the theft. Rather than wait to be 'let go,' he quit.



The Train Station, Peninsula, Ontario, 1938

He was conscientious in his work no matter what position he had. This was neither the first nor the last job he had that he saw his choice as either keeping a job or keeping his integrity. He always opted to keep his integrity.

There were those who might have thought he could ill afford this, when my Mother was eight months' pregnant, and there was very little work available. There is a price to pay to look at yourself in the mirror and hold your head high. They moved out of the train station and rented a Section House.



Section House Peninsula Ontario 1938

My Sister Karen Victoria Snow was born on August 12, 1938. My Father cut a tire inner tube into narrow strips and laced them together to serve as springs for her bed. In the fall, he worked at Heron Bay on the wood flume that carried logs overland from the Pic River to Lake Superior.

They floated huge log booms to paper mills in the US. To save the cost of staying in Heron Bay, my Father walked 32 km to work and back every day along the railway track. He walked up and down hills, through rock cuts, in the dark, in the cold, in the deep snow, and through blizzards - with hungry wolves howling in the night.



Heron Bay Log Flume Peninsula Ontario 1938



Hauling logs Peninsula Ontario 1938

When this work ended, they were in serious trouble. The local store did not give credit for groceries, so they and the remaining half-dozen residents applied for Provincial Welfare.

When the wood supply dwindled, my Father cut green birch trees from the bush along the tracks. Technically, the bush along the tracks belonged to the railroad, and although he knew someone at the station wanted to catch him doing this, he did not care.

They were desperate for fuel, so they collected bits of coal that fell off the train. He made a toy car garage out of wood washed up on the lake-shore. He hunted rabbits or partridge to supplement their meagre welfare food.



Gary Snow (3) Fred Snow (30) Peninsula 1939

Although fuel and food were scarce, they had each other, and an abundance of love. There was no work in the spring. They had no money for train fare, so they sold their kitchenette set to a neighbour. This was the one my Father worked so hard at Jellicoe to save the money to buy.

He had to cut 16 cords of wood (4' x 4' x 8') in the cold of winter to earn this \$17. This amount to a pile of cut wood 64 feet wide x 128 feet long x four feet high.

The \$17 was enough for tickets for my Mother, Brother, and Sister. Villagers spirited their things one night down to the tracks just in time for the freight train.

My Parents were concerned the landlord might keep their belongings in exchange for the few dollars they owed for groceries. They left their cook stove at the house to cover this debt. My Father stayed behind that night, as he was concerned someone at the station might burn the house down and blame him.



Gert Snow (26) Karen Snow (1) Fred Snow (30) Gary Snow (3)
Peninsula Ontario 1939

He and a neighbour stayed in the house overnight with Husky dogs and a rifle. Nothing happened. The next morning, he hopped a freight train and rode to Port Arthur in the coal-tender behind the engine.

The King and Queen of England visited Port Arthur in 1939. Men were paid \$2 each to wear armbands and line the parade route. My Father was in the crowd but only got a glimpse of them when the entourage whizzed by. My Mother missed the parade because she had to take my Brother

Gary to a doctor after he had gashed his head when he fell against a radiator.



Gert (23) Fred (26) Gary (2) 1939



Gert (23) Gary (2) 1939



Fred (30) Gert (27) Karen (1) 1939

My Father received an effusive article from the Gibbs' Club that described the Royal Visit (Keeley 1-2). A number of British Home Children were mentioned in this article. These names may be important to a descendant of the British Home Children:

Henry A Gyertson
Cyril Percival
Albert W O Saxtree
Edward C Leeming
William C Mattison
Edwin M Baker
Charles J Williams
Alan Asquith.

Joseph R Moxon
Albert Rawle
Albert E Bance
Edwin Waldron
Richard Kilbourne
Henry W Slater
George A Sharman

The Waifs and Strays Society planned to expand their operations to Western Canada, but Canada restricted immigration because of high unemployment during the Great Depression. In 1935, the Gibb's Home was renamed the Gibb's Club, as it had become more of a centre for Old Boys rather than a Receiving Home.

Eleven boys were sent in 1937, and only a few were sent in 1939. This marked the end of their child emigration to Canada (Stroud 194-195).

The Waifs and Strays Society deported children to Australia after WWII from 1947 – 1967.



Visit by the King and Queen of England Gibb's Home 1939

CANADIAN NEWS

THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS 12TH (JUNE 1939). The greatest gathering that ever took place in our history is now a thing of the past and what a wonderful life memory it provided for those privileged to attend.

It is fitting that it proved to be our biggest meeting as this was the first time British reigning sovereigns have visited Canada. From the time the King and Queen landed at Quebec the wave of enthusiasm and loyalty increased in volume until even the stolid people were submerged.

The lucky ones who could see their majesties twice or more, took full advantage of their opportunities and earned much good-natured envy.

What a relief to forget the vulgarity and insanity of the totalitarian countries for a few weeks and revel in contemplation, talk and service, connected with one of the most wholesome emotional events of our lives.

The tact, charm and downright good nature of our Royal Visitors was something to marvel at and they received our admiring sympathy for the extraordinary way in which they stood the strain of what we hope will be the most strenuous task of their lives.

. . . Old Boys came from all directions and provinces including the United States. Some travelled all night by car, bus or truck. Sweethearts, wives and children added colour and charm, decorating our large lawn with a happy, enthusiastic crowd.

At 11 am it was time to assemble the company of 100 men we provided to help line the route of the royal procession.

. . . Of course we all intended to strain our blooming hearts when the King and Queen passed, but strange to say we did not make all the noise we had planned. When the great moment arrived something gripped us that could not be interpreted by only wild cheering.

A girl in the crowd explained this for us when she stated that as the Royal couple approached her vocal powers decreased, and she found tears of happiness upon her face. . . .

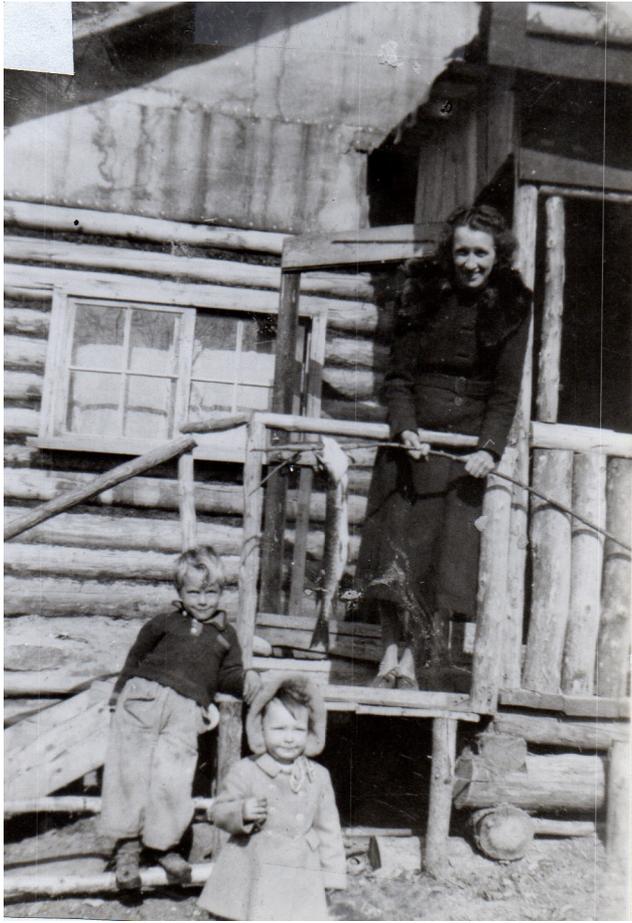
**Chapter 6:
St Anthony Gold Mine Ontario 1939-1940**

There was still no work for my Father in town. Some good friends invited him to stay with them and do odd chores in exchange for his room and board until he could get a job at St. Anthony Gold Mine. It was 376 km West of Port Arthur.

He hopped a train to Sioux Lookout, and then another to Savant Lake. He crossed Sturgeon Lake on a barge from Trapper's Landing. He mailed money to my Mother and she travelled there by train with their belongings and the children.



Gert Snow (26) Fred Snow (30)



A Fish Gert Snow (26) Gary Snow (3) Karen Snow (1)
St Anthony Gold Mine 1939

They lived in a log cabin that was close to the mine and store. They carried water from the lake to do their washing in a tub with a washboard. The community had a bunkhouse for single men, schoolhouse, Hudson Bay Store, Post Office, and a General Store.

They lived well, even if everything was expensive because of the cost of transportation to bring supplies into such a remote area. They used wood from dynamite boxes as building material for two 'potty chairs.'

My Mother had a bad toothache. A Doctor made periodic visits to the mine, and made a home visit. He carried a pack-sack and sterilized his instruments over a fuel lamp. He pulled her tooth and gave her two aspirins afterwards.



Gary Snow (3-4) Fred Snow (30-31)

One day, she took a short cut across the lake, and fell through an unmarked hole someone had cut into the lake. Fortunately, she threw her arms out as she fell. This prevented her from going completely under the ice. She pulled herself out and her clothes were frozen stiff by the time she went to a neighbour's house.



Jack Perry (22)



Jack Perry (22) Tonto

Her brother Jack Perry also worked at the mine. The single miners like Jack found mouldy meat in their lunches, and the bunkhouse meals unfit to eat. They went on strike. The married men had home-prepared meals, so did not strike.

The RCMP forced the striking miners out of the bunkhouse and ordered them off the property. The strikers walked 56 km around the lake to get out to civilization. Two months later, the owners brought in a replacement crew.

After the annual X-rays and medical examinations, my Father decided he had enough of underground mining, blasting, mucking, and tramping. There were serious health risks to this work. The 'writing was on the wall,' that the mine would close.



Gary Snow (3) Karen Snow (2) St Anthony Gold Mine 1939

The men worked three shifts per day in the mine - as timber-men, powder-monkeys, drill-men, muckers, and trammers. One shift drilled and blasted and the next shift 'mucked out.' They shovelled rock into tramcars they pushed along rails.

When my Father smelled gas after a blast, he ran and signalled the hoist-man to send down the skip. Once above ground, he stretched out on the ground to get clean air into his lungs. He could not afford to take any time off for illness as this meant a loss of pay.



Underground Gold Mining 1939

It was a dangerous place to work deep underground. The roof of the mine constantly dripped water and the air was stale. Men were soaked daily and hung their clothes on hooks and hoisted them to the ceiling to dry in the work shed.

One man was killed in a cave-in and another mutilated his hand. The mine had a 40 year history of sporadic production. It produced two tons of gold, but permanently closed in 1941 (Barr 9).



Fred Snow (30) St Anthony Gold Mine 1939

My Father worked there over a year and decided that unskilled labour had a limited future. He continued with International Correspondence Schools to upgrade his limited education, but there was rarely money to pay for his courses. Providing for his family took priority.

He quit before the mine permanently closed. He was again faced with an uncertain future. He had a Wife, two young children, a limited education, and no identity. They packed up their few belongings and took the barge across Sturgeon Lake and the long train ride to Port Arthur.



Makeshift Snow Machine St Anthony Gold Mine 1939

My Father received a letter from his 'Father' in 1939, when he worked at St. Anthony Gold Mine. It was written in pencil by a shaky hand. This was 26 years after the Waifs and Strays Society apprehended him in 1913, and 12 years after he was no longer under their care.

John Snow must have contacted the Waifs and Strays Society to determine my Father's whereabouts, or vice-versa. There must have been previous letters from my Father, because John Snow referred to not receiving them.

Did correspondence between them pass through the Waifs and Strays Society? Did they censor the mail? My Parents' calculations on the back of this letter showed that John Snow was born in 1857 and would have been 53 years old when my Father was born in 1909.

He would have been 82 when he wrote this letter. Was he my Father's Father? If not, why did he sign the letter as 'Dad?'

Dear Fred & Gertie:

So very pleased to hear from you and hope that you are all in good health. I'm pretty fair - can get about all right. Rather shaky. 82 last August. It's so lonely here, small three-room house as myself.

Do hope you and Gertie and children are having good health. I cannot understand not receiving your letters.

Jack is working for London Counties Council - in two weeks been there 12 months. Will then be permanent with pension to follow. He is a plumber.

You know he is married, don't you but I don't see any family yet. How are you for work all right I hope.

God bless you and the children. Kiss them for me. Give my best respects to Gertie's Father and Mother - all you can wish yourselves for the coming year.

Dad.

They returned to Port Arthur and found a small house to rent. My Father found work at the grain elevators that paid \$80 a month. Their rent was \$20 a month, so there was not much money left for groceries for a family of five.



Thunder Bay Elevators

My Sister Sandra was born on December 5, 1940. After the annual seasonal lay-off from the grain elevators, he found work at Canada Car and Foundry. They manufactured Hawker Hurricane airplanes during WWII.

Every Christmas since they met - no matter how tough things were - my Father always bought my Mother a bottle of 'Evening in Paris' perfume. Often it was only a small 75-cent bottle, but he never failed to get some. They rented another house that had two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen with a sink, and a bathroom with a toilet but no bathtub. Shortly after they moved, my Father received this letter from his 'Brother.'

My Dear brother Fred:

March 13, 1940

I hope, Fred, that you will take this bravely, but our dear father has crossed the border, Fred.

I found Dad dead in his bedroom at 7 am on Friday morning March 08, 1940. He passed out quickly and no pain from a stroke. He went on his last journey Fred, on Thursday March 14 at 1:45 pm.

There was George and wife, Amy and husband, my wife and I at the funeral. Just a few of us Fred, it was all very sad. I was with him on the Thursday morning and in the evening I was with Amy making arrangements for him to go and live with her.

Well, Fred, it wasn't to be for Dad to live with Amy. He often said he would not like to leave Dean Cottage until carried out. His wish was granted Fred.

Dad lies buried in Croydon Cemetery. There is one consolation, old chap, dear old Dad was a good age (83) and he had led a good and interesting life.

Now what do you make of this war Freddie - a devil isn't it. It's getting hot over here right now. I am to register for military service next December (34's), but at present my trade (plumber) is on the reserved list so I may escape it.

I am still working for the London County Council, have been with them since March 1938. I see Amy every week, am glad to say she is keeping well, also the children, but losing Dad upset her a lot at the time, but she is a lot better now... (Rest of letter missing.)

Your Father (59) and Mother (62) did not attend the funeral, nor did any Gifford's. Only your Half Brother Jack (35), Half Sister Amy (33), and Uncle George (61) attended his funeral.

My Father must have written to John G Snow on Dean Road after he received the letter from the Waifs and Strays two years earlier. My Mother from then on took on the job of writing to the Waifs and Strays for the next 40 years.



Jack Snow 1938 (30)

Jack and Amy believed my Father was their Brother. Was George another Brother, Uncle, or friend? John G Snow lived on Dean Road for 27 years from 1913-1940 when he was 56-83 years old.



John G Snow (1857-1940)

Jack had sent my Father a picture of J G Snow. My Father believed this man to be too old to be his father. There was no mention of his mother. Perhaps he felt there was no one left to give him information about his identity.

He was 30 years old, married for 5 years, with a Wife and three young children aged 4, 2, and 3 months. He had many other things on his mind.

Following a lay-off at Canada Car and Foundry, he found work scaling timber for a timber operation in Mead - 307 km East of Port Arthur. He was paid \$165 a month plus room and board and this looked good to him at the time.

He could not get weekends off to return to Port Arthur, so he was apart from his family for many months. The workday began at 6:00 am and continued to all hours of the night. He scaled timber, kept the company's books, and was the Timekeeper. The living conditions were primitive.

In spite of the cost of rail fare, he returned home as often as he could. The war was in full swing, and the government enacted a law to ensure people stayed at their current jobs. There was a chance of his being 'frozen' in the bush job.

He quit to be home with his Family and went to work at Canada Car and Foundry again. My Parents made sure every weekend had a picnic.

Before we had a car, the whole family took three streetcars and then a bus to Chippewa Park. It seemed to take the entire day to make the trip, but it was always worth it.



Karen (4) Sandra (2) Gary (6) Gert (29) Fort William Ontario 1942

World War II provided work for 4,500 people at Canada Car and Foundry in Fort William. For the first time, half of this workforce were women. By 1943 they had built over 1,400 Hawker Hurricanes, nearly 1,000 Helldivers.



Hawker Hurricane



Helldiver



Harvard Trainer

He worked at Canada Car and Foundry when he received a letter from the Gibbs' Club.

Gibbs' Club

20 Lawford Avenue
Sherbrooke Que

February 19th, 1942

Dear Mr. Snow:

In reply to your letter received today, I am enclosing a certificate covering your date and place of birth, and nationality.

If any further guarantee is needed regarding your admission to Canada, I will write to the Immigration Department, Ottawa, asking them to certify that you were legally admitted to this country in April 1925, ex Cunard Steamship Andania.'

I am glad to hear the good news that you have a chance to get a better job, and I trust that you will be successful. With kind regards and best wishes. Yours sincerely,
Thomas Keeley Superintendent

GIBBS CLUB
20 LAWFORD AVENUE
SHERBROOKE, QUE.

Feb. 19th, 1942.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

This is to certify that according to records in our possession, Frederick George Snow was born at Larch Road, Balham, London, England, on September 17th, 1909.

He is the son of John George Snow and Annie Snow, formerly Gifford. Both parents were of British Nationality.

I have known Mr. Fred G. Snow for 17 years, and can personally vouch that his nationality is British by birth, and that I have been in touch with him during the seventeen years he has resided in Canada.

Thomas Keeley
Superintendent.

TK/B.

Gibbs' Club

20 Lawford Avenue
Sherbrooke Que

February 19th, 1942

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that according to our records in our possession, Frederick George Snow was born at Larch Road, Balham, London, England, on September 17, 1909.

He is the son of John George Snow and Annie Snow, formerly Gifford. Both parents were of British Nationality.

I have known Mr. Snow for 17 years, and can personally vouch that his nationality is British by birth, and that I have been in touch with him during the seventeen years he has resided in Canada. Immigrated to Canada, April 17, 1925 on 'SS Andania,' Cunard Line. Berthed at Halifax, from Liverpool, England.

Thomas Keeley, Superintendent

This is the first record of my Father being informed of his date of birth. Thomas Keeley clearly identified John G Snow as his Father.

When he received this letter, he was 33 years old, married for seven years, and the Father of three children ages 6, 4, and 2 years old. Until he had this letter, he had nothing to prove who he was. For the next 15 years, from the ages of 33-48, this note would be **all**_he would have to prove who he was.



Karen (4) Gary (6) Sandra (2) Fred (33) Port Arthur Ontario 1942

Chapter 7: War & Post-War Fort William Ontario 1943-1949

In 1943, they rented a 'War-time' house in Fort William that was to be their home for the next 20 years. One million of these houses are still standing today. My Father was very proud to have a house and he taught me a great deal about home renovation – including how to pain the **asbestos** shingle siding.



237 East Christina Street Fort William Ontario 1945

The 'War-Time' houses were about 800 square feet but hastily built and poorly constructed. I do not know how we all fit into such a tiny place. At one time, two boarders lived with us and shared one bedroom.

My Parents had the other first-floor bedroom. Six of us children to shared the two bedrooms upstairs. My three sisters shared one bedroom, and my two brothers and I shared the other.

The houses were inadequately insulated and had only wood shavings in the attic. The roofs were bare in the winter when heat loss melted the snow. The central furnace with its 'octopus' pipes consumed over a ton of coal during the winter.

The windows coated with a thick sheet of ice in the winter. We slept with socks on our feet and coats and blankets piled high upon us. The weight ensured that no one had a fitful sleep.

Family love provided warmth when the furnace would not. Good-natured laughter circulated this heat. Others lived in better houses, but few lived in better homes.

The family consisted of five children, two adults, one dog, a cat, and three kittens. It was a 1½-story wood-frame home with hardwood floors. It had a living room and two bedrooms on the first floor. There were two bedrooms on the second floor.

My Parents felt they had come a long way, as this home had a three-piece bathroom! They took in boarders who worked at Canada Car and Foundry. It was a crowded, but happy home.



Gary (11) Karen (9) Rodger (2) Perry (4) Sandy (11) 1947

My Father tried to enlist in the Armed Forces in 1943, but was not accepted because of his bent arm and mangled feet. He also had a 'key' position as an Aircraft Inspector at Canada Car.

He was 34 years old with a Wife and three children aged 7, 5, and 3 years old. I wonder if he received 'the look' when he presented his 'To

Whom It May Concern' letter, because it identified him as 'one of those Home Children.'

He had hoped that enlistment would allow him to get to England and possibly find his Family. This was the dominant motivation of many British Home Children who served in WWI and WWII.

CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL REJECTION FOR
Service in the Canadian Army (A.F.)

The bearer hereof Frederick George SNOW, of Fort William, Ontario, Canada.

Description: Date of Birth: 17 September 1909

IDENTIFICATION MARKS: Appendix Scar. Height: 5' 9"
Complexion:___ Hair: Brown. Eyes: Blue. Weight: 143½ lbs.

Applied for enlistment in the Canadian Army (Active) on the 27 October 1943 at Port Arthur M.D. No. 10. 4.

He was eligible for enlistment but was found to be unable to meet the required military physical standards.

Signed by me at Port Arthur, Ontario this 27th day of October 1943, _____.

Apart from his mangled feet, my Father's mangled right arm did not allow him to raise his right arm high enough to salute. The Medical Rejection form was not enough to satisfy the patriotic public who wanted proof of why someone had not enlisted.

My Father couldn't really take off his shoes every time he was questioned, so the government came up with a more visible sign - a Canadian Application for Enlistment Badge. It read "Penalty for misuse \$500 or Six months Imprisonment."

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
(ARMY)
This is to certify that
Frederick George

NAME (Surname) (Christian Name -- In Full)
is entitled to wear **APPLICANT FOR ENLISTMENT BADGE**
Number **14**
Signature of Holder.....

Description of Holder
Age..... Height **5' 10"** Eyes **Blue** Hair **Brown**
[Signature]
(Signature of Issuing Officer)

Issued at Ottawa, this **4th** day of **November** 194**3**
Certificate and Badge subject to recall by Minister of National Defence as provided
in the regulations.
M.F.M. 191
20M-5-43 (306)
REQ. 177239-1911

For illegal wearing or use of this badge or insignia, the offender shall be liable to a fine not exceeding Five Hundred Dollars, or imprisonment for a period not exceeding Six (6) Months.

Address of Holder **237 Christie St.,**
FORT WILLIAM, Ontario

Directorate of **Fort William, Ontario**
Mention of **and Address**
Certificate and Badge Examined..... Date.....
Rank and Appointment.....
Certificate and Badge Examined..... No..... Date.....
Rank and Appointment.....

Application for Enlistment Badge Fort William 1942

Such was his need for proof of his identity that he saved every official document that had his name on it.



Application for Enlistment Badge



Canada Car Fort William Ontario 1942

My Father's conscientiousness got in his way as an Aircraft Inspector at Canada Car and Foundry. They manufactured planes used in the Battle of Britain. After the war, Canada Car switched to manufacturing buses, street cars, and subway cars.



Canada Car Fort William Ontario 1942

Others adopted an indifferent attitude towards their work. My Father could not. He would not pass their work if it were not up to specifications.

His coworkers ostracized him, shunned him, and treated him badly in other ways. This unnerved him, and he suffered a great deal of stomach distress. He stuck to his principles anyway.

I was born on Thanksgiving Day - October 11, 1944. My Father walked home from the hospital to gather his scattered thoughts as he did after every birth. It had become a ritual for him - as was making bread and scrubbing floors - while my Mother was in the hospital.

He was laid off work from Canada Car and Foundry in 1945 when war production slowed. He worked briefly at a coal company delivering bags of coal on his back.

He then found work at the Great Lakes Paper Mill woodpile. On his second day there, he was injured when a careless worker swung a 'pickaroon' to stick in the end of a log. A pickeroon is similar to a small fire-axe. It has a pointed end but no blade on the other end.

The pickaroon grazed his head behind his ear. He was not seriously injured, but he could have been had the point penetrated his skull. I had a similar experience when I was 15 and had a summer job laying railroad tracks. Another labourer's pickaroon grazed my temple but could have penetrated my skull. My Father worked at the woodpile through the winter.

My Brother Rodger Maurice Snow was born on January 11, 1946. My Father was re-hired at Canada Car. In 1948, tenants of the Wartime Houses had the first option to buy. The down payment was \$350, with a stipulation that the buyer had to put in a basement.

All through the war, the houses rested on cedar posts 1.4 m above the ground with an open crawl space underneath. He borrowed money for the down payment from my Grandmother, who had inherited some money from her English Aunt.

Right after he committed himself to buying the house, he was laid off Canada Car. He then developed a swollen and ulcerated ankle, and was hospitalized for two weeks.

I have vivid memories of the suppurating, painful, open sore on his left ankle. It was purple and so swollen that he could not walk. It may have been a form of cancer or early diabetes.

The available medical treatments were very limited. He soaked his foot in a galvanized tub of hot water in the kitchen and sprinkled brilliant yellow sulfa powder all over it. He did not let on how painful it was. He bound it up in bandages, and awful fluids leaked through.

It did not completely heal. This wound and his misshapen toes caused him problems for years to come. He made wall plaques using Plaster of Paris and jam-jar lids as moulds, just to keep busy.

He put paper flower cutouts in the centre and trimmed the edges with lace. This project turned out to be quite useful as he revived this interest as a retirement hobby 30 years later with ceramics.

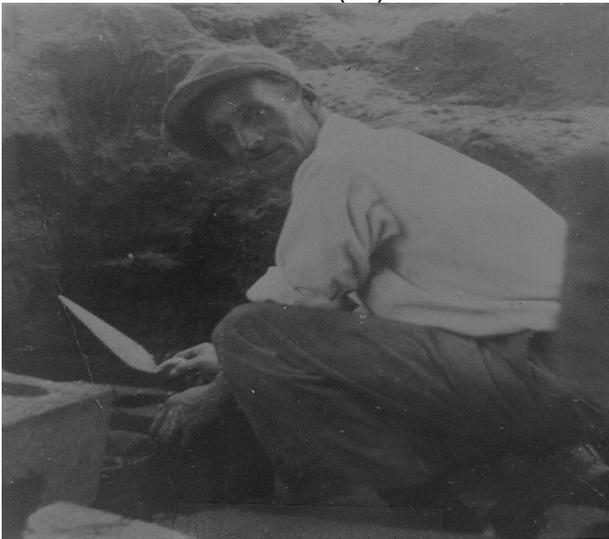
The neighbourhood Minister often visited our home. None of us children had been baptized, so he simply filled a glass of water from the kitchen tap and sprinkled it on us.

In the spring of 1949, our neighbours bought their houses, pooled their resources, dug their basements, and put in cement block walls. They all worked on one house until they finished before they began the next one.

My Father missed this arrangement, as he had been incapacitated by his foot problems. He decided to put in his basement himself. He shovelled all the dirt by hand and moved it all by wheelbarrow.



Fred G. Snow (40) 1949



Fred G. Snow (40) 1949

By May 24, 1949 - their special anniversary - he carried away 200 cubic yards of earth from under the house. Some neighbours volunteered to help him raise the house on screw jacks under each corner.

They added timbers until the house rested on pillars. My Parents laid cement blocks for the basement walls until midnight. The next day, they hand-mixed the cement, dumped it by wheelbarrow, and hand-trlawled the basement floor. They used 3 cubic metres of cement to cover 56 square metres of basement floor, wheelbarrow by wheelbarrow full.



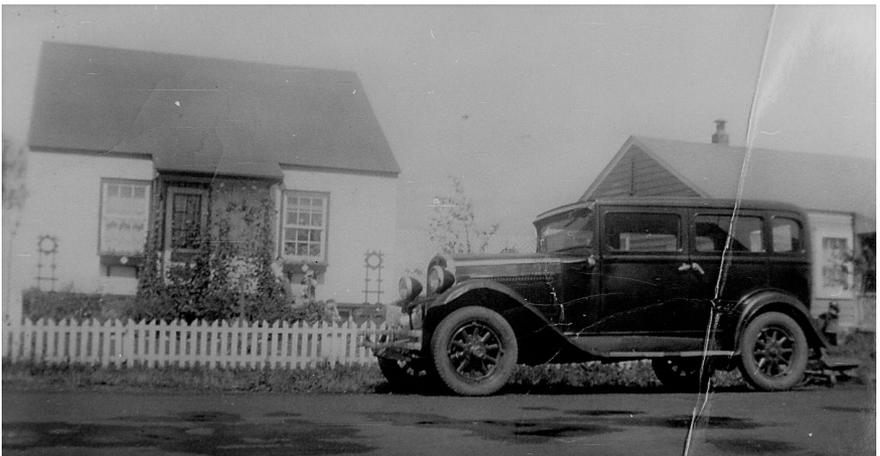
Home Made Go Carts (1955)
Perry (11) Sandra (15) Back



Perry (6) Rodger (4) Sandra (10) 1950

The first family car was a very old Essex. It was a cantankerous machine, but it was large enough to hold the seven of us. On many occasions the entire family piled into the car for a picnic at Oliver Lake. One of us sat in the front with our Parents and four of us crammed into the back seat.

We lashed four inflated tire tubes on the roof. The entourage must have looked like a circus car, with an impossible number of clowns inside. We carried a supply of water because the Essex often overheated and blew off the radiator cap.



237 East Christina Street Fort William Ontario 1949

There was a very steep hill just before the lake and it would take the Essex many tries to make it up and over the hill. If it did not make it up the hill the first time, my Father carefully backed down the hill for another try. Six of us would get out of the car to make it lighter. If this attempt were successful, we would walk up the hill, and get back in the car again.

The downhill road to the lake was as steep as the uphill and we held our breaths as we hurtled down the gravel road that ended abruptly at the lake. The days of swimming at Oliver Lake were memorable ones for the entire family.



Perry (7) Rodger (5) Gert (38) Sandra (11) Karen (15) 1951

For a few years after WWII, the cycle was one of being recalled to Canada Car for a few months of work and then being laid off for a few months. There were times when the spells of layoff were considerably longer than the periods of work.



Fred Snow (41) Gert Snow (37) Revisiting Ozone Ontario 1950

During one layoff, my Father painted a theatre lobby and a few homes in Port Arthur. He biked to the paint store and then biked uphill for 24 km to Port Arthur with gallons of paint in the carrier. He did all he could to work and provide for his family.

The seven of us made a nostalgic trip to Peninsula, Heron Bay, and Ozone in 1950. We found the remains of their tent frame from 15 years earlier.

They pulled a rusty spike from a rotted piece of wood and kept it as a memento. It helps to know where you have been, as well as where you are going.

When my Father received the following letters from the Gibb's Club in 1949 he was 39 years old, unemployed, married for 14 years, and the Father of five children ages 13, 11, 9, 5, and 3.

Thomas Keeley was described as a tall, handsome, personable bachelor, who worked for the Gibbs' Home from 1911-1951. He was called the children's guide and friend in Canada (Stroud 195).



Thomas Keeley 1877-1969

Gibbs' Club

*20 Lawford Avenue
Sherbrooke Que*

21st June 1949

In reply to your letter received today I was very much interested to learn you had three boys and two girls.

On the windowsill in the office we have some interesting pictures of children of Old Boys. It gives me a grandfatherly feeling to look at them, and they certainly are worth a look. I am making this short as I wish to give you quick service.

We have not got any details regarding your people, neither have we got a copy of your Birth Certificate. Since 1928 we have, or had copies of Birth Certificates for most of our lads who came to Canada since that year.

I have sent to Somerset House for one of the new type of Short Certificates which only cost sixpence. They bear the seal of the Registrar General so they are quite official.

It would seem that you had a stepsister named Amy Alice Snow and a stepbrother named John A. Snow.

The last address we had of your people was dated October 3, 1913 which is the year the Society received you, at the age of four years.

You can send me 25 cents to cover cost of Birth Certificate and money order. With kind regards and best wishes.

Thomas Keeley,
Superintendent

Seven years earlier, Thomas Keeley wrote that John G Snow and Annie Gifford were my Father's, Jack's, and Amy's common Parents. In this letter, he said Jack and Amy were my Father's Stepbrother and Stepsister.

Did John G Snow have Amy and Jack with someone other than Annie Gifford? If she had them by a previous marriage, who was their Father?

Thomas Keeley once told him John G Snow was his Guardian. Twelve years earlier, they told him his birth had not been registered. Why did Thomas Keeley suggest he now apply for one?

Gibbs' Club

*20 Lawford Avenue
Sherbrooke Que
Gibbs' Club*

August 2nd, 1949

Many thanks for your letter enclosing the splendid family group received yesterday. It certainly adds to the attractiveness of the photo gallery.

Regarding the Birth Certificate. I thank you for sending the dollar bill, and would say we expect to get a reply from England in the course of the next two or three weeks. I sent the application to the Register General about June 25.

You referred to getting some news regarding lads you knew in Sevenoaks, and who came out with you in 1925. I am adding the names of a few fellows who came out in 1924, as we happen to be in touch with all of them, and it might happen you knew some of them better than those who came out in 1925.

1924: Edwin J MacDonald
Sidney W. Oaker
Robert Muir
Reginald M Worby

1925:

Albert H Barnes
Victor A Barnes
Frank Howe
Arthur Catt
Alfred C Britton
Cecil B Racey
Ernest G Roberts

We have the addresses of some of them if you will please let me know which of them you would like to write to I will be glad to tell you where they live.

Glad to know you are able to carry on a business of your own as a painter, etc. as there is always need for services in this connection.

I have enclosed the most recent photo of myself. Though I think it was taken about 1930.

With kind regards and best wishes for all, Yours sincerely, Thomas Keeley, Superintendent

One winter, my Father built an elaborate snow slide. He constructed a wooden ramp from the roof of the house to the ground and banked snow to make an exciting luge run. He put a ladder alongside the house so we could climb upon the roof.

We slid on pieces of cardboard almost 30 m down the length of our yard and onto the back lane. Other winters, he cleared the entire back yard of snow and flooded it to make a 6 m x 12 m skating rink.

He ran extension cords to provide lights for night skating and speakers so we could play records.

There was a public outdoor rink a few blocks away, but friends preferred to congregate in our back yard. He did not skate himself, because of his mangled feet, but thoroughly enjoyed watching us enjoying ourselves.

We enjoyed many nights of skating in the back yard under the Northern Lights. Our house became a gathering place for all of our friends. My mother joked that she can always reach into the 'Horn of Plenty' and find enough there to feed an army with peanut butter cookies.



Gert (44) Wendy (2) Perry (13) Rodger (with cast on arm 11)
Fort William Ontario 1957

**Chapter 8:
Middle Age Fort William Ontario 1949-1963**

Fred (40-54) Gert (36-49) Gary (13-26) Karen (11-24) Sandra (9-22)
Perry (5-19) Rodger (4-18) Wendy (0-8)

In 1954 my Father (45) had been unemployed for some time and my Mother (41) was pregnant with my Sister Wendy. He tried many times to obtain work at Canada Car. One day, they went to Canada Car together, and said a prayer before they got to the gate. He was hired that day and worked for three years until the final layoff in 1957 when the plant closed.



Back: Gary (18) Gert (41)
Front: Perry (10) Sandra (14) Karen (16) Rodger (8) 1955

On February 16, 1955, my Sister Wendy Anne Pamela Snow was born.



Gert (42) Fred (46) Wendy (3m) Karen (17) Rodger (10) 1955

Shortly after that he wrote to the Police in Balham London, England.

**METROPOLITAN POLICE
'W' Division Balham Police Station
47 Cavendish Road London SW 12**

Dear Sir:

24th October 1957

With reference to your letter of the 8th October, 1957, a search has been made at the Register of Births at Somerset House Strand, London WC.2, between 1906 and 1913, and no trace can be found of your birth having been registered.

Your letter has been forwarded to _____, Church of England Children's Society, Old Town Hall, Kennington Road, London SE 11, who will communicate with you in due course.

If _____ is unsuccessful, it is open to you to write direct to: Register of Births, Somerset House, or Register of Births, Strand, London, WC2 Edinburgh Scotland, if born in England or Wales if born in Scotland.

It appeared that the Police actually conducted a search for his Birth Certificate – and did not charge him for it! When my Father received this letter, he had been laid off from Canada Car.

Groceries were often scarce, but somehow my Mother managed to make daily meals for all eight of us. My Parents often made sacrifices even with food to ensure that we got enough to eat.

They could not always pay their debts on time, and bill collectors frequently turned up at the door. Those of us in school wore hand-me-down clothes that my Mother adeptly altered.

My Brother and I delivered advertising flyers' to 1,000 homes and were paid 1 cent for each flyer delivered, so we earned \$10 for each load. This often included heavy Sears and Eaton's catalogues. We delivered these once or twice a month over an 8 block square of our neighbourhood.

My Brother broke his arm when he slipped and fell on some ice. He was in the hospital for a few weeks, and had a cast on his arm for some time, so my Parents took his place on the route.

Many carriers would stuff the flyers down a sewer and pretend they delivered them. Our employer once accused us of the same thing, and my Father was incensed he would think this of us.

It did not occur to us to dump the flyers. Rain or snow, we delivered them. I did not fully appreciate how much they relied upon this income to buy groceries.



Sandra (15) Gert (42) Wendy (1) Karen (17) Perry (11) Rodger (9)
Camping Thunder Bay Ontario 1955

I helped my Father when he worked cleaning offices at night. One night I was quite tired after I waxed and polished an office floor. He came in and started to scrub a corner of the floor with steel wool. Sweat poured off his brow. I asked him, "Why bother? No one else has cleaned these corners in years."

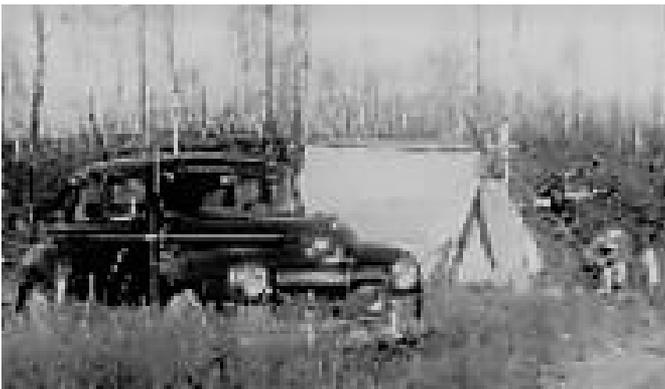
He replied, "No matter what the job, take pride in doing it, and do it well!" I helped him clean the corner. We knew we had left the floor better than we had found it. I learned something about the value of work, regardless of the nature of the work.

He next found work for a few months as a custodian at a Grandview Lodge Home for the Aged in Fort William. For a time, there were regular paychecks and more groceries.

He came home one night and told my Mother that he could not work there anymore. He could not stand to see the old people being abused and neglected and hear them crying. He tried to report this, but his employers, 'Did not want to know.' I overheard the conversation and muttered to my Brother Rodger as we sat in the living room, "Now what will we do for groceries?"

My Father gave me a rare cold stare and replied, "There are more important things in life than food in your belly." I was too young to know about integrity and the price you paid to maintain it. I learned a lesson that day. Ironically, 37 years later, he would spend his final years at Grandview Lodge.

While he was unemployed, he returned to the bush near Beardmore where he had prospected for gold 23 years earlier. He found a few traces, but nothing of any significance.



Fred G Snow (48), Prospecting for Gold Beardmore, Ontario, 1957



He wrote again to the Children's Society. He received a copy of his Baptism Certificate. It did not have a date of birth and did not name his Father. He decided not to share this with his children aged 21, 19, 17, 13, 11, and 2. He must have felt very ashamed. He could not have felt very good about himself, as he was 48 years old, unemployed, and the sole provider for the family.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Dear Mr Snow

November 11, 1957⁵

As you know your letter to the Chief Constable at Balham was forwarded to this office as you were once in the care of this Society.

I have searched through your file and can find no other information than that supplied to you previously over the years since you left England.

I did obtain a copy of your Baptism Certificate and enclose it herewith. You may already have a copy as one was sent to Thomas Keeley at the Gibbs Home, in December 1936.

You will see that the Baptism Certificate gives your age as 4 years, this is because the exact date was not known. I have tried the Registrar at Balham, and, as you know the Police searched at Somerset House and there is no trace of your Registration.

As we had also searched in 1929 with no success, it seems that you were not registered. However maybe your Baptism Certificate can be accepted of proof of your age.

You came to us in October 1913 and at that time you were not old enough to go to school. This means that you were under 5 years.

I am sorry not to be able to send you your Birth Certificate but if there is any other way in which I can help please let me know.

They sent a copy of this Baptism Certificate to Thomas Keeley in 1936. Why did he not give this to my Father, who wrote to him in 1936, 1942, and 1949? Why did Keeley give him a 'To Whom it May Concern' letter in 1942 instead?

Why did he tell him he was born on September 17, 1909, if his birth date was unknown? If they searched for his Birth Certificate in 1929, why did Keeley offer to search for his Birth Certificate in 1949? Why did he ask him for money to cover the cost of the search?

BAPTISM CERTIFICATE

Baptism solemnized in the Parish of St. Peter's Croydon in the Diocese of Canterbury and County of Surrey in the Year 1913

Alleged Date of Birth	When Baptized	Child's Christian Name	Parents' Christian Name	Surname	Abode
1909	8 Oct 1913	Frederick George	Annie	Snow Gifford	Dean Road

By whom the Sacrament was administered. Arthur Reeve, Vicar.

I Certify, that the foregoing is a true copy of the entry of the Baptism of **Frederick George Snow** in the Register of Baptisms for the said Parish of St. Peter's Croydon. Signed: A. Reeve

I first saw this Baptism Certificate in 1994 shortly after his death.

If they had this in their possession for 44 years, why did they not give him a copy before this? Who scratched out his date of birth? It appeared to read as 4 years old, but underneath is a '½.' Could he have been only 3½ years old when he was apprehended?

His Mother was listed as Annie Gifford but his Father was listed only as 'Snow.' If John G Snow was his Father - as Keeley told him in 1942 - why was his name not listed?

They gave him this information 30 years after he was no longer in their care. This was the only piece of official identification he ever had that verified his name. For most of his life to date, he was not sure if 'Snow' was actually his name.

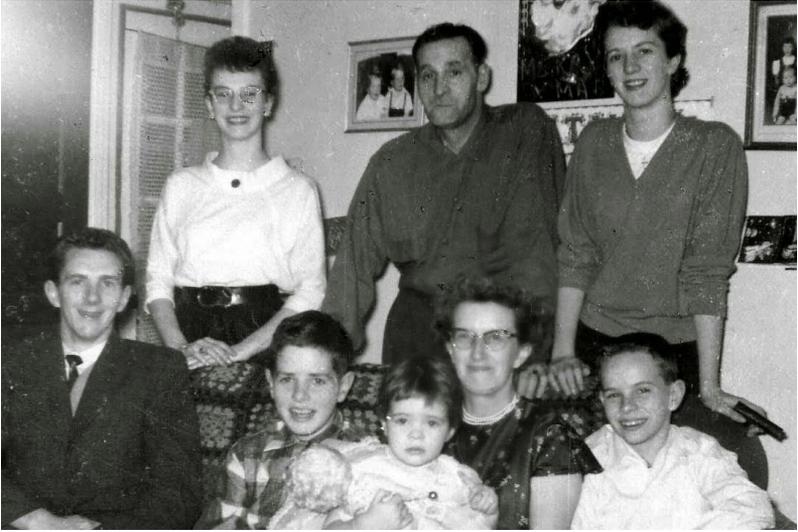
This must have caused him to reflect more upon his mysterious origins while he prospected for gold in the bush. This could only confirm him as being illegitimate.

Each of us had a unique relationship with each of our Parents. For much of my childhood and adolescence, my relationship with my Father was one of JourneyMan – Apprentice. Our whole family became known for its ability to fix almost anything with tape, glue, or wire.

I helped him repair the old Dodge one winter when I was 13 years old. He attached a tarpaulin to the house to make a roof over the car. He shovelled snow around the base of the car and crawled underneath.

He did not have a 'Trouble Light,' so he used a pole lamp from the living room instead. He did not have a proper set of tools. If he needed a 13 mm wrench, and only had a 10 mm wrench, he used a screwdriver tip to take up the space. He was persistent and would not compromise by only doing a partial job.

The job took hours and every repair seemed to coincide with a snowstorm and -34C temperatures. I do not know how he withstood the cold. I shivered so much I could not hold the light steady. He lay on the snow-covered ground underneath a car while the wind howled around us. I didn't know his history of endurance.



Back: Karen (19), Fred (47), Sandra (16)
Front: Gary (21), Rodger (11), Wendy (2), Gert Snow (44), Perry (13).
Fort William, 1957

He received a copy of his Baptism Certificate in November 1957. That winter was particularly difficult with brutally cold temperatures of -34°C that lasted for weeks. There was not much money around for the basics. That winter we ran out of coal for the furnace.

My Father put an old 'pot-bellied' stove in the kitchen, cut a hole in the wall, and put pipes through to the outside. This wood stove was the only source of heat for the entire house.

We shortly ran out of wood for this stove. He called me to the kitchen. I did not have to ask what he wanted, it was usually a given that he needed a hand with something. He just tilted his head to one side. I put my coat on and we walked down the driveway to the lane.

He said, "We need wood." We walked the length of the lane and picked up bits of wood along the way. There was not much as the snow was so deep. When we returned home, he stopped, lit a cigarette, and stood very still.

I shivered from the cold as we watched the eerie Northern Lights flickering across the sky.

He walked up to the neighbour's fence and ripped off a picket. I frowned and he said, "Give me a hand!" I tore off a few as well. He said, "That will do for tonight." My Mother did not ask where we found the painted wood. He had six cold children at home and the house needed heat.

I would have willingly gone for more pickets. In the spring, he told the neighbour he hit his fence with the car, and replaced the pickets.

My Father continued his International Correspondence School course he began when he worked at St. Anthony Gold Mine in 1940. His constant search for work and financial difficulties did not allow him to pursue this consistently.

We shared the kitchen table while I did my High School homework and he did his correspondence course. Others who were unemployed simply waited for 'things to get better.' A few of my friends many years later commented how much they respected him at his age to persist at correspondence school.

My Father wanted to make sure 'things got better' by making sure he was more qualified and employable. He enrolled in an Engineering correspondence course in 1959.

He found work as a Construction Superintendent and supervised the building of a school, church, post office and highway extension to the United States border. I recall the Post Office had slabs of marble imported from Italy and he made sure each matched exactly or it was sent back.



Thunder Bay Federal Building and Post Office



Kakabeka Falls Thunder Bay Ontario

Ironically, one project was the construction of a picnic area and viewing platform at Kakabeka Falls - not far from the site of the Relief Camp where he worked 24 years earlier.

In the winter of 1958, I was 14 years old when I accompanied him on a trip to Gull Bay - a First Nation Reserve 192 km North of Port Arthur on the shore of Lake Nipigon. He had to inspect the construction of a new school.

There had been a heavy snowfall, and most of the road had not been ploughed. We made a trail for ourselves in the deep snow. Mostly logging trucks used the single lane, rough road.

We came to a rickety bridge and I walked tentatively over it to guide him across in the blowing snow. He crept cautiously across the bridge and we heard ominous cracking sounds. The bridge sounded as if it was giving way to the weight of the truck.

He 'gunned' the engine and sped across the bridge. I jumped to the side. He could not stop because he would have stuck in the snow halfway up the hill, or slid back down the hill onto the bridge. He stopped at the top of the hill to let me back in the truck.

He reiterated his famous saying, "For every down, there must be two ups - Right?" Neither of us mentioned how we would cross this bridge when we came to it on our return trip.

We blazed a trail in the -30°F blowing snow. We stayed overnight in a log cabin. I could see the outside through the cracks in the logs. Wolves circled the shack and howled all night.

The cook let the oil-drum 'stove' go out overnight, and it was -30 C inside the shack as well by morning. I was impressed with the way men treated him. It was different from the deference I had noticed when I worked on construction sites and 'the boss' came around.

He neither talked 'up' nor 'down' to these men. He treated them with respect, so perhaps, that is why they reciprocated respect. When he finished his inspection, we headed back down the road. Neither of us said a word when we came to the bridge.

He sailed across the bridge rather than slow down and creep across it. We both held our breaths when we raced across the bridge. Once over, we just smiled and laughed at each other and kept on going. He didn't need to say, "Your Mother really doesn't need to know about the bridge."

I said, "Does she need to know about the whisky in our coffee for breakfast?" He raised his eyebrow and said, "What whisky? You can't drink whisky if your only 15 years old!"

I said, "Dad, I'm only 14 years old." He replied, "There's so many of you kids, I get you mixed up. I think that coffee might have saved your life, it was so cold in there." He winked.

When he returned for another inspection three months later, he was appalled to find the Natives had vandalized the new school. They broke windows, ripped tiles off the floors, and stripped panelling from the walls for firewood.

His next work was as a Construction Superintendent at the Keefer Seaway Terminal. At night, I helped him examine X-ray films of the welding joints from the overpass they built. Together, we did his 'homework' from his correspondence course.

A few of my friends in High School who were much better at Mathematics than me, sat at our kitchen table and helped him with his Algebra and Trigonometry.



Keefer Seaway Terminal Thunder Bay Ontario



Fred Snow (50) Fort William, Ontario, 1960.

He found summer labouring work for me laying railroad tracks when I was 15 years old. I was underage, so they paid me \$.85 an hour for a 10-hour day. Everything about the work was heavy. The railroad ties were soaked in creosote, and the 9m railway tracks weighed 453 kg.

The labouring crew was composed of Italians, Croatians, Finns, Ukrainians, and Russians. Their English was limited to a few words. They were good, hardworking men. They had nothing more to look forward to in life, and were kind in their way.

They reminded me daily to, "Go School!" Many were illiterate and signed for their cash pay packets with an 'X.' They asked me to read their important mail and check their pay packets.

I discovered our employer was cheating them of their pay. I asked my Father what I should do about it, and he simply said, "It's your call." My employer was one of my Father's subcontractors.

I questioned his daughter who was the Timekeeper and someone I had dated. She denied anything was wrong. The next week, I was laid off. This could have been a coincidence. I was in no position as a Grade 10 student to pursue this any further.

Thirty years later, my Mother sent me a newspaper clipping. Revenue Canada charged my former employer with Income Tax Evasion and

fraudulent withholding of Payroll Deductions. He was quite old when he was sent to prison. What goes around - comes around. It just seems to take a while.



Back: Sandra (19) Karen (21) Gert (46) Fred (50) Perry (15).

Front: Rodger (13) Wendy (4) Gary (23) 1959

There was another example of family loyalty. I took some Aptitude Tests in Grade 9. I scored quite high on Literary Skills and Mechanical Ability. Selkirk Collegiate and Vocational School had three programs: General, Commercial, and Industrial.

Because the General Program was full, they decided I was excellent material for the Industrial Program. The city was socially stratified and children were judged by their home address and their Father's occupation. Only the children of professional parents were considered for further education beyond High School.

When I told my Parents of the School's decision, My Father took an unpaid day off work and all three of us went to see the principal. My Father said, "This one is not going to make his living by his hands." My Mother said, "He is going to have a sign on his door with gold letters behind his name." The principal sighed and said he would find a place for me in the General Program.

The first week of High School when I stood up as my name was called, the teacher said, "Gary's brother?" I replied, "Yes." "Karen and Sandra's Brother?" he said. I replied, "Yes." He said, "OK, we're all ready for you!" All of us had trouble in High School, because we simply asked questions.

Many of my friends simply accepted the admonitions of our teachers that they would 'never amount to anything, and quit after Grade 10 to work at

the pulp mill or grain elevators. Some very intelligent friends never read a book beyond High School, and accepted others' opinions of them.

I had fallen in love in Grade 10. Bonnie and I were blessed to share our lives together for 55 years .



Bonnie Bell (15) Perry Snow (16) Thunder Bay 1959



Perry Snow (19) Thunder Bay Bonnie Bell (18) 1962

**Chapter 9:
Old Age Thunder Bay Ontario 1963-1984**

In 1963, my Parents bought a new house that was to be their home for the next 22 years. The landscaping was a lot of work, but fun because this was their first new house. Plus, he did not have to raise the house and dig out the basement by hand!



Wendy Snow (8) 119 Churchill Drive Fort William Ontario 1963



Gert Snow (50) Wendy Snow (8) 1963
119 Churchill Drive Fort William Ontario 1963

My Father loved to garden. In 1980 when he was 71 years old, a truck pulled up in front of the house. A man jumped out and took some photographs of the house. My Father had no idea what this was about.

A month later, he received a letter from the City of Thunder Bay's 'Beautification Committee.' He had been chosen, along with 30 others, to receive an award for his gardening efforts! It was an unexpected surprise, as he simply did what he enjoyed, and was unaware of any competition.

He did not make the papers for discovering gold in his prospecting days, but he was pleased with this all the same.



119 Churchill Drive Thunder Bay 1980

My Father patiently persisted at his Engineering correspondence course for 5 years from 1959-1964 while he was 50-55 years old. His self-education began 28 years earlier in the Relief Camp during the Great Depression.

He completed the program and fulfilled the requirements of a Certified Engineering Technician. This helped him to obtain work with the Federal Government as Clerk of the Works.

*The Ontario Association of
Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists*

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
Frederick G. Snow**

has been registered in accordance with the provisions of the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists Act as a Certified Engineering Technician withal its rights, privileges, and responsibilities in the Province of Ontario. Given under the Corporate seal of the Association this 27th day of October 1964.

In 1964, he supervised the construction of a school at Big Trout Lake - 696 km from Fort William. It was a very isolated native community accessible only by bush-plane. It is closer to Hudson Bay than it is to anywhere else. He lived alone and kept house for himself.

The Natives kept to themselves and shunned non-natives. During services, they sat together on one side of the church, and waited until the non-natives left after the service before they left the church. My Father's lifelong source of solace had been transformed into a stressful place.



Fred Snow (55) Big Trout Lake Ontario 1964



Hudson Bay Store Big Trout Lake 1964



Big Trout Lake Church 1964

The Natives sabotaged the construction. They threw garbage into the lake to pollute the drinking water, stole construction materials, and broke newly installed windows.

He was 55 years old and the isolation, alienation, and loneliness finally got to him. He could only communicate with us by radiophone. Atmospheric conditions interfered and disrupted the calls. After two months, he saw a Doctor in Fort William who gave him a letter saying that his health would be at risk if he continued to work at Big Trout Lake.

At this age, he could not handle the ostracism and sullen hostility. He had experienced too much of this before as a British Home Child. Again, there would be those who would argue that if you have six children to support then you should tough it out, drink more, etc. I learned the lesson that if the cost of work is too high ... you have a choice to leave. If you don't ...

This evolved into the unspoken Snow Family Motto:

You Always Have a Choice.
If you are faced with three crappy choices,
Then choose the least crappiest one.

He was out of work for a while after that, and was quickly fed up with being idle. He went to local construction sites and applied for labouring work. The construction supervisors knew his reputation and were surprised to see him apply for labouring work. He could not even get these jobs because he did not belong to the Labourer's Union.



Gert (52) Rodger (19) Sandra (25) Perry (21) Wendy (10) 1965

He obtained work with the Government of Ontario Department of Public Works. I accompanied him on one of his trips to Red Lake. The 562 km drive was long and uncomfortable in his Ford Anglia jarred our bones with every bump. I developed an appreciation for the hazards of highway driving in the winter.



Ford Anglia



Red Lake Ontario 1965

We stayed two nights in the log cabin he rented, as it was much cheaper than the one motel. The cabin was quite primitive, and was similar to the shack we stayed in at Gull Bay six years earlier. The site inspections went well, and the contractors appreciated his thoroughness.

This trip allowed me to see my Father in a new light. He was 55 years old, married, and Father of five children ages 29, 27, 25, 21, 19, and 10. For the first time I saw him as aging. Until then, he always seemed to me to be strong and full of energy.

The cost of living-away allowance had not changed for 40 years and he managed on \$5 per day for food and lodging. He lived in this cabin all winter - isolated and alone in the cold bush. I felt he deserved much better than this, but for him to live comfortably in a motel would have caused financial hardship for the family.

He was then promoted to the position of Ontario Government District Manager, Buildings Management. At the age of 56, he finally had a secure and permanent position! He had not worked long enough at other positions to establish a pension plan.



Fred Snow Age 54-64 Thunder Bay Ontario 1964-1974

These nine years were the longest period of uninterrupted work he ever had.

For the first time in his life, he did not have to worry about how long work would last and this job would carry him to retirement with a pension.

High School Sweethearts Married 1967



Bonnie (22) Perry (23) 1967



Gert (54) Fred (58) 1967



Bonnie (22) Perry (23) 1967

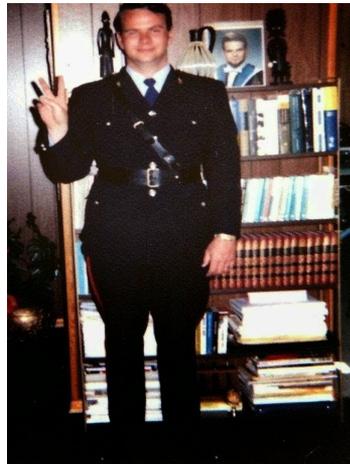


Bonnie (22) Perry (23) 1967

I attended Lakehead University Thunder Bay from 1966-1971



Bonnie Snow (23) 1968



Perry Snow (24) 1968



Perry Snow (25) Bonnie Snow (24)



Bonnie Snow (25) Perry Snow (26)



Perry Snow (27)



Bonnie Snow (26)

Post Graduate Studies
University of Strathclyde Glasgow Scotland 1971-1972

In 1969, my parents noticed the following article in the local newspaper. My Father scratched out the word 'WAIFS.'

WAIFS:

I have been given the interesting assignment of preparing a history of the Church of England Children's Society - the second largest child-care organization in Britain.

From its foundation in 1881, the society - then known as the Waifs and Strays helped a great many children to emigrate to Canada from England and, at one time, it ran homes at Sherbrooke Quebec and at Niagara, Ont.

I am anxious to hear from any Canadian who may have connections with the society and from anyone whose parents may have crossed the Atlantic this way, and may have talked to their children about their experiences.

Many early records have been lost and I am therefore very interested in obtaining personal reminiscences.

John Stroud

My Father replied to John Stroud.

Dear Sir:

April 21, 1969

Re: Advertisement relative to the Church of England's Children's Society

Having read the advertisement in our local paper, I have decided to answer it. First, I emigrated to Canada in April 1925 at the age of 15 years from St. Augustine's Home for Boys at Sevenoaks, Kent.

There were 35 other Boys from all over England that came at the same time on the Cunard Liner SS Andania. We all landed at Halifax and went from there by train to Gibb's Club, Sherbrooke, Quebec. Mr. Thomas Keeley was in charge at that time.

I do not wish to dwell on the intervals in between, at this time, as they are too lengthy and varied, but if you are interested, I have some tall stories to tell on life in

Canada from 15 years to the present age of 60 years. I am married with my Wife and children - three boys and three girls.

One boy is 33 years with a BA degree from the University of Minnesota, now District Manager with General Motors of Canada.

One is attending Lakehead University in his third year with a BA and taking his Masters in Psychology.

The other lad is in Men's Wear as a Salesman in one of our exclusive Men's Stores.

One of my three girls is a Registered Nurse - Assistant, Head Nurse at a local hospital.

One is a Certified Nursing Assistant - now married with our first Grandchild.

The last one is fourteen years old and is attending Grade 9 High School.

As you can see by my card, I am District Manager, Thunder Bay District, for the Ontario Government, responsible for all Government-owned buildings.

I will be glad to assist you in a more detailed account, if you would advise me of your requirements. I have enclosed some material which may be of help to you.

I am, Yours very truly,

Fred G. Snow, Certified Engineering Technician

My Father may have disclosed his true experiences as a ward of the Children's Society for the first time when he wrote to the author. He was dismayed to find only 12 pages of Thirteen Penny Stamps were about the British Child Deportation Scheme to Canada.

The book undoubtedly activated his repressed memories. He may have been depressed to learn the true story of the British Home Children might never be told.

Dear Mr. Snow

1st July 1969

. . . Since I put my letter in the English and Canadian newspapers, I have heard from about two hundred Old Boys and Girls (some of them very old indeed): some of them went into the Homes before 1900.

With their help, and with yours, I have been able to put together the first draft of my book and have delivered it to the Society. Now I have to wait and see whether they approve or not; but if they do, I hope the book will be published next year.

It has been a very interesting assignment and I have received so much information that I cannot do justice to it. On the Canadian end of the work, for example, I have been able to spare a little over one chapter, so of course that cannot cover the whole story.

I expect that you have heard that Mr. Tom Keeley died at Christmas: he was over 90, I believe. He must have been a very fine man, everybody speaks well of him.

I must say you have followed in a great tradition: Prebendary Rudolf, who was the founder of the Society, started out as a clerk in the English equivalent of the Public Works Department.

Amongst other jobs he busied himself with the installation of electric lights in the House of Lords!

I expect you will want the documents you sent me, so I return them herewith with thanks for the loan of them. I was so pleased to hear from you and to learn what a wonderful family you have. With all good wishes, Yours sincerely,

John Stroud

He was depressed for a second time a year later, after he attended a Management Training Program in Toronto. When he returned home, I asked him how it went.

He was more reserved than usual and said, "It was interesting." I asked him what he learned. He said, "I'm not sure. It was nothing like I expected." I became suspicious when he told me the program was held at a Lodge at a remote Southern Ontario lake.

I asked him, "What did they do to you?" His lip quivered, and he said, "What do you mean?"

I realized then that he had inadvertently participated in a Sensitivity and Self Awareness Training Group. I told him what I knew of these 'consciousness and awareness' groups.

Untrained and unqualified amateurs operated on the premise that people needed to become 'more honest with themselves and others.' They compelled people to abandon their defences and become 'more real.'

The group process was confrontational and could run 24 hours without interruption for food or washroom breaks. I told him how people could be damaged when they were rendered defenceless, and how honesty without kindness - is simply cruelty.

I described what I knew of coercive techniques and asked him how he handled it all.

Well, Per, they almost got to me. They accused me of living an isolated life because I had no friends. They said I was a 'social hermit' who was 'overly dependent' upon my family. That hurt.

They made us talk about our childhood - and got on me for that, because I didn't say too much. They said unless I expressed my 'true feelings,' I would never be a 'whole person.'

How did I handle it? The first two days I did not handle it very well. I thought there were some serious things wrong with me.

I was much older than everyone else there. I met a guy in his 50's, and as much as we could, we talked about our work, our wives, and our families. That helped us both.

Whenever I could, I went for a walk. I had to sneak away sometimes because they didn't like you to be alone. I found a place where I could think my thoughts and have a cigarette.

I thought of your Mother and you kids. I reminded myself you all loved me the way I am. I told myself, 'If I am good enough for my family, then who the Hell are these strangers to say I am not good enough?'

The third day was all right, because I played their game and knew it was only a matter of time until I was away from there.

Some people were pretty messed up by the time they left.

Like I said, they *almost* got to me - but then others had tried . . . and failed.

I had many clients who were casualties of these coercive and confrontational groups. They were easily identified as they presented themselves as so emotionally vulnerable and riddled with anxiety and self doubt.



Fred G. Snow (59), 1968

My Brother Gary considered working in England in 1971 and wrote to search for our Father's Birth Certificate. He may not have known of previous attempts.

The General Register Office informed him that no record of my Father's birth was recorded between 1907-1911 and he received a letter from St. Peter's Church in Croydon.

THE PARISH CHURCH
OF ST. PETER, CROYDON

Dear Mr. Snow: December 6, 1971
. . . I am afraid I have nothing definite to tell you. I was advised to ask the Citizens' Advice Bureau as to the best procedure, and they told me the Parish Church of Croydon would have records of baptisms in Croydon and possibly births.

I went there but they informed me copies of Birth Certificates were only available from Somerset House, in London. There I came to a stop, because I did not feel justified in incurring the expense of research in Somerset House without your consent. The fee is 15 New Pence for a quick search or 65 pence for a more difficult one.

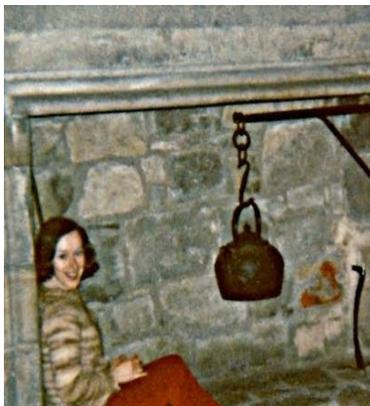
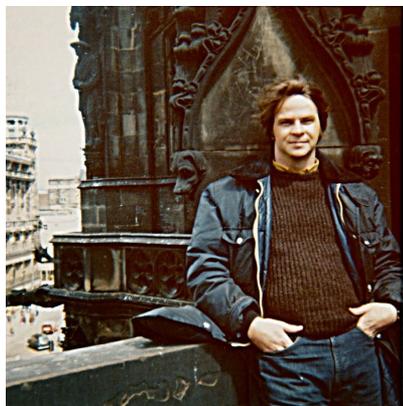
And I imagine it may not be too easy as on St. Peter's copy of the Certificate of Baptism, against the date (Oct. 8, 1913) is written 'Age 4 years' so your father may or may not have been born in Croydon. I hope you will be successful in obtaining your work permit to enter the UK.

Yours sincerely, Vicar's Secretary

I attended Post-Graduate Studies at the University of Strathclyde Glasgow Scotland in 1971-1972. I was oblivious to the correspondence between my Parents, Amy and Jack Snow. I did feel a strange tingle when Bonnie and I rode the train to London and passed through Croydon.



Perry Snow (27) Glasgow Scotland



Perry (27-28) Bonnie Snow (26-27) Scotland 1971-1972



Fred G Snow (64) A Canadian Citizen 1973

My Father (64) became a Canadian Citizen on September 23, 1973. It was a momentous day, as he finally had some proof of his identity. It was always difficult for him to cross the US border without official identification.

He retired at the age of 65 in 1974 and needed proof of his identity to qualify for an Old Age Pension. His Baptism Certificate with his estimated year of birth and his 'To Whom it May Concern' letter would not have been sufficient.

Certificate of Canadian Citizenship

*This is to certify that **FREDERICK GEORGE SNOW** is a Canadian Citizen under the provisions of the Canadian Citizen Act and, as such, is entitled to all the rights and privileges, and is subject to all the responsibilities, obligations and duties of a Canadian Citizen.*

This certificate is given under the provisions of the Canadian Citizenship Act and is evidence that the person named herein is a Canadian Citizen.

Date of Birth: 17 September 1909. Sex: Male. Height: 6 ft. Eyes: Blue. Visible Distinguishing Marks: Scarred Right Arm.

Dated: 23 September 1973

My Parents started a ceramic business they called The House of Snow, with an igloo as a logo. My Father discovered he had a talent for teaching, and held classes three evenings a week.

With newfound identification, they could freely travel to Duluth Minnesota USA to attend training courses and obtain supplies that were not available in Thunder

Bay. My Father poured the molds, fire them in the kiln, and my Mother painted the fine details on them. It was a busy time for them and they thoroughly enjoyed their hobby. They kept the ceramic classes going for two years until his health deteriorated.



Ceramic Christmas Trees



House of Snow Ceramics



'Smiley' Hockey Players

Thirteen Penny Stamps was published in 1971 but was difficult to obtain, and was quickly out of print. Apparently, the author did not notify the hundreds of British Home Children who wrote to him when the book was published.

My Parents wrote the author in 1976, and the Children's Society in an attempt to learn how a copy might be obtained. They tried to solicit his help in obtaining information from the Children's Society.

Dear Mr & Mrs Snow

17 August 1976

Thank you for your letter. I am so pleased to know you have been able to obtain my book and I hope you enjoy reading it.

. . . I have asked the Society if they can help Mr. Snow with his enquiry about other boys who came out to Canada with him in 1925 but I am not sure if the records are sufficiently detailed. One of the problems is that a lot of old records were destroyed during and just after the last war.

*If Mr. Snow could rack his brains for the names of the boys he met on the voyage, we might be able to trace them from the old papers. With best wishes to you both,
Yours sincerely John Stroud*

'Destroyed during the war' is a common excuse to avoid dealing with those British Home Children seeking their records.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Snow,

20 September, 1976

. . . I write to say that I pursued Mr. Snow's enquiry with the Society and have just heard back from them.

They have very kindly searched through the old records and have sent me the following list of names of boys who were at St. Augustine's and who sailed to Canada with Mr. Snow on the SS Anderia [(sic)] in 1925:

Victor Barnes
Leonard Knell
Frank Howe

Alfred Britton
Cecil Racey
Arthur Catt

Unfortunately none of these boys ever wrote back to the Society so we do not know where they may be now.

I can only suggest that perhaps you both might like to consider putting advertisements in one or two of the Canadian papers asking for 'the lads' to contact you.

However, you know the local scene and some other idea might occur to you e.g. using radio services. I am very sorry I am unable to send you any further information.

With best wishes to you both, Yours sincerely, John Stroud

With the exception of Ernest G. Roberts, these were the same names Thomas Keeley gave my Father 27 years earlier.



Back: Rodger Snow (29), Perry Snow (31), Logan Donaldson (37), Rodger Margarit (36), Gary Snow (39).

Centre: Marion Snow (29), Bonnie Snow (30), Karen Donaldson (37), Sandra Margarit (35), Wilga Snow (26).

Front: Paul Poschmann (22), Wendy Poschmann (20), Gert Snow (63), Fred Snow (66)

Thunder Bay, Ontario, 1975



Fred Snow (71) Thunder Bay 1980

My Father (68) became very ill in the spring of 1977, after a callus on his left foot became infected and would not heal. No one knew whether the infection caused his diabetes or vice versa. He had not been in a hospital or seen a doctor in 20 years.

The infection quickly developed into gangrene and they admitted him to St Joseph's Hospital where I had worked as a Psychologist.

As the day wore on, his condition deteriorated. He first said in a very dispassionate way, "I may lose my toes." An hour later, he said, "I may lose my foot."

His entire leg was black, and he was in considerable pain. He said, "They can take my whole leg - as long as it stops the pain." He was quite unemotional about it all.

He was fine until a nurse came in and announced his left leg would be amputated below the knee. He stared off into space, raised his chin, and said, "Fine."



Rodger (31) Fred (68) Perry (33) Gary (41)
The Snow Men Thunder Bay Ontario 1977

My Parents developed an attitude I call the 'Next-Best Scenario.' The best possible scenario was he would not require any amputation. The 'Next Best' was to lose only his toes. The 'Next Best' was a below-the-knee amputation, as it was harder to fit prosthesis to an above-the-knee amputation.

They counted their blessings all their lives. They were grateful for the medical help, and were glad they were in a city, rather than a small town in the bush. Others might focus upon losses, but they concentrated on what they had rather than what they did not have.

A Nurse took a marker pen out of her pocket and drew a dotted line on his leg below his left knee. Only then did tears come to his eyes. When she left, he asked me why they had to mark his leg. I had tears in my eyes as well, and could not speak. I just shrugged. I could not tell him they did this to minimize Surgeon Error. He recovered quickly from this gaffe.

My Mother leaned over and kissed him just before he went into the operating room. She said, "See you soon, Dearie!" He smiled and winked at her. I asked her if she wanted to wait in my office with me but she declined. She went instead to a window at the end of a hallway and looked out over Lake Superior at her beloved Sleeping Giant. I anxiously waited in my office.

The operation went well and they saved his upper left leg. He spent the night in Intensive Care. They transferred him to a semi-private room the next day. I walked into his room and found him struggling to get out of bed.

My first thought was he was not aware of the amputation. Before I could say anything, he gave me a sharp look and said, "I know my leg has been cut off! Come here and help me out of bed!" I went to him and asked him why he wanted out of his bed.

He said, "I am a man who has for 68 years of his life stood up to pee. I do not intend to lay in a bed and pee in a bedpan!" I put my arm around him, and held the bottle while he urinated. The Surgeon walked in just then and was angry that my Father was out of his bed. My Father just smiled a contented smile. I was never more proud of him.

He was in a hurry to recover and get out of hospital. He felt the whole hospital atmosphere was not conducive to his healing and recovery. He asked me if he had to 'be depressed' before he was discharge him from hospital. I hesitated before I answered, but I could not lie to him.

I nodded and explained the nursing staff had a checklist. They expected people to 'grieve for their losses' in a particular way.

I suggested he convince them he was a typical patient who was recovering in a typical way - by 'grieving for his lost limb.'

He acknowledged that he was uncomfortable with letting strangers know how he felt. I encouraged him to tell the staff how much he missed his leg. He replied, "Well, I was rather attached to it."

He was most atypical in his recovery. Once when I visited him, he stared at a picture on the wall. I asked him what was special about the picture. He replied, "I am not looking at the picture, I am looking through it!"

Perhaps this is what he learned to do while he was in the foster home for eight years, Boys' Home for four years, and hospital for one year as a young man. He was eager to get home to familiar surroundings and home-cooked meals.

He pestered the staff to accelerate his prosthesis fitting and crutch-training. They reluctantly discharged him three weeks after he lost his leg. Most amputees were in hospital at least three months.

I went to his room and found him on his crutches, kicking his prosthesis around the floor. I asked him what he was doing. He said, "I can accept this, but I do not have to like it!"

He explained he had read a book written by the Canadian radio announcer Norman DePoe. He had a leg amputated, and advised amputees to do this to their prostheses. It appeared to work. The staff had emphasized that people 'had to accept their condition.'

Anything other than 'acceptance,' they considered 'denial.' It seemed their version of 'acceptance' required patients to 'smile all the while.' Mr. DePoe's suggestion seemed much more appropriate.

My Father accelerated his recovery when he was home. My Parents had overcome many challenges in their lives. This one was a different challenge - but just another challenge.

Almost a year later, they flew to California to visit my Brother. I found out my Father was ill when I phoned my Mother in San Diego. She minimized his condition by saying he had 'a touch of the flu,' as she did not want the Family to worry.

When I called the San Diego Hospital for information, they put me straight through to him! I asked him how he was, and he said, "Fine." He paused and then said he had tubes in his arms and nose. I told him I intended to escort them home. He said "OK." This surprised me, as I expected him to say this was unnecessary. This convinced me that that his condition was quite serious.

My flight was a series of hops through Ontario, Manitoba, North Dakota, Colorado, and California. When I got off the plane, my Mother and I went straight to the hospital. My Brother was in Georgia and couldn't make it back for another day. My Father had pneumonia and a spot on his lung.

Our flight from San Diego was delayed and we had very little time to catch the flight from Duluth to Thunder Bay. I pushed him in a wheelchair as fast as I could through the airport and hollered at people to get out of the way.

My Mother rushed along behind us, with his prosthesis under her arm. He could not wear it, as he had lost weight in the hospital, and it chafed his stump.

In spite of this, they had a great time in San Diego, as this was their first trip outside of Canada except for crossing the border at Duluth for ceramic purchases.



Gert (65) Fred Snow (69) San Diego California 1978



Gert (65) Fred Snow (69) San Diego California 1978



Perry (34) Fred Snow (69) San Diego California 1978

When we arrived in Thunder Bay, he was immediately admitted to hospital. They wanted to operate and biopsy his lung. He was very apprehensive about this, as his strength was diminished from the trip and hospitalization in California. His diabetes was out of control.

He told me he simply was not up to an operation. He just wanted to go home and regain his strength. He signed himself out of the hospital 'against medical advice.' I took them home and helped them settle back in after the strenuous trip. A few weeks later, his X-rays showed that the spot on his lung had inexplicably disappeared.

As the Ontario Health Care system had collapsed and rural hospitals were being closed, it was obvious that I was to be laid off that year since I was the last one hired. I found a job in Hinton Alberta to set up a rural mental health clinic.

We listed our house for sale and Bonnie and our daughters age 2 and 4 were staying at my Sister in Law's home. After I settled my Parents back in their home after the flight from San Diego, I had a few hours sleep and then flew off to Edmonton and a train trip to Hinton. Cowboy hats and boots! I got to drive my restored care through the mountains.



Bonnie (33) Liz (2) Char (4) Hinton Alberta 1978



1947 Chevrolet Thunder Bay Ontario



1947 Chevrolet Hinton Alberta

My Parents continued with the ceramic business but it eventually became too much for him and he switched to hydroponic gardening in their basement in 1980. He was ahead of his time.

They made a nostalgic trip to Savant Lake and had dinner in the same hotel where they stayed 41 years earlier on their way to St. Anthony Gold Mine.



Fred (71) Gert (67) St Anthony Gold Mine 1979



St Anthony Gold Mine 1979

The only correspondence my Parents had with his unconfirmed siblings Amy and Jack, were the occasional exchange of Christmas Cards. One Christmas card dated 1979 from Amy (74), mentioned that her Niece Eileen Snow lived in Kamloops, BC.

In 1956, Eileen hitchhiked across Canada, and called my Father from a phone booth in Thunder Bay. The call was interrupted when she ran off to catch a ride, and there was no other contact with this potential Niece or Step-Niece.

One letter from Amy provided the first and only account he had from anyone as to how he came to be under the care of the Waifs and Strays Society.

He was 71 years old when he read this account.

Dear Fred & Gertie:

23 Sept. 1980

Jack didn't seem to remember as much as I do. You are right about Mother's name Anne Gifford, and Father John George Snow.

I do not know what transpired in Fred's first four years, we lived in Parker Road, South Croydon. I remember one day my Mother and Father were rowing.

My uncle Bill was there, he was Dad's son by his first wife. There was also uncle George, also by Dad's first wife.

As children, Jack and I would go to Uncle George and his Wife Aunt Nance and our cousins, a girl and a boy. I forget the girl's name but young George, Jack, and I went to Archbishop Tenison's School.



Archbishop Tenison's School Croydon England

I recall the row, I was about 4 years old. I don't remember Jack being around, he probably went out to play, he never liked rows.

I think the argument was over my (our) Mother and Uncle Bill. Freddy, as I always called him, was about two years old, he was toddling.

The next thing I remember Jack, Dad, and myself were living at Dean Cottage, Dean Road, Croydon. I have been round once or twice to look at our old place, but it makes me cry. Dad was such a wonderful Father he did his best for us all.

One day Mother came back with Freddy, he was about 3½ years old. So far as I can make out, Dad had been looking after Jack and I and Mother had Freddy.

I can't remember whether Mother stayed at all, but I remember she was gone, and left Freddy with Dad. Whether she and Bill had parted or what happened I don't know.

Jack and I had to take Freddy to school with us as my Father had to go to work. Of course Freddy wasn't old enough for school, I still remember him calling out in classes and my saying 'Shoo.'

We all three sat in the front row. How long we did this I can't remember but I suppose the authorities must have told Dad they couldn't have Freddy at school.

Dad had to go to work to keep us so he couldn't stay home. Jack says he remembers my Father had a girl about 14 years to come daily to look after Freddy.

I don't know what happened except I remember some people being there at home and somebody saying she (meaning me), ought to go as she is a girl. But I suppose Dad had me all along and had managed because we were at school.

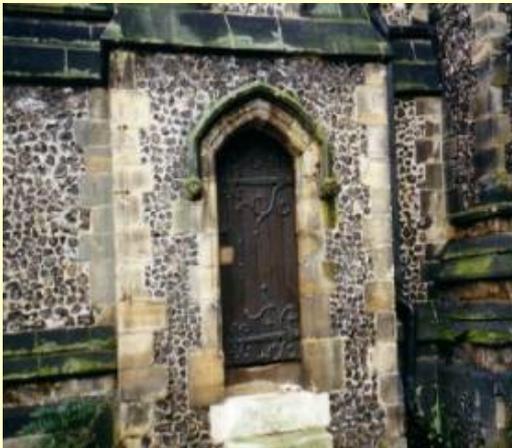
I didn't see Freddy go, maybe they didn't let me, but I remember asking Dad repeatedly where he was and when was he coming back. I must have asked all over the years as I knew Fred had gone to Canada.

I met Mother a couple of times at Tooting at Mother's Sister's house. I don't know if Mother is alive or not. She was younger than Dad and liked a gay life whereas Dad was quiet.

Mother also played the piano well. She was a cashier at Selfridges in London.

Dad ran away to sea on the sailing boats when he was 14. He was also a guard on the trains later on. He jumped ship, as the living was terrible in those days. Dad did his best but we went hungry many times.

Dad had Jack and I to go into a cook shop to have a hot dinner. Even at that age I was embarrassed at sitting having a dinner with working men around.



St Peter's Church Croydon Surrey England

Previously, Jack and I had been going to the back of the Church to a room and getting a jug of soup and a hunk of bread.

The only reason I can see why Fred was fostered out was that he was not old enough for school and Dad couldn't get anyone to look after him through the day.

Best Wishes, Amy

John G Snow was previously married and had two sons named William (Bill) and George. They would have been 31 and 28 years old in 1913 when they apprehended my Father. At the time of the argument, Amy was four years old and my Father was two. About what was the argument?

Was Uncle Bill my Father's Father? Why did Thomas Keeley tell him John G Snow was his Father? Annie Gifford/Snow apparently may have left my three-year-old Father with John G Snow in 1912.

Amy and Jack took him to school with them, even though he was underage. The authorities may have told John G Snow they could not have him in school. He hired a girl to look after my Father. Amy was almost apprehended along with him. More pieces for the puzzle.



Fred Snow (75) Thunder Bay Ontario 1983

In the spring of 1983 my Father (74) bought a 6 m greenhouse that could be disassembled for the winter. He became quite ill that summer and had to be hospitalized because of ulcers. He went on insulin and faithfully followed the ulcer and diabetic diet.

Five months after he was released from the hospital, he was off both medication and insulin. He sold the greenhouse and ceramic kiln, as both had just become too much work. The next spring, he bought another greenhouse so he could continue gardening on a smaller scale.



Fred Snow (75) Thunder Bay Ontario 1983

In 1984, my Parents again wrote to the Children's Society.

The Children's Society
Church of England Children's Society

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Snow

2nd March 1984

Thank you very much for your interesting letter with the fascinating story of Mr Snow's journey from England to Canada.

I am unsure if we will be able to help you but I have passed your letter on to _____ in the hope that _____ will be able to sort out some background for you.

. . . it is wonderful to hear that your husband made such a happy life in Canada and have such a lovely family as witness to it.

I wish you and your family all the very best for the future and I hope that we will be able to help in some way with your queries.

And another.

The Children's Society
Church of England Children's Society

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Snow

13th March 1984

Your letter has been passed to me from _____.

I was interested to read that you are planning to write about your younger days and would be very interested to receive a copy upon completion. The Society would of course pay postage.

. . . I have taken it upon myself to go through the Society's magazine, 'Our Waifs and Strays' and extracted all information on Emigration. However, the cost of pack is quite considerable at 20£ plus postage* of which the latter to Canada would be quite considerable.

I do have a photograph and others . . . of Tom Keeley. The cost of these photos is 2£ for a print if there is an existing negative or 3£ 90p if there isn't.

. . . I would be most interested in hearing about Mr. Keeley and life in the Home in Canada, so if you have anything that you feel would be of interest to me I shall be very interested to hear from you.

All good wishes and good luck with the writing. Yours sincerely.

* It is possible to loan for cost of postage.

My Father wrote his final letter to the Children's Society in 1984. He was 75 years old, my Mother was 72 years old. They had been married for 49 years, and were the Parents of six children ages 48, 46, 44, 40, 38, and 29.

He and my Mother had been writing to them for 55 years for information!

Dear Madam:

31st March 1984

Thank you for your prompt reply to my letter... The photostats are good for my records, it's a good one of the Home, but I am not familiar with the boys in the sailing pictures.

I wish now to give you some information regarding my background. I have enclosed a copy of my Baptism Certificate. I am at a loss to know why, with all the investigations, no one has checked with St. Peters' Croydon Church!

I do not know how long they keep records, but I would think it would be a considerable time.

To gloss over quickly my movements, as I can remember, from the time I was four years old, to the time of emigrating to Canada on April 17, 1925 on SS Andania berthed in Halifax Canada from Liverpool, England.

At age 4 years I was placed with Mr. & Mrs. Smith at Rumburgh, Suffolk, England. I remained with them to age 11 years.

I was sent to St. Augustine's Church Home for Boys, at Sevenoaks, Kent. From there I emigrated to Canada at age 15 years, where I still am.

Enclosed, please find letters relevant to my quest for a Birth Certificate, and family connections.

I wish to state here all the time I was in England I never had any contact with any of my relatives.

To this day I have never seen one of them. I am enclosing some money to defray costs of photostats and mailing. I have no idea of costs.

If you have no use for the enclosed letters and Baptism Certificate, would you please return same and I will pay any additional costs. Thanking you for your time and cooperation.

Yours with gratitude, F. G. Snow

The predictable reply.

*The Children's Society.
Church of England Children's Society*

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Snow, 18 April, 1984

Your letter to _____ dated March 31st 1984 has been passed to me. In answer to your enquiry concerning The Parish Church of St. Peter, Croydon,

I would imagine that the reason behind the investigations not been carried out there would be because that someone would actually have to go to the Church to plough through their records.

Maybe you have a friend in England who could possibly do this for you.

From your correspondence, I am not clear whether in fact you have received information from our records relating to the time you spent in our care.

If not, and you would like to avail yourself of this information, please let me know so that I can retrieve the records.

I look forward to your reply,

Who in England might my Father have as a 'friend?' They stated they were 'not clear' whether he received information from them and asked him if he would like to 'avail' himself of information.

What other reason did he have for writing to them? They offered to 'retrieve the records' that no one had touched for 70 years?

This was beyond bureaucratic ineptitude - it was cruel. My Parents gave up on their search 1984.

Their experiences reinforced my belief that the British Child Deportation Scheme was not about saving children and giving them 'a better life in Canada.'

It was all about irrevocably severing family ties.

It was also all about perpetuating the floundering and shrivelling British Empire by providing the 'colonies' with a domestic servant and farm labourer class.

The Australian Child Deportation Scheme was all about providing that 'colony' with 'good British stock.'

**Chapter 10:
The Final Years Thunder Bay Ontario 1985-1994**



Rodger (40) Perry (42) Fred (76) Gary (49)
The Snow Men Thunder Bay 1985

In 1985 my Parents celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Bonnie and I decided to drive to Thunder Bay from Calgary in our VW Camper Van.

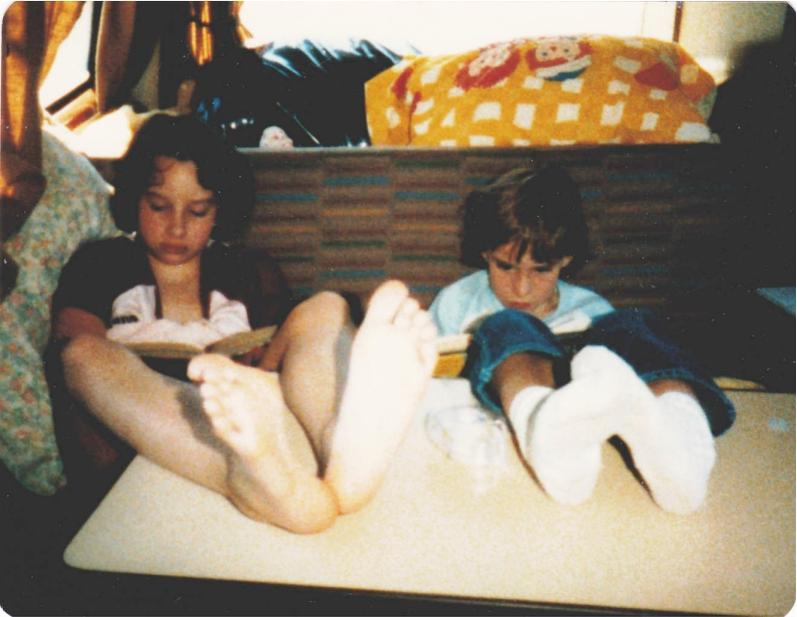
We took a week to drive the 2000 km as we wanted to show our daughters everything in between as they were 4 and 6 when they left Thunder Bay.



Calgary to Thunder Bay 1985



Liz Snow (9) Calgary to Thunder Bay 1985



Char Snow (11) Liz Snow (9) Calgary to Thunder Bay 1985



Fred Snow (76) Gert Snow (72)
50th Wedding Anniversary 1985 Thunder Bay Ontario



Fred (76) Gert (72)



1935 - 1985 Thunder Bay Ontario

Many lifelong friends attended my Parents' Golden Wedding Anniversary. There was the occasional tear in the audiences' eyes when my Parents danced to The Anniversary Waltz. My Father was a wonderful dancer in spite of his artificial leg, and it was always a special joy for my Parents to dance together.

Throughout their lives, they were truly grateful for all they had. They believed they always had help along their way. They believed they were never alone. In times of adversity, they relied on this phrase:

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding; In all thy ways acknowledge Him; and He shall direct thy paths (Proverbs 3:5,6).

In 1985, they sold their house and moved to an apartment that had an elevator, as he found it increasingly difficult to climb stairs with his artificial leg. Their third floor apartment was only a few hundred yards away from their home.



Mount McKay Thunder Bay Ontario

They had the same view of Mount McKay as they had from their house. My Father gardened on the patio deck. The house sale provided them with enough to keep them comfortable until the end of their days. They were happy. They had each other, and that is all either of them ever needed.

My Father kept his hands busy hooking rugs.



In 1985 My Mother wrote "One Set of Footprints," a family chronicle of their lives together and intended only for our immediate family. My Father's disclosures provided me with important and incontrovertible proof of the dark motives to the British Child Deportation Scheme.

In 1988, my Father (79) and my Mother (75) flew to Calgary to visit and have limited copies of her book printed and bound. We had a wonderful time. We toured the Rocky Mountains and enjoyed the magnificent scenery.

My Mother related to the environment as an artist and saw every vista as a potential oil painting. My Father recalled a few memories of the 'Boxcar Years.'



Fred Snow (77) Bonnie Snow (41) Calgary 1986



Fred Snow (75) Calgary Alberta 1986



Perry Snow (42) Fred Snow (76) Gert Snow (72)
Bonnie Snow (41) Char Snow (12) Calgary Alberta 1986



Bonnie Snow (41) Char (12) Liz (10) Fred Snow (77)
Calgary Alberta 1986

On August 13, 1989, my Daughter Elizabeth (12) developed Hodgkin's Disease - a form of lymphatic cancer. She weighed only 24 kg and we were anxious whether she would survive an operation.

The surgeon split her sternum lengthwise to obtain a biopsy sample. It was held together with metal ties after the operation. She took up very little space in the adult hospital bed in Intensive Care after the operation. She had intravenous tubes in her arms and drainage tubes in her stomach.

She sat up in her bed and said she had to go to the bathroom. She ordered me to leave the room. While I waited in the hallway, Bonnie pushed her down the hall in her wheelchair. I could not believe she had gotten out of bed only a few hours after such an operation.

I rushed after this apparition of wheelchair, intravenous pole, and balloons. I asked them where they were going. My Daughter stuck out her lip out and said, "I am going to the bathroom - I am not going to use a bedpan!" That sounded familiar.

When she was released from hospital a week after surgery, she still weighed so little. Legally she qualified to ride strapped into a child's car seat - even though she was about to celebrate her 13th Birthday. She did not want any part of that.

She underwent six weeks of radiation treatment and recovered fully. We were grateful she did not require chemotherapy.

In 1990, my Daughter Charlotte (16) developed some unusual symptoms. She and I discovered we have a rare condition called familial hypobetalipoproteinemia. We both have abnormally low levels of cholesterol. While most people are concerned with lowering cholesterol, we have to raise ours to normal levels.

This genetically determined condition is associated to some extent with longevity. I most likely inherited the condition from my Father, and she inherited it turn from me. I knew the Snow's all inherited intelligence, good looks, and humility, but the need to know family medical history became more of a priority.

From 1989-1991, my Father's health declined further and his vision and hearing were problematic. His diabetes became more difficult to control.

He was very conscientious about following his exercise and diet regime, but he developed a stomach ulcer and circulation problems in his right leg.

My Parents moved to another apartment that allowed for easier wheelchair access. It was obvious he could no longer adequately care for himself, and my Mother reached her limits as to her ability to look after the two of them.

In 1991, he was admitted to hospital for an operation to improve the circulation in his remaining leg. There was a risk he could lose it. At the time, the procedure of inserting a balloon into the veins was quite new.

This was a major operation and he did not recover as quickly as he had in the past. My Sister Sandy felt that the end was drawing near and phoned to tell me, "This is it."

It was difficult to arrange a flight from Calgary to Thunder Bay, and the only one available on short notice was from Calgary-Winnipeg-Toronto-Thunder Bay. It was very much the long way around. All through the flight, I dreaded I might arrive too late, and find that he had died while I was *en route*. He knew I was coming.



Fred Snow (82) Thunder Bay 1991

My Sister Sandy picked me up at the airport and we sped away to the hospital. When I walked into the room he said, 'Well, its Perry - my Guardian Angel, or the Angel of Death!' He made a remarkable recovery while I flew many anxious hours.

This was his pattern. When his health deteriorated, he was admitted to hospital in very poor condition. With a minimum of care, he rapidly recovered. After this operation, he required more intensive and extensive care.

He was reluctantly transferred to Beacon Hill Lodge in Thunder Bay where he slowly regained his health from 1991-1992. It was a frustrating year for the entire family because his health was too good for this Home and not good enough to qualify for the other Home that had a lengthy waiting list.

I saw him only once at this home. It was heart-breaking for all the family to see him there, but there were no other choices available, and he made the best of it.

My Mother moved into a Senior's apartment nearby and faithfully visited him every day for the final three years of his life at both Homes.

In 1992, I flew to Thunder Bay for the weekend to attend the funeral of a good friend. I arrived on Friday night and met with my grieving friends before the funeral on Saturday. I saw my Mother briefly and visited with my Father on Sunday. I tried to see all of my Family, but there was so little time.

On Monday, a Nurse at the Home called me and said my Father was crying inconsolably. He wanted to see me. She had deliberated whether to call me or not, but I was so glad she did. I went to see him. He dressed himself in his suit and tie, as he always did for a special occasion. We had a cup of tea together.

I took him out in his wheelchair for a stroll around the grounds and along the river. He insisted on getting out of the wheelchair and walking with his cane. We did not talk of any 'weighty things.' He was as anxious as I, that this might be the last time we might ever see each other. It was not, but it could have been.

My Mother-in-Law died in 1993. Bonnie flew to Thunder Bay and was there for a month before her Mother died. I arrived the day after. When my Brother drove me to visit my Mother, I noticed an impressive new building. I asked him what it was and he said it was to be a new Home for the Aged. We stopped and toured the building.

It was lovely, and we encouraged our Mother to put in an application. She was accepted and moved in to Jasper Place, where she spent her remaining days.

She had a comfortable apartment in aesthetically pleasing surroundings, and a magnificent view of Lake Superior and the Sleeping Giant.

I borrowed a car and went to the Grandview Lodge to take my Father on an outing. He dressed in his sport coat and tie. He was quite frail, and we took his wheelchair along. We picked up some of his favourite fast food to take with us on our drive to Mckellar Island Bird Sanctuary.

When he commented on the pussy willows at the side of the road, I stopped the car and went into the ditch to pick them. I stepped in the water and soaked my shoes.

I managed to pull some pussy willows and bull-rushes from the bog. He was very pleased, as this was a long-standing spring tradition. Part of this tradition included my getting my feet wet.

We parked the car at the bird sanctuary on the shore of Lake Superior. He insisted he walk, rather than sit in the wheelchair. I held his arms as he manoeuvred himself out of the car.

He took his cane and carefully walked to the water's edge and stared at the Sleeping Giant. We were silent on the return trip to the Home. He and I knew we would not see each other again. My Wife had just lost her Mother, and she knew I might lose my Father in the next year.

He and I silently made our peace with each other, and gave each other our silent blessings that day. We had - in our way - let each other know that we loved and respected each other. He knew I was proud to be his Son, and I knew he was proud to be my Father.

Two images come to my mind when I think of the last time I saw him. One is a picture of him standing, leaning on his cane, and gazing over Lake Superior. His chin is raised and he has a contented smile on his face.

The other less preferable picture is one of seeing him hunched over in his wheelchair, holding himself, and weeping at the Grandview Lodge when I left him. He could not help himself. Our Family tends to 'whimper' when overcome with emotion. It comes from hearts that ache with love.

It is our 'way.' When I think of the last time I saw him, I try to concentrate on the former picture rather than the latter.

On my way out of Grandview Lodge, I met a Nurse I had worked with at St. Joseph's Hospital 15 years before. I asked her if she could once in a while address him as 'Fred' rather than 'Freddie.'

I didn't have to explain how diminishing it was to have him in a shared room with only a bed and a night table. He made sure he had a list of his children and contact numbers conspicuously above his bed. She was formerly a Psychiatric Nurse, so she just gave me a wink.

He and I were not inclined to write to each other, and I treasure the few letters we exchanged. Whenever we spoke on the phone, we 'choked up,' lost our voices, broke down with tears, and could not speak. We were similar in many respects. When others say, 'You are just like your Father,' I take it as a compliment.

DEATH ON AN UNCONFIRMED BIRTHDAY

My Father died peacefully on his unconfirmed birthday of September 17, 1994 at age 85. We had all hoped that he would be transferred to a Long Term Care facility adjacent to our Mother's place, but it was not to be. The simple funeral service was attended only by his immediate family. After the service, we cried, laughed, and renewed our love for each other.



Back: Rodger (49) Gary (59) Middle: Karen (57) Sandra (54)
Front: Perry (47) Wendy(39) Thunder Bay Ontario 1994

He was cremated and his ashes interred in the Perry family plot in Thunder Bay. There were no 'Snow' relatives to notify of his passing. I wondered if there was a Snow family plot somewhere in England.

His obituary read that he was born in Croydon Surrey England and was the Son of John Snow and Annie Gifford/Snow. I was angry his death went so unnoticed except by his immediate family. I knew that with his death, my siblings and I were unrelated to any other 'Snow's' in the world. Who were his Parents? Why was he apprehended? Does he have any Brothers or Sisters?

I held my Mother's hand at the funeral service and whispered, "I'm going to find his family, Mum." She squeezed my hand and said, "I know you will Perry." We cried.

Shortly after his death, my Mother gave me my some of my Father's personal effects. His passports were his most prized possessions because they proved he was a person with an official identity. His was too ill at the age of 84 in 1993, to obtain a sixth passport.



1968: Age 59



1973: Age 64



1978: Age 69



1983: Age 74



1988: Age 78

PART II: DISCOVERING THE TRUTH (1993-1998)

Chapter 1: An Inherited Mystery of Family Origins

I began my search in a limited way, a year before his death. I was quite ignorant of how to conduct a search for familial roots. All I had was the alleged names of my Grandparents - John George Snow and Annie Gifford. I did not know where they were born, where they lived, how old they were, or if they were married when my Father was born.

I felt I was trying to put together a jigsaw puzzle that consisted of very few disparate pieces of information. All the important pieces were in England. There was no complete picture on a box to guide me.

I first wrote the Children's Society in October - a few weeks after my Father died.

The Children's Society.

**A VOLUNTARY SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND
AND THE CHURCH IN WALES**

*Dear Mr. Snow
October, 1994*

17

Thank you for your letter of 5th October 1994. I am sorry to hear that your father has died. I can confirm that he was in the care of the Children's Society.

The date of birth on the record card only says September 1909. The record card shows that he was placed in a Child's Receiving Home on 31st October 1913 and was boarded out on 6th December 1913.

He moved to Sevenoaks on 12th October 1921 and emigrated on 3rd April 1925. I have passed your letter on to _____ who may have further information.

We have no trace of any brothers or sisters in our record cards. I hope this brief information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

If they had 'no trace of brothers or sisters' on their record cards, then who were Jack and Amy Snow? The Children's Society once identified them as his Brother and Sister, and once as his Stepbrother and Stepsister.

Even though searches had apparently been made for his Birth Certificate, I wrote to the General Register Office and requested another. They did not find a record of his birth between 1907-1911.

I phoned the Children's Society for clarification of their note and received two replies.

The Children's Society.

*A VOLUNTARY SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND
AND THE CHURCH IN WALES*

*Dear Mr. Snow
November 1994*

3

Further to our telephone conversation on 2 November 1994, I am writing to confirm that your enquiry regarding your late father has been passed to _____ . . . who holds all the records relating to people who were in the Society's care before 1930.

A copy of this letter has been passed to _____ who will be in touch with you directly in the near future. . . .

Yours sincerely

Second Reply

The Children's Society.

*A VOLUNTARY SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND
AND THE CHURCH IN WALES*

*Dear Mr. Snow
November 1994*

2

Your letter dated 5 October 1994 concerning your father, Frederick George Snow, has been forwarded to me.

Following a search of the Society's index of children formerly in care, I have been able to locate a reference to your father's case file.

I will send you a report outlining the contents of the file, which you should receive in the next two to three weeks.

Yours sincerely

I sent them a fax to advise them that my search for his Birth Certificate was unsuccessful.

*Dear _____
16, 1994*

November

. . . I am very curious as to what exactly constitutes 'the contents of the file.' I would be most grateful to receive any/all information that is available as to his past, since so little is known.

If there are any costs involved in photocopying, postage, etc., please advise me, as I am very willing to pay such costs.

Recently, however, I did discover that his Father was John George Snow (August 1857 - March 8, 1940), and his mother was Annie Gifford, and that he had a Brother John A. Snow (1905-?) and a Sister Amy Alice Snow (1903-?).

St. Catherine's House has not been able to locate a Birth Certificate as per his alleged d.o.b. of September 17, 1909.

It appears this date is incorrect.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely, Perry Snow

The Children's Society initially stated I could expect a reply from them in two or three weeks.

I finally received a reply from them - two months later.

They ignored my first request to release 'any/all information that is available as to his past.' I had hoped they would send me his entire case file. At the very least, this letter confirmed the existence of a comprehensive case file!

I was ecstatic when I read their letter.

The Children's Society.
**A VOLUNTARY SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
AND THE CHURCH IN WALES**

Dear Mr. Snow

4 January 1995

Your enquiry concerning your father, Frederick George Snow, has been passed to me. Below are details of his time in care with the Society that have been drawn from his case file.

According to Frederick's admission form, dated 2 October 1913, he was taken into the Society's care on 31 October 1913 when he was admitted to our former receiving home at Clapham in south London.

He remained there until 8 December 1913 when he was boarded out with a foster parent, Mrs. A. Smith of Rumburgh, Halesworth, Suffolk.

A report dated September 27, 1920, noted that this foster home was: . . . a very good home and contains 3 bedrooms, sitting room and kitchen. The foster mother's husband is a labourer. The foster mother is an exceptionally nice woman.

In 1921, Frederick was transferred to the Society's former boys' home at Sevenoaks in Kent, St. Augustine's.

At the beginning of 1925 Frederick was recorded as being 'very anxious to emigrate to Canada'.

On 13 January 1925 the Society's Emigration Committee sanctioned his emigration and he traveled to the Society's Gibbs' Home at Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada, on 3 April 1925.

From the Gibb's Home he was found work on a farm at East Angus in Quebec. His file contains two letters written to the master and matron at Sevenoaks that give quite a graphic description of life on a Canadian farm during the 1920's; enclosed are photocopies of each.

Two letters from your father dated January and February 1929 bearing a company letter head would seem to indicate that he was employed by the Canadian Ingersoll-Rand Company at this time.

His admission form contains a number of personal details. He was born at Larch Road, Balham, south London, in September 1909.

He was baptised at St. Peter's Church, South Croydon, on 8 October 1913. His mother was Annie Gifford, who was aged 39 when the admission form was completed in 1913.

The information given about your father's parents is sketchy having been compiled by the local clergyman at St. Peter's Croydon, who referred the case to the Society.

From the evidence it is clear that Annie Gifford was the second wife (as described in the admission form) of John George Snow, by whom she had two children, Amy Alice Snow (aged 6 in 1913) and John Allen Snow (aged 8 in 1913).

John George Snow had an adult son by his first wife, called William Henry Snow, who was nine years younger than Annie Gifford.

The detail given in the admission form then goes on to suggest that Frederick was the son of Annie Gifford and the son of, John Snow's first marriage, William Henry Snow.

Annie and William Henry cohabitated [(sic)] after Frederick's birth, during which time Annie left Frederick with John Snow.

In 1913, John Snow father was living at The Stables, Dean Road, Croydon. He is described as having 'very uncertain employment, often being out of work. At best, he has about 30 shillings (£1.50) per week for 8 months out of the 12 months.'

Please contact me if you have any queries regarding the above. Equally, if you would like me to search for a photograph and details of St. Augustine's Boys Home at Sevenoaks, please let me know.

Copy photographs can be supplied at £5 (\$11.15) each, plus postage and packing.

Yours sincerely,

They stated they 'admitted' him to their care on October 02, 1913. My Father's recollection was that the Police forcibly removed him from his Family.

He did not remember being in their Clapham Receiving Home from for six weeks after they apprehended him.

They described the foster home in positive terms and the foster mother as 'exceptionally nice.' He described the home as impoverished.

They said he was 'very anxious to emigrate to Canada' in 1925. He recalled being told to choose between deportation to either Canada or Australia.

The sailing dates indicated the ship took two weeks to cross the Atlantic. They gave me copies of two letters he wrote to the Master and Matron at St. Augustine's. They referred to two letters he wrote in 1929 on Ingersoll-Rand letterhead, but did not give me copies of these.

The second half of the letter contained a number of surprises. They said he was born at Larch Road Balham, London, in September 1909. Where did the date of September 17, originate?

They said he was baptised at St. Peter's Church, South Croydon, on October 08, 1913. I had sent them a copy of this Baptism Certificate.

There was no explanation why the local clergyman 'referred' him to the Children's Society.

They identified his Mother as Annie Gifford. If she was 39 years old in 1913, then she was born in 1874.

Was this not too old for a woman to have children?

This letter explained she was the Second Wife of John George Snow. Amy was born in 1907, and Jack was born in 1905. This information made Amy my Father's Half Sister and Jack his Half Brother.

Why did they tell him in 1949 that Jack and Amy were his Stepbrother and Stepsister? Surely they would know the difference between a Half Brother and a Stepbrother.

The letter identified William Henry Snow as John G Snow's Son by his First Wife. If he was nine years younger than Annie Gifford was, he was 30 years old in 1913, and born in 1880.

They said William Henry Snow was my Father's Father! In 1942, they told my Father he was 'the son of John George Snow and Annie Snow, formerly Gifford.' Why did they do this?

This letter said Annie and William Henry Snow lived together after he was born, and he was then 'left' with John G Snow. Does this constitute 'abandonment' as they previously told my Father?

They offered to sell me photocopies of St. Augustine's Home for Boys for £5 (\$11.15).

I simply asked the same questions of the Children's Society that my Father asked for over 55 years. Why did they release this information to me now? Was his death a prerequisite to this? This information contradicted other information they gave my Father.

For the first time - 82 years after he was in their care - they clearly identified the relationship between William Henry Snow and John G Snow as Son-to-Father.

Why did they tell him on one occasion that John G Snow was his Father, and on many other occasions, his Guardian?

While I was grateful to receive this information, I shuddered to think of what might have transpired had I not persisted in requesting more information.

In 1929, he was legally an adult, and kept the Ingersoll-Rand Company letterhead for 65 years. It must have been the first record of his attempt to find out about his background. There was a letter missing between the two mentioned in the Children's Society letter.

When I fitted these pieces of the puzzle together, I had a new account of my Father's origins. It was one he never knew because they never told him.

His Grandfather John G Snow was born somewhere in England about 1857. He likely first married about 1877 and had two sons - George Snow born about 1879 and William Henry Snow born about 1881.

This marriage ended or perhaps his First Wife died. My Father's Mother was Annie Gifford. It was not clear whether 'Gifford' was her maiden, or previously married name.

She was born about 1874, which would make her 17 years younger than John G Snow. They may have married about 1903 when George Snow was 24 years old and William Henry Snow was 22 years old.

In 1909, it appears that Annie Gifford (35) became pregnant by her stepson William Henry Snow (26). She may have left John G Snow (52), Jack (4), and Amy (2) to live with William Henry Snow and my Father.

Apparently four years later in 1913, she returned to Croydon and left him with John G Snow, Jack, and Amy. John G Snow was apparently impoverished and having a difficult time trying to care for three young children on his own.

The Vicar of St. Peter's Church may have been responsible for his apprehension. He applied for my Father's admission to the Waifs and Strays Society.

They placed him in a receiving home in Clapham for six weeks and then a foster Home for eight years. In 1921, they transferred him to St. Augustine's Church Home for Boys in Sevenoaks, Kent, where he stayed for four years. On 3 April 1925, they deported him to Canada.

He wrote one letter to St. Augustine's Home for Boys and another to a British Home Child friend in England shortly after he arrived in Canada.

He was 15 years old. Obviously speaking French was not part of his 'training' to be a farm labourer all his life. After 8 years in a foster home and 3 years in an Boys' Home in London, what did he know of farm animals?

East Angus, Quebec, Canada May 01, 1925

Dear Master and Matron:

At last I have found time in writing a little letter to you after having a busy three days ... Well, after journeying over water and land I have at last reached my destination which as you see is in Quebec.

I expect Master can tell you more than I can about our voyage. How did you get on with the boys while Master was away? I guess the boys behaved themselves alright [sic].

I hope Master had a better voyage home then [sic] he did when he went. We all fed the fishes (reference to sea sickness) except myself.

Now as regards the farm I am on, I like it very much. We have five horses, thirteen cows, seventy hens, about fifty young chicks, three pigs, about 8 calves, [sic] two steers, one dog, two cats - this is not a bad farm. I can milk. I have milked two cows and trying three tomorrow.

I guess this is very different from the Old country. We get up at five weekdays, quarter two [sic] six Sundays. No eight o'clock Sundays here we are always up before the sun. We finish working at 10 at night.

We are just over two miles from the nearest town which is East Angus. I walked to church with Mac on Sunday.

Our bosses [sic] name is_____. ... We are about 3 mls [sic] from him and two mls [sic] from Leonard Knell.

I hope you got he card I sent you. It is rather cold here, but ever since I have been out here I have been working in my shirts [sic] sleeves.

This is as Master has said this is no place for playing the fool, we have got no time for it, we get about a quarter of an hour for meals. Then we are out again in our shirtsleeves [sic] at work.

Now I think is all for this time as I would like to go to bed and get ready for morning. I will ask you please to excuse writing this time as I am in a hurry.

I still remain an Old Boy of St. Augustine's Home England. *Fred Snow*

I was moved to tears when I read these letters written by my Father. His letters appeared to say that he was happy and well. Had I not read about the children's lives on the farms of Ontario and Quebec, I would have simply accepted these letters at face value.

He was up before the sun at 4:30 am each weekday morning and up at 5:45 am Sundays. He was fortunate to be allowed to go to Church on Sundays. An 16-18 hour workday?

He was allowed a 15-minute break for lunch. He worked 16-hour days in shirt sleeves, regardless of the weather, and worked until 10:00 pm each weekday. Only in 1925 did the Canadian Government insist that boys be provided with long pants for winter.

Farmers brought him into their kitchens and humiliated him in front of their neighbours because of his accent.

The organizations routinely tampered with British Home Children correspondence. They removed their return addresses from their letters. They censored offensive passages such as pleas to return to England, and intercepted correspondence from British friends.

They placed children far from post offices. Children had little time to write and few had paper, pencils, or money for stamps. They collected the children's' letters of complaint and did not deliver them. These letters still lay in the agencies' files. They isolated the children and severed their familial ties (Parr 72-76).

The children had no one to whom they could complain. Corbett noted that many children were victims of sexual assaults, beatings, neglect, and 'accidents' with pitchforks.

They were immobilized by fear and physically isolated in a foreign country (58). They were very much at the mercy of the Canadian farmers.

C/o Mr. _____

East Angus, Quebec, Canada May 28, 1925

Dear _____: I am at last answering your most welcome letter which I received quite safely. Well I will tell you who I am working for and who I am with, first of all I am with Edwin John Head and I'm working for Fred Allen's Boss' Brother so am pretty lucky Knell lives two mls [sic] of me.

Will you write as often as you can because its all the news we get of the old Country, we look forward to the mail like we do our dinner when we have been working hard.

We have been very busy getting in Springs work. I can harrow with a team of three and also drive a single team in the buggy. I can also milk eleven cows and separate in one and a half hours, you have to move some.

We rise with the sun at half past four, sometimes we forget the alarm (accidentally of course) and sleep overtime. Sundays we get a special treat get up at five weekdays we go to bed half past nine (not eight o'clock), which I wish it was.

We buchered [sic] three pigs on Thursday and I went to town with them on Friday. The only thing that is wrong with Mac and I he pinches all the clothes and I pinches his pillow. There is lots more news but I am so tired I can hardly see to write so I will wind up.

I remain yours sincerely "Akela" Fred Snow

PS. Ask Mr. French for me if he will send me the Pathfinder.

I could have ended my search here, and could have been satisfied with this still incomplete account of his origins.

Perhaps they expected me to be satisfied with what they provided me, and yet did not provide my Father.

I was salivating for more information and I made my second request for the release of his entire case file.

Dear _____

18 January 1995

Thank you very much for the information you provided . . . You can't imagine just how important it was to receive any information regarding my Father. As I may have mentioned, he and my Mother corresponded for over 50 years with the Society in an attempt to obtain information about his background.

I only discovered after his death that their efforts persisted up until 1984 when he was 75 years old. It is very gratifying to receive this information. It doesn't really matter whether his Father was John George Snow or his Son William Henry Snow. What matters is knowing versus not knowing.

. . . I am very interested in obtaining any additional information that you are in a position to provide. If this information exists, I am certain that it is of no use to anyone other than my siblings or me. Conversely, it is of inestimable value to my siblings and me. Like our Father, who lived his life never knowing whether he had brothers or sisters, uncles, aunts, etc., all of us also lived without ever knowing grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc. I would like to review whatever you are able to provide from his file - ideally the entire file.

. . . I have enclosed a postal order in the amount of £15 (\$33.45), which I hope is sufficient to cover the costs of photocopying and postage/packing. Sincerely, Perry Snow

It took the Children's Society four months - and some prompting on my part - to reply to my second request for his complete case file. In the meantime, I tried to find a Birth Certificate for my newly confirmed Great Grandfather John G Snow and Grandmother Annie Gifford.

The General Register Office wrote they could not find Birth Certificates for either John G Snow from 1857-1861, or Annie Gifford from 1872-1876.

I joined the East Surrey Family History Society in February 1995 and listed what family information I had in their publication. I hoped someone, somewhere, had researched the genealogy of the Snow's. I obtained a microfiche entitled The British Isles Genealogical Register Index from them.

It contained a list of family surnames being researched by people all over the world. It had the addresses of people who either had, or were seeking information about specific families.

I held my breath as I scanned the microfiche. I hoped there just might be listings for 'Snow.' There were only a few but I wrote to them anyway and decided to include potential 'Gifford' sources in my search.

Everyone to whom I wrote responded quickly, but no family links were established. My curiosity rapidly transformed into an obsession. I no longer just hoped that I could find a family history - I was convinced that somehow I would find his family. I spent many hours at the Calgary Family History Centre searching their records to no avail.

I waited three months for a reply from the Children's Society. I sent them a fax and made my third request for his entire file. They replied two weeks later.

I believe they had not intended to voluntarily release information to me, and only complied following my demand.

Dear _____

24 April 1995

I last wrote to you on 18 January 1995 and at that time requested a copy of my Father's entire file and sent a money order in the amount of £15 (\$33.45) to cover costs of photocopying and mailing.

I have been patiently waiting 3 months now for a reply. Is there a problem? If you require a formal Release of Information to send the entire file to me, enclosed please find the appropriate Release of Information.

This is usually sufficient authorization for me to release my client records to appropriate requests from doctors and other professionals.

My solicitor has advised me that it should be sufficient to allow you to release my Father's complete file to me. If there is anything else you need to send the complete file to me, I would appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely, Perry Snow

RELEASE OF INFORMATION REQUEST

I, the undersigned, do hereby authorize and direct you to release to: Perry Snow . . . any and all information he may require, including but not limited to all documents, medical records, school records, correspondence, inquiries, progress notes, reports of all diagnostic tests and assessments, medical/professional opinions, case notes, and/or other knowledge or information in your possession, power or control relating to his father Frederick George Snow (1909 -1994) who was under the care of the Children's Society from 1913-1925, and for doing so, let this be your good and sufficient authority. Dated at the City of Calgary, in the Province of Alberta, in the country of Canada this 24th day of April 1995. Perry Snow

It was the above letter that prompted them to release his Intake Form. Had I not been so direct ...

I wrote to Barnardo's to find out their policies regarding the release of information. They said they were committed to providing family background information to adults formerly in their care and their relatives.

They received 300-400 inquiries per year from Canadians, but stated 'to date,' they had 'not received **any** enquiries from British relatives searching for child migrants.'

I found it hard to believe the hundreds of thousands of British relatives **never** inquired about their Sons, Daughters, Brothers, and Sisters - the British Home Children.

They said they were not legally bound to release information, and did not withhold information unless a child migrant had requested this.

The Children's Society replied by fax a week later.

The Children's Society.
**A VOLUNTARY SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
AND THE CHURCH IN WALES**

Dear Mr. Snow

4 January 1995

Thank you for your recent fax message regarding your father's case file. The Release of Information Request is useful and I will keep it on file.

As you may have gathered by now, the copying of these files is a fairly time consuming process. The file itself is fragile and has to be copied carefully to ensure that it is not damaged.

The work is in progress, but may take another week to two weeks to complete. Yours sincerely

Why did it take weeks to photocopy a file? Is preserving the paper more important than telling me the facts upon the paper?

The Children's Society.
**A VOLUNTARY SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND
AND THE CHURCH IN WALES**

Dear Mr. Snow

4 Jan 1995

Please find enclosed copies of the documents from your father's case file.

This material represents key documentation that has a bearing on your father's time in care with the Society.

Routine notes and letters dealing with purely administrative and internal Society matters have not been copied in an attempt to save on cost and staff time.

Please contact me if you have any queries relating to these papers.

Yours sincerely

Chapter 2:
A Review of Waifs and Strays Case File # 18264

I held the thick envelope and stared at it for a few moments before I opened it. I was a little apprehensive what it might contain. I ripped it open and resisted the temptation to skim through it. I intensely studied every word on every page.

They gave me 61 photocopied pages from his case file. Fifty-five of these pages had tiny numbers written on them ranging from 4-74. What information is on the missing pages?

If the pages they withheld contained 'routine and administrative matters,' I could decide if they were useful to me. The first page was a hand-written letter from the Vicar of St. Peter's Church to Prebendary Rudolf of the Waifs and Strays Society. I needed a magnifying glass to decipher it.

Why did the Children's Society not include these pages in their first response to my inquiry? Why was he in a hospital from May - September 1913? Why did the Vicar pay to have him kept there when free hospitalization was likely available in Croydon? Did my Father completely repress memories of his being in this hospital?

St Peter's Vicarage South Croydon

Dear Mr. Rudolph [(sic)]

24 September 1913

We are most anxious to get a small boy - by name Freddie Snow into a Waifs & Strays Home. He is about 4 years old, and a fine grown little fellow.

We have been paying for him to be kept in a Convalescent Home in Croydon for over four months past now, not knowing what else to do with him, but our poor funds will not allow of our doing this any longer.

I was telling my mother . . . about this case, a few days ago and she says she was recently trying to get a child in herself to one of the Waifs & Strays Home, but that her child had been withdrawn, & she thought perhaps this child we are interested in could take the place of hers.

It is a very sad case indeed, the mother having run away from home twice, this last time she probably will not come back again. She left this child behind this time, together with her two elder children and their father.

It is hard to say who the father of this little Freddie is. The father of the elder ones has been very good. He tried hard to scrape up 6s or 1£ now and again to keep this poor waif 'Freddie.'

But he is often out of work and can hardly make both ends meet for himself and his two older children. I don't know what will happen to this child unless we can get him into a nice Home.

If you wish us to fill up a form, will you kindly send it to Mr. Reeve or myself. We want to get this settled as quickly as possible.

Yr. Sincerely, V. Inez Reeve

1913 Waifs and Strays Intake Form

Church of England Incorporated Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays,

Patron—HER MAJESTY THE KING & QUEEN. Place of the "Children's Home"—LEAL QUENNE ALBERTINA.
 Protector—HIS GRACE THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND HIS GRACE THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

Head Office—Old Down Hall, Kensington Road, London, S.E.
 Secretary—REV. F. P. BARNES, Esq.
 Secretary's Address—St. N. Parish, Day

APPLICATION FOR THE ADMISSION OF A CHILD.

NOTE—This form, when filled up and certified by a Magistrate of the County of England, should be returned with the medical certificate to
 THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE, 11th and 12th Floors, 11th Street, New York, N.Y.

QUESTIONS TO BE REPLIED TO.

1. Give the child's Christian name and surname in full. Also the date of his or her birth, and the place where born (county and date).	Frederick George Snow																								
2. State the exact date and place of birth.	September 1909. - Lamb, R ³ , Balham.																								
3. Is your child a girl?	Probably no. (See letter)																								
4. Name your child and place of birth.	S. Peter Church, S. Gropdon October 1913.																								
5. Are you a clergyman?	Yes																								
6. If husband, state or how you deal with matters of children and give general details.	None No																								
7. If clergy, give exact name, place of service, with how long they have served there, and what your rank.	None (See letter)																								
8. Give the Christian name and surname of parents in full, and their rank, ages.	None James Dufford age 39. (See letter)																								
9. What rank, or is, the nature of the father's occupation and the amount of his wages? Give the name and address of his present or last employer.	(See letter)																								
10. What rank, or is, the nature of the mother's occupation and the amount of her wages? Give the name and address of her present or last employer.	(See letter)																								
11. Have the parents or guardian ever been in prison? If so in what respect?	No																								
12. Give the names, addresses, and ages of all the children and state of the child, and occupations and earnings of each.	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NAME</th> <th>AGE</th> <th>SEX</th> <th>OCCUPATION</th> <th>REMARKS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Probably left S. Peter Church, S. Gropdon</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lucy Olive Snow</td> <td>(See letter)</td> <td>F</td> <td>at school</td> <td>none</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Albert Snow</td> <td>(See letter)</td> <td>M</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					NAME	AGE	SEX	OCCUPATION	REMARKS	Probably left S. Peter Church, S. Gropdon					Lucy Olive Snow	(See letter)	F	at school	none	John Albert Snow	(See letter)	M	-	-
NAME	AGE	SEX	OCCUPATION	REMARKS																					
Probably left S. Peter Church, S. Gropdon																									
Lucy Olive Snow	(See letter)	F	at school	none																					
John Albert Snow	(See letter)	M	-	-																					
13. Describe the reasons that led to the application. Give the names of all persons named in the report of the medical officer, and state the nature of the child's physical condition.	Cf. Miss Bentley (mother) Children's Congregational Home Brompton, Road S. Gropdon																								

QUESTIONS TO BE RESPONDED TO (Continued)

QUESTIONS TO BE RESPONDED TO	NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	OCCUPATION	WARRANT SERVICE
14. Give a full and true account, independently, of the child and average of each child, including the name of the mother, the father, the child's name, the child's date of birth, the child's sex, the child's race, the child's religion, the child's occupation, the child's education, the child's marital status, the child's present address, and the child's present occupation.	Please see letter. It is impossible to answer this question correctly, as with the sum of the letter, only the mother's own rightful husband (on whom the child has no claim) has very uncertain employment, of few hours work, at best he has had about \$0/- per week for 8 months out of the 12 months. He is a laborer, Bullock, Dean Road, S. Graydon				
15. Have either you or the child's relatives, in your judgment, a position to assist the child, or to maintain it in any degree?	No				
16. Are any payments for the child or maintenance from any source (relative or otherwise) if so, by whom? State full name and address.	No				
17. Has the child ever been employed? (Specify any business or occupation in any way by exceptional knowledge of skill?)	No				
18. Ever attended any school? If so, where and for how long, and in what standard?	Too young for school				
19. Ever attended Sunday school? If so, where and for how long?	No				
20. Ever been in the Workhouse? If so, how long and where?	No				
21. I, J. G. Truman, of Dean College - Dean W. S. Graydon, hereby consent, in the name of the Society, and desirous to obey the rules in force, and to permit the said child to be brought up in the Faith of the Church of England, and when fully trained to be sent to any studies in the United Kingdom, which may be required by the Community.	John G. Truman, Dean College - Dean W. S. Graydon				
Signature	John G. Truman				
Signature of Witness	J. Eury Reeve				
Address	St. Peter's Vicarage, Graydon				
22. I also hereby give my consent to the child being emigrated to Canada, if he or she is found suitable, and if the Society consider it advisable.	J. G. Truman				
Signature of Witness	J. Eury Reeve				
Address	St. Peter's Vicarage, Graydon				

NOTE—Preference will be given to those made in whole consent to emigration if expressed.

I certify that the foregoing questions have been correctly replied to, to the best of my belief.

(Signed) Name Arthur Reese
Address St. Peter's Vicarage, Graydon

Date Oct 3rd 1913

Signature of J. Eury Reeve

IMPORTANT.

must be filled up (as concisely as possible) with a full and particular account of the child, its parents, family, &c.

Deaths should be added here (if correct) in the affirmative.

The names for payment (if any) should also be written here.

When signing this form
please send your name and address to "Rev. Mr. ..."
No. ... St. ...

The mother of Frederick George Snow, is the second wife of John George Snow, by whom she had two children - Emily Alice Snow & John Arthur Snow

Her husband had a grown up son by his first wife, called William Henry Snow - who is more peace & comfortable his step-mother, Anne's Efford Snow.

Anne's Efford turned out a very bad woman, & behaved very disagreeably with her step-son, in such a manner that when Frederick George was born, this woman's own husband did not own his child, but says it undoubtedly is his eldest son's child.

Shortly after this the woman came away with her step-son, taking - Frederick (the baby) with her. William Henry Snow, born 24. 7. 1841

About a year after the woman returned, Frederick with her, & another baby left her & his step-mother. She stayed with her own husband, & her two eldest children for a month or two, & then came away again to join her step-son again, this time taking only her baby with her & deserting Frederick - leaving him to the mercy of - ~~not~~ his own father, but his wife's legitimate husband, John Snow.

This man was very good to the child, altho' it was not his, & he had been so wronged, but having the two children of his own to work for & feed & clothe, & having very little work to do, they were almost at starvation's door.

Mr. R. A. Reese, Vicar of St. Peter's, Croydon, then sent this deserted way to the "Children's Convalescent Home" near R. S. Croydon, where he has been ever since. This is such a blessing on St. Peter's poor friend, that Mr. Reese thinks he can do it by law.

Please do not write on page 4. Any additional particulars of the case should be written on below.

Intelligence of the receipt of this application will be sent, but the Committee's decision will be forwarded with the least possible delay.

Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'

Patrons - Their Majesties the King & Queen

Patron of the 'Children's Union' - H M Queen Alexandra

Presidents - His Grace the Lord Bishop of Canterbury and

His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York

Secretary – Rev Prebendary Rudolf

Secretary's Assistant - H. M Fowle Esq.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE:

A medical certificate signed by a duly qualified practitioner replying to the following questions is absolutely necessary. Consequent upon many recent cases of ringworm and skin disease, very special attention must be given to questions 2, 4, 5 and 7, and the slightest signs of any such complaints (whether at present existent or traces of them having existed at some previous date) must be notified.

1. Child's name and age: **Frederick George Snow. Age: 3-4 years**
2. Has the child any organic disease, any affection of the limbs, joints, ears, eyes, or skin? **No**
3. If so, will they have the effect of preventing her or him from entering domestic service? --
4. Has the child any trace of tuberculosis? **No**
5. Has the child any trace of heart disease? **No**
6. Has the child any albumen or sugar in the urine? **No**
7. Has the child ringworm or any other infectious disease? **No**
8. Has the child enlarged tonsils or adenoids? **No**
9. Please state when last vaccinated. **May 23, 1913 (Did not take)**
10. If boy, has he been circumcised? **Yes**
11. Is the child's general health good? **Very**
12. Height? **3 ft. 2 in.** Weight? **2 stone 10 lb. 8 oz**
Girth (in nipple line with lungs moderately inflated) **23-½ in.**
13. Is he mentally up to the average? **Yes**
14. Is the child subject to fits, or has he ever had one? **No**
If so, please state its nature. **No**
15. Is the child subject to incontinence of urine? If so, state its frequency/probable cause. **No**
16. Has the child had Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, Measles, Diphtheria, Smallpox?
German Measles two (unreadable) ago and (unreadable).

I hereby certify that I have this day personally examined the child.

Doctor's Signature: W. T. Dumpsler

Address: 94 Brighton Road, South Croydon, Surrey.

Date: Sept. 29/13

They estimated his age as 3-4 years old in September 1913. Is this where they first decided he was born in September 1909? He had German measles, and some other illnesses that were unreadable.

(I found out years later that my Father's sister Violet was born in March 1914. His Mother would have been pregnant from June 1913 - March 1914 and had my Father's 1 year old Brother to look after.

German Measles (Rubella) can cause fetal wastage or birth defects if contracted during early pregnancy. This may have affected her decision to take my Father to his Grandfather John George Snow in 1913. His Father William Henry enlisted in WWI in 1910)

He was vaccinated on May 23, 1913, in the hospital, but it 'did not take.' The next pages in the package were copies of an intake form completed by the Vicar. The originals had broken and blackened edges.

TRANSCRIPTION

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'*

*Patrons - Their Majesties the King & Queen
Patron of the 'Children's Union' - H M Queen Alexandra
Presidents - His Grace the Lord Bishop of Canterbury and
His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York
Secretary - Rev Prebendary Rudolf
Secretary's Assistant - H. M Fowle Esq.*

APPLICATION FOR THE ADMISSION OF A CHILD

NOTE: This form, when filled up and certified by a Clergyman of the Church of England, should be returned with the medical certificate to Rev. Prebendary Rudolf, Secretary, Waifs and Strays Society,

QUESTIONS TO BE REPLIED TO.

1 Give the child's christian names and surname in full. In the event of an application being made on behalf of more than one child, separate forms should be used.

Frederick George Snow.

2 State the exact date and place of birth: Please forward birth certificate if possible.

September 1909, Larch Road, Balham.

No Birth Certificate

3 Legitimate? (Yes or No): **Probably no (See Letter)**

4 State exact date and place of baptism.

St. Peter's Church, South Croydon, October 1913

5 Are parents living? **Yes**

If either or both are dead, state nature of disease and give date of death: **No**

6 If living, give their exact places of abode, how long they have resided there, and rent paid.

Mother ____ Father ____ (**See Letter**)

7 Give the christian names and surnames of parents in full, and state their ages.

Mother: **Annie Gifford Age 39.** Father: (**See Letter**)

8 What was, or is, the nature of the father's occupation and the amount of his weekly earnings? Give the name and address of his present or last employer.

(See Letter)

9 What was, or is, the nature of the mother's occupation and the amount of her weekly earnings? Give the name and address of her present or last employer.

(See Letter)

10 Have the parents or guardians ever received parish relief? If so, to what extent? **No**

Give the names, addresses, and ages, of all the brothers and sisters of the child and occupations and earnings (if any). Replies to this question must be very full and exact. No application can be received without full enquiry as to earnings having been made, and result stated.

11 The name of the child upon whose behalf this application is being made should not be given here.

Probably sort of step brother and sister.

Name: Amy Alice Snow Age: 6.

Name: John Allen Snow Age: 8

12 At what address and with whom is the child now staying?

c/o Miss Westoby, Children's Convalescent Home Brighton Road, South Croydon.

13 Give in full the names, addresses, occupations, and earnings of each living relative the child is known to possess, either on the father's or mother's side, such as grandparents, uncles, aunts. Replies to this question must be very full and exact. No application can be received without full enquiry as to earnings of relatives having been made, and result stated.

Please see letter. It is impossible to answer this question correctly as will be seen from the letter, only the mother's own rightful husband (on whom the child has no claim) has very uncertain employment, often being out of work, at best he has about 30 shillings per week for 8 months out of the 12 months. He is Mr. Snow, the Stables, Dean Road, Croydon.

14 State whether any of the child's relatives are, in your judgment, in a position to maintain the child or to contribute in any degree? **No**

15 Can payment for the child be guaranteed from any source exclusive of the relatives? If so, by whom? State full name and address. **No**

16 Has the child ever been convicted? Has his or her character been affected in any way by exceptional knowledge of evil? **No**

17 Ever attended day school? If so, where and for how long, and in what standard? **Too young.**

18 Ever attended Sunday school? If so, where and for how long. **No**

19 Ever been in the Workhouse? If so, where and for how long. **No**
The consent for emigration was known as the Canada Clause. A child-care organization could make a child's admission contingent upon the parent signing the consent to emigration.

21. I, **John G Snow** of **Dean Cottage, Dean Road, South Croydon** (guardian) of **Frederick George** do hereby commit him wholly to the care of the Society, and promise to obey the rules in force, and to permit the said child to be brought up in the Faith of the Church of England, and when fully trained to be sent to any situation in the United Kingdom, which may be obtained for **him** by the Committee.

Signature: **John George Snow**. Date: **October 3, 1913**. Signature of
Witness: **V. Inez Reeve** Address: **St. Peter's Vicarage Croydon**

22. I also hereby give my consent to the child being emigrated to Canada, if he or she is found suitable and if the Committee consider it advisable.

Signature of Witness:

V Inez Reeve

Signature: **John George Snow.**

(If consent to emigration is not given, this space should be left blank)

**N.B. - Preference will be given to those cases
in which consent to emigration is expressed.**

I certify that the foregoing questions have been correctly replied to, to the best of my belief.

Name: **Arthur Reeve**

Address: **St. Peter's Vicarage, Croydon.**

Incumbent of **St. Peter's, Croydon.**

Date: **October 2nd, 1913.**

There was no Birth Certificate when he was apprehended. His Parents were alive, so he was not an orphan. Where did he get the idea that his Mother was dead when he was apprehended? Someone told him she was dead.

Vicar Inez Reeve stated that his parents' address, occupation, employers, and earnings were unknown. She identified Annie Gifford as his Mother but did not identify his Father, and wrote, "It is hard to say who the father of this little Freddie is."

She identified John G Snow as Annie Gifford's 'own rightful husband,' and yet later called him my Father's 'Guardian,' when obviously he was his Grandfather.

She identified Jack and Amy as, 'Sort of stepbrother and sister.' Surely, a Vicar knew the difference between a step sibling and a half sibling.

Even though the application form twice stated an application would not be processed, 'without full enquiry as to earnings of relatives,' they made an exception in my Father's case.

There was nothing in my Father's case file to indicate the Waifs and Strays Society made any attempt to assess either his immediate or extended family's circumstances or resources.

He was in a hospital when the Vicar applied to have him admitted to the Waifs and Strays Society. John G Snow (56) was unemployed and tried to look after his two young children himself.

Did he really have any choice but to sign? Was my Father, 'held hostage?' What would have happened to him had John G Snow refused to sign the application?

There were no temporary provisions when Parents or Guardians signed over care of their children. They were to be **permanently** in care until they were 'fully trained for service.' The minimum training period was to be six months, but some children were deported within weeks of coming into care.

The earlier the organizations rid themselves of children, the more money they could save - and earn. Fortunately, they did not deport my Father immediately to Canada at the age of four years old.

The 'Child-Savers' publicly portrayed families as neglectful, cruel, abusive, improvident, and immoral. The children's families were actually affectionate and cohesive, but poor. The prejudiced attitudes of their caretakers pervaded every aspect of the children's treatment. They misrepresented children and their families to justify their actions.

The Secretary of the Waifs and Strays Society - Edward Rudolf - described the children in his care as 'rolling stones.' He felt they did not have the intelligence or physique required to create careers for themselves (Parr 63 137).

The next pages of the intake form revealed more startling information.

IMPORTANT:

This page must be filled up (as concisely as possible) with a full and particular account of the child, its parents, family, etc. Details should be added here if Question 17 is answered in the affirmative.

The guarantee for payment (if any) should also be written here. When signing this page please state permanent address and whether 'Rev.,' 'Mr.,' 'Mrs.,' or 'Miss.'

The mother of Frederick George Snow, is the second wife of John George Snow, by whom she had two children, Amy Alice Snow & John Allen Snow. Her husband had a grown up son by his first wife, called William Henry Snow - who is nine years younger than his stepmother Annie Gifford.

*Annie Gifford turned out a **very bad woman, & behaved very disgracefully** with her stepson, in such a manner that when Frederick George was born, this woman's own husband did not own this child, but says **it undoubtedly** is his eldest son's child.*

Shortly after this the woman ran away with her stepson, taking only Frederick (the baby) with her. About a year ago the woman returned, bringing Frederick with her, and another baby William Henry (sic) hers and her stepson's.

(Actually this child was William Alfred Snow born 29/8/1912)

*She stayed with her own husband, and her two eldest children for a month or two, and ran away again to join her stepson again, this time taking only her baby with her and deserting Frederick - leaving him to the mercy of - not his own father, but his wife's **legitimate husband**, John Snow.*

*This man was very good to the child, although it was not his, and **he had been so wronged**, but having the two children of his own to work for & feed & clothe, and having very little work to do, they were almost at starvation's door.*

The Reverend A. Reeve, Vicar of St. Peter's Croydon, then sent this deserted waif to the 'Children's Convalescent Home', Brighton Road, South Croydon, where he has been ever since. This is such a drain on St. Peter's Poor Fund, that Mr. Reeve finds he can do it no longer.

Please see other additional paper. Please do not write on page 4. Any additional particulars of this case should be written on foolscap paper. Acknowledgment of the receipt of this application will be sent, but the Committee's decision will be forwarded with the least possible delay.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS:

7. It is not known where the father and Mother of Frederick George Snow are?

9. Nothing is known about the child's own father.

10. It is not known as to whether the Mother earns anything or not. She took to drinking dreadfully, & the short time she was home last, she tried to pawn everything she could, to buy drink.

12. The only real brother (or sister) is a tiny baby named William Henry (sic)

14. Being an **illegitimate child** it is difficult to answer all this question, but the Mother's Mother is known to be dead, and the Mother's Father is a very old man receiving Old Age Pension.

21. The Mother **having deserted the child, has no right to say where the child shall now go or not go**, & as she has run away & it is not known where she is, it would not in any case be able to ask her.

The poor man with whom the child was left, is only too thankful for the child to be taken care of anywhere in England or abroad, & he naturally **never wishes to see it again**, for although he is a most kind man with children, (& was to this one too) this Frederick, naturally only causes him pain.

N.B. It has only just been found out lately that this child - Frederick - has not been baptized, but he is going to be next week when the Matron, who is now away, returns home. He will be baptized in the name of Frederick George.

John G Snow named his Son - William Henry Snow - as my Father's Father. This is clear enough. Why did they not tell my Father this? The Vicar stated that John G Snow 'naturally never wishes to see it (my Father) again' because 'this Frederick, naturally only causes him pain.'

In 1980, Amy confirmed that her Father did all he could to care for her, her Brother, and my Father. This included hiring a baby-sitter to look after him during the day, while she and Jack attended school.

The Vicar implied that John G Snow was responsible for his becoming a ward, when the initiative clearly came from her. In my Father's case, the clergy acted as procurers of children for the British Child Deportation Scheme.

It suited the purposes of the organizations to portray families as disreputable. The Vicar described Annie Gifford as 'drinking dreadfully.' She wrote that she was, 'a very bad woman,' who 'behaved very disgracefully with her stepson.'

She clearly identified their relationship with each other. William Henry Snow and Annie Gifford had 'a tiny baby' named William Henry (sic) Alfred) Snow. His date of birth - August 28, 1912 - was written in the margin of the paper as an afterthought.

When I read this I cursed and then cried. My Father has/had a Brother and a Sister! My mind raced that this Brother and sister could still be alive and 83 years old. Why did they never tell my Father?

Vicar Arthur Reeve did not just 'send' my Father to the hospital. It is very likely she had the Police apprehend him. The Vicar claimed that Annie Gifford deserted my Father. Were her whereabouts really unknown?

The next page in the case file was a copy of his Baptism Certificate. Why did they not give it to him when he first wrote to them in 1929 when he was 20 years old?

They could have alleviated the 28 years of anguish he suffered about whether the surname Snow was really his own. They did not give him a copy until 1957 when he was 48 years old.

BAPTISM CERTIFICATE

Baptism solemnized in the Parish of St. Peter's Croydon in the Diocese of Canterbury and County of Surrey in the Year 1913

Alleged Date of Birth	When Baptized	Child's Christian Name	Parents' Christian Name	Surname	Abode
1909	8 Oct 1913	Frederick George	Annie	Snow Gifford	Dean Road

By whom the Sacrament was administered. Arthur Reeve, Vicar.

I Certify, that the foregoing is a true copy of the entry of the Baptism of **Frederick George Snow** in the Register of Baptisms for the said Parish of St. Peter's Croydon. Signed: A. Reeve

Yes, Vicar, there are indeed many, 'Unanswered Questions!' My Father's lifelong questions were now mine. Why did they never inform him of the circumstances of his 'coming into care?' Why did they not tell him who his parents were? Why did they say they had no information about brothers or sisters?

Who provided the information for the Vicar's application? Why did they tell him that his Grandfather was his father? Whomever the informant, this information turned out to be inaccurate. How did the Vicar know baby William Alfred Snow's birth date and yet not know my Father's birth date? Why did they initially not volunteer this information to me?

Had I not persisted in asking for the entire case file, I never would have learned of my Uncle and Aunt's existence. I submitted all the information I knew of the Snow's in my first letter to the Children's Society. They did not volunteer information as to the identity of my Father's Brother.

This discovery about my Uncle's existence led to unravelling the mystery of the Snow family.

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes for
Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'*

*Patrons - Their Majesties the King & Queen
Patron of the 'Children's Union' - H M Queen Alexandra*

*Presidents - His Grace the Lord Bishop of Canterbury
and
His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York*

*Secretary – Rev Prebendary Rudolf
Secretary's Assistant - H. M Fowle Esq.*

Dear Mrs. Reeve

10 October 1913

Re: Frederick G. Snow:

*It is with much pleasure I write to inform you that my
Committee yesterday decided to accept the above-
named boy, for admission under the Society's care.*

*You may rest assured there will be no avoidable delay in
endeavouring to arrange for Frederick's reception, and I
will communicate with you further as soon as possible.*

*I should like to have full details as to the lad's baptism at
St. Peter's Church, South Croydon on the enclosed red
slip.*

*Needless to say, I am most pleased to send you a
favourable decision, and feel confident that you will
continue to help forward the Society's interests as
opportunities occur.*

Yours sincerely. (Rudolf)

St Peter's Vicarage South Croydon Oct. 13/13

Dear Mr. Rudolf

We heard your good news for us with great relief and thankfulness. It is been good of you to have taken so much trouble & I am truly glad that poor little Freddie Snow will now be taken care of for the rest of his life.

The enclosed slip has been filled in as you wished. I trust that we do not have to buy clothes for him, as we have already had to buy or give him a good many things.

We shall be glad to hear as soon as possible where you can have Freddie, & where we have to send him to.

With Kind regards.

Yr. Sincerely.

V. Inez Reeve

Rudolf saw the children of the poor as 'opportunities' and the clergy as those who could help 'forward the Society's interests.' The Vicar was pleased that, '. . . poor little Freddie Snow will now be taken care of for **the rest of his life.**'

There was no ambiguity as to the fate of children once in their care - they deported them. They put my Father on a train alone with a name -tag pinned to his shirt, and shipped him to their Receiving Home for six weeks.

On November 7, 1913, he had a second Medical Examination.

MEDICAL REPORT

Name and Age: Frederick George Snow 4-2½

Ht: 3 ft. 2 3/4 in. (96 cm)

Girth 21 in. (53 cm)

Weight: 2 stone 9 lb. (16.6 kg)

Head: Eyes: He has a squint which will require attention later on.

Ears: Nil.

Mouth: He has enlarged tonsils and adenoids.

Chest: Nil.

Heart: Nil.

Lungs: Nil.

Abdomen: Nil

Urine: Nil.

Mental Condition: Average.

Remarks:

He is in fair health. There is some slight ecypiera (?) at the back of the left ear. He is knock kneed and flat footed. He requires vaccinating.

N.B. He is ready to be boarded out as soon as he has had his tonsils and adenoids attended to and has been vaccinated.

Date: November 7, 1913

R. Turner

There were five weeks between these Medical Examinations. They must have assumed a birth month of September 1909. Did he lose 6 cm in girth, and lose .67 kg in five weeks?

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'*

Mrs. Green

11 November 1913

Rumburgh, Halesworth re: Frederick G. Snow

I have to thank you for your letter informing me that Mrs. Smith is prepared to receive the above child.

As soon as we hear from the Authorities of our Receiving House that he is ready for boarding out, I will then appoint a day and hour for him to be sent to your kind supervision.

I will see that a cheque in payment of your claim, as well as the expenses incurred in arranging for George Sabine's removal, is forwarded in due course.

I note with many thanks that you have not included all the incidental expenses entailed in the transfer.

Yours very truly, (Rudolf)

George A Sabine born April 17, 1904 was deported to Canada by the Waifs and Strays in 1920 on the Melita 1920.

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
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Vicar Inez Reeve

re: Frederick G. Snow

November 18, 1913

In reply to your card I beg to say that if you will kindly forward this boy's Baptismal Certificate to me at this office, I will then see that it is placed with the other papers.

I may take this opportunity of informing you that I have this morning received medical reports from the Society's Doctor, in which it is stated that Frederick has enlarged tonsils and adenoids and requires vaccinating.

In these circumstances I shall be glad if you can kindly see the father as soon as possible with a view to obtaining his consent to the necessary operations, and forward a letter to this effect direct to:

Dr. Rose Turner
St. Elizabeth's Home
7 Victoria Road Clapham Common
London SW

As desired, I herewith have pleasure in enclosing a 'C.U.' Receipt book.

Yours sincerely, (Rudolf).

More correspondence. Did Croydon not have phones in 1913.

*S. Peter's Vicarage South Croydon
November 19, 1913*

Dear Mr. Rudolf

Many thanks for the C.U. Receipt book. Enclosed is Freddie Snow's Baptismal Certificate. I have written to Dr. Rose Turner, as you wished. The child had been vaccinated, as I took him myself to Dr. Beard, but it never took.

I had to give Dr. Turner permission to do anything necessary for Freddie, as there is no one to ask anything about him, or to give permission for anything.

You had his story from me in the first place, & I have not gone into it all again with Dr. Turner.

*With Kind Regards,
Yr. V: Sincerely,
V. Inez Reeve*

Vicar Reeve took it upon herself to appoint herself as his Guardian because there was 'no one to give permission for anything.' John G Snow was identified as my Father's Father, and then his Guardian. He lived a few hundred yards down the street from the Church. I imagine he had his tonsils out.

The Waifs and Strays Society had 87 children in foster care in 1884, 702 in 1900, and 916 in 1914. The practice of 'baby-farming' plagued the foster care scheme. Women insured babies and then killed them (Stroud, 66).

Children in foster care were to have a minimum of two Medical Examinations per year. My Father was in foster care for eight years and his case file should have contained 16 Medical Examinations.

There were only two. One was when he was 11 years old in 1920 and the other a year later when he was about to be sent to St. Augustine's Church Home for Boys. If there were more, why did they not provide me with copies?

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
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Mrs. Green December 3, 1913

Dear Madam, Unless you hear to the contrary, the above child will be brought to your kind supervision on Saturday next, the 6th, by the train leaving Liverpool Street at 11:40, due to arrive at Halesworth at 3:30, where I shall be glad to hear you will kindly have met him upon arrival.

In the meantime, I enclose two forms of undertaking to be filled in by the foster mother, one of which should be retained by her, and the other returned to me at this office as soon as the child is received under her care.

The box containing the little one's outfit will be sent in advance, so as to be in readiness for him on arrival.

Yours very truly, (Rudolf)

Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.

FORM OF UNDERTAKING
BY THE FOSTER PARENT

*I, **Anna Maria Smith** of **Rumburgh, Halesworth, Suffolk**, foster parent, do hereby engaged in consideration of receiving the sum of five shillings per week to bring up Frederick George Snow as one of my own children, and to provide him with proper food, lodging, medical attendance, and washing, and for the proper repair and renewal of clothing, and to endeavor to train him in habits of truthfulness, obedience, personal cleanliness, and industry; as well as in suitable domestic and outdoor work; to provide the said child with a separate bed to take care that the said child Frederick George Snow shall attend at church, and shall, while boarded out between the ages of four and twelve years attend Day and Sunday Schools, unless prevented by sickness or other urgent cause, during all the usual hours for instruction thereat: in the case of the illness of the said child to report to **Mrs. J. V. Green**, Rumburgh Suffolk and at all times to permit the said child and home to be visited by any person specially appointed for that purpose by the Executive Committee, which will include a medical examination of the child by a lady doctor twice a year or more frequently if deemed necessary; to acquaint the supervisor immediately of any improvement in circumstances of the relatives of the said child that may come to my knowledge.*

Witness: **J. V. Green**

Signature: **A. M. Smith**

Date: Dec. 8/13

Children under four years old could not be boarded out with foster parents. Did the Waifs and Strays Society simply **make** my Father four years old when they apprehended him, so they could place him with foster parents?

Supervisors of foster children were supposed to provide quarterly reports. His case file should have contained 32 such reports, but there was only one dated in 1919. If there were more, why did they not give them to me?

The agreement stated foster parents were supposed to report if they knew of any changes in the child's family circumstances. This implied that the foster parents had contact with the child's family.

The organization did not provide foster parents with any information how children came into care. There was no contact between children and their families while in foster care, so how could foster parents ever learn anything of the child's natural family? Families were not told where their children were.

The organizations irrevocably severed family ties so that emigration could go on without interference. They did not board out children with their relatives.

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.*

BOARDING OUT

*Foster mother's undertaking with regard to the
Child*

*Name of Child: Frederick George Snow aged ___
Address of Foster mother:
Mrs. A M Smith Rumburgh Halesworth
Address of Supervisor: Mrs. J. V. Green.*

*I, **Mrs. Anna Maria Smith** of Rumburgh
Halesworth hereby acknowledge I have this day
received **Frederick George Snow** aged Four -
last Sept. years from the Church of England
Incorporated Society for Providing Homes for
Waifs and Strays on the terms and conditions
contained in the rules supplied, and I undertake to
hand over the said child to the Society when
called upon.*

*Dated this 6th day of Dec. 1913.
Signed: A. M. Smith.
Witness: J. V. Green
Address: Rumburgh, Halesworth*

Re Frederick Snow
Dear Mr. Rudolf:

December 8, 1913

This child arrived quite safely last Sat. Dec. 6th. I had previously been informed by you his box would be sent in advance.

It was not at the station where I went to meet him and we were informed there that a day is not long enough before hand for luggage to arrive the same time or rather before the passengers as it is so often delayed to Liverpool Street.

It is a pity the box was not sent with the child. I think you are aware we are 4 miles (6.4 km) from a station and there is no regular carrier.

I had to pay 2 shillings for the little boy to be met and now there will be further expenses in getting the box here. The box arrived this morning by post; The Station Master at Halesworth thought the box would most likely be here today.

Frederick Snow seems a very bright little fellow and is quite happy at his new home.

I have not put the date of birth because I have unfortunately destroyed the letter I received from you when you asked if Mrs. Smith could receive the little boy. I believe the date of birth was in that letter.

With the other children, I had an account of their parentage. I do not know if you usually send this kind of thing with the children.

J. V. Green

My four-year-old Father rode the train alone for hours to Rumburgh. The Social Worker paid someone to meet him.

There was much 'to-do' about the travel trunk, incidental expenses, and bureaucratic trivia.

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.*

Mrs. Green, Rumburgh, Halesworth 9 Dec 1913

I have to thank you for your letter and enclosure in regard to the above boy.

I am very sorry to hear the trouble and expense which you have been put to in sending for the box containing his outfit, and if you will kindly include the amount in your next claim for maintenance, I will kindly see that it is refunded.

The date of the boy's birth is September 1909, but unfortunately the day of the month is not given.

We have recently decided not to send the full particulars of a child when arranging for it to be boarded out, as we have found from past experience that it is not always desirable that the foster parent should know the family history.

However, I have pleasure in sending you the case paper copy of the child in question, and shall be obliged if you will be so good as to return the same to me as soon as you have taken what information you require.

You will, of course, treat the particulars, as confidential.

*Yours very truly,
(Rudolf)*

Not always desirable for the foster parent should know the family history?

Dear Sir

Dec 15 1913

I was not of course aware of the recent decision not to send full particulars of children when arranging for them to be boarded out or I should not have asked for them.

I am very much obliged to you for sending them and under the circumstances I take it as a great favor to me.

If I may be allowed to express an opinion on the subject I think the decision a very wise one.

I have always thought it a great pity that anyone should have the chance of casting any stigma on these unfortunate little mites in a few years.

*Truly the history of this little boy is **too awful for words** and one that certainly ought **not to be made public for his sake.***

I note in one of the letters this little boy had not been baptized but was going to the following week when the matron returned home. I presume this was done.

The only charge I shall send in my weeks claims for maintenance is the trap hire for fetching the boy.

*Again thanking you, I am,
Truly, J. V. Green.*

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.*

*Report of visit to Fred Snow 11. Sept 27, 1920
At home of Foster Mother Mrs Harry Smith
At Rumburgh
Date of last visit Nov 12 1919*

1. What are the circumstances of the Foster mother, and your impression of her character?

Foster Mother's husband has a little private means. This is an exceptionally good home containing 3 bedrooms sitting room and kitchen.

The foster Mother was out but her daughter who lives here was at home. Another of our boys - Ronald Young is boarded out here.

2. What is the state of the child's health?

*He is in good health. He has some **bad teeth** which should be attended to. Ht. 4 ft. 7¼ in. (138 cm) Girth 24½ in. (62 cm)*

3. Is adequate clothing provided? Yes, by foster mother.

4. Is sufficient care given to cleanliness? Yes.

5. Have any complaints been made by the Foster mother? No.

6. Has the child made any complaints? No.

7. Is the child in your opinion properly cared for and happy? Yes.

8. Has the child attended school regularly? Yes.

9. In what standard? III.

10. Does the child attend Church and Sunday School? Yes.

11. Is the sleeping accommodation satisfactory and has each child a separate bed? Yes.

12. Remarks of School Teachers, &c., &c. Yes.

13. General remarks. (If child is of an age to be transferred, do you recommend the same?) Yes.
R. Turner September 27, 1920

If there was a previous inspection made a year earlier, there was no copy of it in the case file. There was nothing in the case file to indicate they did anything about his bad teeth.

My Father had to wait until he was no longer 'in care' in Canada to have his teeth removed.

The Smith's were too poor to buy him shoes and he wore Mrs. Smith's boots for years, deforming his feet. Perhaps Dr. Turner did not notice this.

This was the first or possibly second visit by someone from the Waifs and Strays Society in his seven years of foster care. What boy in these circumstances would complain?

An issue of supervision pay arose. Mail appears to be have been delivered quite quickly. I am amazed that the heads of the organization routinely dealt with such trivia.

*To. The Secretary C of E Waifs and Strays
Nov 25 1920*

Dear Sir: As supervisor of the two waifs and strays Fred Snow and Ronald Young I should be glad to receive the extra pay which I understand has been sent to other Supervisors in the Parish for some time.

You will be able to tell me how much is due to me no doubt and you will also be able to say whether this omission is due to my not having claimed the amount when writing for the last quarter's pay.

I would have written before had I not been prevented by a great sorrow in the loss of my dear husband.

Yours faithfully, J. V. Green

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.*

1 Dec. 1920

Dear Madam,

Re Frederick G. Snow & Ronald B. Young

In reply to your letter, I beg to say that as the Committee has recently decided to increase the payment for boarded-out children to 10 shillings a week, per head, which is inclusive and covers the grant of £1. a quarter for clothing.

Perhaps you will claim accordingly in future on behalf of the above-named boys. I am afraid, however, we cannot see our way to make a retrospective payment.

The Committee only decided to increase the allowance on receiving the first application from the respective Supervisors.

As I find we already have many children boarded-out at Rumburgh, under the supervision of the Rev. W. Linton Wilson and it is not unusual, unless there are special circumstances connected with the same, to have two Supervisors in the same district, I am venturing to write and ask whether you would have any objection to handing over the supervision of the two boys in question to this gentleman, in which case I will write and let him know, so that he can include the children together with those already under his charge.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my sympathy with you in the great sorrow you have recently sustained in the loss of your husband.

*Yours faithfully,
Rev. W. Fowell Swann*

To. The Sec. Homes for Waifs, Rev. W. Fowell Swann M.A. 12/12/20

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your letter and your kind sympathy therein expressed.

I am glad to know that the Foster Mothers are to be allowed more children in the future.

I am relieved also to know that you can dispense with my supervisorship. I have today seen the Vicar - Rev. Linton Wilson and he has agreed to take over my two little charges.

It has always been a great pleasure to do this for you but as there is no longer any need . . .

J. V. Green

(Next page missing).

Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays

Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.

Dear Madam 6 Dec 1920
re Frederick G Snow and Ronald B Young

Thank you very much for your kind letter with regard to giving up the Supervision of the above two boys.

Let me assure you that my only reason for this suggestion was that I thought you might like to be relieved, whereas the additional Supervision would not add much to Mr. Wilson's labours.

I need not say how grateful I shall be if you will kindly carry on the work of Supervision as you have done hereto.

I have written to Mr. Wilson and I hope you will quite put out of your mind that I have any desire to hurt the feelings of a very good helper.

Rev. W. Fowell Swann

Rev. W. Fowell Swann Rumburgh Sept 12, 1921

Dear Sir: Fred Snow is now almost 12. If he is to be removed for definite training I should be glad to know.

Mrs. Smith does not desire another in his place, she is getting into years and past it.

W. L. Wilson

Anna Marie Smith died in 1922 at age 74, the year after my Father left foster care. She was 66 years old and her husband probably a bit older when my Father was placed there.

*Church of England Society for Providing Homes
for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.*

The Rev. W. Linton Wilson 14 Sept 1921

Dear Sir, re Frederick G. Snow.

I have to thank you for your communication received respecting this lad and as I gather that neither you nor the foster mother have any suggestions to make as to his future,

I shall be glad if you will be kind enough to have the enclosed report form filled in as fully as possible on his behalf with a view to his being transferred to one of our ordinary Homes for further training.

We are shortly opening a new Home at Sevenoaks and if the lad is suitable I am hoping that arrangements can be made for him to be sent there.

*Yours faithfully,
Rev. W. Fowell Swann*

This foster home was in a small village in Suffolk. What suggestions could the foster parents or the Minister have made regarding his future? They planned to transfer him to a Home 'for further training.' The only training he had to date could be called 'Waif Training.'

Stroud described how Dr. Edith Green and Dr. Rose Turner provided Medical Examinations for every child in their care in **all** of England. They made unannounced visits to the villages and saw children at their schools.

They inspected the children's heads, eyes, ears and measured their height and girth. They noted how happy were the children. They inspected the foster home, looked at the beds, and made sure the children had nightshirts.

They met with the Parson, Lady of the Manor or Retired Teacher Supervisors and wrote reports at night in the hotel (72-73).

The Waifs and Strays Society may have had well over a thousand children in foster care by 1920, when Dr. Rose Turner inspected my Father. Her report was almost identical to the one a year before.

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.**

Report of visit to Fred Snow 12. At home of Foster Mother Mrs. Harry Smith at Rumburgh. Date of last visit Sept. 27.20

*What are the circumstances of the Foster mother, and what is your impression of her character? **This is a very good home and contains 3 bedrooms sitting room and kitchen. The foster Mother's husband is a labourer. The Foster Mother is an exceptionally nice woman. Another of our boys - Ronald Young is boarded out here.***

- 1. What is the state of the child's health? **Good***
- 2. Is the clothing suitable and how is it provided? **Yes, by foster mother.***
- 3. Is sufficient care given to personal cleanliness? **Yes.***
- 4. Have any complaints been made by the Foster mother? **No.***
- 5. Has the child made any complaints? **No.***
- 6. Is the child in your opinion properly cared for and happy? **Yes.***
- 7. Has the child attended school regularly? Yes. In what standard? **IV.***
- 8. Does the child attend Church and Sunday School? **Yes.***
- 9. Is the sleeping accommodation satisfactory and has each child a separate bed? **Yes.***
- 10. General remarks. (If child is of an age to be transferred, do you recommend the same?) **Yes.***

R. Turner September 20, 1921

There was no mention whether his teeth were repaired, as she recommended in her 1920 report. Perhaps she did not examine his malformed feet. He apparently grew 9 cm in height and 2 cm in girth in one year.

He had four Medical Examinations from Dr. Rose Turner during the 11 years he was a ward of the Waifs and Strays Society. The first occurred when he was four years old in 1913, when he was apprehended. The second occurred when he was six years old in 1915, and had been in the foster home for two years. The third and fourth occurred when he was 11-12 years old in 1919-1920, and had been in the foster home for 7-8 years. These last two were in preparation for his transfer to the Home.

REPORT OF A CHILD

***Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.***

Name: Frederick G. Snow Age: 12

Home: Mrs. H. Smith

1. EDUCATION:

*In what Standard? **IV.***

*If backward, give reason. **He is sharp.***

2. DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: None

3 Disposition. *Cheerful and obliging.

4. Intelligence Fair.

5. Health. Excellent.

6 Height. ____ Weight. ____

7. Conduct. *Good.

***8. If over twelve years of age, please state for
what occupation the child appears suitable. ****

These should be answered fully.

Signed Rev W. Linton Wilson.

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'**

*The Rev. Linton Wilson
re Frederick G. Snow*

4th October 1921

Dear Sir,

Adverting to my communication of the 14th. ult. I write to inform you that arrangements have now been made for the above boy to be transferred to the Society's St. Augustine's Home, Sevenoaks.

Will you, therefore, please see that he is sent to London on Wednesday the 12th inst. by the train leaving Halesworth at 8.28 am due to arrive at Liverpool Street at 11.22 am. where he will be met by a member of our staff and seen into the train for his future Home.

The boy should be allowed to leave with his complete outfit, and the enclosed blue form of medical certificate should be filled in on his behalf and accompany him.

Any expense which you may be put to in effecting the foregoing will be refunded, if you will charge for the same in your next claim for maintenance.

Please let me have a line to the effect that the foregoing will be carried out.

*Yours faithfully,
Rev. W. Fowell Swann*

They again put him on a train alone for a three-hour ride into London. Some stranger met him sometime during the two-hour layover at Liverpool Street Station. They put him on another train ride to a 'Home' where he spent the next 3½ years of his life.

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.**

The Master, St. Augustine's Home 4 Oct 1921

Dear Sir, re Frederick George Snow.

*I have to thank you for your communication of the
1st. inst. enclosing a report of George Hodgson.*

*I take this opportunity of enclosing particulars of
the above lad, and, unless you hear to the
contrary, will you please expect him on
Wednesday the 12th inst.*

*By the train leaving Charing Cross at 1.45 pm due
to arrive at Sevenoaks (Tubs Hill) at 2.23 pm
where I shall be glad if you will kindly see that he
is met.*

*In accordance with instructions received from the
Homes' Committee, I shall be very glad if you will
be so kind as to let me have a report of the boy in
question.*

*I should like to have a report as to his health,
attainment, and the outfit which accompanied him,
and any such other details as appear advisable.*

*Yours faithfully,
Rev. W. Fowell Swann*

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.**

Mr John G Snow Croydon
Re Frederick George Snow

21 Jan 1925

I am sorry to trouble you in this matter, but the above-named boy is very anxious to emigrate to Canada, and it is proposed to include him in a party of boys we are sending out in a month or two's time.

You may remember that when application was made for his admission under our care you signed an agreement for him to be sent to Canada should the Committee consider it advisable, and I shall be glad, therefore, if you will kindly sign the enclosed form and return it to me at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully, Rev. A J.Wescott D D

“Anxious to emigrate to Canada?” He was not given the choice of staying in England. No one wanted him there. He had to choose between 'emigration' to Canada or Australia.

**Church of England Society for Providing Homes for
Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.**

Form of Consent to be signed by the Parent, Guardian, or nearest Relative, in cases of Children Sent to Canada.

I, John George Snow residing at Dean Cottage, Dean Road, South Croydon do hereby declare that I am the **Guardian of FREDERICK GEORGE SNOW** and that I hereby of my own free will give him up to the Committee of the above Society to be sent to one of their Canadian Distribution Homes, and thereafter to be provided with a suitable home in such manner as the said Committee shall see fit.*

Signed: **John G Snow** in the presence of Lilian Keen, 296 Franciscan Road, Tooting
Dated Feb. 2nd, 1925.

What 'suitable homes' did the Waifs and Strays Society ever provide for the children they deported to Canada? They were to be domestic servants and farm labourers. John G Snow is still identified as his Guardian. Could his Parents not be found? Was Lilian Keen Annie Gifford's married Sister?

CASE SUMMARY SHEET

Diocese of: Canterbury.
Application Number: 27426.
Accepted Number: 18264.

Name: **Frederick G. Snow.**

Decision of Committee: Accept.

Vide Case Agenda 9.10.13.

Informed Mrs. Reeve 10.10.13. October 31, 1913
Admitted Clapham Receiving House 41 Days.

December 6, 1913: Supervisor Mrs. J. V. Green,
Rumburgh, Halesworth.

December 8, 1920: Supervisor Rev. Linton
Wilson, Rumburgh Vicarage, Halesworth.

October 12, 1921: Transferred St. Augustine's
Home, Sevenoaks.

Informed Mrs. Reeve 13/10/21.

January 13, 1925: Passed by Emigration Sub-
Committee.

Informed Mrs. Reeve 31/03/25.
April 3, 1925: Emigrated to Gibbs' Home,
Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada

This information provided invaluable pieces of the puzzle. His Parents' identities had been confirmed as William Henry Snow and Annie Gifford. John G Snow was his Grandfather, and Jack and Amy were his Half Brother and Half Sister.

He has/had a natural Brother named William Alfred Snow . While I was overjoyed to learn so much from his file. I was indignant that they never provided my Father with this information.

This intake information lay in his file for almost 100 years and they withheld this information from him.

The motive? To ensure that family ties were irrevocably severed. I sent them a fax and made my third request for the release of his entire file.

Dear _____

June 1, 1995

Re: Frederick George Snow (1909-1994)

*I received the copies of documentation from my Father's case file. I note that you included his **first** letter of inquiry . . . January 17, 1928, when he was 19 years old.*

What was not included was a letter of response to this inquiry.

You should know that I have in my possession copies of most of his correspondence to and replies from the Children's Society.

*I want copies of **all** such correspondence in order that I have a complete record of his 56-year-old search for his identity.*

I also want any and all school records from the time he was at St. Augustine's (1920-1925).

Also, there may be records of his time in Canada at Gibbs' Home, Sherbrooke, Quebec.

From the records you sent, it is quite apparent that his actual parents were Annie Snow (née Gifford) and William Henry Snow.

This information was withheld from my Father, in spite of his unremitting attempts over 60 years to elicit such information.

He died believing that his Father was John G Snow and that John Allen Snow and Amy Alice Snow were his Brother and Sister, when in fact they were his Grandfather, Half Brother, and Half Sister, respectively.

I now discover that he has/had a Brother named William Henry Snow Jr (sic) who was born on August 19 1912. You neglected to mention this in your letter of January 04, 1995. .

Was William Henry Snow Jr (sic) in the care of the Children's Society? While I can understand why this information was withheld from him while he was a child in care I cannot understand why it was continued to be withheld from him for over 65 years of his adult life.

Again, I must insist that you release the entire contents of his file as per my request of April 24, 1995. I believe the £15 (\$ 33.45) I sent you should be sufficient to cover costs of photocopying and mailing.

I sincerely hope to prevail upon your sense of integrity and humanity in complying with my request.

For over 65 years, the Children's Society ignored my father's requests for information, implied that they had no information, provided inaccurate information, and withheld information.

I believe that two weeks should be sufficient time for you to decide whether to comply with my request.

I expect to hear from you before June 15, 1995. Please phone me collect, fax, or write your reply. My solicitors have advised me to make one more attempt to have his entire file released to me.

If I do not hear from you in the next two weeks, I will have to assume that you intend to perpetuate the Society's tradition of withholding information.

If that is to be the case, I will reluctantly have to seek legal advice as to what alternatives are available to me through Canadian/British courts.

Sincerely, Perry Snow

They sent a lengthy, defensive, and evasive letter the day after they received my fax. They gave me a few more pages from his case file. These were clearly not 'routine notes and letters dealing with purely administrative and internal Society matters.'

They stated they had conducted thorough and time-consuming research on my behalf. Perhaps they felt I was ungrateful. They explained they did not include post-1929 correspondence as this 'did not offer any further perspectives' regarding his time in care.

They cited a letter they sent to my Father identifying his Father as William Henry Snow. In 1938, they incorrectly (?) sent him a copy of their 30 January 1931 letter instead. It did not mention William Henry Snow.

Thomas Keeley of the Gibbs' Home told him that John G Snow was his Father. The Children's Society made no comment about this in their latest letter.

Even though they knew the relationship between William Henry Snow and John G Snow was one of Son and Father, they never once clarified this for my Father. They continued to refer to John G Snow as his Guardian rather than his Grandfather in this letter.

They listed his correspondence between 1931-1957, as he 'pursued the issue of his past,' and noted their attempts to find his Birth Certificate.

They wrongly stated he did not identify his 'Brother' by name, when he clearly named him as Jack Snow, in his 1938, letter.

They acknowledged they sent him his Baptism Certificate in 1957, but did not explain why they did not give it to him 30 years earlier. They asked the Croydon Local Studies library to search the Electoral Registers and found that Jack lived on Dean Road from 1938-1951. While I appreciated their effort, this information was not vital.

They suggested I could retain their Post Adoption and Care Project researchers. They did not have his school records, but gave me the address for the Kent Archives Office.

They insisted they had operated 'in the full spirit of cooperation' and provided me with information that was 'in excess of the level of detail' they are required to give under their 'Interim Policy and Guidance Re: The Ownership of User Records.' They reminded me the case files were confidential and **their** property.

They did not refer to his last letter to them in 1984, and their offer to release information from his Case File.

They did not acknowledge the fact they knew his natural Brother's name and date of birth for 82 years and yet never informed him.

They did not even mention William Alfred Snow's name in this last, long letter.

They maintained they did not have any records from the Gibbs' Home at Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Did their policy allow them to **not** inform my Father of his Brother's existence?

Did their guidelines allow them to mislead him as to his Parents' identities, tell him his Grandfather was his Father, and withhold his Baptism Certificate from him until he was 48 years old?

Why did they not provide these latest pages in the first package they sent me? They either 'did not get it,' or 'did not want to get it.'

I would not correspond with them for five months. The back-and-forth would be futile, and I had more documents from his case file to examine.

I decided to 'pursue the issue' of my Father's past with added zeal. Perhaps they did not read the material they first sent me, and inadvertently revealed the existence of his natural Brother William Henry Snow Jr (sic).

My Mother felt vindicated, as she always suspected they withheld information. She was excited by the prospect that my Father has/had a Brother, and may have/had more siblings.

The first piece of correspondence in this package was a letter my Father wrote when he was legally an adult and no longer under their care.

**Canadian Ingersoll-Rand Company Limited
Sherbrooke Quebec**

Dear Sir:
Re: Fred G. Snow

Jan. 17th 1929

I am writing to ask you if it would be of any inconvenience to you if I asked you to look up my birthplace and also my past history.

I have been living in Sherbrooke the past five years, and certain things have occurred that under the circumstances I would very much like to know where I was born, and also if I have any parents living at the present time.

I was in St. Augustine's Home in Kent before I came to Canada, I also know that I was in Rumburgh for a while before going to Kent.

If you could inform me as to these matters I would be more than obliged to you.

Trusting that you will help me out in this matter, I am, Yours truly,

F. G. Snow

This letter was not included in the first package of correspondence they sent me. He obtained work with Ingersoll-Rand after he had been in the hospital for a year.

His comment that 'certain things have occurred' might have referred to prejudice he met with in the small, French-Canadian community of Sherbrooke. Perhaps he began to date, and was informed of his 'tainted origins.'

He was 19 years old. He did not know when or where he was born and did not know who his Parents were. He had nothing to prove who he was. When he was laid off this job, he joined the Reserve Army Service Corps.

I believe the following letter was lost when my Father's landlady kept his travelling trunk in Winnipeg in 1929. In all the correspondence over the years, this is the **only** time they told him William Henry Snow was 'believed to be' his Father.

The intake form of 1913 clearly quoted his Grandfather John G Snow naming his Son William Henry Snow as my Father's Father.

They led him to believe John G Snow was his Guardian, and 13 years later, Thomas Keeley told him John G Snow was his Father. He did not believe him. They requested a search for his Birth Certificate, but did not give him a copy of their request.

If they had, he may have been satisfied, and not pursued this over the years. He did not believe them. They could have given him a copy of his Baptism Certificate in 1929. They could have informed him that he had a natural Brother, William Henry Snow Jr (sic), who would have been 17 years old in 1929.

***Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'***

My dear Snow

7th February 1929⁸

In reply to your letter asking for information as to your birth, I write to inform you that one of our representatives called at the General Register Office in London, to obtain these particulars for you, but unfortunately could find no entry of your birth.

According to the information we possess at this Office, your full name is Frederick George Snow, and you were born at Larch Road, Balham, sometime in September, 1909, the exact day being unknown.

Your mother's name is Annie Gifford Snow, and your father is believed to be William Henry Snow.

I am sorry it is not possible for me to give you any more definite details, but it may be possible for your former guardian, Mr. John George Snow, Dean Cottage, Dean Road, South Croydon, Surrey, England, to furnish you with further particulars.

With every good wish for your continued happiness and success in Canada, Believe me,

Your sincere friend, Secretary's Assistant.

My Father immediately wrote back to them.

**Canadian Ingersoll-Rand Company Limited
Sherbrooke Quebec**

Dear Sir: Re: Fred G. Snow

Feb. 21st/29

In reply to your letter received here the 21st inst; I write to thank you for your trouble and also to tell you how much I appreciate your generosity in giving me the information you did concerning my parents.

I am writing immediately to the address you informed me of, and am trusting to luck that I will be able to trace a little of my past history.

Thanking you again for your kindness, I remain,
Yours sincerely F. G. Snow

He rode boxcars, and lived as an itinerant labourer, when he next wrote them. He wrote an impassioned plea in fountain pen and flowing script after having to learn how to write and shave with his left hand following his accident where his arm was mangled.

Dear Sir: January 11, 1931

I am writing to you, at the advice of Mr. Keeley, Gibbs' Home, Sherbrooke P. Que. requesting you if possible, to advise me, as to the whereabouts of my parents (if any). My name being, Frederick George Snow, age 21 years, Born Sept. 17 1909.

As far as I know, I resided with a Mrs. M. Smith, Pleasure Ground, Rumburgh, Suffolk, England at the age of 4 years, from there I was transferred to St. Augustine's Home, Sevenoaks, Kent, until the age of 15 years, when I imigrated [(sic)] to Sherbrooke, PQ Can.

*I would more than appreciate your kindness, if in any way you can throw light on this matter for me, and by doing, help one who has been in darkness, and ignorant as to who he is.
Yours most Respectfully,
Fred G. Snow*

They replied with a rather terse note that he had been 'left' with 'a Mr John G Snow.' They could have told him he was his Grandfather, and identified his Father.

In 1931, Prebendary Rudolf was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire and awarded an Honorary MA Degree from the University of Oxford (Stroud, 174-175).

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
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My dear Snow

30th January 1931⁹

In reply to your enquiry, I am afraid there is very little information I can give you respecting your parents and relatives.

In October 1913, when application was made for your admission under the Society's care, it was stated that the address of your mother and father were unknown, and at the present day we at this Office have heard nothing of them.

A short time previously, you were left by your parents with a Mr John G Snow, Dean Cottage, Dean Road South Croydon, Surrey, who acted as your Guardian and consented to your emigration to Canada in April 1925.

You may remember that in February 1929, we gave you the address of your Guardian, to whom you stated you would write for information as to your relatives, so that if he was unable to help, I am afraid there is nothing further we can do for you.

Regretting I am unable to send you a more favourable reply,

*Your sincere friend,
Secretary's Assistant.*

Five years passed before my Father wrote to Thomas Keeley. He prospected for gold and cut lake ice for a year before he married. He and my Mother lived in a tent, while he worked in the gravel pit at Ozone.

When they moved back to Port Arthur, there was little work available, and the unemployment rate was 15%. He shovelled snow from the streets in the winter, and washed dishes in a bush camp in Moberg in the summer. He had a seven-month-old Son.

Keeley wrote to Secretary Vaughan of the Waifs and Strays Society. The letter had a boastful letterhead.

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'**

*Over 40,000 Children have been provided with homes.
Gibb's Home is the Boys Canadian Distributing Branch of
The Church of England Society which operates 107
Homes in England and Wales Caring for over 4,500
children (Founded 1881 by Rev Prebendary Rudolf DBE*

*Dear Mr. Vaughan:
re. Fred G. Snow*

Dec. 8th 1936¹⁰

*I shall be obliged if you will kindly secure a copy
of the Birth Certificate of Snow, if it happens to be
obtainable.*

*I am expressing doubt, because of the meagre
details contained in the Case-paper.*

*It would also be helpful if you would kindly send
us a copy of page three of the Case-paper, as we
have only got half of the form on file.*

*We heard from Fred this month after a silence of
two years. He states he is married and has a son
seven months old.*

*In his letter he asked for his Birth Certificate and
details regarding his family history. I will be
responsible for the cost of the Birth Certificate and
or other charges.*

Yours sincerely, Thomas Keeley

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'**

Dear Mr. Keeley,
re Frederick George Snow

23rd Dec 1936¹¹

In reply to your request for a copy of this man's birth certificate I should mention that application was made for this at Somerset House in February, 1929.

No trace could be found that his birth was ever registered, so that it is impossible to obtain a certificate, and we informed Snow of this at the time.

I am now enclosing copy of the third page of the casepaper relating to Snow and we will leave it to your discretion as to how much of this information you pass on.

*Yours sincerely,
W. R. Vaughan, Secretary.*

PS It has occurred to me that Mr. Snow's Certificate of Baptism might be of use to him, and I am, therefore, sending it herewith.

It 'occurred' to Secretary Vaughan that his Baptism Certificate 'might be of use' to my Father, who had been in Canada for 11 years without any form of identification.

The 'third page of the 'case-paper' contained an explanation of how my Father came into care, and identified his Father, Grandfather, and Brother.

Thomas Keeley chose not to pass on **any** of this vital information and did not forward a copy of his Baptism Certificate to him. My Father was married, age 27, and had a 6 month old son.

My Father next wrote to St. Augustine's Home for Boys and J. C. Mason, Secretary of the 'Old Boys League.'

Dear Sir, September 14, 1937

I am writing this letter as you will notice to Mr. Jago, as I am under the impression he is still Master, if I am mistaken I do hope sincerely that whoever reads this will do me a great favour, and try and find out for me the little information I am about to ask you.

First my name is Frederick George Snow, I came to Canada in 1925, but what I really would like to know is have you any official data on me or my life concerning where I was born, my parents, if any, are still living, or anything regarding me personally.

I do hope you can help me in this matter. I am married and have a son 15 months old so for his and my wife's sake, please help me.

Sincerely,

Letter to the Secretary of the 'Old Boys League.

Dear Sir, September 14, 1937

I take this opportunity as a member of our great organization to ask you if you can help me in a matter that is of great importance to me Fred G. Snow and my family.

I have been in touch with Mr. Keeley at Sherbrooke but he has been unable to do much for me, and I thought perhaps you being closer to the place than us, you might have a better opportunity to communicate with the parties concerned.

I would like you to get any data you can on me or any of my relatives and let me have the same.

I don't know much about any of them and I thought you could help. The address is Dean Cottage, Dean Road, Croydon, Surrey, my father is supposed to live there.

I have no proof of anything my league number is 207 and I came out here from St. Augustine's, St. Johns Rd, Sevenoaks, Kent. Mr. Jago was Master at the time, 1925.

My Mother was Miss Annie Gifford before she married I think. I was born in London in 1909. Can you help me Sir to get some legal information of some kind, I will be forever grateful to you. I am doing well in Canada here, have a lovely home and all modern conveniences, and I sure like the country.

*Trusting I may hear from you Sir, at your earliest, I remain,
Anxiously waiting, Fred G. Snow*

My Father believed for most of his life, what Thomas Keeley had told him - that his Father was John George Snow.

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'**

ST. AUGUSTINE'S HOME FOR BOYS

Dear Mr. Vaughan, 29th September 1937¹²

Herewith letter received on the 28th. inst. from Mr. Fred G. Snow, one of our old boys, a former inmate of this Home and who is anxious to obtain some information regarding his antecedents.

Submitted for your information and necessary action.

Yours sincerely, J. Frost, A/Warden

In the fall of 1937, my Father fought forest fires in Northern Ontario. He was 28 years old, married for two years, and had a 16-month-old Son. They moved to Peninsula where they would have the most difficult winter of their lives.

He received a Christmas card from Jack Snow, who signed it 'Brother.' In January 1938, he wrote again to the Old Boys' League.

He had quit his job, subsisted on intermittent labouring work, and hunted small animals for food. My Mother was a month pregnant with my Sister Karen.

Dear Mr. Mason:

January 23, 1938

. . . I was very surprised at receiving a letter from you so promptly, and I must apologize for not answering it sooner than this.

With regard to the information I enquired about, I am sorry to say I have no knowledge nor can I recollect hearing from your office on January 30, 1931.

It might possibly have gone astray in the mail somehow but if you have a copy on our files at the present time and it has any bearing on this matter

I would be very grateful if you could forward a copy of same to me.

*Speaking for myself, **I am under the impression that the name Snow, I am at present using is not my own** and I feel it is only fair to my Wife and child that this be in some way proven, true or false.*

At time of writing, I am in receipt of a Christmas Card sent to me from, (as he calls himself) my brother, he is at present living at No. 3 Churchill Road, S. Croydon, Surrey, England.

If, Mr. Mason, you thought we could gain anything by contacting him, in regards this matter, would your Office be willing to undertake the task?

I am grateful for your interest in this matter and trust you will inform me if anything new turns up.

Yours very Sincerely, Fred G. Snow.

PS My brother's name is Jack Allen Snow.

My Father at age 30, still had serious doubts that his surname was truly 'Snow.' He had nothing to verify this.

The only way Jack (33) could have located my Father was by writing to the Waifs and Strays Society.

Where are the copies of this correspondence in his case file? Why did they claim my Father did not identify his 'Brother?'

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
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Dear Mr. Snow

8th February, 1938¹³

In replying to your further letter received this morning I am now enclosing copy of our letter to you dated the 30th January, 1931, as I note you have no recollection of ever receiving the original of this.

I hope this information will be of help to you and as you received a Christmas card from your brother. I see no reason why you should not write to him direct as it is possible you might be able to obtain some further particulars from him.

*Yours sincerely,
J. C. Mason, Secretary O.B.L.*

Their 1929 letter suggested that William Henry Snow was his Father. They gave him a copy of their 1931 letter instead, that did not identify his Father.

Was this an innocent example of bureaucratic ineptitude or a deliberate attempt to confuse him? In 1995, they repeated the same mistake (?), when they gave me a copy of the 1931 letter instead of the 1929 letter.

Barnardo's made their last shipment of 21 boys and 7 girls to Canada in 1939. The Waifs and Strays Society deported eight boys to Canada in June 1939. They may have been the last of their shipment of children to Canada.

The Waifs and Strays Society admitted Child Number 50,000. They had 6,000 children in their care in 1941 and had been in operation for 60 years (Stroud 212). In 1949, W. R. Vaughan retired as Secretary of the Waifs and Strays Society and was replaced by Colonel E. St. J. Birnie.

Almost 20 years later, my Father wrote to the Balham Police, London. He had been laid off work at Canada Car and Foundry when the factory closed. It was a very difficult winter. It was hard for him to keep the family supplied with groceries and the house supplied with heat. This was the winter we gathered wood, and took pickets off a fence for fuel for the house.

My Father was 48, had been married for 22 years and had six children ages 21, 19, 17, 13, 11, and 2. Two were in Elementary School, and two were in High School.

He was anxious he might not be allowed to cross the border without a Birth Certificate to attend my Brother Gary's Graduation at the University of Duluth, Minnesota, USA. He still had nothing to verify who he was. They could have given him the Baptism Certificate that lay in his file for 44 years.

Dear Sir:

October 08, 1957

I should like to make enquiries regarding records we have from Our Boys League, Old Town Hall, Kennington Road, London, S.E.11 referring to myself, Frederick George Snow, that I was born at Larch Road, Balham, London in September 1909.

Would there be any means of obtaining a birth certificate from hospitals, church records, or your department? We also have records that I am supposed to be the son of John George Snow (deceased) and Anne Snow (née Gifford) formerly of Dean Cottage, Dean Road, South Croydon, Surrey, England.

I am now married with a family of six children, been in Canada since 1925 and this birth certificate is essential to me regarding property and legal transactions and also permission to enter the United States if the occasion arises.

Hoping you can throw some light on this matter it will be greatly appreciated by myself and family.

Yours truly, Fred G. Snow.

PS Trusting all matters are strictly confidential.

The Police apparently searched for his Birth Certificate at Somerset House but with no success, and forwarded his letter to the Children's Society.

Instead of simply giving my Father their copy of his Baptism Certificate, they obtained a photocopy from St. Peter's Church in Croydon. They also searched for his Birth Certificate at Wandsworth under the name 'Snow' and 'Gifford,' without success.

**Church of England Society for Providing
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The Revd. The Incumbent 29th October 1957¹⁴

*Reverend and Dear Sir,
Re Frederick George Snow
born? September 1909.*

We are experiencing great difficulty in obtaining a Birth Certificate for the above named, who was once in the care of this Society.

He is now in Canada and has written for details of his history and Birth Certificate.

On our file we have a record that he was Baptized at St. Peter's on the 8th October 1913.

We have found in the past that sometimes the date of birth is quoted on the Baptism Certificate and would be most grateful if you would let me have a copy Certificate of Mr. Snow's Baptism.

As he was in the Children's Convalescent Home, Brighton Road, South Croydon, at this time his parents had deserted him, it is quite possible the correct date of birth was not known.

If you can let me have the information I shall be grateful. I understand from our file that Mr. Snow was being maintained at the Home in Croydon by St. Peter's Poor Fund. I enclose a stamped envelope for reply. Yours sincerely,

Col. E. St. J. Birnie, Secretary

His Parents had 'deserted him?'

St. Peter's Vicarage,
55 St. Peter's Road, Croydon 30 October, 1957¹⁵

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of yesterday's date, I enclose herewith an exact copy of the entry in our register of the baptism of Mr. F. G. Snow.

Unfortunately, the entry does not show the precise date of his birth.

I suppose this was not known at the time, hence the appropriate column gives only the information as stated on the enclosed copy.

I regret that no more definite information is to hand. Yours sincerely Rev. _____

WANDSWORTH REGISTRATION DISTRICT
(COMPRISING THE METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH)

Col E. St. J. Birnie
Secretary Church of England Children's Society

Dear Sir Re Frederick George Snow or Gifford

With reference to your recent enquiry about a Birth Certificate in respect of the above-named, I regret that I am unable to trace in the registers in my custody an entry agreeing with the particulars given by you.

Your remittance of 4/6d less the appropriate fee of 3/9d is therefore returned herewith.

Yours faithfully, Superintendent Register

My Mother (63) wrote to them in 1976.

Dear _____

Aug 1, 1976

Just a letter to thank you for your help in getting John Stroud's book . . . We received our copy last week and will enjoy reading it.

I am writing on behalf of my Husband, Frederick George Snow. During the 41 years of our very happy marriage we have tried at various times to trace something of his past.

I am enclosing a copy of a baptism certificate that we managed to obtain. He has had correspondence from a Brother whose last address is in Ireland and a Sister in England.

We were never able to obtain a birth certificate, or any information except what Mr. Snow remembers of his childhood.

. . . Now, my Husband would like to find out if some of these boys . . . are still alive in Canada.

We figure, that so many people answered Mr. Stroud's enquiry, that some of them from St. Augustine's might like to get in touch.

Yours sincerely, Mr. & Mrs. Fred G. Snow

**Church of England Society for Providing
Homes for Waifs & Strays
Otherwise Known as 'WAIFS AND STRAYS.'**

Dear Mrs. Snow

17 August, 1976¹⁷

Many thanks for your letter, and I'm very pleased you and your husband found '13 Penny Stamps' so interesting.

Have you thought about advertising in the national Canadian newspapers or perhaps writing letters to them for publication, asking for anyone who went to Canada with your husband to get in touch with you? . . . With regards to your queries about Mr. Snow's birth certificate I have passed your letter along to _____ who will do their best to help and will be writing to you shortly.

With best wishes
John Stroud

No one wrote to her. My Father wrote his final letter to them eight years later in 1984. They replied they 'were not clear' whether he received any information from their records, and asked him if he would like to 'avail himself of this information.' This ended my review of his file.

The fall of 1995 marked the first anniversary of his death. I wrote the Kent archives in hope of obtaining his school records, and possibly those of his Brother William Henry Snow Jr (sic). Their records listed a Frederick George Snow who entered the school on 13 October 1921, and left on 17 April 1924.

His birth date was September 09, 1909! His previous address was given as Dr. Barnardo's Homes, St. John's Road, Kent. His previous school was listed as Ebury Bridge LCI School, St. George's Road, London.

This was the first record of his complete date of birth. From where did this originate? Did someone at the school decide that the ninth day of the ninth month of 1909 was a convenient date of birth for my Father? In 1942, Thomas Keeley told him he was born on September 17, 1909.

I had some doubts this was his record. I wrote for clarification and they replied their records were incorrect in listing St. Augustine's as a Barnardo Home. Given this error, it was probable that his previous school attended was incorrect as well.

The Sevenoaks Council School records contained the names and birth dates of eight other British Home Children who were deported to Canada along with my Father.

Someone may just be looking for these names and dates of births of these British Home Children:

George Hodgson 20 October 1908
William Mason 29 October 1909
Cornelius Van Loon 09 February 1908
Thomas Maynard 03 April. 1909
Frederick Van Loon 09 February 1908
Stephen Mildred 03 May 1911
Reginald M. Worby 21 September 1909
Robert Muir 15 March 1909

His last day at school was April 17, 1924. Where was he for a year until he was deported from England on April 03, 1925?

A year had passed since I first contacted the Children's Society.

I was not entirely satisfied with their explanation, 'The left hand did not know what the right hand was doing.'

Dear _____ October 4, 1995

It has been exactly a year since I first contacted the Children's Society regarding information about my Father's origins.

_____ wrote to me on October 17, 1994 and stated 'We have no record of brothers or sisters on our record cards.' This turned out to be most inaccurate.

. . . After much correspondence with _____, I now discover from these records, that my Father did indeed have a Brother named William Henry Snow Jr. (sic) born August 29, 1912 -?, Son of Annie Gifford, and William Henry Snow.

This information was withheld from my Father, and would not have been provided to me had I not been persistent. . . My Father died not knowing with any certainty whom his parents were, and without knowing he had a Brother.

After 60 years of correspondence with the Children's Society, none of this information was provided to him. His Brother . . . may still be alive at the age of 83 . . . _____ has suggested that you may be of some assistance in tracing members of this family.

. . . In order to begin a search for he and his descendants, I need to know if he was ever under the care of the Children's Society (or Barnardo's).

I will write to the Archivist for St. Augustine's school records. It would also help if you could tell me what school my Father might have attended in Rumburgh, Suffolk, from the ages of 5-11 (1914-1920).

Yours sincerely, Perry Snow

The Children's Society
A Voluntary Society of the Church of England
and the Church in Wales

Dear Mr. Snow

17 October 1995

I am writing to thank you for your letter of 4 October 1995, which gives a good summary of the information you have gathered so far.

I am aware of the correspondence between yourself and _____ and _____ on this matter.

I apologize if you felt that the information sent to you by _____ was inaccurate. It was perhaps not made clear that only the record cards are held at this office.

They were checked and no brothers or sisters were identified.

The fuller records (pre 1930) are held . . . at Headquarters, hence the passing of your enquiry from one office to another.

However, I will arrange for the record cards to be checked again with the names you supplied to see if any further information is found.

We do have the services of a researcher. I would appreciate it if you could complete the enclosed authorisation form and I will then ask the researcher to undertake some work.

I will also make enquiries regarding schools that your father might have attended.

I hope that the enquiries may lead to some answers for you, and we will be in touch as soon as we have information to give you.

Yours sincerely

I wrote the Children's Society and made my fifth request for the release of his entire case file.

Dear _____

October 27, 1995

In your last letter of June 01, 1995, you neglected to make any reference to William Henry Snow Jr. (sic), my Father's heretofore-unknown Brother.

You neglected to make mention of his existence in your letter of January 04, 1995.

This information lay in the records for over 82 years, and yet the Children's Society never informed my Father of his Brother's existence.

Since you did not answer my questions, . . . I again have to ask you if William Henry Snow Jr (sic) was ever in the care of the Children's Society.

. . . At any time over the past 82 years, my Father could have been informed of these details.

When I first contacted the Children's Society a year ago, I could have been informed, but was not.

Again, I need to remind you of my Release of Information request of April 24, 1995.

If you refuse to comply with this request, please be so kind as to notify me in writing of your refusal. . . .

Should this be the case I will have to seriously consider my lawyer's advice regarding my options of filing suit.

Sincerely, Perry Snow

I was tempted to end my search. I wrote to a man in England whose name I found on a British Isles Genealogical Register Index.

Dear Perry:

28 October 1995

Very many thanks for your most interesting letter dated 14 October 1995 re the Snow's. It was fascinating to read and aroused my interest. I will try to help if I can.

However, I regret to say that Annie Gifford is not (as far as I can see) related to me - unless in some convoluted way, which goes back several generations.

I will however, be very pleased to research some of your missing links which, as you have names and approximate birth years, may be quite possible.

I have been busy on other activities for the last six months or so but I will make a start towards the end of next week. I will write again as soon as I have more information.

Very best wishes, Robin.

I thought it kind of him to offer to help, but I did not give the letter much thought, and added it to the ever-growing file of similar correspondence. I wrote again to the Children's Society on the 82nd Anniversary of my Father being sent to the foster home.

Dear _____

October 31, 1995

You will understand my cynicism regarding this search for information about my Father's past, given my Parents' futile efforts over 60 years.

I am still waiting for the Society to acknowledge that the existence of my Father's Brother William Henry Snow Jr (sic) - August 29, 1912 was known to them and evidence lay in his case file for 82 years!

This information was withheld from my Father. This acknowledgement may never be forthcoming as the existence of my Father's Brother is studiously avoided in all correspondence.

I would still like to retain some faith in human nature and will persist in my search for information with or without the cooperation of those 'keepers' of the information. Before I decide to accept your offer, I would like some assurance that I will not simply receive information that I already have.

While I have no problem with authorizing a Birth Relative Initiated Research, I would like to know in advance what this search entails and what it would be reasonable to expect as results.

Sincerely, Perry Snow

I received a reply from their researcher who confirmed they could obtain Birth, Marriage, and Death Certificates for £6 (\$ 13.38). The researcher charges a fee of £7.50 (\$16.72) per hour and provides an intermediary service to make an initial approach to any relatives traced.

They did not think they would have any greater success than I would in tracing school records. The researcher explained that the index cards have the names of anyone who was ever in the care of the Children's Society and confirmed that William Henry Snow was not in their care.

They did not answer my question if he was ever in Barnardo's care. Is there no family member cross-reference in their system? Do they not share information with other child-care organizations?

My Father could not have been the only Snow in all of England over all of these years to be a ward of the Children's Society or other child-care organizations.

**The Children's Society
A Voluntary Society of the Church of England
and the Church in Wales**

Dear Mr. Snow

2 November 1995

. . . the issue of your father's brother William Henry Snow (sic), b. 1912. As you will see from the copies of your father's case file that accompanied my letter of 2nd June 1995, the Society does not hold any additional information about his brother.

He is noted only once in the case file, this being the admission form completed in 1913.

The evidence from the case file would suggest that the Society had never been aware of the whereabouts of William Henry Snow and Annie and their Son, William Henry (sic), . . .

Later correspondence does not contain any reference to the couple's address.

The Society never shied away from this fact as is shown by a letter written to your father.

Indeed, the Society suggested that he contact his guardian, John George Snow, to see if he could offer any insights into the whereabouts of his parents.

The Society did not attempt to withhold this information from your father

. . . In terms of . . . the index cards, the reason that they do not contain any reference to William Henry Snow (sic) is simply that he was not taken into the Society's care. The cards note only the names and briefest details of individuals who were actually cared for by the Society,

. . . The cards are not a general index to other family members who may have been noted in the case files as part of the admission process.

While I can appreciate your feelings of frustration about trying to locate details of your father's brothers and sisters, the matter is not helped by the lack of information in the case file.

Yours sincerely,

They again ignored my request for release of the entire file. They did not provide written reasons why they did not comply with my request.

The letter contained a scribbled family tree and a note that said, 'I thought this might clarify the relationships involved here. I thought you might have worked this out already!'

And just how might my Father, or I, have 'worked this out?' They never told us Annie Gifford was John G Snow's Second Wife; John G Snow and William Henry Snow were Father and Son; and Annie Gifford and William Henry Snow were Stepmother and Stepson.

They commented William Henry Snow was single in 1913. This turned out to be incorrect. He had married in 1904, separated in 1909, and enlisted in WW1 in 1910. They did not answer my question why they never informed my Father of his Brother's existence.

They did not provide any explanation why they never informed me of this when I first contacted them. They did not explain why they told my Father his Grandfather was his Father. It was obvious from their reply such futile correspondence could continue for years.

I was grateful for what I had discovered, but at the same time saddened, that he died before I could share this with him. I was a somewhat discouraged about the search. Although I had confirmed many facts about his origins, I still had very little with which to continue.

I still had nothing to verify his alleged birth date of either September 09, 1909, or September 17, 1909. His Mother had been identified as Annie Gifford. I did not know if she had been married before her marriage to his Grandfather John G Snow. 'Gifford' could be her maiden or married name.

I had only approximate birth years but no locations of birth for her and his Father William Henry Snow. John G Snow's children Amy and Jack were likely deceased. I had no idea how to trace William Henry Snow, Jr (sic).

The incompetence I had experienced with the Children's Society did not inspire my confidence in their researcher. I decided not to retain their researcher. I resented their ever-present appeals for money. They made enough money from their exploitation of the British Home Children.

A MEAGER FAMILY TREE 1995

- 1 John George Snow, Born 1857? Location? Married 1877? Died 1940
Croydon, Surrey, England
 - +First Wife? Born 1857? Location? Married 1877? Died?
 - 2 George Snow, Born 1880? Location? Married 1902? Died?
 - 2 William Henry Snow, Born 1884? Location? Married 1902? Died?
 - +Annie Gifford, Born 1875? Location? Married 1904? Died?
 - 3 Frederick George Snow, Born 1909? Larch Road, Balham, London, England, Married 1935, Port Arthur, Ontario
 - +Second Wife Annie Gifford, Born 1875? Location? Married 1904? Died?
 - 2 John Allen Snow, Born 1905? Croydon, Surrey, England
 - + Margaret? Born? Location? Married 1925? Died?
 - 2 Amy Alice Snow, Born 1907? Croydon, Surrey, England
 - +Stephen J? Born? Location? Married 1927? Died?

These are the scraps of information and misinformation they gave my Father from 1929-1984. They consistently identified his Mother as Annie Gifford/Snow.

They told him his Father was John George Snow and on other occasions said he was his Guardian. They once told him his Father was William Henry Snow.

They never told him that John George Snow and William Henry Snow were Father and Son and that the former was married to Annie Gifford. They once told him John Allen Snow was his Brother and on another occasion told him, he was his Stepbrother. They told him Amy Alice Snow was his Stepsister.

They never once told him that he had a natural Brother named William Henry Snow Jr (sic). They did not volunteer this information to me when I first wrote to them.

They had a copy of his Baptism Certificate in their possession from the day he was apprehended, and did not give him a copy until he was 48 years old.

Lies They Told My Father

1929 (Age 20): We could find no entry of your birth. Your full name is Frederick George Snow. You were born at Larch Road, Balham, sometime in September 1909. Your mother's name is Annie Gifford and your father is believed to be William Henry Snow. Your guardian Mr. John G Snow may furnish you with further particulars.

1931 (Age 22): There is very little information I can give you respecting your parents and relatives. You were left by your parents with a Mr. John G Snow who consented to your emigration. I am afraid there is nothing further we can do for you.

1937 (Age 28): I can add nothing to the letter which was sent to you from this office on the 30th January 1931. You were deserted by your father and mother. We were unable to obtain a copy of your birth certificate, as your birth was not registered.

1942 (Age 33): Frederick George Snow was born at Larch Road, Balham, London, on September 17, 1909. He is the son of John George Snow and Annie Snow, formerly Gifford.

1949 (Age 40): We do not have any details regarding your people. You had a stepsister Amy Alice Snow and a stepbrother John A. Snow.

1957 (Age 48): I have searched your file and can find no other information than that supplied to you previously over the years since you left England. I did obtain a copy of your Baptism Certificate and enclose it herewith.

You may already have a copy as one was sent to Thomas Keeley in December 1936. . . . We searched in 1929 with no success. It seems that you were not registered.

1984 (Age 75): I am unsure if we will be able to help you. I am not clear whether in fact you have received information from our records relating to the time in our care. If you would like to avail yourself of this information, I can retrieve the records.

Your identity consists of a collection of beliefs you hold to be true about yourself. My Father's lifelong identity consisted of the lies the Children's Society told him.

"All I know about myself was what the Waifs and Strays Society told me. They said I was born at Larch Road, Balham, London, England on September 17, 1909.

They told me I do not have a Birth Certificate, as no one registered my birth, so I am not sure on what day I was born.

I never knew I was baptized in the Church of England in 1913, until I was 47 years old in 1957. I don't know why they never gave me a copy before this.

I was almost 50 years old before I had proof that my name was really 'Snow.' There was no Father's name on the Baptism Certificate, so I guess I was illegitimate.

I really don't know who my Parents are. They told me William Henry Snow was 'believed to be' my Father, but I do not know who he is.

They told me John George Snow was my Guardian, but later told me *he* was my Father. My Mother was Annie Snow (formerly Gifford). I don't know if she was married, or who she was married to, when she had me.

They told me my Parents deserted and abandoned me, and left me with my Guardian John George Snow. This never made sense, if he was my Father.

His children - Jack and Amy Snow - thought they were my Brother and Sister. I just never believed they were. The Waifs and Strays Society told me once they were my Brother and Sister and years later they told me they were my Stepbrother and Stepsister.

I do not know if I have any real Brothers or Sisters. I don't know why I never saw any of my family in England in the 15 years I was there in a foster home and Boys' Home.

Most people have two families, you know. There is the one you came from, and the one you create when you get married, and have your own children.

People take it for granted everyone has two families. You don't realize how much people talk about the families they came from. I could never do that.

I would have loved to talk about my Parents, Brothers, and Sisters, but I could only talk about the family Gert and I created.

Without her, I would not have had any family at all. I'm sorry I can't tell you any more about myself.

I don't know who I am." (Snow Gertrude 85-86)

Had I not undertaken his search, I would not have been able to identify him any more than could he. **All** the information the Children's Society reluctantly gave me in 1995 could have been given to him when he first inquired in 1927, or anytime in the following 55 years.

They could have simply given him the facts that would let him know who he was. A few lines of truthful information would have been sufficient. Why did they not?

I imagine they would answer with the arrogance of the bureaucrat. 'Your father never asked for **these** specifics.'

They never told him what he wanted, needed, and begged to know. This was so cruel to him. Their obstinacy in releasing this vital information to me is spurious and contemptible.

I had serious doubts about how much time, money, and energy my search had taken to date. I wondered if it would ever end, or whether it would become an all-consuming, endless, and circuitous search.

The more I learned of his unknown life, the more I was saddened by the unnecessary loneliness of his life.

Chapter 3: A Kind Stranger Joins the Quest

I was often tempted to abandon my search. I wondered what difference it would make to anyone to find out about my Father's past. Each time I began to doubt, some new piece of information turned up that inspired me to continue.

I decided if my Parents persisted all their lives, the least I could do was make an effort. If they believed that answers existed to their questions, and did not accept the limited information they were given, then so could I.

At times, I felt guided, nudged, pushed, shoved, and finally driven along the path of this search.

You may be familiar with the phrase, 'There is a light at the end of the tunnel!' My Mother was most fond of saying, 'There is a light inside the tunnel!' A light came on inside this lonely tunnel, just when it became darkest.

I received a letter in November 1995 from someone whom I had not expected to hear. A 'kind stranger' in England became intrigued with this mystery and took it upon himself to solve it.

Robin - on his own initiative - found Birth Certificates for my Father's Half Brother Jack, Half Sister Amy, and newly identified Brother William! Before I finished this book, I

wrote Robin and asked his permission to acknowledge his tremendous contribution. He told me about himself and that he was incidentally paraplegic! I was shocked when I considered how this man who somehow made his way around London looking for clues

These people suddenly became real for me. They were no longer just names. When I held proof of their identities, I could claim them as my own. Jack became my Half Uncle, Amy my Half Aunt, and William Henry Snow Jr, (sic) my Uncle.

I quickly learned the importance of these certificates, as each provided more pieces to the puzzle. The Waifs and Strays Society had identified my Father's previously unknown Brother as William Henry Snow Jr (sic). This was incorrect. He was William Alfred Snow.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Registration District: Streatham, Wandsworth
County: County of London
When Born: 29 August 1912
Where Born: 77 Pevensey Road

Name: **William Alfred Snow**
Name and Surname of Father: William Henry Snow
Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:
Annie Snow formerly Gifford
Occupation of Father: Journeyman Carpenter

Informant: Annie Snow 77 Pevensey Road

This Birth Certificate became a crucial piece of the family puzzle. My 'Man in England' did a remarkable job. When he wrote he would be 'pleased to research some of my missing links,' I had no idea he would expend so much effort. He became the 'light inside my tunnel!'

He spent many hours in libraries, Family History Centres and Record Offices all over London. He mailed me a copy of the London A-Z road map! He is remarkably kind and thoughtful.

I photocopied and pasted pages together to make a large map, and highlighted relatives' addresses. Little did I know that I would take this road map to London 8 years later in 2003 and meet my Snow relatives.

Since the Vicar of St. Peter's Church had my Uncle's name wrong, I wondered how much of the other information was credible. I also wondered how much time and money it would have cost, if I had retained the Children's Society researcher.

I was cynical enough to assume they would have persisted for some time, at some cost, and looked all over for William Henry Snow's Birth Certificate.

I faxed them and asked them to confirm whether William **Alfred** Snow was ever in their care. They replied the next day.

The Children's Society
A Voluntary Society of the Church of England
and the Church in Wales

Dear Mr. Snow

27 November 1995

*Thank you for your fax of 26 November 1995. I am writing to confirm that I have again searched the records in the name of **William Alfred Snow** and have found no card in this name.*

There is therefore no evidence that your uncle was ever under the care of The Children's Society.

I am glad that with the help of your agent you are managing to make some progress with your research and I wish you well with it.

I will leave it to you to contact me again if you ever wish any further assistance from the Children's Society.

Yours sincerely

I was relieved to find my Uncle had not been in their care. I wondered just how useful was their Index. To establish whether he was ever under the care of other child care organizations, would I have to write to each of them separately?

If I found other Snow siblings or relatives, would I have to make separate inquiries to every other child-care organization?

Why do they not have an index of the Parents of the children who were in their care? Do these organizations not communicate with each other?

Robin found Birth and Marriage Certificates for my Half Uncle Jack and my Half Aunt Amy. In all, he sent me 80 certificates that cost only £480 (\$1,070), as he obtained them for £6 (\$ 13.38) each.

Had I known what Certificates to request from the General Register Office, it still would have cost £1600 (\$3,568). I was very grateful for these savings.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

*Registration District: Croydon
County: County of Croydon
When Born: 10 July 1905
Where Born: 141 Sussex Road*

Name: John Allen Snow

*Name and Surname of Father:
John George Snow*

*Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:
Annie Snow formerly Gifford
Occupation of Father: House Painter*

Informant A. Snow 42 Sussex Road

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

*Registration District: Croydon
County: County of Croydon
When Born: 18 March 1907
Where Born: 144 Selsdon Road*

Name: Amy Alice Snow

*Name and Surname of Father: John George Snow
Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:
Annie Snow formerly Gifford
Occupation of Father: House Painter*

Informant: Annie Snow 144 Selsdon Road

Robin looked long and hard for traces of my Grandmother Annie Gifford. He checked the birth records from 1859-1876, but we did not know where she was born, so could not identify her from these records.

He searched the Croydon Directories and found a listing for George Frederick Snow at 157 Brighton Road (1911-1912) and 131 Sussex Road (1925).

John G Snow was listed at 5 Parker Road (1914) and Dean Road (1925). This information confirmed that the people identified were the right ones.

These addresses are all a few blocks from each other and close to St. Peter's Church in Croydon. My Great Grandfather John G Snow lived at Dean Road for 26 years until his death in 1940.

My Granduncle George lived in Croydon for 42 years until his death in 1952. This information allowed me to create a more accurate chronology of the years before my Father's apprehension.

From 1905-1909, the Snow family was intact in Croydon. John G Snow (47-51), Annie Gifford/Snow (27-31), Jack (1-5), and Amy (2) lived together.

According to the Vicar of St. Peter's Church, Annie (31) 'ran off' with her stepson William Henry Snow (26) to have my Father in 1909.

John G Snow (51) was left to look after Jack (4) and Amy (2). Sometime in 1913, Annie (35) returned to Croydon with my Father (4) and his Brother Bill (6m).

She allegedly left my Father with John G Snow (55), Jack (8), and Amy (6).

The Vicar arranged his apprehension in May 1913 for reasons unknown. Perhaps it was as simple as the Vicar's disapproval of an illegitimate birth and an impoverished family. They kept him in the Children's Convalescent Home in Croydon from May-September, 1913.

The Vicar applied to the Waifs and Strays Society to have my Father become their ward, because they could no longer pay to have him kept in this hospital.

I updated the sketchy Snow Family Tree and was inspired enough by the discovery of relatives to buy a Genealogy computer program. I thought if my Uncle Bill were still be alive at the age of 83, he would collect a pension, so I wrote the Department of Social Security.

**Contributions Agency
Department of Social Security
Newcastle Upon Tyne, England**

30 November 1995

Dear Mr. Snow: RE: MISSING RELATIVES

. . . Information held in the Department's records is kept in strict confidence and cannot be disclosed. . . . We do not record details of next of kin nor family histories.

I wrote to them again a few months later to inquire about whether British Home Children might be eligible for Social Security Benefits.

They replied that they were not, as National Insurance came into effect in 1948, twenty-three years after my Father was sent to Canada. They added that they 'do not get involved in cases which involve family histories or where people are unknown to each other.'

In December 1995, Robin located the burial plots of John G Snow and Amy in Croydon. There was no Snow family plot in Croydon.



Amy Jackson (Snow) Elizabeth (Snow)
1907-1983 1928-1986



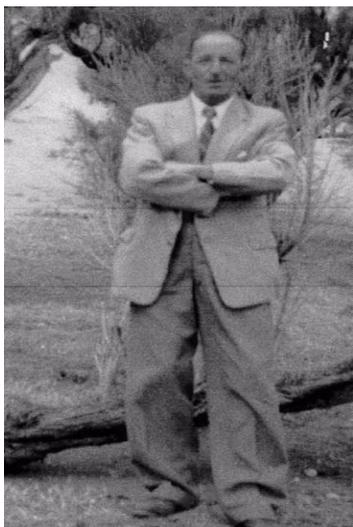
John George Snow 1856-1940

He speculated that Arthur Jackson, noted on Amy's Death Certificate might be her Son, and after a great deal of search, located him. Arthur gave me his Nephew's address in British Columbia. I wrote him but he did not reply.

Arthur said Jack and his Wife had an adopted Daughter named Eileen who had moved to Canada many years ago. She must have been the 'Niece' who called my Father while hitchhiking through Fort William in 1955.

Arthur had no recollections of a Grandmother named Annie Gifford/Snow and had never heard of George Snow or William Henry Snow. He recalled seeing a picture of my Father standing in the snow and holding his Son. This must have been a picture from St. Anthony Gold Mine my Father sent his Grandfather in 1938.

Arthur believed Jack and his Wife divorced. She died in 1989. Arthur gave me the last known address at a Home for the Aged in Ireland where Jack (90) lived.



I wrote Jack in late January 1996 but did not receive a reply. He died on April 26, 1996. His Lawyer wrote that he found my letter in Jack's effects, but there was nothing in his belongings that would be of any use in my inquiries.

He kindly sent me a copy of Jack's Birth Certificate. I wrote the Lawyer again and asked if he could give me a copy of Jack's obituary, but I did not receive a reply. I had hoped it might identify other Snow family members.

I went to the Calgary Public Library and found telephone and addresses of Snow's in Croydon in a telephone book. In February 1996, I made up sixteen packages and mailed them to every Snow in Croydon.

Some were returned as, 'Moved - no longer here,' and others did not reply. Some wrote very nice letters and offered helpful suggestions. Others gave me what they knew of their Snow ancestors. It was worth a try!

In April 1996, Robin found listings for Snow's and Gifford's in Kelly's Directories for Balham and Tooting. I highlighted the addresses on the A-Z map. They were all within a few blocks of one another. While this did not establish familial relationships, it implied some possible connections.

From 1907-1914, a Herbert Gifford lived at 2 Larch Road, Balham, London - the alleged address of my Father's place of birth. Was this where my Grandmother went to have my Father in 1909? Could Herbert be her Father, Brother, Uncle, or Cousin?

Perhaps my Grandmother stayed with another of her family when she had my Uncle Bill in Tooting in 1912. These two addresses were less than a mile apart.

Robin and I both got on the Internet and our communications were enhanced.

(Note: In 1995 the internet had a user base of 40 million compared to 50 times larger to 2 billion in 2017. Facebook today is 15 times larger than the entire internet of 1995.

Email capability had just started and dial up connections were required). When I say I 'wrote' or 'sent' it meant typing on a desktop, printing it out, mailing via envelope, stamps, and waiting weeks for a reply.)

In May 1996, I wrote to the National Archives of Canada to determine if there were any records of my Father in the Reserve Army Service Corps. They were unable to locate any records of his service, as they destroyed the records of Reserve Forces members when they were 70 years old (?).

Robin made use of a clue provided in Amy's 1980 letter to obtain important school records from Archbishop Tenison's C E School. These records listed Jack and Amy as children of John G Snow (painter), who lived at 3 Dean Road, Croydon.

Jack attended this school from 1913-1919 and left at 14 years old to work with the Croydon Gas Company. Amy attended from 1915-1921. Emily and George were listed as children of George Frederick Snow (painter), who lived at 157 Brighton Road, Croydon in 1911, and 131 Sussex Road in 1912.

Emily was born on 23 November 1902 and attended this school from 1911-1917. George was born on 16 June 1904 and attended this school from 1912-1918. He left school at 14 years old to work as a Grocer's Boy.

These bits of information were very useful as they provided birth dates for George's children. Jack and Amy must have attended some other school in Croydon before this one.

John G Snow (55) tried to look after Jack, Amy, and my Father. He hired a young girl to look after my Father while he looked for work and worked. When he was unable to pay for a sitter, Jack took Amy and my Father to school with him.

When they apprehended my Father in April-May, 1913, Jack would have been 7 years 10 months old, Amy 6 years 2 months old, and my Father 3 years 6 months old.

Amy wrote in 1980, that my Father was fostered out because he 'was not old enough for school' and John G Snow could not get anyone to look after him through the day.

What was Croyden like in 1913 when they apprehended my Father? Charles Booth - of Salvation Army fame - categorized 909,000 Londoners into eight income classes.

The fifth class (337,000) earned 22-30 shillings a week. This barely provided them with enough to eat regularly. The fourth class (129,000) was poor and needed their children's wages to raise the family income above the poverty line.

The third class (75,000) was poorer still. The second class (100,000) was very poor and earned 18-21 shillings a week. The first class (11,000) led 'savage' lives. He described them as people who degraded whatever they touched, and labelled them as incapable of improvement (Thomas 195).

According to this classification, and the Children's Society report of his earnings, John G Snow (55) was just above the poverty line.

Croydon was a rural district of Surrey from 1894 to 1915 and had a population of 65,000 in 1911 in an area of 85 sq km.



Croydon Surrey England 1908

Many parents paid neighbours to look after their preschool children in these times. The working poor turned to their relatives for help and lived together to ease their financial pressures.

Widows and single parent mothers after marital breakdown often had to reluctantly turn their youngest children over to the child-care agencies when they became destitute. Children from 6-12 years old were enlisted as caretakers of their younger siblings.

In 1912, there were more underage children (3-5 years old) in the elementary schools than children of legal age (Parr 15-20). My Father was one of thousands of children whom older siblings took to school with them and this may have been a factor of his being taken from his family.

The Victorian attitudes towards the poor persisted into the early 1900's when my Father was apprehended. They believed poor children were the 'raw materials' that would form 'the dangerous classes.'

They believed child deportation would eradicate the children's 'memories of pauperism,' and would save them from becoming 'as corrupted as their parents' (Parr 33).

The British Child Deportation Scheme was in full swing in 1913 and had been operating for almost 30 years. The child-care organizations had already deported tens of thousands of young children.

Their solution to the problem of underage children attending school was apprehension and deportation. Once out of sight, they were permanently out of mind. In my Father's case, the clergy acted as procurers of children for the scheme.

My Daughters Charlotte and Elizabeth gave me a copy of **Empty Cradles**, and an A-Z map of London for Father's Day.

My first thought was that the map was to help me locate relatives' addresses. I realized I was to use it when I went to London to *meet* my relatives. I had occasional thoughts of perhaps someday going to London to do this. It suddenly became a goal.

I went for a long walk and thought of my Father on Father's Day.

Chapter 4: The Unearthing of Relatives in England

Robin found Birth Certificates for Grandfather John G Snow's First Wife, Father William Henry Snow, Uncle George Frederick Snow, and Niece Alice Emily Snow.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Registration District: Wandsworth Battersea

County: County of Surrey

When Born: 30 Oct 1857

Where Born: 33 Bolinbroke Road

Name: *Emily Jane Cheer*

Name and Surname of Father: James Cheer

Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:

Jane Cheer Formerly Hollingshead

Occupation of Father: Labourer Colour Factory

Informant: 'X' The mark of Jane Cheer

Great Grandmother Jane Cheer signed Grandmother's Birth Certificate with an 'X.' This was typical of the times in which 40% of the British population in 1850 could not sign their names.

Half of all children 5-15 years attended school in the 1850's. Mandatory schooling for children only came into effect in the 1870's. When the 1881 Census was taken, 20% of the population could not sign their names.

Robin found John G Snow's First Marriage Certificate. He literally married 'the girl next door,' as they lived at 100 and 112 Brandon Street, Walworth, Surrey.

This certificate identified Great Grandfather as John Allen Snow, and determined John G Snow's birth date as 1858.

Robin was unable to find a Birth Certificate for John G Snow. The area of the search shifted from Croydon to Wandsworth.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

*Registration District: St Saviour
Marriage Solemnized at
St. John's Church Walworth, Surrey
When married: 11 June 1878.*

*Name and surname:
**John George Snow (21)
and Emily Jane Cheer (20)**
Rank or Profession: Railway Policeman*

*Residence at the time of the marriage:
112 Brandon Street and 100 Brandon Street.*

*Father's name and surname:
John Allen Snow and James Cheer.
Married in the Parish Church.
Witnesses: Thomas Goman, Elizabeth J.
Hopgood.*

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

*Registration District: Wandsworth Battersea
County: Surrey
When Born: 9 December 1879
Where Born: 11 St Philip's Cottages*

*Name: **George Frederick Snow***

*Name and Surname of Father: John G Snow
Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:
Emily Jane Snow formerly Cheer
Occupation of Father: Railway Policeman
Informant Emily Jane Snow*

Uncle George's lineage fell into place when Robin found his Marriage Certificate and Birth Certificates of his seven children.

His first two children were born in Tooting in 1902 and 1904. Perhaps John G Snow and his two sons lived in Tooting in 1902-1904, and when he moved to Croydon in 1905, they followed.

From 1911-1912, his first two children attended Archbishop Tenison's School in Croydon with Amy and Jack. His other five children were born in Croydon but apparently four of them died in infancy. I wrote to the last known addresses of some descendants of my Granduncle George, but these addresses were out of date.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

*Registration District: Wandsworth Battersea
County: Surrey
When Born: 03 August 1881
Where Born: 31 Shirley Grove*

*Name: **Alice Emily Snow***

*Name and Surname of Father: John G Snow
Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:
Emily Jane Snow formerly Cheer
Occupation of Father: Railway Ticket Examiner
Informant Emily Jane Snow*

I learned nothing more about Niece Alice Emily Snow. She likely married, had children, and created another line of descendants, as did my George.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

*Registration District: Wandsworth Battersea
County: Surrey
When Born: 29 April 1883
Where Born: 23 Shirley Grove*

*Name: **William Henry Snow***

*Name and Surname of Father:
John George Snow
Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:
Emily Jane Snow formerly Cheer
Occupation of Father: Railway Ticket Collector
Informant Emily Jane Snow*

My Grandfather William Henry Snow was finally confirmed as a real person! The paper chase quickly became a people-search. I was thrilled to be able to simply write to anyone to whom I was related, but I was somewhat apprehensive if my letters would be answered.

My first contact with a Snow relative occurred in June 1996 when I wrote to a Second Cousin - a descendant of my Granduncle George Frederick Snow. She kindly sent me photographs of my Great Grandfather John George Snow and his first wife.



John George Snow and Emily Jane Snow (Cheer) 1878

The initial letters from these people were overwhelmingly kind. People offered to help with my search in any way they could.

Robin found a Death Certificate for my Grandmother Emily Jane Cheer/Snow. She and John G Snow had only three children before she died in 1904 at the age of 46.

She was 22, 24, and 26 years old when her first three children were born in 1879, 1881, and 1883. It is possible she had more children in 1885, 1887, and 1889, when she was 28-32 but none were located.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH

*Registration District: Wandsworth Streatham
County: Borough of London
When Died: 06 Feb 1904
Where Died: 37 Chetwode Road Upper Tooting*

Name: Emily Jane Snow

*Sex: Female Age: 46
Occupation: Wife of John George Snow Decorator
(Journeyman)
Informant: John George Snow Widower*

John G Snow married Annie Gifford **six months** after his wife died of cancer. He made himself younger by one year and she made herself older by four years on their Marriage Certificate. This created an age gap of only 15 years between them. This was apparently acceptable to the Vicar of the Parish Church in Tooting, whereas an actual age gap of 22 years may not have been.

Vicar Reeve was incorrect in stating that my Annie Gifford was nine years older than William Henry Snow, as the difference was only five years.

John G Snow was 53 years old and Annie was 31 when she was pregnant with my Father by her stepson William Henry Snow who was 26. The Vicar did not mention the disparity in their ages. Instead, she described John G Snow as the 'rightful husband' who had been so 'wronged.'

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

*Registration District: Tooting
Marriage Solemnized at Parish Church in Tooting
When married: 11 June 1878.*

**Name and surname: John George Snow (45)
and Annie Gifford (30)**
Rank or Profession: House Decorator

*Residence at the time of the marriage: 17
Gasham St. 2 Rookstone Road*

*Father's name and surname: John Allen Snow
(Deceased), William Gifford (Carpenter)
Witnesses: William Gifford, Catherine Gifford.*

William Henry Snow (21) married Agnes Maud Moore (21) **three** months after his Mother died. I do not know if they had any children, although there was an Agnes Snow born in Croydon in 1905.

This marriage did not last and William Henry Snow moved back home to live with his Father John George Snow and his Stepmother Annie Gifford.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE

*Registration District: Tooting
Marriage Solemnized at Registry Office Tooting
When married: 07 May 1904.*

*Name and surname: **William Henry Snow (21)
and Agnes Maud Moore (21)**
Rank or Profession: Journeyman Carpenter*

*Residence at the time of the marriage:
27 Chetwode Road*

*Father's name and surname: John G. Snow,
House Painter. Samuel Handle Moore, Cornet
Player
Witnesses: Edward G. Hartland, Eliza Cheer*

The most shocking news came when Robin found Birth Certificates for my Father's two Sisters and one Brother. His Parents stayed together for at least 11 years after my Father was born and had three other children while he was in the foster home in Rumburgh.

William Henry Snow enlisted in the Army in 1910 after my Father was born in 1909, his Brother William was born in 1912 and Annie was pregnant with his Sister Violet in 1913. He served in WW1 from 1910-1919 and was wounded twice in France and Africa.

Their first Daughter was born just before the beginning of WW1 and may have been named after my Father's Aunt Lilian Gifford/Keen.

My Father's Parents were cohabiting aka 'living in sin' for 16 years as each would have had to divorce their previous spouses. They had five children together while his Father was in the army for 9 of these years. It ended in 1925 when William Snow left Annie for a younger woman and her 3 children were apprehended.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Registration District: Wandsworth Battersea

County: County of London

When Born: 15 March 1914

Where Born: 33 Meyrick Road

Name: Violet Lilian Beatrice Snow

Name and Surname of Father: William Henry Snow

Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:

Annie Snow formerly Gifford

Occupation of Father: Journeyman Carpenter

Informant: Annie Snow 33 Meyrick Road

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Registration District: Wandsworth Battersea

County: County of London

When Born: 22 August 1918

Where Born: 7 Abyssinia Road

Name: Gladys Elsie Snow

Name and Surname of Father: William Henry Snow

Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:

Annie Snow formerly Gifford

Occupation of Father: Journeyman Carpenter

Informant: Annie Snow 33 Meyrick Road

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH

Registration District: Wandsworth Battersea

County: County of London

When Born: 10 December 1920

Where Born: 7 Abyssinia Road

Name: Reginald William Snow

Name and Surname of Father: William Henry Snow

Name, Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother:

Annie Snow formerly Gifford

Occupation of Father: Journeyman Carpenter

Informant: Annie Snow 33 Meyrick Road

Robin found Death Certificates for William Henry Snow. Peggy Snow was listed as informant and William Henry Snow's Daughter on his Death Certificate. My Reg Snow was listed as informant on my Annie Gifford/Snow's Death Certificate.

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH

Registration District: Hampstead
County: Hampstead
When Died: 24 January 1959
Where Died: North Western Hospital Hampstead
Name: William Henry Snow
Sex: Female Age: 75
Occupation: Carpenter and Joiner (Retired)
Informant: Peggy Snow Daughter

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH

Registration District: Lambeth
County: Lambeth
When Died: 10 August 1954
Where Died: Lambeth Hospital
Name: Annie Snow
Sex: Female Age: 76
Occupation: Widow of William Henry Snow
Carpenter
Informant: Reginald William Son

How sad to find out that his Parents lived until their middle 70's in the 1950's without ever knowing what became of their first child – my Father. They did not know they had six grandchildren in Canada.

My Father was told his Parents were dead and that they had abandoned him and 'left him' with the Waifs and Strays. Since his parents were unmarried, he was illegitimate' and yet they stayed together and had four other children together - his brothers and sisters.

Thanks to Robin's tremendous sleuthing skills, I was able to contact my Father's family. None of his Siblings or their Families knew of him.

I had not determined whether Uncle Bill (84) was alive. Aunt Vi (82) was alive, and although I did not speak with her, I obtained a remarkable account from her children - my Cousins James and Gladys.

Aunt Gladys (76) did not answer my letter. I spoke with one of her children - my Cousin Ann. My Uncle Reg died on 13 March 1984.



Reginald William Snow 1975

Ironically, my Father wrote a letter to the Children's Society in early March and received a letter from them dated 13 March 1984 - the day his Brother died. He wrote his final letter to them on 31 March 1984. I wonder if he had some unusual premonition about his unknown Brother Reg.

I phoned Reg's widow - my Aunt Freda. When I talked with her about my Uncle Reg, it was like talking to my Mother about my Father. Both spoke of their Husbands in such loving terms. She said he would have been a marvellous Father if they had children.

She sent me an original copy of their Wedding photo. I offered to scan it and return it, but she said they had no children and she really didn't know any other Snow's so she thought I would value it all the more. I did. She died in 2010 at the age of 80.



Freda Snow 2000 London England



Reg Snow & Freda Snow 1946 London England

As my Mother described my Father, she described Reg as 'lost and alone' when she met him. Years later I found he was 'in care' with Barnardo's and yet did not speak of this with Freda for many years. I am grateful these two women recognized the goodness of these two Brothers and chose them to love all their lives.

The year ended well, with a tremendous conclusion to an intense search for family. I was astounded by one unanticipated aspect of the search. I never would have thought I would be in a position of clarifying relationships and family history for my relatives in England.

I had hoped that if Snow relatives existed in England, I would eventually contact one who would be quite knowledgeable and would ask me, 'What do you want to know of the Snow's?' It was quite the opposite. I informed **them** of our common Uncles, Aunts, Cousins, and Grandparents.

Robin suggested it would be a lovely thing for all the Snow descendants to unite in England and to have some sort of memorial for my Father. What a kind thought! What an extraordinary man!

My Siblings were somewhat overwhelmed with this family information. We had all lived without having Snow relatives, so it took some time for the information to be processed from names into actual living people.

My Mother was extremely happy to have her in-laws identified, and their lifelong search carried on to a successful conclusion.

The fall of 1996 marked the second anniversary of my Father's death. I was quite satisfied with the search results to date. At the same time, I was left with the knowledge of the awful legacy of the British Child Deportation Scheme.

Why is this aspect of Canadian history so unknown? Must it take a lifetime of searching for the British Home Children to learn who they are? What was to become of their millions of Canadian descendants? Were all of our efforts going to be stymied as well?

Just as my Father searched all his life for his Parents, I spent years searching for my Grandparents. Will the next generation spend years searching for their Great-Grandparents? When will this nonsense stop? I wondered what I could do to help others learn who they are, discover their British roots, and restore their natural family ties so cruelly and deliberately severed by the BHC Deportation Organizations.

Chapter 5: Assembling the Pieces of the Puzzle

In February 1997, I discovered many Genealogical Websites on the Internet and posted what information I had about the Snow family.

In July 1997, I tried to find information about the Children's Convalescent Home in Croydon. I hoped to obtain his medical records. It was a Private Charitable Institution supported by voluntary contributions, but not affiliated with child-care organizations. There are no records.

Why was my Father hospitalized here rather than in a free hospital? Why did the Vicar of St. Peter's Church pay to keep him there?



Children's Convalescent Home Croydon Surrey England



The fall of 1997 marked the third anniversary of my Father's death. In November 1997, I posted a message on a Genealogical Website. I asked if anyone had any information about Rumburgh, Halesworth, Suffolk. It was too small to be included in travel literature. I would have been content to learn of its size.

A woman in Suffolk took it upon herself to seek out his school records in Ipswich. She photocopied school records, transcribed them, and sent them to me as e-mail. This took considerable time and I was very grateful she did this.

These records provided me a picture of what it was like for my Father to attend school as a 'Waif' in a small village. She drove to Rumburgh and photographed the school he attended and the foster home where he lived from 4-12 years old. She located a class picture of him from 1919!



Rumburgh Halesworth Suffolk Class Picture 1919
Fred Snow (10) Left End Centre Row?

This is the only photograph I have of my Father before he was 20 years old. I examined this picture for hours with a magnifying glass and could not identify him. After I studied the photograph, I had a nap. I had a very unusual dream where my Father clearly said, "I'm standing in front of the teacher!" I woke up and had another look at the picture. I found him.

Christmas 1997 was remarkable because for the first time I exchanged Christmas cards with 'my people.' The initial telephone contacts were delightful.

My Mother came for a visit to Calgary in 1998 for Christmas and New Years. We had a wonderful time and she was amazed to be able to sit on the deck with a cup of tea in December.

The Chinook wind is a wonderful thing. It can melt a foot of snow in one day and temperatures can be -20C in the morning and +20C in the afternoon.



Gert Snow (75) Calgary 1988



Gert Snow (75) Liz Snow (12) Char Snow (14) Calgary 1988

My Mother was becoming frail and in 1999 he fell in her apartment and was not discovered until the next morning. She may have suffered a minor stroke, and was unable to reach the 'Panic Button.'

She was hospitalized for two weeks. The last time she had been in a hospital was when my youngest Sister was born over 40 years earlier. It was quite an experience for her but she slowly regained her strength and was discharged from hospital.

My search for relatives took on a new urgency.

In March 1998 Aunt Freda authorized the release of Reg Snow's records to me. Barnardo's reply was very disconcerting.

Barnardo's

03 March 1998

Dear Mr. Snow

Thank you for your recent enquiry concerning your relative who may have been in Barnardo's care.

Since the BBC documentaries were shown in August 1997 we have received nearly 1,400 enquiries from people seeking information from Barnardo's records.

We are also still working with a considerable number of enquiries dating back to the earlier BBC programmes shown in July 1995.

In order to manage this enormous workload we have taken the very difficult decision to respond only to those enquiries which came from people who were themselves in Barnardo's care and who are looking for information to help them make sense of their early life experiences and to help them trace family members.

This means that for the foreseeable (sic) future we will be unable to research and respond to enquiries such as yours about a deceased relative.

We know that you will be disappointed by this letter and we hope that you will understand that this decision was not made lightly, but rather as a response to the vast number of enquiries from those people who are alive today and are actively seeking their family background information.

Your enquiry will remain on our records and if at any point in the future we find that we are in a position to address enquiries such as yours we will write and let you know. We would ask therefore that you keep us informed of any change of address.

They referred to my inquiry about my Uncle Reg as someone 'who may have been in Barnardo's care.' They are still processing inquiries since the showing of [The Leaving of Liverpool](#) documentary in 1995. When it was shown again in 1997, they had another 1,400 inquiries.

They will only process inquiries from people who were themselves in their care - not relatives. They could not respond to my inquiry about a 'deceased relative' for the 'foreseeable future.' They would keep my inquiry on their records. If, 'at any point in the future,' they might be able to address it, they would contact me.

They did not even bother to confirm whether or when my Uncle Reg was in their care. How difficult would this have been for them?

I imagine they were flooded with inquiries from Australia but I did not feel any sympathy for them. The scandal revealed by the Child Migrants Trust was bound to set off a backlash. I was discouraged to learn they had a three-year backlog of inquiries.

If my Father was alive at the age of 89, would Barnardo's ask him for his non-existent Birth Certificate to verify his relationship to his deceased Brother Reg? Would they tell him they could only accommodate enquiries from people who were themselves in their care, and tell him they cannot respond to inquiries about 'deceased relatives?' Would the fact he inquired about his Brother make any difference to them?

If my Uncle Reg were alive and inquired about his records, would they tell him they had an inquiry from his Brother - my Father?

If my Aunt Freda wrote for her Husband's records, what would they tell her? Would they tell her they cannot respond to inquiries about 'deceased spouses?' Would they tell her they had an inquiry from her Brother in Law Fred or her Nephew Perry Snow?

By now, I was skeptical enough to believe they would stonewall **any** inquiry regardless of who made the inquiry. I decided these bureaucracies were not going to change. The will, is - as it has always been - simply not there.

The fall of 1998 marked the fourth anniversary of my Father's death and the fifth anniversary of the beginning of my search. Barnardo's response was the final straw.

The literature describing the British Child Deportation Scheme referred to the child-care institutions as 'charitable organizations.'

When it comes to providing vital personal information to the British Home Children and their descendants, these organizations have proven themselves to be most uncharitable. They have been - and continue to be - most cruel.

THE GOLDEN LADDER OF CHARITY

The first and lowest level of charity, is to give, but with reluctance or regret. This is the gift of the hand, but not of the heart.

The second is to give cheerfully, but not proportionately to the distress of the sufferer.

The third is to give cheerfully, and proportionately, but not until we are solicited.

The fourth is to give cheerfully, proportionately, and even unsolicited; but to put it in the poor man's hand, thereby exciting in him the painful emotion of shame.

The fifth is to give charity in such a way that the distressed may know the benefactor and receive his bounty without being known to him.

The sixth which rises still higher, is to know the objects of our bounty but remain unknown to them.

The seventh is still more meretorious, namely, to bestow charity in such a way that the benefactor may not know the relieved person, nor he the name of his benefactor.

The eighth and most meretorious of all is to anticipate charity by preventing poverty; namely, to assist a reduced brother . . . so that he may earn an honest livelihood and not be forced to the dreadful alternative of holding up his hand for charity

(Maimonides 1135-1204).

I again wrote to Barnardo's in 2000 and 2003 as the 'foreseeable future got to be 2-5 years.

February 16, 2003

Ms _____
Barnardo's After Care Centre
Tanners Lane Barkingside
Ilford Essex England 1G6 1QG

I first contacted Barnardo's in February 1998 and asked for records of my Uncle Reginald William Snow.

His wife and my Aunt Freda completed the necessary Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information forms and forwarded them to you. I also inquired as to whether the following were ever in Barnardo's care

Uncle William Alfred Snow (born 29 Aug 1912)
Aunt Violet Lilian Snow (born 15 Mar 1914)
Aunt Gladys Elsie Snow (born 15 Sept 1926)

You replied on March 1998 and thanked me for my inquiry regarding my relative "who may have been in Barnardo's care."

How difficult would it have been at that time for you to simply confirm that he, my other uncle and two aunts were in Barnardo's care, and for what period of time?

Two and a half years later in August 2000, you replied and sent me relevant information from my Uncle Reg's file.

It was there I learned that my Aunt Gladys and Aunt Violet were also admitted to Barnardo's on the same day.

While happy to receive this news, how nice it would have been to learn this two and a half years earlier as my Aunt Violet died on 22 Sept 1998.

I appreciate your "most abject apologies for the length of time it has taken to respond "and how ".this delay is deeply regretted." and that it was "an oversight."

My cousin James _____ has some reservations about requesting his Mother's file and has authorized Barnardo's to send her records to me...

Enclosed please find a copy of James _____ Birth Certificate to verify that he is the son of Violet Lilian Beatrice Snow and a Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information form signed by her son James _____ and dated 19 January 2003.

I do hope this authorization is sufficient for you to forward information from my Aunt Violet's case file.

Please note that a narrative summary of her time in care is NOT acceptable. I expect to receive complete copies of any and all information contained in her case file. If there is a cost to photocopying this material, please advise.

They did not accept my Release of Information regarding Violet or Gladys' records.

Many people asked me how my Father might have felt to learn of his unknown past before he died. Far too many assumed that perhaps 'there were things best not known.'

A better question to have asked was, 'Why did he never know who he was?' The answer is now quite obvious. The Children's Society did not want him to know who he was.

My Father had a unique identity as someone's Son, Brother, Grandson, Nephew, and Cousin until he was four years old. They took this identity away from him, gave him a new one, and withheld his own from him. They are thieves. They stole my Father's identity from him.

In Othello (Act 3 Sc. 3), *Shakespeare* wrote:

*Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:*

*Who steals my purse steals trash;
'tis something, nothing;
'T was mine, 't is his, and has been slave to
thousands;*

*But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him*

And makes me poor indeed.¹⁸

Since he died before I made these discoveries, I can only speculate how he might have felt to learn of them. He simply would have been satisfied to know that he belonged to, and was part of a family.

He could have accepted and lived with **any** factual answers to his lifelong questions about who he was.

He found it difficult to live with only unanswered questions. The imagination - if left to its own devices - tends to follow a negative path. His was fuelled by visions associated with the words, 'abandoned, deserted, and illegitimate.'

Throughout my search, I heard my Parents softly whisper, 'Find the answers.' As I discovered the truth, I heard them say, 'Tell the story.' When I found his family, their voices were louder, and I heard them say, 'Write the book!'

Was all of the information I discovered simply 'too much - too late' for my Father?

Perhaps it is never too late.

PART III: A STOLEN IDENTITY RECLAIMED

I would have dearly loved to have met with my Parents and shared what I had discovered. It was not to be. Not only did the Children's Society rob my Father of his identity, they also robbed me of the opportunity of returning it to him before he died.

This book could, and should have ended, with a description of how I returned his stolen identity to him. I can only describe the visit we should have had in the summer of 1994 before my Father died. My mother at least got to read a draft copy of my book before she died on Nov 18, 2000.

A Imaginary Reunion Thunder Bay Ontario 1994

Bonnie and I flew to Thunder Bay with binders full of material to share with my Parents. I could not have made this one trip alone. Mom (81) suggested we go to Chippewa Park for a picnic to review all the material. She packed a lunch of sandwiches and tea.

She was ready and waiting at Jasper Place long before the arranged time. When questioned as to why I was doing something, I had become accustomed to saying, 'It is my way.' Now I say, 'It is my way - and the way of my people.'

She smiled and we hugged each other. An ever-present twinkle gleamed in her eyes. She left her walker behind and brought her cane instead,

Dad (85) waited in his wheelchair outside the entrance of Grandview Lodge. He was dressed in his jacket and tie. He never missed an opportunity to be outside in the fresh air.

He used his cane to make his way to the car, and carefully manoeuvred the walk on his artificial leg. I placed his walker in the trunk. They were both frail, but rarely complained. They greeted each other with a kiss and, 'Hello, Dearie!'

We drove by our former home of so many years - just for a look. We drove by 'The Loop' where we children waited for the bus to take us to Chippewa Park.

We admired Mount McKay as we crossed the Swing Bridge over the Kaministiquia River. The loose boards on the bridge rattled and thumped as they always did.



Mom took Bonnie's arm to steady herself for the short walk to the picnic table. Dad insisted on walking with his cane rather than the walker. He raised his chin and proudly walked to the picnic table as he leaned on my arm for support.

Neither of them pressed to learn what I had discovered. They were very patient, as they had waited all of their lives to learn anything of his background. We ate and reminisced about the happy times we had as a family at Chippewa Park.

We absorbed the view of the Sleeping Giant. The Lake Superior waves pounded up against the rocks of the breakwater and echoed memories of sunny days, warm breezes, picnics, and laughter.



Perry (50), Gert (81), Fred (85), Thunder Bay Ontario 1994



Perry (50), Bonnie (49) Thunder Bay Ontario 1994

Dad finally said, “Now, Perry, what have you found out about your Father? Did you find out who I am?” Mom held his hand in anticipation. I said, “Yes, Dad, I discovered who you are. I found your stolen identity. I’m here to return it to you.’

He asked, “What do you mean, when you say my identity was stolen?” I replied, “The Children’s Society had information about your family they withheld from you. They tried to withhold this information from me.” He frowned and said, “I always suspected they knew more than what they ever told me.”

“We need to thank a ‘kind stranger’ in England who made this project his own. Without his tremendous dedication, I could not have done this. Many other people were helpful. They provided me with information I would not have obtained from agencies, organizations, and bureaucracies.”

We were silent for a few moments, while we expressed our ‘Thanks’ to these unmet friends.

I said, “Dad, I only set out to discover who your Parents were, but I learned almost too much about this thing called the British Child Emigration Scheme. It was a scheme all right.” He looked intrigued. I returned his stolen identity to him by relating this story.

Great-Grandparents: John Allen Snow and Mary Dyason

John Allen Snow was baptized at St John the Baptist Church in Margate Kent in 1831. He was the eldest of six children. You had three Great Grandaunts and two Great Granduncles.

John Allen Snow was a Mechanic when he was 20 years old and a House Painter when he was 49 years old. He married your Great Grandmother in 1858 and had eight children who were born in Canterbury. He died in 1891 in Canterbury Kent.

Your Grandfather John George Snow was the eldest born in August 22 1856 in Margate Kent. You had four Granduncles and three Grandaunts. Your youngest Granduncle and two Grandaunts may have died at young ages. In the 1870-1880's, one in four children did not survive their first year of life, and adult life expectancy was about 45 years old.

Dad said, "Wait a minute. What do you mean - John George Snow was my Grandfather? The Waifs and Strays told me he was my Father." I replied, "I know what they led you to believe, but it is not true."

He said, "If he was not my Father, then Jack and Amy were not my Brother and Sister. Somehow, I just knew they weren't! Who is my Father, then?" I said, "I know it is confusing, but we'll get to that."

Your Grandparents: John George Snow and Emily Jane Cheer



Your Grandfather John G Snow ran off to sea and sailing ships when he was 14 years old in 1872. The conditions on these ships were terrible, and he jumped ship when he was 20 years old in 1878. He then worked on the railroad in London and lived at 112 Brandon Street Walworth Surrey. Your Grandmother Emily Jane Cheer lived at 100 Brandon Street.

When they married, you inherited "Cheer" relatives, who originated in Drayton Berkshire as early as the 18th Century. There is a Chiers Drive in Drayton that may be named after them. Your Grandmother Emily was the middle child of your Great Grandfather James Cheer who was born in 1831 and your Great-grandmother Jane Hollingshead. You had three Great-granduncles and two Granduncles.

John G Snow (21) married his First Wife Emily Cheer (20) on 11 June 1878 in Walworth. Your Uncle George Frederick Snow was born 9 December 1879 in Battersea Surrey.

From 1878 -1883, your Grandfather John G Snow (20-23) worked for the Railroad as a Ticket Examiner, Ticket Collector, and Policeman.

Your Aunt Alice Emily Snow was born on 3 August 1881 at 31 Shirley Grove, Wandsworth, Battersea. I know nothing more of her. She likely married around 1900 and had children - your Cousins.

Your Father William Henry Snow was born on 29 April 1883 at 23 Shirley Grove Wandsworth, Battersea. He was named after your Granduncle (1868) of the same name.

Dad said, "You're telling me that this guy was my Father?"

I replied, "The Waifs and Strays Society called John G Snow both your Guardian and your Father. In all of your correspondence with them, they never identified him as your Grandfather.

Nor did they identify him as the Father of William Henry Snow - your actual Father. In 1929, they said your Father was **believed** to be William Henry Snow." I have papers to prove that even John G Snow identified his son William Henry as your Father in 1913.

He said, "I don't recall that letter. In 1929, I rode boxcars and did not have any address."

I said, "In 1931, they referred to this letter, but never mentioned William Henry Snow's name. They gave you John G Snow's address and identified him as your Guardian.

In all the correspondence over all the years, William Henry Snow's name never appeared again. Each time you wrote them, and said John G Snow was your Father, they never corrected this for you.

They could have told you much, much more about yourself. They withheld a lot of vital information from you. They lied to you.”

“I’m not surprised - they lied to me all of my life about my family,” he said. I replied, “In 1942, Thomas Keeley told you that your Mother was Annie Gifford and your Father was John George Snow. He knew the truth, but chose not to tell you.”

“I trusted Tom Keeley - all of us kids did. He was all we had in Canada,” he said. Mom reached out and grasped his hand. His face betrayed a mix of joy and pain when he said, “They had the nerve to call *me* a ‘Bastard!’”

Your Grandparents appear not to have had any more children. Women usually had children two years apart, so perhaps there were more Uncles and Aunts born between 1885-1891, when your Grandmother Emily was 27-34 years old.

Your Uncle George Frederick Snow married Ann Eliza Storer on 25 December 1901 in Battersea when they were both 22 years old. She was literally “the girl next door,” as he lived at 47 Alfred Street and she lived at 49 Alfred Street.

They had seven children. Your Cousins were: Annie E. Snow (1902), John G. Snow (1904), Arthur R Snow (1907), Florence A Snow (1910), Albert E Snow (1911) Thora K Snow (1915), and Ernest D Snow (1920).



George F Snow



George F Snow Ann Eliza Storer

Your Uncle, Grandfather, and Father were all carpenters, house decorators, and painters. I guess we come by these skills honestly. They likely worked together from 1890-1900, and your Father and Uncle may have apprenticed with your Grandfather.

Your Uncle George and Aunt Ann moved to Tooting in 1904 where they had the first two of their seven children. Their other five children were born in Croydon from 1907-1920. They lived a short distance away from your Grandfather.

Your Uncle George was at your Grandfather's home at Dean Road when your Mother likely announced she was pregnant and her Stepson William Henry Snow was your Father. This must have caused quite a rift in the family.

Amy wrote in 1980 "I think the argument was over my Mother and Uncle Bill. Freddy, as I always called him, was about two years old, he was toddling. The next thing I remember Jack, Dad, and myself were living at Dean Road Croydon." Amy died in 1983.



Amy Snow 1932



Amy Snow 1952



Jack Snow (2) John George Snow (51) Croydon Surrey England

There appeared to be no further contact between your Parents and the Snow family. Your Uncle George maintained a close relationship with your Grandfather, but not with his Brother - your Father. George served in WWI when he was 35-40 years old. He worked as a Builder's Foreman and lived his life in Croydon. He died in 1952 at the age of 73..

Parents: William Henry Snow and Annie Gifford/Snow

Dad, your enigmatic Mother was very difficult to trace, but Robin eventually found her Birth Certificate. She was born on 25 June 1878 at 4 Patmore Street Wandsworth Battersea.

This was about one block away from where your Grandfather John G Snow, Aunt Emily, and Uncle George lived in 1881. Perhaps this is where the Snow and Gifford paths' first crossed. She was born in the same year when Grandfather married his First Wife.

I discovered a few things about your Gifford ancestors. Your Great Grandfather John Gifford was born in 1810 and married Hannah Boffin in Dilton Marsh Wiltshire 1830.

Your Grandfather William Gifford (1837) was the eldest of seven children. Your Granduncles were: Edward Gifford (1830), William Gifford (1842), Walter Gifford (1844), Robert Gifford (1849), Edward C. Gifford (1851), and Thomas Gifford (1852).

Your Grandfather William Gifford was born in Dilton Marsh, Somerset. Your Grandmother Catherine Pearce was born in Norton St. Philips, Somerset. They married about 1862 and had six children.

Your two Uncles and three Aunts were: William Gifford (1864), Ada Gifford (1866), Emma Gifford (1867), Frederick Gifford (1872), and Lilian Gifford (1876). Your Mother was the youngest of these six children.

Dad, the Snow family underwent dramatic changes a few years before you were born. Your Grandmother Emily died of cancer on 6 February 1904 when she was 46 years old. She and John G Snow had been married for 26 years.

Three months after she died, your Father William Henry (21) married his First Wife Agnes Maud Moore (21). Four months after your Grandmother Emily died, your Uncle George (25) and Aunt Ann had their second child. Their first was two years old.

Your Grandfather John G Snow married his Second Wife - your Mother Annie Gifford. This happened six months after your Grandmother died.

Your Uncle George (30) and his family moved to Croydon in 1908. Your Father William and his First Wife Agnes may have moved to Croydon around this time as well.

When your Grandmother died, your Grandfather, your Mother, your Father, his First Wife, your Aunt, Uncle, and two Cousins all lived at the same address.

Your Grandfather John G Snow (48) married your Mother Annie Gifford (26) on 1 August 1904 in Tooting. She made herself four years older on the Marriage Certificate to make a difference in their age of 15 years instead of the actual 22 years.

I imagine this marriage was unpopular with your Grandmother's family - the Cheer's. Your Grandfather married a woman 22 years younger than he, and only six months after he became a widower.

Who knows what your Uncle George (25), your Father William (21), thought of this marriage? It was, after all, their Mother who died, and their Father who remarried a much younger woman who was 1 year older than her stepson George and 5 years older than her stepson William.

Your Grandparents William Gifford (67) and Catherine Pearce/Gifford (67) witnessed their marriage. William Gifford was a Carpenter and perhaps they worked together with the Snows.

Your Grandfather and Mother moved to Croydon in 1905 where they had their two children. Your Half Brother Jack was born in 1905 at 141 Sussex Road, Croydon. He was named after your Great Grandfather John Allen Snow (1831).

Your Half Sister Amy was born in 1907 at 144 Selsdon Road, Croydon. She was named after your Grandaunt Amy Snow (1874) and your Aunt Alice Emily Snow (1881). The first few years of this marriage must have been difficult as John G Snow was often unemployed.

Jack and Amy had to go to St. Peter's Church for food from the soup kitchen. In the meantime, something happened in your Father's marriage. His Wife Agnes (26) may have died, or they may have separated.

Interestingly enough, 1905 was the year Mom's Parents decided to leave London to sail to Canada to settle in Port Arthur, Ontario.

Another significant event was that your Father William Henry Snow joined the British Army on March 8 1910 – 5 months after you were born. He served until 8 Jul 1919 as a Sergeant.

“What!” my Father said. I replied, “Yes, he served in France and Kenya and was wounded once in the hand and once in the stomach. Somehow he managed to be home long enough to have your two brothers and two sisters.”

“Do you know anything more about my Father?” he asked. I replied, “Actually a lot more than I know about you Mother. To this day, I was unable to find any photographs of her.”



William Henry Snow Kenya Africa 1914



William Henry Snow Kenya Africa 1914

NOTE—This Certificate is to be issued without any alterations in the manuscript.

WARNING.—If this Certificate is lost a duplicate cannot be issued. You should therefore on no account part with it or forward it by post when applying for a situation.

Certificate of discharge of No. 200066 Rank Sgt
 Name SNOW William Henry
Surname. Christian Names in full.
 Unit* and Regiment or Corps from which discharged 1st London Regt.
* The unit of the Regiment or Corps such as Field Co. R.E., I.I.T., or M.T., A.S.C., etc., is invariably to be stated.
 Regiment or Corps to which first posted 1st London Regt.
 Also previously served in WAR
 Only Regiments or Corps in which the soldier served since August 4th, 1914, are to be stated. If inapplicable this space is to be ruled through in ink and initialled.
 Specialist Qualifications (Military).....
 Medals, Clasp, Decorations and Mentions in dispatches N.I. N.I. N.I.
* N.I. ONE Red & TWO BLUE. Wound Stripes ONE. To be inserted in words.
 Has served Overseas on Active Service? Yes
 Enlisted at 15th Battalion Signal on 8th March 1910
*Each space is to be filled in and the word "nil" inserted where necessary. To be struck out in ink if not applicable.
 He is discharged in consequence of Para 392 (X.VI)
K.R. No longer physically fit for War Service.
 after serving N.I. years* N.I. days with the Colours, and Eight years* 319 days in the Army Reserve or Territorial Force } Strike out whichever inapplicable.
*Each space is to be filled in and the word "nil" inserted where necessary; number of years to be written in words. †Service with Territorial Force to be shown only in cases of soldiers serving on a T.F. attestation.
 Date of discharge 21st Jan 1919 Signature W. H. Snow and Rank Capt.
 to Officer i/c London Records (Place).
 Description of the above-named soldier when he left the Colours.
 Year of Birth 1883 Marks or Scars Stomach
 Height 5 ft. N.I. in R. Hand Right
 Complexion Pale
 Eyes Grey Hair Grey



William Henry Snow Croydon Surrey England 1919

R. G. Camp,
Blackdown
Hants.
June 18th 1919.

No 200066 Sgt. SNOW, W. H. has, during the last two years, been on my immediate staff almost exclusively engaged on the varied pioneer jobs required. He has performed those duties in a thorough way to the satisfaction, not only of myself, but to Brigade Command Inspectors who have frequently noted our talkative. His working model of a Lewis Gun has been adopted by the Army Ordnance Corps & is now in use throughout the British Army.

I give this appreciation of Sgt Snow's value to me the Battalion generally quite unasked, & can secure any team

who may in the future become his employer, that he will in Snow find thoroughly reliable, steady & industrious with initiative & gentlemanly bearing.

I regret to lose his services.

R. G. Camp
(R. G.) Blackdown H.

He made sure he had a referral letter before he was discharged.

*R E Camp
Blackdown Hants*

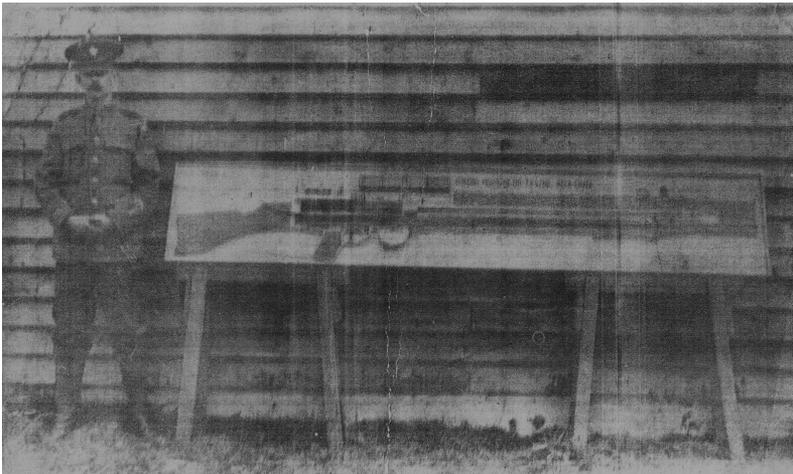
Jan 18, 1919

No. 200066 Sgt. Snow has, during the last two years, been on my musketry staff almost exclusively engaged on the varied pioneer jobs required. He has performed these duties in a splendid way to the satisfaction, not only of myself, but to Brigade Command Inspectors who have frequently visited my battalion.

His working model of a Lewis Gun has been adapted by the Army Ordinance Corps and is now in use throughout the British Army.

*I give this appreciation of Sgt Snow's value to me and the Battalion generally quite unsolicited, and can assure any person who may in the future become his employer, that he will, in Snow find thoroughly reliable, steady, industrious with initiative and gentlemanly bearing.
I regret to lose his services.*

E. Yardell 1st (Reg) London



William Henry Snow WWI London England
Lewis Machine Gun Instructor

He had something to do with modifying the Lewis Machine Gun or making a working model of one. In 1925 he wrote to the War Ministry

Tel. No.—Vict. 9400.

Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to—
The Under-Secretary of State,
The War Office,
London, S.W. 1.
and the following number quoted.

WJC/BS.



THE WAR OFFICE,
LONDON, S.W. 1.

10 March, 1925.

84/Claims/1402. (A.4.b.)

Sir,

I am directed to refer to your letter dated 16th February 1925, and previous correspondence regarding a Lewis Gun Model, and in reply to acquaint you that whilst your work in this connection is fully appreciated, the model involves nothing in the nature of an invention for which a reward can be granted.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

C. R. Gillett

for

Director of Artillery. (II).

W. H. Snow, Esq.,
8, Shellgate Road,
Clapham Junction,
S. W. 11.

*The War Office London SW1
10 Mar 1925*

I am directed to refer you to your letter dated 16 Feb 1925, and previous correspondence regarding a Lewis Gun Model, and in reply to acquaint you that whilst your work in this connection is fully appreciated the model involves nothing in the nature of an invention for which a reward can be granted.

I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant

C R Gillett for Director of Artillery

*W H Snow, Esq
8 Shellgate Road
Clapham Junction SW 11*

Sounds like he felt he was entitled to some money for his working model of the Lewis Gun. There seems to be a family history of letter-writing to bureaucracies.

Dad asked, "Where on earth did you get this picture?" I replied, "Your Half Sister Peggy mailed it to me." He just grinned and said, "Another Half Sister?" There was a long pause, and he said, "My Father had three wives?"

I replied, "It appeared that your Parents were no longer living together in 1925. This may explain how your Brother Reg and Sister Gladys and Violet taken 'into care' by Barnardo's on Sept 15, 1926.

There was a shocked look on my Parents' faces, and Bonnie suggested we take a break and eat our sandwiches.

Three Snow Siblings 'In Care' 1926

Grandfather: John George Snow (70)

Father: William Henry Snow (43)

Mother: Annie Gifford/Snow (48)

Fred G Snow (17) In Canada

Brother: William Alfred Snow (14) with William Henry Snow

Sister: Violet Snow (12) Barnardo's

Sister: Gladys Snow (8) Barnardo's

Brother Reg Snow (6) Barnardo's

Half Brother: Jack Snow (21)

Half Sister: Amy Snow (19)

I don't know the circumstances of how or why these three were taken from you Mother. You were deported to Canada a year earlier. 'Deported?' Dad said. I replied, "Many would say you were transported, emigrated, sent, etc.'" He said, "Yes, it's not like I had the choice of staying in England."

Mom said, "It's a good thing you picked Canada, because I was here waiting for us to find each other!"

Your left her a year earlier and that left your Mother (48) to look after Vi (12), Gladys (8) and Reg (6).

Your Father William Henry Snow (43) left your mother to live with a younger woman Leah Lassman (22) who was pregnant. He took your brother William Alfred Snow (14) along to live with he and Leah.

William Alfred did not get along with his Stepmother who was only 8 years older than he, and he was thrown out to fend for himself at age 15. According to the Barnardo file, it was because he called her a 'filthy' name and she claimed he owed her rent.

Your Grandfather and Leah had a daughter Peggy in 1926 who is another Half Sister of yours. Her mother Leah died in 1947 at age 43 when Peggy was 11 and she was sent to live with her Mother's people. Your Father was 64 when Leah died.



William Henry Snow (64) Leah Snow (43) 1947

My Mom looked at my Dad and said, “So your Grandfather married his second wife who was 22 years younger, and your Father married his third wife who was 20 years younger, and ...” They all looked at me and Dad said, “It’s OK, I broke the pattern!: Bonnie just raised on eyebrow and gave me ‘the look’ that I interpreted as, “Don’t even think about it!”

In 1938 your Sister Gladys (24) and Brother William Alfred (22) found each other. She introduced him to you Mother (60) who was in hospital with diabetes. The hospital wanted them to pay for her stay in hospital.

The only reason your siblings were not deported is that the Canadian Government decided that perhaps it was not a good idea to have children under 15 years old sent to Canada.

This was after 50 years of the scheme shipping children as young as six years old. The only reason William Alfred (Bill) was not taken was that he was 14 and school leaving age, so assumed to be able to fend for himself.



Gladys Snow (8) Reg Snow (6) Vi (12) 1926

"I was only able to get records from Barnardo's for Reg. Gladys wrote and told me she has no memories of her mother at all as she was so young when she was taken."

"Wait a minute," Dad said, "What do you mean this Gladys wrote to you?" I replied, "Yes, that's right - your Sister Gladys is very much alive, and intend to visit her in England." There were a great many tears, hugs, and blubbering as we are wont to do.

I told them how moved Gladys was to have received a Christmas card from me. It was the first one she ever had from a 'Snow.' She was unaware of your Mother's attempts to see her, Reg, and Gladys. She was told her Mother was dead.

I said, "I also intend to write a book about your story - somehow." Mom said, "Of course you will!" Bonnie said, "Tell them the rest of the story, Per."

Your Brother Reg was placed in a foster home in Stowmarket Suffolk that was 50 miles (32km) away from your foster home that you left in 1922.



Reg Snow (Right) Age 6-14 Stowmarket Suffolk 1926-1934
Barnardo Foster Home

He never spoke of his time there until after he and Freda were married for a long time. He said he was treated well and kept in touch with Mrs Thorndyke for a few years after he left. Instead of being deported, Barnardo's sent him to Watt's Naval Training School.



Reg Snow (15-17) Watts Naval Training School 1935-1937

In 1937 he worked at Searle Aircraft as a Sheet Metal Worker in Camden Town. There was a note that he was thinking of working on a merchant ship that was going to Canada, but WWII came along and he enlisted.

One week after he was admitted to Barnardo's, Your Mother wrote and asked where Reg was and was told that he was in Stowmarket, 96 mi (150 km) from London.

The next month she wrote and asked if she could visit Vi and Gladys and was told visiting was allowed every 3 months. I imagine if poverty was a reason for apprehension, then she likely could not afford that.

In December 1926 your Mother sent parcel of toys to Barnardos that were not delivered. Gladys told me she never saw her Mother again after she was 'in care.'

My Father said, "Even people in prison are allowed visits from their family. Why were we children 'in care' not allowed to have visits from our family?"

I replied, "Sadly, Dad, that was part of their motive – to make sure family ties were broken forever." My Mother said, "That is truly cruel!"

I had to tell them that the organizations routinely tampered with correspondence. They removed return addresses from letters. They censored offensive passages such as pleas to return to England, and intercepted correspondence from British friends. These letters still lay in the agencies' files. They isolated the children and severed their familial ties (Parr 72-76).

The next year your Mother let them know of a new change of address. She asked if Reg could be transferred to Woodford Bridge in London but that was denied.

A few months later she sent a parcel for Reg and asked if he could be transferred to Boys Garden City London and that was denied. The parcel was not delivered.

The next year she wrote Barnardo's of a new address and was advised by Barnardo's to write to them for news of Reg and not write to Stowmarket.

Barnardo's stated that my Grandmother's actual letters were not kept as "they were not of historical importance."

Oddly, they kept every letter sent to them by a foster parent, landlady, employer, etc.

I believe she must have written to the Waifs and Strays to find out where you were, and met with the same result. I wonder if the missing pages they called 'administrative trivia' were actually accounts of your Mother's attempts to locate you.

Between 1933-1934, your Sister Gladys (15-16) was at the Barnardo Girls Village Home in Barkingside Essex. She wrote Barnardo's asking for information about Reg and Vi.

In 1937, Reg (16) wrote and asked for his birth certificate and the whereabouts of his Sister Gladys (21). He was told they did not know where she was as she was in service somewhere.

Marriages

Your Brother William Alfred married Eva Pope in 1939. They had two sons Peter and Arthur who died in 2004.



Arthur Snow

Your Sister Vi (25) married James A on March 25, 1939 had a daughter they named Gladys after your Sister in 1940, and a son named James in 1942.



Violet Lilian Beatrice Snow 1914-1998

The marriage failed and she and her husband separated. London was being heavily bombed.



London Bombing 1942

Who could she turn to? She believed her parents were dead and had no Snow or Gifford family to turn to other than her siblings with whom she had little contact. She placed Gladys (2) and James (4 months) with Barnardos.



James A.

When Jim was five years old, he was placed in a County Council Home in Essex. When he was 9, he was placed in a foster home where he lived there until he was 18 years old in 1960.

Barnardo's contacted him and asked him if he could assume responsibility for his Sister Gladys. Until then, he never knew he had a Sister! I was not surprised by now to learn that yet another child in care had a sibling about whom they never knew. He agreed and they lived together for a few years.

They found their Mother Vi (56) in the early 1970's when they were in their 30's. They did not know why they were placed with Barnardo's and know nothing of their Father or their Grandparents - your Parents.

Jim and his Mother had been estranged for a number of years, and he decided to check up on her. He found her in a very bad way and arranged to have her admitted to a Long Term Care facility. She died in 1988



Violet Snow Violet Snow 1914-1988

I sent a picture of you to your Nephew Arthur. He pinned it to his bulletin board by his desk. Late one evening he recalled a memory 'long since buried.' He was 10 years old in 1948 when his Mother Eva took him to meet his Grandmother - your Mother (70).

He recalled a gas-lit corridor and a basement apartment. The brown door had the number '1' on it. He described her as an old woman who sat in a wooden chair with a crocheted headrest. She held his hand, kissed his cheek, and plied him with jam sandwiches and a banana - a rare treat in those days. This was the only time he saw her.

Your Sister Gladys married William W in 1942 and had a daughter Theresa born in 1948 and Susan in 1959.



William W and Gladys Snow 1942 England

World War II

Your Brothers Reg and William Alfred both served in WWII. Reg served in the Navy but suffered a nervous breakdown and was invalided out. He and Freda did not have children and Reg died in 1984. Reg died on 13 March 1984, ironically the same day my Father received his final letter from the Children's Society.

Ironically, my Father wrote a letter to the Children's Society in 2 March 1984 and received a letter from them dated 13 March 1984 - the day his Brother died. He wrote his final letter to them on 31 March 1984. I wonder if he had some unusual premonition about his unknown Brother Reg.



Reg Snow (24) WWII England 1944



Reg Snow and Alfreda 1952



Reg Snow 1970

Dad said, "These are my Brothers? They have pointy noses like most of you kids. I always thought it was a 'Perry' thing - but maybe it is a 'Snow' thing. Mom said, "What do you mean, 'pointy?' I call it 'Distinguished!'"

Your Brother William Alfred (28-35) was with the Royal Artillery and East Surrey Regiment in WWII. He served in North Africa, Italy, Greece, and Palestine.

Sometime during the war, your Sister-in-Law Eva, and your Nephews Arthur (5) and Peter (2) were bombed out of their home. They had nowhere to live and apparently sought our your Father who slammed the door in their faces.

William Alfred returned to England in 1947 and this was the first time Peter saw him, as he had left England shortly after Peter was born. Your Nephew Arthur told me his Father William Alfred was shell-shocked, exhausted, and never the same after the war. Following the war, he worked for the General Post Office until he retired. He died in 1991.



William Alfred Snow (33) WWII England



William Alfred Snow (33) WWII England

Your Brother Bill (79) died in 1991 in a Home for the Aged in London, England. He had only been there a few months. Your Sister-in-law Eva (80) died in 1993.

One of the many ironies in this saga was finding out that while you were working at Canada Car during WWII making war planes, your Father was working at an aircraft factory in London.



William Henry Snow (62) Aircraft Factory London England 1975

Your Father died on Jan 24 1959 at the age of 75 at NW Hospital Hamstead London. He was living at 44 Malden Road St Pancras London England. He is apparently buried in Highgate Cemetery, London.

Your Half Sister Peggy (21) was the informant on the Death Certificate, and lived at the same address when he died. She briefly stayed with your Brother William Alfred (46) and Eva (43) for a time after his death.

It is unclear who attended his funeral other than your Half Sister Peggy. Of his 8 children 7 believed him to be dead most of their lives and only William Alfred had minimal contact with him.

Your Mother died on Aug 10 1954 at the age of 76 at Lambeth Hospital and is buried in Streatham Cemetery Tooting Wandsworth. She was living at 7 Radnor Buildings Carlisle Lane Lambeth London England.

Reg (34) was the informant on the Death Certificate and he made the funeral arrangements. She was listed as the widow of William Henry Snow even though he was still alive when she died and apparently paid for the funeral expenses.

It is unclear who attended her funeral. Of her 7 children, 4 were 'in care' and told she was dead when they were taken. Two had not seen her since they were very young and believed she was dead. They only one not 'in care' (Reg) had only seen her once before she died.

Your Brother Reg located your Mother (74) and lived in the same building as she for two years. Freda only met your Parents, Brother, and Sisters once. She described your Mother as an accomplished pianist - even though she was missing a finger - and 'well spoken.'

She did not have any photographs of her. She described your Father as 'nice,' and said his home had 'exquisite furniture,' as he was a Journeyman Carpenter.

Robin's extraordinary help allowed me to identify many generations of Snow's. Broken branches of the family tree have been spliced together, roots have been revitalized, and family connections re-established.

Like everyone else, Dad, you **always** belonged to a family. You are not just the product of one man named Snow and one woman named Gifford. You had two parents, who had two parents, who had two parents, etc.

The Waifs and Strays Society forcibly removed you from this intricate family network. It was their deliberate policy to shred this network. Like any fabric, if you pull one strand out of the weave, you weaken it. These are 'your people.'

As I passed him the Snow Descendant Tree, a gust of wind came through the trees. It was strong enough to make the poplar leaves tremble and the delicate bark of the birches flutter. It blew the sheet away and I ran after it. I retrieved it and looked back at Mom, Dad, and my Wife sitting at the picnic table.

I thought I heard something in the breeze that passed by me. It sounded for a moment like soft whispers of English accents. The air was still again. I walked back to the picnic table, and gave him the Descendant Tree.

I said, "Mom and Dad, let me introduce you to the Snow Family."

The Snow Family Tree

DESCENDANTS OF JOHN ALLEN SNOW KENT, ENGLAND, 1812

- .1 John Allen SNOW born 1832 Canterbury Kent England
+ Ann Dyason born 1832 Canterbury Kent England

- .. 2 John George SNOW born August 1858 Margate Kent England Died
8 March 1940 Croydon Surrey England
+ (First Wife) Emily Jane CHEER born 30 October 1857 Wandsworth
Battersea married 11 June 1878 Walworth Surrey England Died
6 February 1904 Upper Tooting Surrey England

- ... 3 George Frederick SNOW born 9 December 1879 Battersea Surrey
England Died 14 February 1952 Croydon Surrey England
+ Anne Eliza STORER born 1879 England married 25 December
1901 Battersea England Died 1960
4 Annie Emily SNOW born 23 November 1902 Tooting Graveney
Surrey England married 22 December 1923 Croydon Surrey
England Died 1990 Tasmania
+Wallace T born 1901 Isle of Wight England,Died 1975 Greenwich
London, England
5 Dorcas T born 1925 Woolwich Kent England
5 Joan T born 1926 Woolwich Kent England Died 1994 Tasmania
5 Wallace T born 1931 Woolwich Kent England

- 4 John G SNOW born 16 June 1904 Upper Tooting Surrey England,
Died 29 July 1974 England
+Alice born 1905 Croydon Surrey England married 27 December
1930 Died 19 September 1968 Croydon Surrey England
5 Ronald SNOW born 1931 Croydon Surrey England
5 William SNOW born 1933 Croydon Surrey England
5 Eric SNOW born 25 September 1936 Croydon Surrey England

- 4 Arthur SNOW born March 1907 Wandsworth Battersea England
Died 1908 Croydon Surrey England

- 4 Florence SNOW born September 1910 Croydon Surrey England
Died 1911 Croydon Surrey England

- 4 Albert SNOW born March 1911 Croydon Surrey England Died 1912
Croydon, Surrey, England
+Thora SNOW born 29 November 1915, Croydon Surrey England,
Died 1916, Croydon, Surrey, England

- 4 Ernest SNOW born 21 September 1920 Croydon Surrey England
Died 27 December 1997 Australia
+Joan born 1925 England married 1946 England

5 L. SNOW born 1959 England
5 S. SNOW born 1965, Australia
...3 Alice Emily SNOW born 3 August 1881 Wandsworth Battersea,
England

...3 William Henry SNOW born 29 April 1883 Wandsworth Battersea
England, Died 24 January 1959, Hampstead, England
+ (First Wife) Agnes Maud MOORE born 1883 married 7 May 1904
Wandsworth, Battersea, England

...3 William Henry SNOW born 29 April 1883 Wandsworth Battersea
England Died 24 January 1959 Hampstead England
+ (Second Wife) Annie GIFFORD born 25 June 1878 Battersea
England Died 1 August 1954 England

....4 Frederick George SNOW born 17 September 1909 Balham Died 17
September 1994 Thunder Bay Ontario
+Gertrude Mabel Emily PERRY born 23 March 1913 Minnedosa
Manitoba married 5 September 1935, Port Arthur, Ontario
5 Gary Frederic SNOW born 1 June 1936 Port Arthur Ontario
5 Karen Victoria SNOW born 12 August 1938 Peninsula Ontario
5 Sandra Gale SNOW born 5 December 1940 Fort William Ontario
5 Perry Alan Wayne SNOW born 11 October 1944, Fort William
Ontario
5 Rodger Maurice SNOW born 11 January 1946 Fort William
Ontario
5 Wendy Anne Pamela SNOW born 16 February 1955, Fort
William Ontario

....4 William Alfred SNOW born 29 August 1912 Tooting London Died
1991 London England
+ Eva Pope born 1908 England married 21 June 1936 St Pancras
London England Died 1993 England
5 Arthur SNOW born 22 May 1938 Marylebone London England
5 Peter SNOW born 24 January 1941 Wiltshire England

....4 Violet Lilian Beatrice SNOW born 15 March 1914 Wandsworth
Battersea, England Died September 1998 London England
+ James A born 15 August 1910 Edrum Berwick Scotland married
25 March 1939, London, England
5 Gladys A born 13 October 1939 Lambeth London England
5 James A born 27 March 1942 Newington Southwark England

....4 Gladys Elsie SNOW born 22 August 1918 Wandsworth Battersea
+ William W born 1918 England married 1936 England
5 Theresa W born 1938 England
5 Susan W born 1948 England

....4 Reginald William SNOW born 10 December 1920 Wandsworth,
Battersea, England, Died 13 March 1984 London England
+Freda born 1928 Ireland married 26 March 1952, London England

...3 William Henry SNOW born 29 April 1883 Wandsworth Battersea
England Died 24 January 1959 Hampstead England married 1937
England

+ (Third Wife) Leah Lassman born 1908 England
 4 Peggy SNOW born 1938, England

..2 John George SNOW born August 1858, Margate, Kent, England, Died
 8 March 1940, Croydon, Surrey, England
 + (Second Wife) Annie GIFFORD born 25 June 1878, Battersea,
 England Died 10 August 1954 Lambeth England married 1 August
 1904 Tooting Surrey, England
 3 John Allen SNOW born 10 July 1905 Croydon Surrey England
 Died 26 April 1996 Cork, Ireland

+Margaret born 1906 Croydon Surrey England married 25 July 1936
 Croydon Surrey England Died 1989 England
 4 Eileen SNOW born 1938 Croydon Surrey England
 3 Amy Alice SNOW born 18 March 1907 Croydon Surrey England,
 Died 15 February 1983, Croydon, Surrey, England
 +Stephen J born 1904 Croydon Surrey England married 31 August
 1925, Croydon, Surrey, England
 4 Arthur J born 17 September 1926 Croydon Surrey England Died
 17 September 1999 Thornton Heath Surrey England
 4 Elizabeth J born 1928 Croydon Surrey England Died 1985 England
 4 Margaret J born 1936 Croydon Surrey England
 4 Reginald J born 1938 Croydon Surrey England
 4 Kathleen J born 1943 Croydon Surrey England

..2 William SNOW born 1860 Canterbury Kent England
 ..2 George Frederick SNOW born 1862 Canterbury Kent England
 ..2 Mary Ann SNOW born 1865 Canterbury Kent England
 ..2 William Henry SNOW born 1868 Canterbury Kent England
 ..2 Harry SNOW born 1871 Canterbury Kent England
 ..2 Amy SNOW born 1874 1862 Canterbury Kent, England
 ..2 Agnes SNOW born 1877 Canterbury Kent England

Dad studied the Ancestor Tree very carefully, shook his head, and said, 'Well, I guess I am a member of a family, even though I never knew them.'

I replied, "Yes, Dad, the moment you were born you were linked by blood to hundreds of other people. It was your birthright to know who you were."

He asked, "Did any of these relatives know of me before now?" I said, "No, but once people read my book, thousands of people all around the world will know who you are."

He smiled. Mom was overjoyed to see the names of her in-laws. She was extremely happy for him to know he had a family - just like everyone else. Her eyes filled with tears of love for him.

"Mom, I did not set out to research the Perry family but along the way, I discovered a lot of this ancestry. Mom, you are the product

of at least eight separate families back to the early 1800's. When you and Dad conceived me, I inherited the genetic contributions of 16 separate families." I am still research the Gifford's and hoping to find living relatives there too.

Dad said, "So, what living Snow relatives do I have again?"

Your sole surviving Sister is Gladys and I'll need to write to her more. She (76) has two daughters - your Nieces Susan (56) and Theresa (46).

They have two sons - your Grandnephews Mark (25) and Steven (19). Your Brother Reg and your Sister-in-Law Freda did not have children. Your Half Sister Peggy (74) is alive. She may be able to tell us much more about your Father.

Your Brother who I've been calling William Alfred but is really 'Bill' had two Sons. Your Nephew Arthur (62) has two daughters - your Grandnieces Coral (39) and Catherine (36). They have four children - your Great-grandnephew Michael (23), and twin Great-Grandnephew and Great-grandniece Benjamin and Kirstie (10).

Your Nephew Peter (59) has one Daughter - your Grandniece Emma (24). Your Nephew James (58) and his deceased sister have four children - your Grandnephews and Grandnieces - David (26), Shane (20), Jeanette (32), and Heidi (21).

Dad said, "I think the English word is 'gobsmacked' and the Canadian words are astonished and astounded - right Dearie?" Mom just smiled her enigmatic smile.

This meeting never happened. It should have happened. Had the Waifs and Strays Society only told him the truth, or given him the three pages of his Intake Record, he would have found his family.

They could have spared him a lifetime of anguish as to his identity. No one should lead their lives not knowing who they are.

Who has the right to steal anyone's identity?

PART IV: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE BRITISH HOME CHILD

Chapter 1: The Development of a Personal Identity

Your Parents conceived you in a moment of love. They were overwhelmed by the wonder of what their love produced when you were born. They knew you were a unique individual, the first time you grasped one of their fingers with your tiny hand. They were overjoyed simply because you were alive, healthy - and theirs. The unconditional love you felt when you were born was your birthright.

Only one of your Father's millions of sperm survived the frenzied search to find your other complementary half. Only one of your Mother's egg cells was reserved for you. These two infinitesimal cells found each other and united with an unseen spark of life to produce you.

All that is you was created the moment you were conceived. An extraordinary and predetermined program unfolded and knitted together an intricate combination of genes to guarantee your uniqueness.



Fetal Development

The greatest miracle in the world is repeated every time a child is born. From the beginning of time billions of people have been born, but never one exactly like you. Until the end of time, billions more will be born, but there will never be another one exactly like you. No one will ever think your thoughts, feel your feelings, or experience life exactly as you (Mandino 97-98).

The Psychiatrist Carl Jung theorized that a powerful spiritual inheritance is transmitted at the moment of our conception. It lives in our subconscious mind, and may contain all the life experiences of all of our progenitors. The collective experience of **all** of humanity may be present in **all** of us.

The first year of your life is a critical period of your development. You and your Mother formed a wondrous unique relationship. The nature of this relationship formed the basis of all other relationships you would have in your life.

This included your most important relationship - the one you have with yourself. Your Mother is the one who taught you to love and trust. The exquisite subconscious program that was designed to ensure your survival began to operate at the moment of your conception. It relentlessly works 24 hours a day on your behalf throughout your life.

Before you were born, it automatically regulated your heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature, and breathing. It also recorded the repetitive, relentless, and rhythmic sound and feel of your Mother's heart beat. It indelibly etched this record into your being.

Mothers universally rock their children at a rate 70-80 beats per minute. This coincides with the rate of their resting hearts. This frequency and pattern of sound have been used throughout history in healing ceremonies (Perry 7).

The Mother-Child bond reverberates through your being throughout your life. Your heart beats a subliminal sound that echoes your Mother's synchronized heart beat. Perhaps it beats a different sound that echoes your Family's heartbeats.

Death and distance do not muffle these unheard sounds. Have you ever 'sensed' something from a family member far away? Have you ever been prompted to contact them, to see if all is well? How are these unheard messages communicated?

A loving, stable Mother-Child relationship is a prerequisite for healthy child development. Maternal Deprivation is the term used to describe inadequate mothering, or deficient foster care.

It produces a lack of maternal identification and maternal bonding. Young children separated from their Mothers and placed in institutions invariably suffer from *anaclitic depression*. They cry continuously for the first few months and then became indifferent to adults. They lay with their eyes wide open and stare off into space. Their faces are expressionless, frozen, and immobile.

If **Maternal Deprivation** persists for more than five months, normal development is arrested or retarded. The result is that some children cannot walk unassisted and do not develop meaningful speech (Mussen 163).

The idea of Maternal Deprivation is not a recent one. As early as 1906, the Committee on Agricultural Settlements in the Colonies noted that there was an 'evil psychological effect' upon children separated from their parents (Parr 78).

The adverse effects of institutional care on young children have been studied for many years. The mortality rate for infants in American foundling homes in 1915 was 90-99% during the first year of admission. They died of a disease called '**merasmus**.' They 'wasted away' (Juhan, 43-44). In modern times, this is called a **Reactive Attachment Disorder of Childhood**.

The most severe form of deprivation experienced by children is loss of their Mothers in the first five years of life. This alone contributes to the development of ambivalent feelings about identity, love, and affection. It is known to be associated with feelings of lifelong depersonalization, alienation, and worthlessness.

Missildine described the three phases of a grief reaction that children experienced following separation from their Mothers (227-228). They first protested the only way they could. They shook their cribs, cried loudly for their Mothers, and anxiously looked for any sign or sound of her.

If they were strongly attached to their Mothers, their protests persisted for some time. Then despair ensued. They continued to whimper for their Mothers, but they gradually gave up hope of ever seeing them again.

They grudgingly accepted the food and care offered by their caretakers. They learned to avoid the risk of any form of attachment to transient caretakers. The third reaction was one of detachment. They withdrew into their lonely selves and responded to their caretakers with indifference.

Stroud described how children came into the care of the Waifs and Strays Society as a simple matter. He wrote they grieved, became quiet, found their bearings, and settled into the routine (Stroud 111).

The childhood experience of actual parental abandonment is most harmful. Children who were led to believe they were abandoned, are equally harmed. The mind does not always differentiate between an actual experience and a strongly held belief.

It is not hard to imagine the impact upon a young children of being lied to about their being abandoned and that their mothers were dead.

They told my BHC Father, Uncle, two Aunts and one Cousin that their mother was dead and they were abandoned by their Parents. If he believed what he was told, the impact was emotionally devastating.

He was 3½ years old when the Police apprehended him and the Vicar arranged to have him admitted to the Children's Convalescent Home. He had absolutely no memories of this. He had blocked this traumatic experience from his mind along with the operation to remove his tonsils.

He did remember the Police taking him away and his interpretation of perhaps he had run away or done something bad. No one told him any different, instead, the Waifs and Strays lied to him. He never saw his family again.

I was disappointed, but a little relieved when I did not obtain his hospital records. They may have contained some graphic descriptions of his adjustment to the hospital. It is painful enough to imagine his time there.

For the first year of your life, your physical growth was predominant. Your subconscious mind attended to your needs of nutrition, elimination, and sleep. It finely developed your senses of vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.

You learned to sit, crawl, stand, and walk. You learned to smile, trust, and love because of parental care taking. In the second year of your life, you became a more socialized person.

You continued to grow in height and weight. You walked more confidently and refined your motor skills. You used words in a meaningful way, and could comprehend questions and instructions.

In the second year of your life, your subconscious mind continued its important work. It determined the pace and sequence of your physical, emotional and cognitive development. It carefully monitored your progress, guided you, and helped you solve your problems.

Your conscious mind - the part that actively thinks and decides - was relegated to a position of secondary importance.

People addressed you by your name, and many other names. They bombarded you with positive and negative comments about yourself. These took the form of judgments such as, 'You are _____.' Your relatively weak conscious mind allowed these judgments to pass unfiltered and uncensored into your subconscious mind.

All of these comments were absorbed, recorded, and implanted in your subconscious mind. You believed everything everyone told you - especially about yourself.

If the majority of these messages were positive, you developed a positive self-image. Correspondingly, if the majority of these messages were negative, you developed a negative self-image.

Either way, portions of your adult identity are composed of these internalized judgments from others in this vulnerable period of childhood.

Some of these judgments became powerful determinants of your adult self-image and self-esteem. Suppose one of the early implanted beliefs was that, you were stupid. It would not matter if you were actually more intelligent than you believed yourself to be.

You would act according to your strongly held belief about your intelligence. This one belief could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. 'I am not very smart. I can't do anything right. When I try, I fail. I guess it's true. I am not very smart.'

This one belief could dramatically affect major life choices in education, vocation, and relationships.

You are, as a person, who you believe yourself to be.
You value yourself according to these beliefs.
Implanted beliefs can be blessings or curses.

The British Home Children had many negative beliefs implanted in their minds before they were of an age where they were capable of consciously accepting or rejecting others' judgments of them. They were depersonalized, stripped of their identities as someone's valued child, and bombarded with labels of inferiority.

As a young child, your Parents likely allowed you the freedom you needed to develop a degree of autonomy and at the same time set realistic limits for you. They reinforced the critical belief that you were a person of worth and that you belonged to a Family.

Your conscious mind developed so that you were able to exercise your judgment. You chose what to believe or disbelieve about yourself.

You could reject negative appraisals if they did not fit in with your definition of who you were. You independently developed your unique ideas about who you were. As an adult, you could readily answer the question of 'Who Are You?'

How important is your given name and surname to you? Would any another name suffice as a substitute to identify you? How would you feel about yourself and value yourself, if someone forbids you to use your name as the British Home Children were forbidden to use their names in the Homes?

We all resent being treated, 'Like a number.' How would you feel if your identity consisted solely of a number, as the British Home Children were identified? Some, like my Father, lived a large part of their lives having doubts their surnames belonged to them.

Two events of major significance occurred in your early childhood. Until you were two years old, you likely referred to yourself in the third person. If your name was Freddy, you said, "Freddy is hungry.' Then you underwent a remarkable transformation. You said, "I am hungry.'

This development coincided with the phenomenon of self-assertion. We call this period the "Terrible Two's.' It signifies the beginning of the evolution of your adult personal identity.

People said, "No" and "Don't," to you for two years and you reiterated the same statements in a defiant way for almost two years as a normal phase of healthy development..

Both events needed to occur for you to develop your independence and define your existence apart from others. The British Home Children lived in coercive environments. The Rule of Silence enveloped them. They were not allowed to speak, so they had little opportunity to assert themselves.

From the age of four onward, you developed your own unique identity. You learned you were a certain 'kind of a person,' and belonged to a group called a family.

You learned you were important because you were 'one of a kind.' You learned a consistent set of values that acted as your internal guidance system.

Without this, you might have floundered through life plagued with feelings of worthlessness and uselessness. The development of your identity did not evolve by itself.

Your Parents provided you with a definition of who you were - someone's valued child. The British Home Children had these aspects of their identities stolen from them.

We were all sometime, somewhere - children. There is no demarcation line where we ceased one day to be children and were transformed into adults the next day. Emotionally, the children we once were - and still are - live inside our adult shells. The little child in us laughs, cries, dreams, and imagines.

It is difficult to imagine my Father not being traumatized when he was forcibly removed from his family when he was 3½ years old. The Waifs and Strays Society transferred him to their Receiving Home in Balham where he stayed six weeks.

He may have experienced some separation anxiety when they removed him from here to put him in the hospital. They again placed him on a train alone to yet another unknown destination - the foster home. To this point, he had been institutionalized for 6 months of the first four years of his life.

He again may have struggled with terror during the train ride to the foster home. After eight years there, they again put him on a train alone and sent him to a Boys' Home.

Somehow, he learned to survive this brutal environment for 3½ years. When he was 15 years old, they put him on a ship and deported him to Canada. They put him on a train and shipped him to the Distribution Centre at Sherbrooke Quebec. I am surprised he did not develop a phobia for trains!

He was hospitalized for a year after he mangled his arm, and then enlisted in the Reserve Army. He spent a few years as a homeless itinerant labourer during the early years of the Great Depression.

He lived in a Relief Camp that was virtually a prison for three years. He lived 21 of his first 25 years of life in hospitals, foster care, Boys' Home, indentured farm labour, military, homeless, and controlled environments.

If separation from their families was the only trauma experienced by the British Home Children, other positive experiences may have mitigated these effects.

The British Home Children's experiences in Canada exacerbated their early childhood traumas of abandonment, isolation, and rejection in England.

The term Psychology derives from the Greek *psyche* (mind/soul) and *logos* (study). The issue of identity is crucial to Psychology. Your personal identity exists at the centre of your being. It is composed of the collection of beliefs you have about yourself.

Your definition of who you are restores any imbalance between what you think, how you feel, and what you do. Your thoughts, feelings, and behaviour must be congruent in order for you to feel a sense of wholeness and integrity.

Identity is the feeling you experience every time you say or think, "I." It is what allows you to feel, 'Yourself.' It is a feeling only you can experience. The British Home Children were not allowed to use their names or speak freely. They could hardly develop a sense of self.

It is difficult to imagine not knowing who you are. The most important relationship you can have is with yourself. It can be a positive and genuine relationship in which you know who you are and respect yourself.

It can be an image relationship in which you may not know who you are, but can respect the image you have of yourself.

It can be a rejecting relationship in which you know who you are, but do not respect yourself. Finally, you can be a stranger to yourself. You do not know who you are and cannot respect yourself.

You do not have a 'self' to which you can be 'true.'

In Hamlet (Act 1 Scene 3), Shakespeare wrote,

*This above all: to thine ownself be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.*¹⁹

The most important belief you have about yourself is your belief as to your worth/value. Upon what does your value as a person, depend? Does it depend upon occupation, attractiveness, others' appraisals, skills, money, or material possessions?

However you judge your worth, you may judge others the same way. If your personal yardstick for assessing your worth is wealth, you may judge the wealthy as more worthy and the poor as less worthy. It can help to buoy your self-esteem with the balloons of health, relationships, occupation, skills, money, and possessions.

How do you value yourself when these balloons break and you hold only the strings? Anyone can feel good about himself or herself when they are healthy, loved, employed, skilled, and have possessions. How do you value yourself when you are ill, alone, unemployed, unskilled, and possession-less?

Your true value as a person rests upon only one thing - your uniqueness as a human being. Death reminds us of a person's true worth - that their unique lives are irreplaceable. There has never been, nor will there ever be another exactly like you.

No one on earth ever has, or ever will have, your fingerprints, voice print, hair, eyes, skin, personality, and DNA structure. You may share many experiences with others, but no one will ever experience the same thing in precisely the same way as you.

If you know who you are, you can value yourself as a unique individual. If you do not know who you are, you cannot.

Most of us have an array of conflicting, contradictory, and coexistent appraisals of ourselves. There is a connection between your attitude towards yourself and your attitude towards others.

This attitude connection determines the nature of your relationships. While your level of self esteem varies over time, all that is important is the extent to which you occupy one position more than another over a lifetime.

Chapter 2: The Attitude Connection (Snow P 1988)

	Positive Towards Others	Negative Towards Others
Positive Towards Self	Trust - Trust	Trust - Trust
	Equality	Superiority
	Cooperative	Competitive / Domineering
	Mutual Respect	Respect - Contempt
	Healthy	Dependent / Vulnerable
	Acceptance - Acceptance	Acceptance - Rejection
	Approval - Approval	Approval - Disapproval
	Appreciation - Appreciation	Appreciation - Depreciation
	Offer - Offer	Offer - Seek
	Assertive	Aggressive
Move With	Move Against	
Love	Anger	
	Positive Towards Others	Negative Towards Others
Negative Towards Self	Mistrust - Trust	Mistrust - Mistrust
	Inferiority	Superiority / Inferiority
	Submissive	Enmeshed / Avoidant
	Contempt - Respect	Contempt - Contempt
	Dependent / Vulnerable	Mutually / Vulnerable
	Rejection - Acceptance	Rejection - Rejection
	Disapproval - Approval	Disapproval - Disapproval
	Depreciation - Appreciation	Depreciation - Depreciation
	Seek - Offer	Seek - Seek
	Passive	Passive / Aggressive
Move Toward	Move Toward / Move Away	
Fear / Guilt	Fear / Guilt / Anger	

The Positive / Positive Position:

You have an identity and know you are unique. You trust yourself and others. You believe you and others are equal as human beings. Your relationships are cooperative and healthy. You respect yourself and others as people.

You maintain a positive level of self-esteem independent of others' evaluations of your worth. You accept yourself and others- in spite of imperfections. You approve of the positive qualities in yourself and another. You appreciate yourself and others for who you and they are - unique individuals.

You and others share what you both need. Positive self-esteem is not a given. You assert yourself to protect yourself from the attempts of others who would elevate their self-esteem at your expense. You 'move with' people and are motivated by love.

You are most likely to move from a positive/positive position to a negative/positive position when your fear and guilt predominate.

Have you ever loved and known someone who loved and knew you?

The Positive / Negative Position:

You have an identity but an inflated self image. You trust yourself but distrust another. You believe you are superior to another. This belief may be a result of over-compensation for fears of inferiority and becoming submissive.

You are competitive and domineering in relationships, as you need to prove your superiority to another. You respect yourself but have contempt for another. You are unable to maintain a positive level of self-esteem independently of others' evaluations of your worth.

You are in a vulnerable position because your self-esteem requires you to keep others subservient to you. You accept, appreciate, and approve of yourself but reject, belittle, and disapprove of another. Your self-esteem appears to be high and you apparently offer what others needs.

Your style is aggressive as you maintain your inflated self-esteem by intimidating, dominating, and controlling another. You 'move against' people, motivated by anger. You are most likely to move from a negative/positive to a negative/negative position when fear and guilt predominate.

At an extreme level, this pattern is similar to Paranoid, Narcissistic, Antisocial, or Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorders.

People who fear becoming dependent or vulnerable, over-compensate for this and become dominant, aggressive, and controlling.

There is room in this description for a yet-undefined pattern I would call Bureaucratic Personality Disorders.

Have you ever been in a relationship where loved someone but dominated, belittled, and controlled another?

The Negative / Positive Position:

You do not know who you are, but believe you are nothing special. You do not trust yourself but naively place too much trust in another. You believe you are inferior to another. You are submissive in your relationships. You have contempt for yourself and yet treat others with respect.

You are unable to maintain a positive level of self-esteem independently of others' evaluations of your worth. You are in a vulnerable position since others' evaluations determine your sense of worth.

You reject, belittle, and disapprove of yourself and yet accept, appreciate, and approve of others. You seek love and respect from others. You passively comply and tolerate domination, intimidation, and aggression from others who maintain their self-esteem at your expense. You 'move toward' people, motivated by fear, guilt, and shame.

You are most likely to move from a negative/positive position to a negative/negative position when fear, guilt, and shame predominates. At an extreme level, this pattern is similar to Passive Dependent and Histrionic Personality Disorders.

People who fear becoming dominant, aggressive, and controlling over-compensate for this and become passive, submissive, and dependent as a result.

Have you ever been in a relationship where you loved someone and allowed them to dominate, belittle, and control you?

The Negative / Negative Position:

You do not know who you are, but believe you are nothing special but want to be. You do not trust yourself or others. You vacillate between believing you are superior and inferior to others. Your relationships vary from enmeshed to avoidant, in a confusing pattern of approach and avoidance. You have contempt for yourself and others. Have you ever been in a relationship that you would describe as a 'Love/Hate' relationship?

Your relationships are mutually vulnerable, as you and others are unable to maintain a positive level of self-esteem independently of each others' evaluations. You reject, belittle, and disapprove of yourself and others.

You seek love and respect from others, who seek the same from you. Neither is able to offer the same to each other. Your style is a confused one of 'move toward' and 'move away' from people, motivated by fear, guilt, anger, and shame.

You are most likely to move from a negative/negative position to a positive/negative position when anger predominates. At an extreme level, this pattern is similar to Schizoid, Borderline, Avoidant, and Passive/Aggressive Personality Disorders.

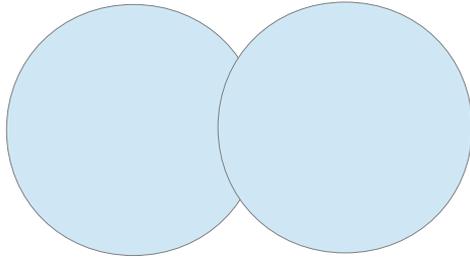
The British Home Children were predisposed to occupy the negative/positive or negative/negative position because their identities were taken from them and they were brainwashed into believing that they were inferior, worthless, abandoned, illegitimate, tainted by their origins. They felt ashamed of themselves, not for anything they did, but rather for who they were.

Many, out of necessity, developed lifelong coping strategies that deprived them of healthy relationships with themselves and others.

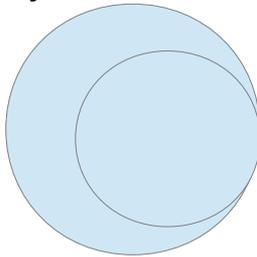
Chapter 3: Healthy versus Unhealthy Relationships

Most relationships are constantly changing. A healthy relationship operates in the healthy mode 90% of the time but can deteriorate into one of the other positions temporarily until the relationship returns to its normal state. No relationship is healthy all of the time.

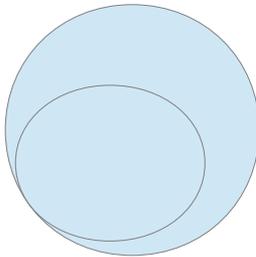
The unhealthy relationship operates in an unhealthy mode 90% of the time but can evolve into a healthy mode temporarily until the relationship returns to its normal state. No relationship is unhealthy all of the time. The incidences of health get magnified way out of proportion to their occurrence and perpetuate the unhealthy mode.



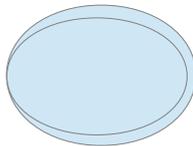
Healthy Mode: Offer + Offer



**Unhealthy Mode: 'Offer + Seek' Dependent
(Dominant/Submissive)**



**Unhealthy Mode: 'Seek + Offer' Dependent
(Submissive/Dominant/)**



**Unhealthy Mode: 'Seek + Seek' Mutually Dependent
(Enmeshed/Detached)**

The Universal Need

All anyone wants is to love another and be loved by another. Why should that be so hard? All anyone wants is to know and be known to another. Why should that be so hard? They are interconnected,

	KNOW	NOT KNOW
LOVE	GENUINE	IMAGE
NOT LOVE	REJECT	STRANGER

If you love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate and know who you are then you can have a genuine, authentic relationship with yourself. If you love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate and know who another is as a person, then you can have a genuine, authentic relationship with them. This is healthy.

If you love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate but don't know yourself as a person, then you will have an image relationship with yourself. If you love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate but don't really know who another is as a person, then you can have a image relationship with them. It will function but will lack intimacy. This is unhealthy.

If you don't love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate and don't know yourself as a person, then you will have a don't love relationship with yourself. You will reject your self. If you don't love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate but don't really know who another is as a person, then you can have a not love relationship with them, and reject them.

If you don't love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate and don't know yourself as a person, then you will have a stranger relationship with yourself. If you don't love, respect, accept, approve, appreciate but don't really know who another is as a person, then you can have a stranger relationship with them. There will be no relationship.

If our BHC relatives did not know who they were, how could they know another? If they never experienced love, respect, acceptance, approval, appreciation, how could they express it? If they never let themselves be known, how could they allow another to be known to them?

Chapter 4: The Childhood Trauma of 'Coming Into Care'

When people in financial distress exhausted all of their and their extended families' resources, they reluctantly led their children to the high-walled institutions and placed their children 'in care.'

Half of the children Barnardo admitted from 1882 -1908 were for economic reasons. They admitted another third of these cases for 'moral reasons.'

The sanctimonious attitudes towards the families of the poor persisted throughout the history of the British Child Deportation Scheme.

The child-care organizations attributed poverty to negligence and unemployment to idleness. They referred to common-law marriages of the poor as 'vicious' (Parr 62, 78).

Self-appointed 'Child-Savers' benevolently abducted (kidnapped) children. Some were so obsessed with rescuing children from their evil influences (families), that they actively searched for these children of the destitute.

The child-care organizations portrayed these families as evil, vicious, tainted, depraved, base, corrupt, immoral, and incorrigible. In modern times, they depicted them as irresponsible, unreliable, untrustworthy, and disreputable.

Throughout the history of the scheme, they saw the poor as undeserving of their children. The 'Child-Savers' ensured from the outset, that children in care would not know who they were.

In their minds, they were convinced they had rescued children, but in doing so, they destroyed their souls. Parents had to sign an Admission Form, that authorized the organization to 'bring the child up.' This allowed them to 'train' children and 'send' them to 'any situation in the United Kingdom' which included Canada and Australia.

Few parents anticipated their children would be deported as young as six years old. Once in care, the organizations limited, discouraged, or forbade family contact.

Most parents never knew of their children's welfare or whereabouts. Most children never saw their families again.

The organizations usually placed young children in a Receiving Home for assessment and distribution. Once admitted, the first door to their past was slammed shut - never to be opened again.

Admission into care was permanent, and was designed to remove children from their families forever. Children immediately and invariably suffered the traumatic experience of Maternal Deprivation. The younger were the children, the more severe the effects upon normal personality development.

From the Receiving Homes, children were placed on trains to foster homes, Boys' or Girls' Homes, or a ship to Canada. Once the train ride ended, another door to their past was irrevocably closed. Each step in the process added to their isolation and alienation from all that was familiar to them.

Those children who suffered the most their losses of identity were those who were deported at very young ages to Canada. Next were those who spent their entire childhood in the Homes and were then deported. Next, were those first placed in foster homes, then a Home, and then deported.

This is only because the foster homes offered them some semblance of a family life and exposure to normal daily life. At least in these placements, they were allowed to use their names and to speak. They were still alienated as non-persons, because they belonged to no one.

Children react to trauma differently, depending upon their ages. Infants can only cry. Their emotional expressions range from hyperactivity to apathy. They do not develop attachment nor do they learn to trust. Their eating and sleeping patterns are disrupted. Their language and motor skills are arrested. They fail to thrive physically.

Toddlers become hyperactive and do not develop social skills and independence. Preschool children display their distress through repetitive play, avoidance, clingingness, sadness, dissociation, and regression.

School age children react with anxiety, depression, and guilt. Their concentration is impaired and their language development is delayed. Adolescents act out with suicide attempts, substance abuse, delinquency, truancy, and self-mutilation. They suffer identity problems, personality disorders, and eating difficulties (Schwarz & Perry 10-11).

Enuresis was a widespread problem among the British Home Children. Estimates of incidence ranged from 10-66%. Canadians regarded this 'low habit' as an indicator of the children's 'low beginnings' and proof of their Parents' bad moral lives.

Enuretic children were seen as having weak constitutions and lacking in mental vigour and physical development. Some were deported back to England if they could not overcome this problem (Parr 103-104).

Chapter 5: Child Training or Brainwashing?

The 'training' referred to in the BHC literature was devoted to transforming children into domestic servants or farm labourers for the colony of Canada.

The child-care organizations did not merely 'train' children - they brainwashed them. The term was first used to describe the experiences of Allied prisoners in the Korean War. They were adults who had established identities before their capture.

For many, the simple knowledge they had loved ones was enough for them to survive their treatment. British Home Children were prisoners until they were 18 years old and had served their indenture as farm labourers in Canada. Their survival depended upon the speed of their conversion.

The brainwashing of helpless, dependent, and vulnerable children was relatively easy for the child-care organizations to accomplish.

The children were incapable of resistance and their Families were powerless to protect them.

Brainwashing is defined as the systematic effort to destroy an individual's former loyalties (family) and beliefs and to substitute loyalty to a new ideology or power (the child care organization).

The techniques of brainwashing usually involve: isolation from former associates and sources of information (family); an exacting regimen of absolute obedience (rule of silence) and humility (replace a name with a number); strong social pressures and rewards for cooperation; physical and psychological punishments for non-cooperation (the Daily Punishment Circle) Social ostracism, criticism, food deprivation (bread and water).

How do you brainwash children? You need to have total control over them to conduct a program of thought reform. You remove them from their families and assume absolute control of their time.

You make them feel powerlessness. You keep them ignorant of what is happening to them and how they are being changed. You strip them of their identities so they will lose confidence in their beliefs. You relentlessly attack their beliefs about his former identity to confuse them. You punish them whenever they displays behaviours consistent with their former identities.

You place them into a converted group. This group acts as models for them to imitate and provide approval once they begin to conform and comply.

You provide some rewards when they adapt to their new environment. They acquiesces because they fear the loss of these new relationships if they fail to convert. You work them hard, so they are too tired to resist.

If they asks questions, you tell them that their questioning proves there is something inherently wrong with them. You convince them they are evil. They cannot challenge you or the authoritarian structure in a highly controlled and coercive environment. They are always wrong (American Family Foundation 1).

The British child-care organizations began the process of thought reform by transforming the children into objects. The organizations publicly portrayed them as 'orphans' who had no Parents and Families.

The Child Migrants Trust researched thousands of cases over a seven-year period, and found only one child who had lost both Parents. It suited the pecuniary purposes of the organizations to portray their wards as orphans for 100 years.

They called them 'Waifs,' and implied they were 'pieces of abandoned property.' They were 'things,' rather than someone's Son or Daughter. This prevented the public from empathizing with the children as children similar to their own. The organizations depicted the families as undeserving of sympathy and unworthy of consideration.

This resulted in the children being treated as an inferior sub-category of the human race by their caretakers. Canadians regarded them in a similar way, and treated them accordingly.

Christian child-care organizations in Canada housed Aboriginal children in Residential Schools. They abused these children to 'take the Indian out of the Indian.' The British Home Children were dehumanized to 'take the taint of their origins out of them.' No one challenged, questioned, or opposed the child-care organizations' methods in England or Canada.

Brainwashing is a deliberate process that follows a predictable pattern (Lifton 1989). You place someone in a situation of extreme physical and psychological distress to make them amenable to changing their beliefs about themselves.

You apply intellectual, emotional, and physical pressure to make sure they convert. You make them confess, expose, and denounce their former 'evil' self. The experience a death and rebirth of their personalities.

You deprive them of basic necessities in the early stages of the process, and later encourage them to seek acceptance into a reformed group.

Their will and power to resist is weakened. They inevitably surrender their independence and identity. They become mentally and emotionally blank. While they are in this vulnerable state, you impose upon them a totally different personality.

There is a predictable sequence to the process of brainwashing (Lifton 1-6). Only the first six phases apply to the British Home Children, as adults usually experience the final phases.

The Brainwashing Process

1. Assault on Identity
2. Recognition of Guilt
3. Self Betrayal
4. Breaking Point of Basic Fear
5. Breaking Point of Total Conflict
6. Desperate Gratitude
7. Compulsion to Confess
8. Channelling of Guilt
9. Logical Dishonouring
10. Sense of Harmony
11. Final Confession
12. Ideological Rebirth
13. Transitional Limbo

Phase 1: Assault on Identity

The individual is physically and emotionally deprived to render him more suggestible. He regresses into a state of helplessness where he surrenders his autonomy. He is coerced into believing he is not the person he once thought he was.

Imagine you are a six-year-old child in London, England in 1913. Your Mother tells you she is taking you to see some people who will 'take care of you.'

You wear your best clothes. Your Mother holds back tears as you go through a large gate set into a high stone wall. The huge stone institution frightens you.

The people inside look down upon you and your Mother. They lead you away from your Mother and take you into a large hall where strange children stare at you with blank faces. It is eerily still and quiet.

Your caretakers take your best clothes from you. You will not see them again. They give you old, worn clothes, and ill-fitting shoes to wear. They cut your hair off in chunks. They bath you in a tub surrounded by the other children.

You wonder why the only sound is the splashing of the water in the tub. They roughly dry you with a thin towel and cover you with delousing powder. They say you are, 'Verminous.' You are in their 'care.'

You cry for your Mother. Someone slaps your face and says, 'You don't have a Mother anymore! I'm your Mother now!' Girls had to address their caretakers as 'Mother.' I have not heard of Boys having to address their caretakers as 'Father' but I'm sure 'Master' was acceptable. Since the indenture was a result of the Master-Servant Act, I wonder if they had to address the farmer as 'Master?'

You tell them your name. They slap you again and say, 'You don't have a name! You are Boy Number 14!' The other children just look away or look through you.

At night, you wet your bed, and the straw mattress stays wet for weeks. You cannot sleep because you are so afraid. You are never alone or away from the ever-present influence of your caretakers.

Peer monitors make note of your every deviation from what they define 'acceptable behaviours.' They report you to your caretakers for public punishment. They strip you bare and cane you in front of all the other blank-faced children. Every night some child is caned.

You are hungry and cold all the time. Your skin breaks out in sores and your scalp is covered with lice. You constantly work at scrubbing wooden floors in your short pants. You get slivers in your knees and you pull them out yourself.

They tell you your Mother is never coming to get you. They say she abandoned you because she did not want you any more. They say you are bad, like all the other children in the Home. You feel confused and completely helpless.

You believe what these powerful adults tell you. After a time, you began to believe you do not belong to anyone. They tell you your Mother is dead, you are a deserted Stray, and now you are an Orphan. When they strip you of your name, they strip you of your identity. You have serious doubts about your life before you were 'in care.'

You regard your present life in the institution as reality, and your past life in a family as fantasy. They tell you that you just imagined you were part of a family.

Phase 2: Recognition of Guilt

The individual is assailed unmercifully with messages and demands that make him feel guilty. His subconscious mind is impregnated with so many thoughts of his evilness that they seep into his conscious mind.

The thought of, 'You are evil,' becomes, 'I am evil.' His thinking becomes saturated with thoughts of personal evil. He is convinced he alone is the cause of his suffering. He is convinced he deserves to suffer. He expects nothing less than suffering.

As a helpless young child in such a situation, you are desperate for affection and approval from any source. Affection is not forthcoming, so you settle for approval. Powerful adults force you to comply with their expectations and demands. You internalize their negative appraisals. Your survival depends upon this.

They can beat you and starve you to death by withholding food. They once placed you on a bread and water diet for three days. You know you cannot do that again. You dare not use your name,

for fear of the punishment that would inevitably follow. People have names. You have a number. You are not a person.

They do not allow you to speak. They tell you that nothing you could say could be of any importance. You cannot smile or laugh. You learn the best way to not show feeling was to not feel. You 'numb' yourself.

They tell you that you are not who you believe yourself to be - a member of a family. They ask you hundreds of times, 'What did you do, to be in a Home?' You quickly assume that either you must have done something bad, or you were inherently bad. These are the only acceptable answers to their question. You respond by saying, 'I was bad.' They ask you why you were bad. You answer, 'I was evil.' They are pleased.

If you assert you have a family, they bombard you with questions you cannot answer. 'Who are they?' 'Where are they?' 'Why don't you live with them?' 'Why don't they come to see you?'

These onslaughts shatter your fragile self-esteem. They make you feel guilty, inferior, worthless, and ashamed - not so much for what you had done - but for who you are.

You are a Waif. You are a thing. You are tainted by your origins. The word, 'Family' fades from your thinking. It becomes synonymous with the words they use. They call your family, 'Your Evil Associations.'

Phase 3: Self Betrayal

Protestations of innocence are regarded as proof of guilt. The premise is one of, 'Only the guilty need to protest their innocence.' The individual learns his survival depends upon his confession of secrets already known to his caretakers. He is completely dependent upon them for food, clothing, and shelter.

His existence depends upon his compliance. His self-betrayal produces deep feelings of guilt and disloyalty. He confesses to win his caretakers' approval. Once this line is crossed, it is very difficult for him to turn back.

You cannot argue with your caretakers. You are a helpless and anonymous child. They make you eat spoiled food. They force you to wear dirty clothes. They do not change your soiled mattress and you sleep in a urine-soaked bed. They beat you and place you in a dark closet for days.

They tell you that your Parents were not married and that makes you an Illegitimate Bastard. They call your Parents 'vicious' and they deserve to be dead. You have to agree your Parents neglected you and did not provide for you. You agree you are 'Tainted by Evil.' You renounce your parents, identity, and origins.

Phase 4: Breaking Point of Basic Fear

The captive suffers unbearable emotional conflicts when he is estranged from all that is familiar and his own inner self. He fears total annihilation. His physical and mental integration breaks down. He becomes more anxious and depressed. He has delusions and hallucinations as his psyche tries to protect itself from a fear of total disintegration. He thinks of suicide.

You fear annihilation. You are completely estranged from your family, yourself, and the other children. You cannot speak with the other children because of The Rule of Silence. You do not trust some of them. You learn to dissociate yourself when they punish you or force you to watch others being punished. It is just as painful to watch other children being caned as to be caned yourself.

You have few other options other than learning to mentally absent yourself. You are a prisoner. No one knows where you are. You cannot defend yourself. You cannot run away. You are alone and on your own. You live in a state of constant fear.

Wild animals “play dead,” or collapse into a posture of appeasement to minimize a threat. Children in threatening situations from which they cannot escape, “absent” themselves. Hawthorn-Attard described the dissociative look as one in which colour drained from children’s eyes. This allowed them to wash away their distress, or hide it from others who might take delight in their distress (25).

Phase 5: Breaking Point of Total Conflict

The individual becomes confused as to the real truth of his past. His defences weaken because he is totally estranged from his familiar surroundings. His feelings of alienation are exacerbated when he seeks to escape the intolerable stress with self-betrayal. He becomes more estranged from his self.

Your childhood defences are quite inadequate to withstand the brainwashing process. Your “choices” are limited. You either maintain your beliefs about yourself and your past - and pay tremendous penalties for doing so - or abandon them. Your newly imposed identity as a worthless thing smothers your previous identity as someone’s child.

You are driven by self-preservation. You abandon your former beliefs and sacrifice the last remnants of your unique self. You become what your caretaker's want you to become - a compliant "Waif." It will be difficult to leave this identity behind you. When you are no longer in care, and are 60 years old, they call you an "Old Boy." Since this is the only identity you have, you refer to yourself as an "Old Boy," too.

Phase 6: Desperate Gratitude

This part of the brainwashing process could be called, 'grasping at straws.' Just as the individual reaches the breaking point, he may be shown unexpected kindness and leniency. This coincides with encouragement to confess. He cooperates with his reform, as this is his only escape from total self-annihilation.

Unexpected kindness was a rare occurrence in the Boys/Girls Home. As children reached school leaving age, or date of Deportation, they may have been taken on a special outing, or given new clothes and a travel trunk. Your caretakers instead show some leniency in punishments as a reward for your compliance. To secure relief from daily torment, you grasp at the only available straw.

You become passive, subservient, ingratiating, guilt-ridden, and ashamed. You appear to be a, 'Good Waif.' When you 'came into care,' your caretakers stripped you of your legitimate identity. They set it aside as something unclean. They never returned it to you. They kept you naked for a time until you renounced who you 'used to be.'

They did not allow you clothe yourself in your new identity until you agreed you **never** were who you thought you were. They made you admit you were mistaken about this. Then they allowed you to wear your new identity. You learned to express your gratitude to them.

Some of your peers readily accepted their new identities and wore them proudly. Their gratitude was desperate and they professed that becoming a Waif was the best thing that ever happened to them.

They thanked their caretakers for rescuing them from their 'evil associations,' and loudly proclaimed they had 'given them a better life than they ever would have had with their families.' Such convictions were held even though these children had nothing with which to compare their lives 'in care.'

You secretly wondered just how 'evil' were your previous 'Associations' - your Family. You wore the 'Waif' identity loosely and vowed you would find the truth about your origins. This new identity constrained you like ill-fitting clothes.

The longer you wore them, the more you felt as if you were inside a straight jacket. Very deep inside yourself, you wanted to believe you were not what they said you were. You sustained a tiny belief you had a Family somewhere. This hope kept you going, until you finally gave up hope.

The organizations led you to believe Canada was the Promised Land and you would be warmly welcomed. You endured life in the Homes in the hope that eventually you would have 'a better life in Canada.' Some other children naively believed Canadian families would adopt them.

You were sadly disappointed, when you met with a cruel prejudice. Canadians treated you as farm stock rather than as someone's child. They made you live in the barns with the other animals.

They segregated you from their families because they feared you would infect them with your 'tainted blood.' Even then, you accepted this treatment because you believed you deserved it.

Any semblance of normal human kindness was exaggerated far out of proportion to it's occurrence.

You announced, "They treated me well." Compared to what? It is like the physically abused spouse, who defends her abuser by saying, "He only beats me up once a month," or "He's OK when he's not drinking." The unspoken words are, "It's probably my fault that I anger him," and "It's my fault he drinks so much," or "I don't deserve any better treatment because I deserved to be punished."

There was nowhere for you to run, and no one to whom you could turn for help. All you had for company was the guilt and shame imposed upon you in England and reinforced in Canada. All you had was an imposed identity that would haunt you all your life. Long after you were in care, you continued to endure an assault on your identity.

It was unremitting, merciless, and lifelong. Others asked you all your life who you were. You could only respond by saying your name - even though you were not certain it was yours. They asked you about your Parents and Family.

You replied the only way you could. You repeated these statements, thousands of times. 'I am an orphan.' 'My Parents are dead.' 'My Parents abandoned me. 'I have no Brothers or Sisters.' 'I don't know why I was raised in an institution.' 'I don't have a Birth Certificate.'

Each time you said these words, you unintentionally reinforced the identity they had imposed upon you, that you are worthless. Still, you tried to sustain the flickering belief you had a Family somewhere as long as you could.

Others having no other identity than the one imposed upon them completely became an 'Old Boy' and 'Old Girl.' They clutched their Good Conduct Medals and other relics that provided them with an institutional identity.

You told yourself, 'At least I belong to somebody.' They worshipped those that had saved them and staunchly defended them. They would not tolerate any criticism of their masters and saviours. Some of the BHC descendants adapted the same attitude and blindly accepted the organization's account of the scheme.

This went way beyond the tendency to 'assume the best of intentions in others', 'give others the benefit of doubt,' 'be grateful in all things,' 'forgive rather than resent.' It went to the point of complete denial of reality.

If bad things happened such as physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, beatings, drownings, suicides, and murders, they were either not believed, or if acknowledged it was only to the point of rare occurrences, accidents, and minimization.

I once met an elderly British Home Child who heard I was about to write a book. When I visited him in his home, he pointed proudly to a framed picture of the Boy's Home he lived in while in England.

He had his Good Conduct Medals framed behind a glass. He had a yellowed letter from the founder of the organization addressed to him as an 'Old Boy' congratulating him for his success in Canada and thanking him for his annual donations. It was very much a shrine of worship. He spoke of the Old Country which to him had been the Home he lived in from 8-14.

He said: "They tried hard to do the right thing. They had good intentions, They did me a favour taking me from that (not my) family. There was some diddling (sexual assault), but not with me.

Some kids had it hard, but then they deserved the beatings they got. I was a monitor, so I helped keep other kids in line by reporting them for infractions.”

“I owe my life to those people. If it weren't for them I would have died in the streets of London. I certainly had a better life in Canada than I would have had in England with those people who abandoned me.” He looked fondly at a picture of his wife and children.”

Who was I to challenge this man's defenses? Denial is the refusal to accept reality or fact, acting as if a painful event, thought or feeling did not exist. It is the most primitive of the defense mechanisms because it is characteristic of early child development. His defenses served a purpose for him.

Who was I to ask this man how he knew he was orphaned and abandoned. Who was I to ask him who his parents were or if he had any siblings? He only knew what he was told. He couldn't know if he was truly orphaned, or orphanized. It would have simply been self serving on my part and devastating to him.

Chapter 6: The Legacy: Depersonalization and Dissociation

A Depersonalization Disorder is a condition in which you feel like an observer of your life rather than an active participant. Loss of identity is synonymous with depersonalization.

You feel your thoughts are not yours, and your body and mind are disconnected. Estrangement from your self can be a frightening experience, as it is your self that anchors you to reality. For most, it is usually a transitory adult phenomenon, similar to an 'identity crisis.' Occasionally, you may feel 'out of touch' with yourself. You might describe the condition of depersonalization as, 'I do not feel like myself,' or 'I do not know who I am anymore.' If the condition persisted, your ability to function could be impaired by your distorted perceptions of reality.

British Home Children did not have much opportunity to acquire an identity before they came into care. The organizations took their fledgling identities from them. The only time the children ever felt 'themselves,' was before they came into care.

They did not have the luxury of saying, 'I used to know who I was, but now I don't.' All they could ever say was, 'I don't know who I am.' They lived their lives in a constant state of depersonalization.

They had nothing with which to identify themselves as individuals. They could not claim to belong to anyone except the organization.

The organizations sent siblings in care to separate foster homes and Homes. They deported their siblings to different countries. They separated siblings they sent to the same country. The children were abandoned in Canada by the organizations that deported them, and rejected by Canadians.

Only those who experienced a modicum of human kindness were able to assuage the painful, repetitive experiences of their childhood. Most would suffer lifelong estrangement from themselves and others, in both England and Canada.

British Home Children who were faced with overwhelming emotional or physical pain, from which they could not escape, 'ran away' in their minds. The process of Dissociation allowed them to psychologically isolate the ideas, feelings, and memories of their experiences.

They could escape temporarily and were later able to act as if they never experienced the trauma. When they dissociated, information was not connected with other information, as it normally would have been. They suffered amnesia as a result.

This allowed them to protect themselves from not only remembering the pain, but also re-experiencing the traumatic situations. Amnesia spread from the traumatic incident and further contaminated their imposed identities.

Children subjected to repetitive, overwhelming, and unrelenting trauma, may learn to cope with crises by relying upon the extremely effective psychological technique of dissociation. If used overused, dissociation can become an automatic, habitual response to perceived threat - even in non-threatening situations.

Research has shown that living in a constant state of fear and crises can produce biochemical changes in the brain.

Over time, the dissociating coping can become a dominant aspect of children's personalities. When dissociation is so frequent that it disrupts a person's ability to function, it can develop into a chronic condition known as a Dissociative Disorder. It is usually the result of childhood trauma before the age of nine years old.

Symptoms can include any or all of the following: anxiety attacks, depression, mood swings, suicidal tendencies, sleep disorders, phobias, alcohol/drug abuse, compulsions, rituals, hallucinations, eating disorders, headaches, amnesia, time loss, trances, out-of-body experiences, self-injury, self-persecution, self-sabotage, and aggressiveness (Sidran Foundation 1999).

As adults, most British Home Children hid their pasts from their spouses and families. For some there simply was nothing to tell, as their memories were impaired by repression-induced amnesia. Many were ashamed of themselves.

An individual develops genuine and close interpersonal relationships because of mutual disclosure of ideas, beliefs, opinions, experiences, and feelings. British Home Children had a difficult time disclosing who they were, as they did not know who they were.

What opportunity did they have to disclose themselves in the Boys/Girls Home environments where reigned the Rule of Silence? Emotional closeness and feelings of belonging were foreign to them. These experiences made it difficult for others to know them. All yearned to know the families from whom they were taken. This is where they last belonged, and where they felt like people rather than things.

An Acute Stress Disorder can develop within a month of traumatic experiences. These contain the potential for loss of life or serious injury, and create intense fear, helplessness, or horror. Children are more susceptible to stress reactions than adults are.

Dissociative symptoms can occur during or after the event along with other symptoms such as: emotional numbness, detachment, reduced awareness, feelings of unreality, depersonalization, and amnesia.

The traumatic event may be re-experienced as intrusive recollections, images, thoughts, dreams, flashbacks, and distress when reminded of the event. People, places, and activities related to the event may be avoided.

Hyper arousal may develop and take the form of sleep difficulties, irritability, poor concentration, hyper-vigilance, startle response, and restlessness.

Symptoms usually last a few days and dissipate a month after the traumatic event. Recurrent traumatic experiences perpetuate the reaction and a chronic condition develops.

A **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder** in children is characterized by recurrent and intrusive recollections of the event. These can include thoughts, images, perceptions, and dreams about the trauma. People may feel or act as if the traumatic event were happening again. They experience intense distress and severe physical when exposed to aspects of the event.

They persistently avoid stimuli associated with the trauma and their general responsiveness is numbed. They may avoid thinking and talking about the trauma, and may avoid anyone and anything associated with the trauma.

People are usually unable to recall important aspects of the trauma. They may lose interest and reduce participation in their usual activities. They may feel detached and estranged from others and their usual range of emotional response may become restricted.

They may develop a sense of a foreshortened future and may not expect to have a normal life and life span. The condition is called chronic if these symptoms last longer than three months.

If an individual experiences a series of traumatic events, he may have little opportunity to recover from one before having to contend with another. Children are not as resilient as we might think. They do not become inoculated nor are they 'toughened up' by their traumatic experiences.

Rather, these events can have a profound immediate as well as long-term negative impact upon their adult functioning. The idea of stress and stress reactions is not new. Before WWI, Walter Cannon described how the body responded to stress with either a 'fight' or 'flight' reaction.

The British Home Children were hardly in a position of 'fight' in their captive environments. Nor could they 'flee' by withdrawing, avoiding, or escaping the stress. They learned instead to 'freeze,' and dissociate themselves.

Whether the threat is imaginary or actual, the fearful response is immediate. It is an adaptive, inescapable, and uncontrollable reaction in which resources are instantly mobilized to deal with threat.

A sophisticated neurophysiological reaction occurs in the brain, autonomic, and immune system. The alarm reaction includes hyper arousal, pounding heart, chest pain, sweating, trembling, shortness of breath, 'lump in the throat,' abdominal distress, light-headedness, feelings of unreality, fear of losing control, emotional numbness, blurred vision, and hypersensitivity.

If the threat is less than first perceived the system reverts to a more relaxed mode. Living a life of constant fear can cause the circuitry of the brain to create over-developed pathways of either 'fight, flight, or freeze' responses (Perry 5).

Severe, prolonged, or recurrent stresses cause tremendous increases in neurotransmitter activity that can significantly alter brain development. Post Traumatic Stress Disorders in childhood can produce irreversible physical alterations of the Central Nervous System.

These can cause altered heart regulation, emotional lability, impulsive behaviours, increased anxiety, and sleep abnormalities. The neurological systems can become hypersensitive to future stressful events. Children raised in stressful environments are more susceptible to developing more severe symptoms with each exposure to stress (Schwarz & Perry 4).

The most traumatic event for a child is loss of a parent. Cardiovascular disease, immunological, neuroendocrine, and adult emotional disorders have been associated with parental loss in childhood.

These are more likely to occur if parental loss is compounded by the absence of supportive adult relationships following to the loss. Children who suffer a severe trauma such as parental loss before four years old are more at risk to develop severe pre-psychotic and psychotic symptomatology in adult life. Children, who experience trauma later in childhood, are more at risk to develop symptoms that are similar to adult Post Traumatic Stress Disorders.

The most consistent physical finding with traumatized children is Autonomic Nervous System hyper arousal (Schwartz & Perry 7).

If a child is hyper-aroused, chronically anxious, and 'on guard,' any innocuous stimulus can trigger an alarm response. This reaction creates increased anxiety and a chronic hyper-aroused state. A vicious circle is maintained.

The 'fight or flight' options are not usually available to young, helpless children. Some learn by default, to 'freeze.' With repetitive stress, these children acquire a sensitized hyper arousal or dissociative syndrome.

They automatically 'freeze' when overwhelmed by anxiety. 'Freezing' is the first step towards complete dissociation. The entire Central Nervous System is involved whether a child reacts with either hyper-arousal or dissociation.

Even though the reactions are different, the system always reacts as it was designed to react.

Each exposure to stress strengthens the 'freeze' response. It can develop into an automatic response to anticipated or actual threats, or it can become the 'normal' state for a traumatized child (Perry et al. 10)

Chapter 7: Malignant Memories of a Traumatic Childhood

A memory consists of information about experiences that is conveyed over time. Every system in the body is designed to collect and convey memories across time to ensure the survival of the complete organism.

Every living cell has its life cycle that ends in its death. Every cell replicates itself before it dies. Through complex physiological processes, every cell of the body passes on critical information to its replacement and to every other living cell.

Every skin cell needs to know what its predecessor knew - that it is a skin cell. If a skin cell was scarred before it died, it passed this information along to its successor.

Every cell is intricately connected - and in some unknown fashion - in communication with every other cell of the body. What experiences are collected and transmitted to every other cell in your body?

It is entirely possible that every thought, feeling, movement, sight, smell, taste, sound, and experience you have ever had are recorded intact in the billions of brain cells in your mind.

Since brain cells do not function in isolation, all of this information may be recorded in, and transmitted to, every other cell.

These experiences may exist as memories and may be passed on to every generation since the beginning of time. One could hardly make a case that children of Holocaust survivors are identical in their development compared to children of those who had not experienced this horror.

You inherited your genetically determined physical characteristics when you were conceived. Memories of experiences may be carried from cell to cell **and** across generations. Your brain is changed by your experiences - all of your experiences - both good and bad.

It is attuned to your internal and external environments. It processes information, stores sensations, and acts to promote survival, by creating internal representations of the external world. The associations between audio, visual, olfactory, tactile, and emotional components of events are stored as memories in the mind (Perry et al. 10).

These memories of experiences are recorded completely intact with precise sights, sounds, smells, tastes, sensations, and movements. The mind is designed to process, record, and transmit all of your experiences as memories.

Not all of these memories are benign. Some of them are malignant. Most exist at a subconscious level in a dormant state.

Malignant memories can be awakened by external sensory cues or internal cognitive, affective, somatic, or behavioural cues. Once activated, they flood consciousness and trigger either hyper-reactivity or hypo-reactivity. Either set of responses can create depression, and disorganization.

High levels of arousal create: cognitive distortions, dissociative and somatic states, emotional and behavioural reactivity, numbness, amnesia, or avoidance.

Each time the malignant memory is activated, it takes less and less to awaken it. It lies out of awareness, waiting to be triggered again.

Traumatized children who experience repetitive stress are at risk to develop 'traumatized brains' that are characterized by deregulated neurological systems. They develop a neurological template that is different from non-traumatized children.

It consists of excessive fear, threats, unpredictability, insecurity, frustration, anger, helplessness, powerlessness, hunger, and pain. Young or chronically traumatized children react to a wide variety of triggers that may not be directly connected with the original trauma (Schwartz & Perry 8-15).

The past is not always past. The indelible marks of childhood trauma extend well beyond childhood. Time does not always heal these wounds and traumatized children are more at risk to develop psychopathological symptoms rather than be inoculated against it.

Children who lived their lives in fear experience ongoing, repetitious alarm reactions of varying intensities. They adapted to living in an emotional state that varied from High-Medium-Low Stress - but always in an internal and external environment of stress.

The brain processes information by association and generalization. It connects separate pieces of information, associates them together, and stores the collage as a response to a threat.

It also loosely connects bits of information and generalizes from the specific to the broad. Should a threat occur, the brain produces the appropriate response.

Often remote cues can set off an inappropriate response because of false associations and false generalizations. The alarm response can be triggered by cues that are only remotely similar to the original cues associated with the threat.

Veterans of the wars of the past decade may react to the any trigger from their past experiences. An increase in heart rate may have been part of the initial response to a threat. Long after the threat is gone, an innocent rise in heart rate can trigger an inappropriate alarm response. The brain stored this original memory, associated it with a threat, and now is unable to distinguish between the two cues (Perry 6).

While an adult is capable of cognitively making distinctions between an appropriate and inappropriate response, the child is not. The child simply reacts without knowing why. Malignant memories supplanted whatever initial, safe, secure, and contented memories the British Home Children may have had.

The emotional state associated with the former memories did not just fade with time. Their caretakers erased these memories when they stole their identities. The children could not keep these memories alive because they were not allowed to think or speak of their former lives and identities.

They could not even find a safe haven in their pasts before they 'came into care.' They were trapped in the present, cut off from the past, and always fearful about the future.

Even though significant traumatic experiences of early childhood may not recur, their effects leave their mark. Malignant memories are etched in the minds of children by neurochemical changes. They are as much a part of an individual's personality as are any other benign memories.

All can intrude upon and transform the individual's present perceptions. No one can help but carry all of these relics of their past into their present.

Malignant memories are not entirely passive. They can insidiously intrude into the present transform the present to conform to the template of the past. Even when all is going well, a past memory can sabotage the present.

You know who you are. You have a name you are certain is yours. You have Parents and a known Family from which you came. You know when and where you were born. You know you are someone's Son, Brother, Grandson, and Nephew.

You think your thoughts, feel your feelings, and know they are your own. You feel an affinity with others. You conduct your life according to your certain beliefs about yourself, others, and the world in which you live.

You feel you belong no matter where you are, or whom you are with. You feel like a legitimate resident on the planet. You are an active participant in your life.

A complex collection of beliefs about yourself lies at the centre of your being. This is your unique identity - this is who you are. It is what makes you a human being - whose life has value. No one else can be, or claim to be you.

Your identity serves you well as your constant companion - someone with whom you will have a relationship all of your life. It allows you to relate to others and their unique selves.

You filter all of your experiences through this core of your self that is composed of predominantly positive early childhood experiences.

You learned to love and trust at an early age. You had a relationship with your Mother that provided the basis for all of your relationships throughout your life.

You were raised in a Family from whom you learned who you were. You can relate to others based on the common ground that everyone is someone's Son and Daughter.

You experienced your share of pain and disappointments in childhood but these were drowned by more positive experiences of love and acceptance.

Your identity is your gyroscope that maintains your stability and keeps you 'on track' and 'true to yourself.' You know where you belong in the 'grand scheme of things.' You feel complete and whole, because you know who you are.

If you are a British Home Child, you do not know who you are. You have a name but you are not sure it is yours. You do not know your Parents and cannot identify the family from which you came.

You do not know when and where you were born. You are no one's Son, Brother, Grandson, and Nephew. You think your thoughts and feel your feelings, but do not feel they are even yours. You do not feel an affinity with others, but feel very much distant from them. You conduct your life according to your uncertain beliefs about yourself, others, and the world in which you live.

You do not feel you belong, no matter where you are, or whom you are with. You feel like a foreigner always in a foreign land. You feel like a perpetual traveler rather than a resident. You are a passive observer of your life.

Vague, disparate ideas about yourself lie at the centre of your being. Your identity is composed of labels such as 'Waif, Orphan, Boy Number 14, Home Child, and Old Boy.' This is your identity - this is who you are.

You do not have a unique identity. Anyone could be you, or claim to be you. You feel like a thing posing as a person. Your identity does not serve you well because your constant companion is a lonely stranger within, whom you can never know. You feel you have little in common with others, and can only relate to them as a friendly, but reserved stranger.

You cannot develop close relationships with others because you never developed a close relationship with yourself. You filter all of your experiences through this shrivelled core of your self that is composed of predominantly traumatic early childhood experiences.

You were deprived of a relationship with your Mother and as a result did not learn love and trust at an early age. You were left with a wound that never completely healed. You had no conscious memories of your Mother but you feel the absence of her love that once was at the centre of your being.

You were not raised with your family, so you could not know how to relate to others who were raised within their families. Every person you meet is someone's child. You are not.

Your few positive experiences were drowned by more than your share of traumatic experiences of abandonment and rejection. You have no gyroscope to maintain your stability and keep you 'on track' and 'true to yourself.' You do not know where you belong in the 'grand scheme of things.'

You feel incomplete and feel there is something missing inside you.
It is your Self.

PART V: THE UNIVERSAL RIGHTS OF A CHILD

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN Convention 1989) declared that a child was a human being.

Many of their articles could be used to evaluate the British Child Deportation Scheme.

To what extent did they conduct themselves according to the 'best interests of the child,' and ensure their protection, care, and well-being?

What legal grounds did they have to separate children from their families?

How was it in the children's best interests to **not** maintain direct and regular contact with their Families?

Could the child-care organizations' 'emigration' of children be considered as the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad?

How did the Rule of Silence conform to children's right to free speech?

Could censorship of children's correspondence be considered unlawful interference?

If it was illegal for these school-age children to work 16-hour-days in England, how was it permissible for them to do so in Canada?

What British or Canadian Child Labour Laws did they violate?

To what extent were the children protected from physical violence, injury, abuse, neglect, and maltreatment?

How did the child-care organizations protect children in their care from economic exploitation and sexual abuse?

To what extent did they ensure children in their care enjoyed a full and decent life?

How did they safeguard children's dignity, promote their self-reliance, and facilitate their active integration into society?

How did they make sure children received adequate medical care and an education?

Estimates of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or neglect vary from 33-66%. This means that 40,000 - 80,000 children did **not** benefit from being 'in care' and being deported to Canada.

The Child's Right to an Identity

Article 9:4. *Separation of children from families can occur because of detention, deportation, imprisonment, exile, or death of one or both parents or the child.*

Countries should provide family members with essential information about the whereabouts of the absent family members, unless it is not in children's best interests.

Article 10:1. *Countries should deal with applications of children or their parents to enter or leave a country for family reunification in a positive, humane, and expeditious manner.*

Article 10:2. *Children who live in different countries than their parents have the right to maintain regular, direct contacts with their parents.*

Article 11:1. *Countries should fight the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.*

Article 16:1. *Children should not be subjected to unlawful interference with their privacy, family, home, or correspondence.*

Article 16:2. *Children are entitled to legal protection against such unlawful interference with their privacy, family, home, or correspondence.*

The child-care organizations continue to violate the rights of former children in their care (and their descendants) to their identities, by withholding vital information.

It is naive to assume they will voluntarily and speedily help former wards (and their descendants) establish their identities and restore family ties. They themselves are responsible for having illegally deprived children of their identities and for telling children that their parents were dead. This served their purpose of propagating the 'Save the Orphans' Myth.

Divide and Rule

My Father would have answered the question of why the child-care organizations went to such great lengths to ensure they erased children's identities. He would have said, 'There is strength in numbers - so divide and rule!'

Divide and Rule is a very old political strategy. It basically means that you divide the population into manageable chunks and that makes it impossible for them to come together and fight against the sovereign authority.'

It worked so well for the British as they expanded their empire, so why not with the Child Deportation Scheme to Canada **and** Australia?

They first isolated children in care from their families. Then they isolated siblings in care from each other. Children in foster care in small villages had no contact with other siblings in foster care. Children in the Boys/Girls Homes had no contact with siblings in other Boys/Girls Homes.

Why didn't they send two brothers to the same Boys Home or two sisters to the same Girls Homes? Because they would look out for each other and remind each other of their families.

They segregated children from society-at-large in England. They deported siblings to different countries. They separated siblings deported to Canada from each other once they were placed in their indentures.

Why didn't they send two brothers to the same indenture or two sisters to the same placement? Because they would look out for each other and remind each other of their families.

They separated those who knew each other from the Boys/Girls Homes from each other upon arrival in Canada. Communication with friends or relatives in England was censored.

Frequent movement from one farm posting to another ensured that any ties between the British Home Children would be severed in Canada. They censored British Home Children mail to the UK and vice versa.

Part of the grand Victorian scheme was to ensure that children would never establish ties between themselves.

Their only links in Canada with the Waifs and Strays were by way of the Gibbs Distributing Home and Thomas Keeley' the children's guide and friend in Canada.'

He took it upon himself to not let my Father know who his Father was and chose to tell him his Grandfather was his father. He withheld my Father's Baptism from him for decades. I can only speculate what would happen if my Father asked Keeley about the whereabouts of his friend Leonard Knell, or vice versa.

As long as the organizations made sure that a Brother would not find his Sister in Canada, there was little risk that unrelated children would ever unite. As long as the organizations withheld the secrets to their identities, the helpless children became powerless adults.

My Father would also an answer why the organizations did not want the children to know who they were. He would have said, 'The bonds of Family are strong.' Throughout history, wars have been waged because a family members was wronged. Family members defend, protect, and look after its members 'own best interests.'

Siblings can be hard on each other, but will step up to defend each other. I was quite small when I was in elementary school and lived in a typical neighbourhood for it's time. Bullying was also quite typical. I learned to talk fast, and run faster.

However one kid used to torment me and one day caught up to me, sat on my chest, pinned me to the ground, and pummeled my head. I heard a loud noise and saw my brother Rodger running from our house, screaming like a banshee and swinging a large pointed fire - axe. My tormentor ran off and kept his distance. I grew bigger in the meantime and could hold my own. Had I been a single child . . .



Rodger (11) Wendy (2) Perry (13) Fort William Ontario 1957

The organizations identified the captive children as 'no one's children,' and took possession of them so they were easily exploited. They continued their claim to possession by referring to their former wards as 'Old Boys' and 'Old Girls.' Many British Home Children clung to that identity in a cult-like fashion until their dying days.

They had no Family from whom they could solicit support. Their Families did not know where they were, nor how they were treated either in England or Canada.

The goal of the British Child Deportation Scheme to Canada was to 'do all things expedient' to ensure that family ties were irrevocably severed. They have not entirely succeeded.

We descendants need to make our 'invisible child immigrants' visible. We need to replace our BHC ancestors' sense of implanted and imposed shame with pride. We need to find our UK relatives that our BHC ancestors could not. We need timely and affordable access to our BHC relatives' complete records.

Whales do not have vocal cords, and yet they send messages through thousands of kilometres of ocean. They wait for their messages to reach their specific targets and bounce back to them. They follow this sound trail to its source. They pursue this pathway and ignore the clutter of others' cries along their way. They know which course is theirs alone.

The British Home Children were lost souls. Their hearts continued to beat, but their cries were absorbed by the vast Canadian solitude that surrounded them. Their sad cries were, 'Where is my Mother?' Their sadder cries were, 'Who is my Mother?' Their saddest cries were, 'I am lost. Who do I belong to?'

All my Father ever wanted was to know his Family. All I wanted is for his Family to know him.

PART VI: 2000-2017

The BHC Mail List and BHC Database 2000

After I published my book in 2000, I decided that since so little was known about British Home Children, that someone had to take on the job of telling the story and collecting as much information about each one of them as I could.

The internet was quite primitive and I had a free Ancestry site that allowed me to set up a website and database. I started with one entry - my Father, and one subscriber - my Daughter Charlotte.

The BHC Mail List grew to 500 subscribers and the BHC Database to 50,000 records but it took 13 years to obsessively add hundreds of thousands of details. The Ancestry website suffered a catastrophic crash a few years ago, and is gone but the Mail List site remains a valuable source of information for researchers.

Meeting My First British Relative 2001

In 2001, a year after I published my book, I had an email from my half cousin Margaret in Wales who said she was coming for a visit! She arrived on September 11, 2001 (9/11) and was fortunate to have landed at Calgary as planes were grounded and had to land at the nearest airport.

Although a great many relative pictures were taken, I need to protect their privacy.

She was also lucky to rent a car and we only had a few days together as they were travelling with another couple through the Rockies to Vancouver. It was an amazing visit all the same.



Bonnie Snow (50) Perry Snow (51) Calgary Alberta 1995

She provided family pictures, letters, and photos to fill in more missing pieces of the Snow family puzzle. She spoke fondly of her Grandfather and my Great Grandfather John G Snow whom she said did his best in raising her Mother Amy and Uncle Jack.

She still new very little about our mutual Grandmother Annie Snow/Gifford, but had no ill feelings towards her. Margaret said, "It's easy to judge and harder to be compassionate." Women had so little choice in those days." I completely agreed.

She said, "When your Dad was taken away, my Grandfather was a 55 year old unemployed single parent who did the best he could, trying to provide for his kids. That's all anyone can do."

I thanked her profusely for the letter she saved that her Mother wrote about how my Father was taken away. She was very grateful to find out that her mother narrowly escaped being taken away and deported to Canada.

They were fascinated to learn about things such as thermal windows, vinyl siding, insulation, and car plug-ins.

Meeting British Relatives in the UK 2003

I went to England to meet my Snow relatives and my 'Kind Stranger' friend Robin. Bonnie and my Daughters had some reservations about my going alone because she knew I was 'geographically challenged." I argued that "I may get lost a little, but I'm never late.' The three of them jointly 'sighed' as they did for no apparent reason.

I got off to a pretty good start and things were good until the plane was half way across Hudson Bay when they had to declare a medical emergency. They turned around and headed back to Winnipeg. The sick passenger was taken away but they insisted we stay on the plane.

A few hours went by and I was glad to see they thought of refuelling. Again the plane took off and this time we made it past Hudson Bay. However, someone had not thought of replenishing the food and other supplies.

As the hours past by, people got very hungry, very thirsty, and very cranky about toilets overflowing and diapers piling up. I made a bag of peanuts last a very long time, rationed my water, and took a few blood sugar tests. On the way to the washroom I had to step around people who were prostrate and praying.

On the way back, I wondered if I should join them. I hoped Robin had gotten a message about the flight delay. Cousin Jim had told me that the Thames had flooded and that some roads were washed out near the airport.

I think 16 hours had passed including time change since I got on the plane in Calgary. Perhaps blood sugar had gone awry. Anyway I was in a strange mood going through the airport to the baggage.

While walking along I glanced around and saw a woman standing in the crowd holding a little sign that read 'Snow.' I couldn't resist walking by her and then turning around to approach her from another direction.

I tapped her on the shoulder and said "I'm Perry Snow." She was startled and punched me on the shoulder and then gave me a hug. I don't know why women punch me on the shoulder for no apparent reason.

I apologized for the flight delay and she said they had to make two trips because the delay notice came after they arrived at the airport the first time.

I asked her where Robin was, and she said, "Don't you hear that ruckus - that's Robin!" We got outside and heard a Bobbie waving his hands around and hollering at a man to move his car.

The man inside the car was screaming, "Bloody hell, Copper - can't you see I'm a 'crip! Why aren't you running after criminals and blowing your whistle instead of harassing me?"

I said, "Robin?" She sighed, and said, "Robin. I think you two will get along." I was about to say "I think you and I will get along too, because I like your 'sigh.' But I decided to be quiet.

Robin stuck his hand out the window and we shook hands. He was absolutely calm and had a beaming smile. He said, "Don't worry about the Copper. He's just doing his job, and I'm just doing mine. What's he going to do? Arrest me and lift me out of the car? I'm a big man who weighs nearly 15 stone (100 kg)!"

Robin's car had been modified with hand controls and he drove 'assertively.' It was late at night and a bit foggy and he said, "We'll head for Bucks but I thought we could stop and meet your Cousin."

'Bucks' was short for Buckinghamshire I deduced. "I can't just barge in on him this late at night," I said. He told his wife to, "Call Jim and tell him Perry wants an invitation and that we're on our way."

Jim lived in a trailer on the banks of the Thames. We drove in the fog around the park looking for the number. I told Robin to look on the left side of the road, as Jim's address was an even number.

He questioned how I knew this and I replied, "Years of delivering mail in University - even numbers are on the south side."

We found Jim's trailer but couldn't see far because of the fog. I decided to walk along one side of the trailer and stepped into some water. It was the Thames! The water had risen half way under the trailer!

I retreated and went around the other side where the water was half way up the steps. I knocked on the door and was practically dragged in by my Cousin Jim! Huge hugs and much excitement.

He asked where Robin was and I explained that he was paraplegic and might have trouble with the stairs - and the water. Jim and his wife Margaret fixed a tray of tea and biscuits and took this out to Robin, who grinned and said, "Get some food into your Cousin!"

I ate and we had a wonderful visit, although we both noticed we kept glancing at each other. Me more so than he, because he was the first Snow Cousin I had ever seen face to face.

It was close to midnight when we arrived at Robin's home in 'Bucks.' I had written to him about staying at a Bed and Breakfast but he 'wouldn't have it.' On the way there, I said I should call Bonnie to let her know I arrived all right."

Robin said, "She called while you were visiting with 'Your Cousin Jim.'" He emphasized, 'Your Cousin Jim.' I asked what he told her and he replied, "I told her you looked kind of tired after being 10 hours late, and Yes, I told her why. I also told her that you got lost a bit and walked into the Thames up to your ankles."

I asked what Bonnie had said to that. He said, "She told me not to lose sight of you and I reassured her that you were in good hands." I asked his wife if I was in good hands, and she just burst out laughing. And so began the amazing adventure.

It was such a pleasure to meet Robin, the complete stranger who devoted three years of his life to solving my family mystery. His wife was French and from a very large close family and was horrified to think of anyone who would dare to tear a family apart and spirit children overseas.

She muttered, "Only the English." Robin and I chose to be very quiet. 'Bucks' became the base of operations. The next day I helped Robin into his car and put the wheelchair in the trunk. I asked if we were going to see Jim but he said "No, we are off to Croydon and parts thereof.

He explained that Jim and his wife were coming over for supper that night and that after I had been to Wales, Jim insisted on driving me up to Staffordshire. I insisted that I could take a train there, but Jim 'would not have that.'

I said, "Did I miss a meeting or something?" He said, "Even though you say you are a highly trained some-kind-of-competent professional, I believe Bonnie. I'll make sure you get on the right trains, and I will let you out of my sight, but maybe you should have a Name-Tag pinned to your shirt, that reads, 'If found, return to ...'" We 'got on.'

He just had to add, "And I've passed along Bonnie's instructions to Jim, too. Best to listen to our wives, like highly trained professional husbands, Right!" I didn't have to worry about anyone being intimidated by my occupation any more, because the new reputation was quite a bit different.

I insisted that we stop for coffee after Robin said how difficult it was to get around in a wheelchair and how he spent a lot of time and effort advocating for improved access to buildings. While driving, he said he constantly looks for curbs that are scooped out for wheelchair access.

I mentioned that Calgary was quite good that way and all new housing developments had those at each corner. He said he has made progress, and that the Queen had noticed and given him an award. He was quite serious but did not explain.

I pointed out a McDonald's drive-through that was in the middle of a street. It ruined the charm of the street, but I was desperate and Robin would not have to get out of the car. He had never been and was fascinated by the convenience and horrified about amount of wasted paper. After we left, he tossed me a London A-Z and said, "Guide Me!"

I proudly pulled out my own copy and said, "Are you serious, I'm the guy who has a lousy sense of direction." He explained how the street signs could be low to the curb, high on the corner of a building, and generally hard to locate.

As it turned out, I actually spend so much time looking up addresses that I did have a pretty good mental picture of the London layout.

Balham Tooting and Croydon

Our first stop was where my Father was allegedly born.



Larch Close Balham Wandsworth London England 2003



Larch Close Balham Wandsworth London England 2003

A one bedroom flat in 2017 now sells for **£350,000** (\$500,000). It wasn't hard to envision how this area would look in 1913. Next we headed through Tooting and I was again surprised how close everything was. I amazed myself after Robin made a wrong turn and I told him how to get to get back to Tooting!



27 Chetwode Road Tooting Surrey England

The 1901 Census showed Great Grandfather John G Snow (45), wife Emily (44), his two Sons William Henry (18), George Frederick (22), wife Anne, and their two children living together in this home. These 8 people shared a two bedroom home.

The death of Emily Cheer in 1904 set off a crisis, as four months later, my Great Grandfather John George married my Grandmother Annie who was +20 years his junior and my Grandfather married his first wife.



5 Parker Road Croydon Surrey England

In 1909 my Great Grandfather John G Snow (53), my Grandmother Annie (31), their two children Jack (4) and Amy (2), my Grandfather William Henry (26) who was separated from his first wife all lived here.

This was the scene of the crime wherein my Grandparents who were not married to each other, fell in love and conceived my Father.

I don't know where they initially lived together. When my Father was 6 months old, my Grandfather enlisted in the army in 1910. My Father had German Measles and my Grandmother was pregnant.

She took my Father to Dean Road to be looked after, and between the Vicar and overcrowding of underage children being taken to school by older siblings, he was illegally and forcibly removed from his family.

We then drove to Croydon to have a look at Dean Road, where my Father was taken from his family. The garage was once a stable for horses and wagon. In 2017 it sells for £460,995 (\$750,000). Robin waited in the car with his ever-present crossword puzzle



3 Dean Road Croydon Surrey England 2003

Being a polite Canadian, I knocked on the door to explain why I was taking pictures and to ask if I could take a picture of the back of the house. I explained that my Father once lived there.

The woman invited me in, showed me around, and gave me what she knew of the history of the house!

I walked down the block to St Peter's Church to take pictures where Jack and Andy went for bread and soup in 1913 and the school Amy (6) and Jack (8) took my Father (3 ½).



St Peter's Church Croydon



Lord Tenison School Croydon

The Church had screened mesh over its windows. It was heavily locked and covered in graffiti. I thought of all the years my family had written to this place, trying to obtain information.

He was baptized here but did not get a copy of his Baptism Certificate until he was 48 years old. His age was scratched out. It appeared to read as 4 years old, but underneath was a "½." Could he have been only 3½ years old when he was apprehended? If so, this was illegal.

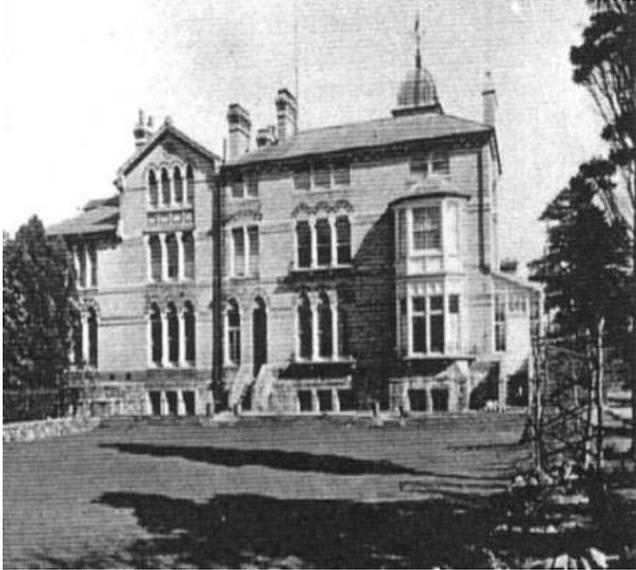
I imagined the Vicar writing to the Waifs and Strays and arranging for the Police to take my Father away. It was probably uncharitable of me, but I swore, kicked the ground, and quickly walked away.

Robin suggested that we might have time to stop by the Children's Society. He thought we could have a chat with the Archivist who tried so hard to keep information from me.

I told him I didn't think I was up to that and I wondered if I ever would be. After all the lies that have been revealed, I'm not sure what we would have to talk about. I doubt they would have any answer to the question of, "Why did you lie to my Father and I?"

Sevenoaks Kent

The next day we were off to visit Sevenoaks Kent. St Augustine's Home for Boys was no longer there as it was demolished and replaced by apartment buildings.



St Augustine's Home for Boys Sevenoaks Kent

What surprised me most was that I had envisioned a building such as this but surrounded by vacant space. From the look of the neighbourhood the homes were all the same age and far from new.

I thought of how maddening it must have been for the boys to march down the sidewalk to school and Church not allowed to smile or speak. They had to keep their heads down or risk a caning.

At night I envisioned my Father, after the nightly punishment circle looking out the window and seeing intact normal families through their windows. Had he known how close he was to Croydon, he might have planned an escape.

If caught or returned, it would have meant a bread and water punishment and caning. He certainly would not find refuge in the church in Croydon. What made it tolerable was finding some solace in the Church down the block.



St John the Baptist Church Sevenoaks Kent

We then went to the Sevenoaks Library to look for information about St Augustine's Home for Boys. They were very helpful and managed to dig out a pamphlet and a picture. She asked if I was a Canadian, and when I said "Yes," she replied, "Every year we get a few elderly Canadians asking the same questions about St Augustine's."

She became quiet, and said, "I've lived in Sevenoaks all my life. A lot of bad things happened there, and none of knows what happened to the boys once they were in Canada. I used to watch them march down the street with their heads down and never a smile." I told her, "Well, know you'll know because I'll send you a copy of my book. She insisted in not charging me for a lot of photocopies."

Billericay Essex

My cousin Arthur didn't have a computer so we kept in touch by snail mail. The last I had heard was that he got sick in 2002. When I met his wife Pat in Billericay, she said that he had a brain aneurysm and had been in a Long Term Care facility for over a year.

Robin drove us there and opted to wait in the car with his crossword puzzle as he had spent years in the hospital himself when he became paraplegic.

Arthur was a large man who was completely paralyzed. She wasn't sure if even is eye movements could be controlled. She visited him daily and believed he could hear and understand her. I believed her and held his hand and introduced myself.

I told him how great it was to meet him, and joked about how we could have passed each other on our motorcycles as he and Pat had toured Scotland at the same time in 1971. I felt him squeeze my hand. Pat said he loved talking to me on the phone and she was sure we would have 'got on.' Arthur died in 2007.

Heston Hounslow Middlesex

Then it was on to Heston Middlesex. Robin decided we just couldn't drive through London without seeing the sights. We sped through London during rush hour and saw all the major tourist attractions. He screamed around a corner and stopped the car alongside a long wall.

I asked him where we were, and he asked, "Do you want to hop over this wall and give the Queen a copy of your book?" I said, "What are you talking about?"

He explained that someone had just that a week earlier and just walked into the Palace before being apprehended. He said, "I'm sure she would love an autographed, hand delivered copy of your book! After all, the Royal Family have been Patrons of the Children's Society for over a hundred years!" I suggested we stop for a beer somewhere instead.

On our way to Buckinghamshire, Robin suggested I just drop in on Cousin Gladys, as we were passing right by. I kept looking for a pay phone to warn her, as Robin's cell was dead. Before I could say anything, we were outside her house. She knew I planned to visit her, but we had not arranged a time.

I really surprised her when she opened her door. We had a short but wonderful visit. We planned on meeting again the day before I left for Canada, but she was far too ill that day. She died in 2005 at age 66.

Streatham Cemetery Tooting



There was no time to contact anyone there on a Sunday to find the exact location. I was happy just to be in London, and would have been happy to just peek through the gate of the cemetery.

My cousin Margaret had mailed me photos of John George Snow's marker in Croydon, so I imagine my Grandmother's marker would be similar. His was very overgrown and I'm sure she had to uncover it with a shovel.



Great Grandfather John George Snow (1858-1940)



Mitcham Cemetery Croydon Surrey England

Family folklore had it that my Grandfather William Henry Snow paid for my Grandmother's funeral even though they had been estranged for 28 years. My Uncle Reg apparently made the funeral arrangements for my Grandmother. I don't know if any of her other children attended her funeral.

I didn't know exactly where her common grave was. I stood in the cemetery as the rain drizzled. I thought my thoughts. I felt saddened for my Grandmother.

She was born in 1878 and married my Great Grandfather John George Snow in 1904 when she was 26 and he was 48.

They had their first child John Allen Snow in 1905 when she was 27 and he was 47. They had Amy Alice Snow (her second) in 1907 when she was 29 and he was 49..

She fell in love with her stepson William Henry Snow who was separated from his wife and was living with she and his Father. She left John George Snow to live with William Henry Snow in 1909 as she was pregnant with my Father Frederick George Snow (her third). She was 31 and he was 26. My Grandfather enlisted in the army in 1910 and served until 1919.

They had their second child (her fourth) William Alfred Snow in 1912 when she was 34 and he was 29. They had their third child (her fifth) Violet Lillian Beatrice Snow in 1914 when she was 36 and he was 31. They had their fourth child (her sixth) Gladys Elsie Snow in 1918 when she was 40 and he was 35. They had their fifth child (her seventh) Reginald William Snow in 1920 when she was 42 and he was 37.

In 1926, William Henry Snow (43) left Annie (48) to live with a pregnant Leah Lassman (22). He took William Alfred Snow (14) with him. Ironically my Grandfather repeated his Father's tendency to marry women 20 years his junior.

Annie (48) was left to care for Violet (12), Gladys Snow (8), and Reginald Snow (8). Barnardo's apprehended her children and she tried for years to locate them while they were 'in care.' I doubt that my Grandfather paid any child support as he was about to have his sixth child, Peggy.

Of her seven children, four were 'in care,' and one, unbeknownst to her, - my Father - deported to Canada. Ironically the year before three more of her children were taken from her.

She never saw her son Jack and her daughter Amy after 1909. She never saw my father after 1913. She never saw her son William Alfred Snow, her daughters Violet and Gladys after 1926.

She did meet her son Reg a few years before her death after an estrangement of +30 years. They lived in the same building for two years before Reg told his wife about this.

I could think of nothing more tragic than a mother losing six of her seven children, especially four of them to 'child care organizations' who told these children that she was dead.

I kicked the grass for no apparent reason other than to make sure I wasn't standing on her buried marker. The large divot fell to one side and lo and behold there was a marker, but of course it was not hers. Robin was patiently doing his crossword puzzle but kept looking askance to see if I was alright. I was.

I didn't know what to do or what sort of prayer to say. I am diabetic, so I took my test kit out, punctured my finger, and let a drop fall on the grass. I said, "Grandma, I believe you did the best you could with what choices you saw before you, with what you knew, and what you had to work with.

I know you tried to see your children for 4 years after they were taken from you. I know you sent them Christmas presents they never received. I know you tried to find out what happened to my Father. I brought a bit of your firstborn Son to you. God Bless You. Rest in peace."

I couldn't visit my Grandfather's grave as I did not know where it was until my Half Aunt Peggy came to Calgary a few years later. I would have said and done the same things at his gravesite.

Flintshire Wales

Robin was enjoying the expedition and was keen on driving to Wales, which would take about 4 hours. His wife disagreed and I insisted a train would do just fine, and my half cousin would not hear of my staying in a Bed and Breakfast, so would pick me up at the train station. What could possibly go wrong?

Robin dropped me off at the train station which was much larger than I expected. I ran through the station and banged my bag down the escalator stairs. When I reached the platform, I was the only one on it apart from a conductor 50 yards away who was waving frantically.

As I ran, he was shouting, "Where to?" Oh, Oh. Could there be other trains on this track leaving within minutes of each other? So I hollered, "Wales!" I figured that was close enough. He replied, "Hurry, Lad!"

I was flattered, as I was 59 at the time. He grabbed my ticket and pushed me on as the train was starting to move. I plopped myself on the seat, panting, sweating, and flushed. I smiled sheepishly at my travelling companions. They must have noticed my little Canadian flag pin, because they smiled back. Lovely train ride and countryside that reminded me of Scotland.

I quickly learned what the word 'diversion' meant. There were considerable track repairs going on. It was common for trains to be sent back the way they came, sent around in circles for hours, or simply idle in stations until tracks were repaired. My train arrived in Wales a few hours late.



Perry Snow (59) Wales 2003

It was great to see Margaret again after she had visited Calgary two years earlier. We stopped in a village called Mold where I bought a Welsh cap. We then went on a tour of Cheshire Cathedral, and I was overwhelmed with the architecture.



Chester Cathedral

We toured Cheshire and I noticed these interesting signs.



I asked her, “Does this apply to hold and cold poop? Do dogs understand Welsh and English?” She just sighed. It was great to have supper with her large family and a few asked about my book but had never heard of the British Home Child Deportation Scheme. This was the most comfortable few days as we had met before and every other relative was a first ever meeting.

Liverpool Lancashire

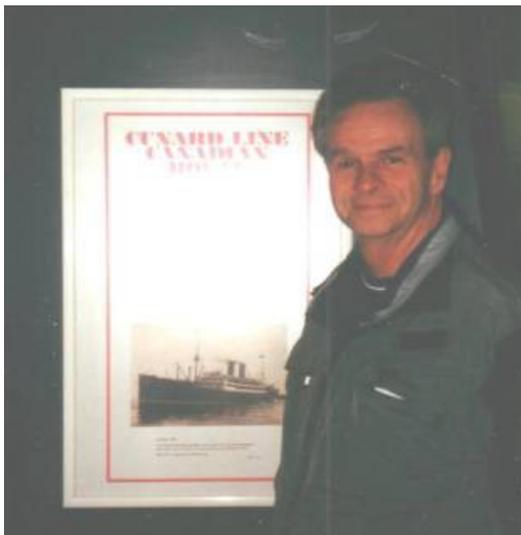
The next day we drove to Liverpool to tour the Merseyside Maritime Museum. As tempting as it was, we decided to bypass the Beatles Museum nearby.



I was impressed with the size of the building and the size of its displays. I was very disappointed to turn a corner and find myself in a small room devoted to Child Emigration. As of 2017 there is a larger display mostly devoted to the Australian Child Emigration Scheme. My Father's story was part of the joint project 'On their Own'

On a small computer screen played a continuous loop of a two-minute segment of "The Leaving of Liverpool." There were a few posters on the wall. Canada was mentioned in passing as the Australian scheme had much more exposure.

I found it sad that there was so little acknowledgment of +100 years of Child Emigration and recognition of 100,000 British children deported overseas to Canada to uncertain futures.



Perry Snow (59) Merseyside Maritime Museum 2003

Margaret noticed that I was gritting my teeth and put her arm around me after this picture.



This poster entitled ORPHANS read as follows.

“Some orphans were assisted to emigrate to Canada. Parish authorities, philanthropists, and orphanages such as Barnardo’s helped orphans to emigrate.

It was believed that the children would have a better chance in life when placed with a Canadian family.

In 1869 a Miss Rye took 50 orphan girls from Liverpool to Canada. Their average age was 8 years. They were asked if they wanted to go and their relatives were consulted.”

Caption under picture: “Orphans on their way to Canada 1881”

Well, that certainly explained what the British Child Deportation Scheme to Canada was all about! The myth lives on.

I had trouble retaining my composure here, and couldn't wait to get out of the building. We had a coffee on the dock and I envisioned an endless stream of a hundred thousand boys and girls who were loaded on ships like cattle to be met by a representative of the Department of Agriculture. How appropriate.

The train trip from Chester to London was supposed to be about 3-4 hours. Margaret made sure I got on the right train - she had met Bonnie in Calgary after all.

The train was from Chester to Stafford should have only been an hour. It was diverted to Birmingham instead. I got off the train and the platforms were deserted - never a good sign.

It looked to me that stairs led to an overhead tramway so I headed there. A porter asked where I was headed, and I proudly said, "Bucks." He said, "not today you're not." He started to explain the new diverted route, but I couldn't follow his accent. I pretended to have a hearing problem but that didn't help.

I gave him a pen to write directions. The written word did not match what I was hearing. He said, "You better move, or you won't make the next train to Leamington Spa. I later found out that was in Warwickshire.

He said, "Come along then!" I wasn't really sure what he said but following him to an freight elevator and when I got off, he said, "Run like hell!" I found a ticket booth and got a new train ticket to Leamington Spa and then a bus ticket to Reading Berkshire – wherever those places were. With England being an island, I thought as long as I stay on dry land I should be OK.

I found a pay phone to alert Robin to the changes. The connection wasn't all that great and the overhead announcement were very loud. With the delays so far, I was already overdue on his end. I explained that I was diverted and in a station in Birmingham. Robin replied, "What are you doing in Bloody Birmingham in the North of England!" I'm south of Wales!

I started to explain about a new train to Leamington Spa, and then a bus to Reading. He was laughing hilariously, and I could hear him hollering to his wife, "Guess where Perry is - just try and guess." She grabbed the phone, and calmly asked, "Perry, love, are you sure you know where you are?"

I held the phone above my head so she could hear the announcement I couldn't understand." She had heard Wolverhampton on the announcements and I read the ticket out to her. She said, "Well that is a long bus ride so be sure to eat and go the bathroom before you get on the bus." I guess there is some secret about toilets on buses - perhaps there wasn't one.

Lovely vistas along the way through Oxford. Switched buses along the way. This was not on the ticket, so I just followed everyone else. The four hour planned trip became eight. Robin was not waiting at the Reading station because I didn't dare estimate an estimated time of arrival. I called him from a phone box.

He picked me up and said I looked 'knackered.' I said, "I'm guessing that it is not a good thing." He just said, "It could be worse." "You are certainly quite the traveller! I'll tell Jim not to let you out of his sight." he guffawed. My previous reputation as a highly trained professional was taking a beating.

Staffordshire

It was about a 3 hour drive from London with Cousin Jim to meet my sole surviving Aunt Gladys (85). It was fairly uneventful and a chance to enjoy the English country side. We drove around the town and I asked Jim if he had the address. He said, "I didn't think I'd need it." When I asked him when he had last been here, he replied, "About 15 years ago." One more turn and we found her house.

A very warm welcome from my cousins, whom I had only contacted by email. I had no idea whether Aunt Gladys was still alive, living on her own, or in a Senior's Home. I asked my Cousin Theresa, "... and your Mother?" She replied, "Oh, she'll be here in about 10 minutes, she's walking over."

I asked her, "What did you tell her about me? She replied, "Oh, I just told her you were someone visiting from Canada who wanted to meet her!" My heart skipped a beat, and I wondered which one of us might have a heart attack.

A few minutes later, the door opened and this very short woman walked in with her can and her head held high. When we were introduced and when she heard the name Snow, she tilted her head.

We sat on the couch and I explained that she had an older brother she could not have known about as he was taken from the family and sent to Canada. She said, "I've heard a lot of bad things about being 'in care.' She blinked and said, "Well, that would make you my Canadian Nephew - how lovely. She was an intelligent woman, and wanted to know all about my Father. She said, "You look a lot like my Brother Bill. I replied, "It must be the pointy noses we all seem to have," and she laughed.



Perry Snow (58) Aunt Gladys (85) Staffordshire 2003

It was very awkward with the Elephant in the Room. She knew that I knew that she was in Barnardo's with her Sister Vi and Brother Reg. She had never told her family. There was a pause in the conversation, and I held her hand, and simply said, "I know." She took a big breath and let out a long sigh. We both held back tears.

How ironic it was for me to be sitting in my relative's home as the keeper of so many secrets. Jim had never disclosed that he was 'in care' to his wife until they had been married for +20 years. Their daughters did not know. His cousins did not know. On and on and on. It has to stop.

My rule of thumb for disclosing secrets, is to consider, "What useful purpose would be served to both parties by the disclosure?" If it would serve a useful purpose to only one, then don't disclose. In this case, I hoped it would serve a purpose to tell her, "I know." Honesty without kindness is simply cruelty.

My cousins had already read my book and chose not to approach her with what they knew, but decided that it would be best coming from me.

She told me she didn't remember anything about her family as she was only six. "My Parents never made contact with me ever again. I never had a Christmas card or a Birthday card from any of them," she said.

She told me she couldn't remember what her mother looked like. "Barnardo's told me I was an orphan." I told her they lied to her and that her parents died in the 1950's.

She recalled one memory she had of her Father. She said, "I have a fuzzy picture in my mind of a tall man who would walk up and down the stairs and tap the stairs with a cane-like thing." I explained that he was a Sergeant in the Army for 9 years and he had a swagger stick.

She said, "Like a conductor's baton?" I said, "Yes." I explained that her Parents had separated and her Father had an affair with a younger woman. Her mother was destitute and could not look after the three of them. The authorities chose to take them away from her.

I told her that her Mother had tried for 4 years to get them moved closer to London, to visit them, and sent them Christmas packets that were never delivered. She said, "I guess I won't be putting any coins into those Barnardo collection boxes, as if I ever did." I gave her a picture of my Father, how nice to say, 'Your Brother!' She said he was a handsome man.

The record of my Grandmother's correspondence exists, but Barnardo's stated that her actual letters were not kept as "they were not of historical importance." Oddly, they kept every letter sent to them by a foster parent, landlady, employer, etc. Further, my two cousins Jim and Gladys were placed in care at age 4 months and 3 years old. Both were told while they were in care that their parents were dead. Their mother Violet died in 1998.

We had a lovely supper together with her family. When she left, she asked how long I was staying, and I told her I was leaving the following night. She asked if I could visit her tomorrow! I almost shouted, "Absolutely." The next morning when I visited her, I was surprised and very moved to see my Father's picture already framed and sitting next to her on a table. I was too choked up to say anything, so she said, "It's comforting to have a picture of my Brother nearby."



Aunt Gladys (85) Staffordshire 2003

Later that year, I called her at Christmas and she was overjoyed to receive a Christmas Card from a Snow. It was the first ever one. She told me she had read my book and that 'the cat was out of the bag' as she told her daughters as much as she could about 'being in care.' They already knew of course, but they loved and respected her all the more for her disclosure.

While I understand the need for keeping personal secrets, but if you don't know who you are and had your identity taken from you, how can anyone else really know you?

She was very happy to find out she had a Brother and a Canadian Nephew. I tried to tell her how important it was to me to have any actual living relatives. She confided that it was many years after she was out of care that she re-connected with her brother Reg and her sister Violet. The three of them were separated from each other in 1926, and although Barnardo's had a last known address a few years old, they couldn't really provide that after telling these three that their mother was dead.

She only saw her brother once or twice once out of care. Her siblings died without knowing they had a brother in Canada. Barnardo's, like the Waifs and Strays must have decided to 'do all things expedient to ensure that children in care not have any contact with their parents or their siblings. These children's attempts to find each other while in and out of 'care' were deliberately thwarted. The Snow's are a persistent lot, and in spite of the lack of caretaker cooperation, one way or another, we found each other.

As Jim and I left their house, I turned the wrong way on the steps and fell into their flowerbed. My cousin came running out to see if I was all right, and I said, "I guess I'm just a bit knackered." She said, no way - you are shattered!" She insisted I eat something before we left.

That night Jim and I drove off to our Bed and Breakfast outside of the town. I was desperate for some sleep. The fog got so thick that we couldn't see the road for more than 10 feet ahead. I got out with a flashlight and Jim drove along at 15 mph a few feet behind me. We crawled along the gravel country road until we spotted a light on a post quite far away. Another half hour and we fell into our beds.

Had a quiet trip back to 'Bucks' and I told Jim he really didn't have to tell Robin about my falling down in their garden. Jim just laughed and said, "Of course I do! I'll have to tell Robin that I only took my eyes off you for a minute and there you were on the ground!" I wonder if he's told Bonnie about your getting lost coming back from Wales yet?"

I was starting to look forward to my flight back to Calgary and sleeping for about 12 hours. We said our hear-felt Goodbyes in London and Jim announced that he would do everything he could to make sure he and his wife visited us in Calgary the next year. I would have loved to have Robin and his wife visit but his paraplegia and his wife's health worsened in the next few years.

London to Calgary

I ate on the plane and settled in to catch up on many hours of lost sleep after 10 days of emotionally exciting but also draining experiences. Life altering experiences. Half way through the flight many people complained of not feeling well - including me. I attributed stomach upset to the stress of the trip but I was wrong. By the time I got off the plane in Calgary I was very ill. Bonnie's first comment was, "You actually got on the right plane!" I replied, "I got on the right plane to England, but things went awry. I'll tell you about diversions sometime.

Once home I had an attack of vomiting and diarrhea that lasted 14 hours. Later found out that it was a Norwalk infection caused by contaminated food. Hmm. Couldn't sleep and finally opted for laying in the tub as I was so weak. Bonnie helped me in and out and hosed me down to stop the malaria-like shaking. Once this passed I slept straight through for 22 hours. Bonnie cancelled my appointments for the next two days.

Cousin Jim Visits Calgary 2004

Jim and his wife were in Calgary for their “trip of a lifetime.” We toured the Rocky Mountains and had a week at our timeshare in Fairmont BC. He was thrilled with it all and took over 300 pictures. He was fascinated by the long trains pulled by three diesel locomotives and surprisingly gophers.



Cousin Jim Visits Calgary 2004

I had done a bit of genealogical search for Jim's family. When I shared what I found regarding is Father, he decided he 'didn't want to know' anything about his Father, other than his name. He simply said, “He left my Mother and she abandoned my Sister and I to Barnardo's.” I had to respect his decision.

Half Aunt Peggy Visits Calgary 2006

I was very surprised to find out that my Half Aunt Peggy was to come to Calgary. We had had a few emails back and forth but when she scheduled a trip to the US to visit her son, she decided to include Calgary. She and her husband were in their 80's and not in the best of health, but insisted on seeing the Rocky Mountains and touring Calgary.



Scotsman Hill Calgary Alberta

We stopped on Scotsman Hill overlooking the Saddledome and the Stampede Grounds. Peggy seemed a little quiet so I asked her if she was feeling all right. She said, "I'm a little embarrassed, but I need to ask you a question." I said, "Go ahead."

She replied, "I was wondering if you could arrange to have this sprinkled on your Father's grave site. It's just a little bit of England." She gave me a zip-lock bag of soil from her garden in London!

I was quite moved, and said, "How very kind of your, of course I will." I told her of how I put a drop of blood in my Grandmother's cemetery in London. I mailed the soil to my Sister Sandra in Thunder Bay who sprinkled it on our Father's grave marker.

Again, I found myself in the role of family historian. It was so odd to look at her and have Half Aunt register in my head, and that my Grandfather was her Father. William Henry Snow was 43 when she was born and 63 when her mother died in 1947 at age 43. She was 11 when her mother died and was sent to live with relatives.

I explained to Peggy that her Father had married in 1904, separated from his wife, fell in love with Annie Gifford and my Father and four other children. She knew nothing of the Snows. She didn't know of her Uncle George Frederick Snow and his large family. She didn't know her Father had 3 children that were placed 'in care' after he left her. She was shocked to find out she had four more Half Uncles and Aunts.

Her husband brought along letters my Grandfather had written and said he was quite a character, who called him 'Old Cock.' He described how he and Peggy had met during the Great London Fog of 1952 that caused 6,000 deaths. They had to wear gas masks to breathe.

She brought a large envelope of pictures of her Father from WW1 and his discharge papers. These were the first pictures I had seen and was surprised that he was enlisted for 9 years, served overseas, and yet had 4 children between 1909 and 1920.

Her husband wanted more details of how my Father managed to build a snow slide from the roof of their house, so I got some paper and sketched it out for him. He was fascinated to learn of how you raised a house, shovelled dirt from underneath on shovel full at a time.

They could only stay a few days, but they were certainly memorable ones. So many of the puzzle pieces were falling into place.

The British Home Children Society 2006-2007

In 2006 I decided to form a national organization called the British Home Children Society, a non-profit organization. At that time there were a few small groups in each province, but no national group. After a year, I decided to dissolve it as I had few people who were willing to join. Too many objected to a modest annual membership fee.

I was self employed, had a family and a life, and because of the technology available I was the only one who could enter data into the database and upload a portion of it to the website. So, I personally typed in ever bit of information into ever record in the database.

Advocacy was limited to emails to governments, organizations, newspaper/magazines, articles, public appearances, radio/TV interviews, etc. with underwhelming results. The time, energy and frustration this involved often took it's toll.

A Family Crisis 2010

In 2010 my Wife Bonnie became quite ill. It took a year to determine that she had a very rare (5 per million) progressive neurological disease of unknown cause that was untreatable and incurable.

I closed my Private Practice and detached from the British Home Children obsession. We managed as best we could with Home Care for a year but decided to sell our house and move into a Retirement Residence while we waited until a space became available in a Long Term Care Facility.



Newport Harbour Long Term Care
and Retirement Residence Calgary Alberta 2012-2015



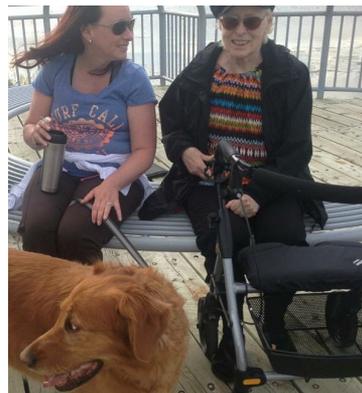
Newport Harbour Long Term Care 2012 - 2015

The two places were adjacent to each other and joined by a tunnel and an airway so that I could bring her to my place and/or visit her twice a day or as needed in her place.

This turned out to be very opportune as her place flooded and the residents were evacuated to other facilities all over the city which was very disruptive. I moved her into my place and cared for her until her facility was restored.



Bonnie (67) Perry Snow (68)



Liz Snow (36) Bonnie Snow (67)
Josie

We were both too young for both places as the average age in both was over 85 years. The generation gap was huge. I spent a lot of time on the bike path and bench around the pond thinking my thoughts. .

The Next Best Case Scenario came to mind, along with 'Count Your Blessings.' We were both just old enough to qualify for these services, our Daughters were in the city, we were next door to each other, the house sold well, I was in good health, she had a private room, etc, etc.

As a family we dealt with this crisis as best we could. Bonnie and I had always been and will always be so proud of our Daughters. Bonnie was in Long Term Care for 3 years.



Elizabeth Snow (40) Perry Snow(72) Charlotte Snow (42)
Calgary Alberta 2016

British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association 2013

In 2013 I donated the BHC Registry to Lori Oschefsky of the British Home Children Advocacy and Research Association (BHCARA). It will be preserved as an online resource for those researching their BHC broken family ties. In a relatively short time, she has added another ten thousand names to the Registry.

In 2013 I also donated my 2000 edition of this book as a free download, epub book, and online version to BHCARA. It was more important to have the book read than to collect publishing royalties. We stopped counting downloads after the first 5,000.

My wife Bonnie died on March 4, 2015 at age 69, two years before our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Since we met in Grade 10, we shared 55 years of our lives together. I am forever grateful for that. She remains ever present.

British Home Children Advocacy & Research Association 2016

In 2016 I was invited to join BHCARA as Executive Director (Canada) and agreed as it is mostly a virtual position. Between us, Lori Oschefsky and I have devoted +30 years of our lives to the identifying the BHC, helping BHC descendants find their families and raising awareness of the BHC Deportation Scheme.

I am very optimistic about the potential of social media. So much more information is available and accessible. BHCARA has a huge resource site of everything you need to find you family.

Are you are at the early stage of "I just found out my Mother, Grandfather, Uncle was a BHC? What is a British Home Child? Have you been searching for years, the length of time has shortened considerably, and [help is available](#).

The [BHC Registry](#) is the only comprehensive database of BHC that has grown to 60,000 listings. It will continue to grow and more and more of the BHC will be 'claimed' by their descendants.

The [BHCARA Facebook](#) page is growing exponentially with over 4,000 members in 2017. It is an excellent forum for researchers and for BHC Descendants to tell their family's stories.

PART VII: DISPELLING THE MYTHS

The Orphan Myth

How many of the BHC were orphans? By definition, this means that both of their parents were deceased when they 'came into care.' It suited the BHC Deportation Organizations to exaggerate the incidence to justify their alleged benevolent actions. One author wrote of 'half-orphans,' where only one parent died. Seriously?

Unless there was a catastrophic incident in which a child's entire family was killed, then very few of the BHC were truly orphans. If some did lose one or both parents, they still had extended families of grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc. on both their maternal and paternal sides of their family.

If the extended family's identity was concealed, then the children and their families cease to exist for each other. This was NOT an incidental effect of the Child Deportation Scheme - it was deliberate.

When my Father was forcibly removed from his home in 1913, he had a Grandfather, Father, Mother, 13 Grand Uncles and Grand Aunts, 10 Uncles and Aunts, one brother, two sisters, and an unknown number of cousins.

He had at least 30 people in his extended family. To them, he just 'disappeared.' To me, he was 'disappeared.'

Orphanized means 'to make an orphan of.' If children are told their parents are dead by their caretakers, and those children believe what they are told then they are orphanized and act accordingly.

My Father, two Aunts, one Uncle, two cousins 'in care' were all told their Mother was dead. That was a lie. If children were told they are unwanted, abandoned, and inferior, then they act accordingly. It suited the organizations such as Barnardo's to label the children as 'No One's Children' to elicit public sympathy, support, and donations.

Often their British caretakers and Canadian farmer 'Masters' believed that these children didn't belong to anyone, therefore they could treat them however they wanted.

How many would you estimate were orphans, whose both parents died? 10% or 10,000 of these children would have had 20,000 deceased Parents, 80,000 deceased Grandparents, 160,000 Uncles/Aunts, etc. who could not take care of them. Did I miss a catastrophe or a war somewhere in the last 100 years?

These children were 'orphanized.' And, they were 'disappeared.' To their families, they ceased to exist. Once in Canada, they became invisible.

Your BHC relatives have passed into oblivion. We remain as invisible as them. Time to claim them as ours, tell their stories, make their lives mean something, and in doing so become visible ourselves - even only if virtually visible.

Our BHC relatives have been called 'Canada's Invisible Immigrants.' We descendants are an 'Invisible Majority.' Only you can change that by identifying yourself as a proud descendant of a BHC.

Every time you see, read, or hear about the 'British Orphans,' challenge it. Your silence only perpetuates the myth.

The Numbers of BHC and Descendants Myth

There are only estimates as to number of BHC deported to Canada and estimates as to number of descendants. The source of these estimates are unknown. The current estimate is 120,000 BHC and 4 million descendants.

We will not know until every child sent is identified on a ship's passenger list. The organizations have not provided a number of children per year tally. Why won't they? Why doesn't our Canadian Government find out?

In the meantime, every time you read, see, or hear a number tossed about, challenge it. I suspect that there were at least 150,000 BHC deported to Canada who produced 10 million descendants - one in three Canadians.

The How Many Myth

How many BHC were placed in good indentures? All of them? None of them? Some of them? Many of them? Do your own homework. Make a decision. Our Canadian government could find out. Why don't they?

How many BHC were sexually, physically, emotionally abused, died of neglect, were killed? All of them? None of them? Some of them? Many of them? Do your own homework. Make a decision. Our Canadian government could find out. Why don't they?

How many BHC were 'orphanized' told that their mothers and or fathers were dead when they were not? All of them? None of them? Some of them? Many of them? Do your own homework. Make a decision.

Our Canadian government could find out. Why don't they? Evidence is mounting from many sources that the majority if not all of BHC were made orphans by the organizations.

How many BHC were subjected to the Numbering System where their names were taken from them and replaced by a number they had to refer to themselves at all times. Until someone provides factual information to the contrary I would say every one of them.

How many BHC were subjected to the Rule of Silence that did not allow them to speak except for one hour a day. Until someone provides factual information to the contrary I would say every one of them.

How many BHC were subjected to the Punishment Circle that meant either being caned daily or forced to watch others being caned daily? Until someone provides factual information to the contrary I would say every one of them.

The Better Life in Canada Myth

When I see elderly British Home Children interviewed, I cringe when they are asked what their childhoods were like in British Boys/Girls Homes. Does someone really believe they feel free to say "I was emotionally, physically, and sexually abused."

When asked if they had a better life in Canada, they know how they are supposed to answer. They invariably look to a family picture, and say, "Look at the family I have."

My Father was a gentleman and I can imagine how he might have answered this question. In my Mother's book he is quoted as saying "I had to wear women's boots that were too small for me **for a time.**" The reality was that it was for years and his feet were badly deformed.

If I were asked if he had a 'better life in Canada' I would say, "That's a very loaded and stupid question, because he was never given the choice of staying in England and FINDING IS FAMILY."

The Waifs and Strays made sure he would never FIND HIS FAMILY in England or from Canada.

His two Sisters and one Brother 'in care' had a very difficult time finding each other as adults. They all believed their Mother was dead because that is what they were told to make them 'orphanized.'

None of them said they were better off 'in care' than being with THEIR FAMILY." Is someone going to asked them if they would have had a better life in Canada?

If interviewed, the interviewer would be long gone before I could show them my Parents file of 60 years of correspondence or listened to my story of how I found his family.

I would not get the chance to say, "Do you want to hear about the Number System, the Rule of Silence, and Daily Canings?"

If anyone were to ask my opinion as to whether he had a better life in Canada, I would reply, "Whatever my Father accomplished in Canada was 'in spite of' his being 'in care,' NOT 'because of his being 'in care.' Every time you read, hear, or see this myth promoted, challenge it.

PART VII: TOO BAD, SO SAD, NOW WHAT?

Knowledge is Power

There isn't even a word to describe what was done to the British Home Children. It was a diabolical plot based upon grandiose Victorian illusions of creating a domestic servant and farm labourer class for the colony of Canada.

The irrevocable severing of family ties has no historical precedent. The brainwashing of children to achieve this goal unabated for a hundred years is incomprehensible.

There is a litany of lies for over 100 years of the British Home Children Deportation Scheme. They have never been adequately challenged so they persist in public presentations of the scheme.

Like our BHC relatives who were very much on their own, so are we. No one is going to make this cause their own, unless they have a vested personal interest.

What Can You Do?

Yes, you. Lori and I have been doing the heavy lifting for 30 years, as have others. This while being full time employed (myself self employed) and Lori other employed, having families and a life. It is very time and energy consuming. Neither can be replaced. Our efforts were/are completely unfunded.

Beliefs are powerful things that drive the mind. Positive beliefs about oneself create a healthy level of self esteem and self respect. Positive beliefs about others create healthy relationships.

Conversely, if one group of people believes that another group is 'subhuman' then a holocaust can result. If one group of people believe that another group are 'infidels' for having different beliefs, then Holy Wars can result.

If one group of people decide that children of the poor should be taken from their families, deported to Canada, and all family ties irrevocably severed, then the British Home Child Deportation Scheme can result.

Denial is the refusal to accept reality or fact, acting as if a painful event, thought or feeling did not exist. It is considered one of the most primitive of the defence mechanisms because it is characteristic of early childhood development.

The apologists are those who blindly defend or support a cause or organization that is being criticized. Ironically, their comments ie 'You can't use current standards to judge the past' tend to mimic the propaganda of the organization. My favorite is the justification of the 'better life in Canada.' I guess to them the ends justify the means.

You are free to choose what you believe about the BHC Deportation Scheme. You are free to choose what you believe about what I have written.

If you 'Don't Want To Know,' that is your choice. If you do want to know the truth, then persist in your search.

Add your BHC family information to the [BHC Registry](#).

Join the [BHCARA Facebook Group](#) where thousands of others are searching for the truth about their BHC relatives.

Tell your BHC family story. Write a book as a Publish on Demand or make a video on Facebook.

Do not let Canada's 'Invisible Immigrants' become ghosts. Do not let their stories die with them. Unlike a visible minority, we are very much an invisible majority. It's time to stand up.

How can you assert yourself if you are somehow ashamed of yourself and your people. Only you can decide how you are entitled to be treated. With respect, acceptance, approval, appreciation, or contempt, rejection, disapproval, deprecation.

You need to assert yourself regarding your BHC heritage. No more, "Please Sir ..." No more settling for scraps.

Inevitably you will need to get records from the sending agencies. I regard their fees as exorbitant and extortionate. They are still doing all they can to restrict access, delay the process, provide as little information as they can get away with, etc.

It took me too many years to get the Children's Society and Barnardo records, and I am still not convinced I got complete records. My Grandmother tried for four years to see her children, have them moved closer to London, and sent them Christmas gifts they never received.

They did not give me a record of her correspondence as they regarded this as “not of historical significance.” They had already told my aunts and uncle that their mother was dead and they were orphans, so it might have been a bit embarrassing when I finally met my Aunt and told her how hard her mother tried to see her and showed her the proof.

I don't know how my Aunt would have reacted to finding out that her Parents were alive until the 1950's. My Aunts and Uncle spent their lives in England. They would have been in her 30's when their unknown Parents died. What did the organizations achieve by 'Orphanizing' children?

Do we need a Canadian Ombudsman or an International Ombudsman to ensure that obtaining records becomes an affordable and efficient process? An ombudsman is a public advocate usually appointed by the government or by parliament. An ombudman has a significant degree of independence and is charged with representing the interests of the public by investigating and addressing complaints of or a violation of rights.

I Had a Dream

Or maybe it was a Seniors Moment. In this dream I had a phone call from a Canadian government official who said my book had been shared so much it was on everyone's phone in Parliament.

Never having heard of this story before, people decided it was time to erect a memorial in Ottawa dedicated to the British Home Children.

They wanted to know if I had any ideas as to what it could look like. They offered help from their many government department's. I was flooded with proposals some mundane and some so artistically abstract that I couldn't get it. I finally had to come up with my criteria.

Absolutely Not Category

Forbidden Words. The word Orphans should not appear anywhere near the monument. The BHC were someone's son and daughter before they 'came into care.' They never saw their families again. They had their names replaced by numbers. I want to give them their names back. I want to 'de-orphanize them.'

Group Children by Organization. They cannot be identified as per the organization that kidnapped, imprisoned them, sold them, kept them in indentured captivity, and provided inadequate care. These organizations orphanized them.

I do not want any of these organizations' names any where near these children. These children were not theirs, even though some boasted they were 'No One's Children.'

If someone wants to recognize the organizations, then they can have a small monument listing the +50 known organizations. It would have to be placed no where near the children. It would have to be entitled not the 'Child Savers' but 'The Child Slavers.'

Group Children by Ship. Since the early passenger lists read 'Girl age 8' you could only have a group picture of hollow eyed children with no names attached. My Father's ship was just one part of his captivity. I want to break that connection as well.

Photographs and Electronic Media. Barnardo's has 500,000 photographs and 300 propaganda films that I'm sure they would be happy to sell, rather than donate. Pictures of nameless children permanently and irrevocably severed from their families and living in captivity is abhorrent to me.

The Deportation Organization's past and present use of such media as propaganda makes me feel very disloyal to the children if I don't challenge what is being said in documentaries.

Group by Sex. Boys and Girls were deported on different ships. Siblings were separated from each other in Homes in England. They were sent to different indentures. They were sent to different countries. They never saw each other again once in Canada. Surnames would reunite them side by side with their brothers and sisters, and they only childhood friends they ever had - those 'in care.'

Signage: No references to the Organizations. No euphemisms: sent, transported, migrated, emigrated, assisted, indentured, adopted, etc. British Home Children would do.

Part of a Museum: Collection of relics, trunks, photos, etc should be separate from the BHC monument of names. These children need a good bath if you will and need to have all traces of their experiences in care flushed away and burned.

Only then can they symbolically be returned to the state they were in before 'coming into care.' They were members of a family who loved them and were guilty only of being born into the wrong class in England and being victims of a society that could or would not care for its own.

Absolutely Category:

It must be HUGE. 100,000 - 150,000? Who knows? The monument must contain the names identified to date and allow for the ongoing inclusion of names as they are identified. If it were a wall, it would be 3 times the size of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (500 ft). It could be plastic.

It must be SEPARATE and not mixed in with the cultural mosaic of Canadian Immigrants. To date, these children are a faint smudge on our Canadian Flag.

I have yet to see any significant representation of millions of BHC Descendants on Canada Day, Heritage Day, etc.

These children were unique. They were taken from their families and not given the choice of staying in England with their families. They should stand alone, with the only family they had - each other. It diminishes them to have them compared with other immigrant groups of that were made up of adults and families.

Group by SURNAMES. This is the only way children can be reconnected with their siblings. Brothers and Sisters must be reunited if only in this way.

Because the organizations' records are not shared with each other, discovering a relative from one organization does not lead to discovering another relative in another organization.

Group by UNMARKED MASS GRAVES. Once these children have been identified and it may take decades to do so, their names can be added alphabetically to the main list.

Group by DIED WHILE IN CARE. Thousands died of natural causes, committed suicide, were killed, died of neglect, exposure, drowned, beaten to death.

Group by MILITARY SERVICE. Those who survived and those who perished.

It must be MODIFIABLE. Plastic bricks or nameplates with one name per brick could be slotted into place and moved as necessary.

It must be OUTSIDE The BHC were confined in the foster homes, the Boys/Girls Homes, girls in the homes they worked as servants until they were 21, boys on the farms (outside but not allowed to venture beyond).

But they would be rained and snowed upon! Yes, but they endured and the monument would be open to the sky and stars.

It could be ENCLOSED and somehow this picture came to mind. A building shaped like a shell with circular stairs inside. Separate and apart as were the BHC in Canada. Safe from the contamination of the organizations that Brainwashed them.



And then I woke up and realized this was a dream. But maybe it is a goal instead.

Apologies serve one purpose and I hope our government provides a sincere one that acknowledges their role in facilitating this abominable chapter of our history.

They paid the organizations for the British Home Children and in turn sold these children to Canadian farmers. They abdicated their responsibility for the welfare of the British Home Children to these organizations who failed terribly at looking after the best interests of children.

The Canadian Government has done nothing to help the descendants of the British Home Children to restore their family ties that were so cruelly severed by the sending organizations.

They have done very little in terms of identifying every single BHC that was deported to Canada.

They have done nothing about the exorbitant and extortionist charges being made by the Deportation Agencies to release BHC records to descendants. If it costs a descendant \$400 per inquiry and the descendant has to apply to three different organizations if amounts to thousands of dollars and a wait time of years.

Why is there no Canadian government funding for this?

Why is there no Canadian government funding for the British Home Children Advocacy and Research Association?

Why has the Canadian government not challenged the Deportation Agencies long standing position of withholding information?

Why has the Canadian Government not demanded of these organizations to release the names and numbers of children actually deported to Canada year by year?

It is time the British government acknowledged this unspoken purpose to the scheme but they will not. Neither are they likely to create a monument to the British Home Children as they have had a 100 years to do so.

What reasons and/or excuses does our Canadian government have for not creating an appropriate and distinctive monument for the British Home Children and their unknown 4-8 million descendants/voters?

Lori Oschefski and I have a combined +30 years invested in the British Home Children project. Others have been trying as well and investing many years as well.

What's changed in the last 17 years since I first published my book? Well I was 56 then and will be 73 this year. Second, third, and fourth generations have inherited the searches. The encouraging part is social media and the access to so much more information that was unavailable not that long ago. As time passes, the organizations will have more reason to deny access to records by claiming people are not direct enough descendants.

It is time to focus on a significant, meaningful, and appropriate national recognition of our people - the British Home Children. A National BHC Day and a National huge, distinct and separate monument would suffice. Token replicas are not good enough. Thanks for the stamp, though.

If not now ... When?

I want you to share this FREE book with your family, friends, and whatever media you feel needs to know. I want you to send a personal email to our elected representatives.

If you are part BHCARA's 4,000 Facebook Group, I want every one of you to send a personal email, ideally on the same day and Identify yourself as one of Canada's millions of yet unknown British Home Children Descendants. Tell your family's story.

Tell them you want a **National BHC Day** proclaimed.
Tell them you want a separate **National BHC Monument in Ottawa** containing +125,000 BHC Names.

Include a link to the [British Home Children Research and Advocacy Association](#)

Include a link to this book [Neither Waif Nor Stray: The Search for a Stolen Identity](#)

Include a link to the [British Home Children Facebook](#) page.

They all have email addresses. Use cc rather than bcc because bureaucrats worry about who else has copy. Include your local Member of Parliament.

[Members of Parliament](#)

Senate of Canada

We can help you find your BHC Family and have found about 70,000 of them. We can't find the millions of BHC descendants. Only you can do that by speaking up and telling your story.

I intend to make a video in April 2017 that is very unlike other documentaries to date. I intend to highlight the true goal of the British Child Deportation Scheme as one of permanently and irrevocably removing children from their families and ensuring these ties are never re-established.

I will emphasize the brainwashing techniques used to ensure this goal was achieved. They have almost succeeded, but we are still here and will persist in reclaiming our BHC family's stolen identities.

I wish you all the best in the search for your and your family's stolen identities.

¹ Kenneth Bagnell, "Britain's Children Who Came to Stay," The Review: Canada's Child Immigrants, Volume 64, Number 5, Issue Number 355, (1980a), p. 5.

² Kenneth Bagnell, "Britain's Children Who Came to Stay," The Review: Canada's Child Immigrants, Volume 64, Number 5, Issue Number 355, (1980a), p. 9.

³ "Town of Marathon-History." Noront International Trade Services, Inc., Thunder Bay, Ontario. June 18, 1997.
<<http://www.marathon.nor-ont.ca/history.html>>

- ⁴ Correspondence: Assistant Superintendent, Metropolitan Police, Balham Police Station, Balham, London, England, to Fred G. Snow, October 24, 1957.
- ⁵ Correspondence: Secretary Col. E. St. J. Birnie, The Church of England Children's Society, London, England, to Fred G. Snow, November 11, 1957.
- ⁶ Karen Matthews, "Young child's torment in a long voyage." Article courtesy of Geelong Advertiser, Saturday, November 19, 1994.
- ⁷ Karen Matthews, "A childhood rediscovered and a 'family' reunited." Article courtesy of Geelong Advertiser, Saturday, December 10, 1994.
- ⁸ Correspondence: The Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays, London, England to Fred G. Snow, February 07, 1929.
- ⁹ Correspondence: The Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays, London, England to Fred G. Snow, January 30, 1931.
- ¹⁰ Correspondence: Thomas Keeley, Gibb's Home, Sherbrooke, Quebec to Secretary W. R. Vaughan, The Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays, London, England, December 08, 1936.
- ¹¹ Correspondence: Secretary W. R. Vaughan, The Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays, London, England, to Thomas Keeley, Gibb's Home, Sherbrooke, Quebec, December 23, 1936.
- ¹² Correspondence: J. Frost, Assistant Warden, St. Augustine's Home for Boys, Sevenoaks, Kent, England, to Secretary W. R. Vaughan, The Church of England Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays, London, England, September 29, 1937.
- ¹³ Correspondence: J. C. Mason, Secretary, Old Boys League, London, England, to Fred G. Snow, February 8, 1938.
- ¹⁴ Correspondence: Secretary Col. E. St. J. Birnie, The Church of England Children's Society, London, England, to St. Peter's Vicarage, South Croydon, Surrey, England, October 29, 1957.

¹⁵ Correspondence: Secretary Col. E. St. J. Birnie, The Church of England Children's Society, London, England, to St. Peter's Vicarage, South Croydon, Surrey, England, October 29, 1957.

¹⁶ Correspondence: Superintendent, Wandsworth Registration District, Wandsworth, England, to The Church of England Children's Society, London, England, November 08, 1957.

¹⁷ Correspondence: The Children's Society, London, England, to Gertrude Snow, August 17, 1976.

¹⁸ William Shakespeare. From Othello. "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare," May 23, 1999. <<http://www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/Tragedy/othello/othello.3.3.html>>

¹⁹ William Shakespeare. From Hamlet. "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare," June 1999. <<http://www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/Tragedy/hamlet/hamlet.all.html>>

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