

Forced Migration: Ghosts of Familial Memory

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ABSTRACT

In *Forced Migration: Ghosts of Familial Memory*, I create a haunted archive through performance and recorded conversations with my mother and grandfather. Our conversations focus on my ancestors' forced migration to Canada as children in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries. Beginning in 1618, the United Kingdom shipped as many as 150,000 children to the colonies; I create a haunted archive of sound recordings to tell stories of my ancestors' migrations – Joseph Hart, Louisa Hart, and Eleanor Copeland – while tracing the impact of these stories through my own embodied and performative response. Performances are recorded using video and still photography, and my mother and grandfather's stories are accentuated through collected sound. This haunted archive contends with the official adoption records of my ancestors' migration by highlighting the storytelling voices of my mother and grandfather. My archive lives in a website which pairs performance documentation with audio recordings. I use queer and hauntological theory to reflect on my experience as a haunted archivist in the creation of a sound and performative archive.

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I would like to thank my grandfather Clifford Hart, and mother Sherry Hart for all the stories shared over our lifetimes and your willingness to collaborate with me on this project.

I also wanted to posthumously thank our grandmas, Eleanor and Louisa and Grandpa Joseph, who came to Canada as children and started our tradition of telling stories. Now everyone gets to learn that you existed, and that you and your stories mattered.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that my art was made, performances took place on, and this thesis was written in Cornwall, Ontario on the traditional territory of the Wendake-Nionwentsïo, Kanien'kehá:ka, and Ho-de-no-sau-nee-ga on lands governed by the Crawford Purchase of 1783.

I acknowledge that my ancestors came to Roslin, Ontario and lived on the traditional territory of the Wendake-Nionwentsïo, Mississauga, and Ho-de-no-sau-nee-ga on lands governed by Treaty 57.

These lands are now home to a diverse group of Indigenous, Inuit and Métis communities.

DEDICATION

My writing and creative work are dedicated to

my Great-Great Grandpa Joseph Hart,

my Great-Great Grandma Louisa Hart,

my Great-Great Grandma Eleanor Copeland,

and my cousin Mark Hart,

and to all the little ones who did not survive the child migrant scheme.

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Figure 1: Joseph Hart in a wedding photo aged 42 (Circa 1911).

WE HAVE A STORY YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD: AN INTRODUCTION TO HAUNTINGS

In 2016, my grandfather, Clifford Hart, received three packages of adoption papers sent from the United Kingdom to his home in Belleville, Ontario. The three folios of photocopied paper document the lives of three of his grandparents who came to Canada as child migrants during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.¹ Until my grandfather received these documents, I had never thought of their lives – and our lives as descendants of child migrants – as stories worthy of telling beyond our family’s living rooms and dinner tables. After reading the adoption records, I began to imagine the ways in which these documents could be transformed and shared to tell stories of forced child migration. My creative practice and this thesis embody my desire to tell and creatively engage with these stories.

Forced Migration: Ghosts of Familial Memory addresses the familial experience of being haunted by ancestors who were forcibly displaced as children in an often-exploitative child migrant scheme. In *Forced Migration*, I facilitate conversations between my mother and grandfather and record their memories and perceptions of our own ancestors' forced migration to Canada.² The conversations are layered with sounds collected from the places where our ancestors lived and worked, and are available in an Archive of Hauntings:

<https://ghostsoffamilialmemory.wordpress.com/>. This website contains perspectives of my

¹I intentionally use “child migrant” as a descriptor, a term more commonly used in Australia, when referring to unaccompanied children sent to the colonies as part the U.K. this scheme. In Canada the same children are more commonly referred to as Home Children or Barnardo Children. I resist the use of these terms because they reference the brand: Dr. Barnardo's Homes National Incorporated Association. Even though Dr. Barnardo's is only one of many organizations sending children at the same time.

² Having children and grandchildren document the lives of their child migrant ancestors is a practice which has been used by other researchers. Phyllis Harrison's *Home Children Their Personal Stories* (1979) also uses this approach.

family about the lives of our ancestors. For five generations, my family's hauntings have been shared through a counter-memory practice of storytelling.³

Integral to *Forced Migration: Ghosts of Familial Memory* has been my access to the adoption papers my grandfather obtained from Barnardo's and Quarrier's, two of the Christian charity organizations that sent children as young infants to Canada (Bean and Melville 62; Corbett 56-7) (1997).⁴ As the Industrial Revolution altered family life dramatically for those living in the UK's newly-built class-divided Victorian cities, Christian charity organizations including Barnardo's in England and Quarrier's in Scotland began to systematically send poor children to Canada – the choice destination after 1869 (Neff 237).

Returning to Belleville and Roslin Ontario to record stories about my ancestors filled me with unease. How could I possibly document five generations of hauntings in just a few conversations? There is something special in the intimacy of our conversations and memories of my great grandparents, Eleanor Copeland, Louisa Hart, and her husband Joseph Hart. One reason why I consider these as hauntings is because my ancestors did not come to Canada by choice, they were sent without their parents as part of a systematic, government-supported program that separated children from their parents and sent them to the far reaches of the British Empire – New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), South Africa, and the Caribbean (Bean and Melville 1, 28) (1989).⁵ As many as 150,000 children were sent to Canada as part of

³ My use of counter-memory draws from the work of Yifat Gutman. In their essay, *Looking Back to the future: Counter-memory as oppositional knowledge production in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (2017), Gutman cites the research of Coy et al (2008) who identify four types of oppositional knowledge. Applicable to my research is counter-informative, as it "introduces new information or 'the untold story' and highlights the selectivity and partiality of the dominant knowledge that was made available to the public by those in power" (56).

⁴ The age range of children sent to the thirteen Colonies and later Canada changed over the course of the program, sometimes this was because of decisions made by the sending organizations and other times based on Government policy. The U.K. government's 1850 Poor Law gave guardians the right to send children under the age of 16 overseas (Bean and Melville 35). Officially, in 1924 Canada banned children under the age of 14, with the program officially ending in 1925 (77). Although, as I write in Chapter 1, children continued to be sent to Canada into the early 1950s through the Fairbridge Farm School on Vancouver Island.

⁵ Janet Fink almost captures the relationship between church and state in the global shipment of children in the title of her article: *Children Of Empire: The Alignments of Church, State and Family in the Creation of Mobile Children* - although *Collusion* rather than the softer *Alignments* may be more accurate given the economic value of the program for Churches. I borrow collusion from Margrit Shildrick's analysis of the relationship between the Irish State and the Catholic Church in the "sociopolitical oppression of vulnerable women" (171).

the program.⁶ In defining haunting, Avery Gordon points out that “the ghost ... is not the invisible or some ineffable excess (xvi)”; instead she insists that “the whole essence of a ghost is that it has a real presence and demands its due, your attention. Haunting and the appearance of specters or ghosts is one way ... we are notified that what’s been concealed is very much alive and present, interfering precisely with those always incomplete forms of containment and repression ceaselessly directed towards us (xvi).” Because of the conditions under which my ancestors came to Canada, and the way in which my family has shared their stories with me over my lifetime, my ancestors do not feel distant, gone, or lost. They feel present. When I return to Roslin, I very much feel them there. And sometimes their stories, and in particular their lack of agency scares me.

All three of my child migrant ancestors found each other in the small village of Roslin, Ontario. The first of my relatives to arrive was Joseph Hart, and according to his adoption papers he was sent to Canada on March 22, 1887.⁷ He was taken into care a year earlier in Glasgow on May 30, 1886. The second was Louisa Hart née Panther. The date of her admittance is unknown. She arrived in Quebec on June 9, 1894, aboard the SS Vancouver. As adults, Joseph and Louisa would marry. The third and last of my relatives displaced to Canada was Elenore Copeland née Breach. She was admitted to Barnardo’s, and according to official papers she was admitted on May 31, 1910. Their adoption records are a collection of official documents amassed over the period my ancestors were the responsibility of a childcare organization and “adoptive families”.⁸

⁶ Some estimates put the number at 80,000 children sent to Canada (Sherington 461). Others place it at 100,000 (Neff 237). Counter-knowledge efforts by descendants problematize such numbers and place it at 150,000 (Snow, Perry). Bean and Melville also site 150,000 children as being sent across the Empire (1). The British Home Child Registry, an online database created by descendants lists 83,000 children sent to Canada as of December 2021. Two of my ancestors are listed at this time. Previous searches only found one (www.britishhomechildrenregistry.com/)

⁷ The actual number is 6. Eleanor came with a sibling Annie Tracy née Breach. Both Joseph and Louisa would have sisters come after their arrival. Louisa’s sister Winnifred arrived June 13th 1895. Joseph’s sister Annie arrived in 1888. This research project is focused on the three who are my direct ancestors. Future research could potentially involve locating living relatives and documenting their family memory practices.

⁸ I place “adoptive families” in quotations to reflect the complex nature in which children were taken into state-organized care and the diversity of relationships between children and the families responsible for their care. First and foremost, children were not always ‘placed’ into state

The adoption agencies admit that some documents were destroyed, and it is likely that others were lost (Appendix: 1 & 2).⁹ These records document migration from the point of view of the adoption agencies and lack the voices of my ancestors and family.¹⁰ Our stories form an intimate counter-memory practice, held closely for five generations.

My backpack is heavy – documents, photographs, and clothes. I packed to be home for at least two weeks recording conversations and visiting with family. My winter coat is bulky, making it difficult to get the backpack on. The coat's arms catch on the straps of the backpack, bunching up. I try again. It is filled with a few photographs of my great-great grandparents as adults given to me by my mother and grandfather. I even have a photo in a round frame of Louisa and Joseph Hart with two of their friends from their wedding, everyone dressed in their Edwardian finery. This is the only photograph I have of Joseph, who died three decades before I was born. I am also carrying three folders of paper, containing the adoption papers sent to us from the UK. While my grandfather had applied for the documents, I have kept them in my care as part of the preparation for this project. I take being responsible for this document very seriously. They are not mine but ours. They belong to my entire family. I am their trustee. The weight of the documents and photographs pulls the backpack down.

In each chapter, I will reflect on my family's haunted experience of child migration. In my reflection and making, I think with Avery Gordon's 1997 book, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Gordon's research moves between social activism, literature, photography, and government policy to delve into how hauntings influence the public imagination, thus shaping the lives of the living. The crux of Gordon's explorations into hauntings is to listen to the ghosts we evoke which tell a different story of events than official

sponsored care by their families. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries children were 'spirited away' to the colonies. This practice continued until 1757 when a civil action in Scotland brought the practice of 'spiriting children away' to an end ("Child Emigration Information Sheet 10"). In the 19th century, Dr. Barnardo practiced what he called 'philanthropic abductions' on at-risk children (Bean and Melville 48). While childcare agencies like Barnardo's used the language of 'adoption', children were not always adopted into a new family in a way we would recognize today. Maria Rye had children sign 'apprentice agreements,' although such agreements were not legally binding (51). British Social worker Andrew Doyle noted in his report to the Canadian Parliament: "Very young children are 'adopted' in the ordinary sense of the word... The other sense in which the word 'adoption' is used is simply apprenticeship. The view that many of the children take of this form of 'adoption' was expressed to me by one of them, an intelligent shrewd girl between sixteen and seventeen. 'Doption, sir, is when folks gets a girl to work without wages'" (Bean and Melville 66).

⁹ The destruction of child migration records is an important part of the history of the program. According to Bean and Melville (1989), all of the records from the Fairbridge Memorial College in Rhodesia were destroyed at the school after its closure (98).

¹⁰ The sending organizations would often go as far as to redact the letters sent home from children: "Cleansed of criticism, their letters back to the institutions in England were proudly run in the magazines of the different societies" (Bean and Melville 47).

government narratives (22). Gordon disentangles trauma and haunted writing: “but haunting, unlike trauma, is distinctive for producing a something-to-be-done” (xvi). Gordon sees ‘something-to-be-done’ as the ‘socio-political psychological state’ which requires action from the living and is a response to the:

... turmoil and trouble, that moment (of however long duration) when things are not in their assigned places, when the cracks and rigging are exposed, when the people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving, when disturbed feelings cannot be put away...(xvi).

Using Gordon’s definitions of hauntings, *Forced Migration* focuses on how practices of familial storytelling *is* the “something-to-be-done” of our haunting (Gordon xvi). Gordon’s haunted epistemology lays the groundwork for what is a counter archive of hauntings, voices, and performances. Part of our haunting is the sensation that comes before we tell a story, the feeling that requires us to share and talk about those who came and laboured in Canada. It is also the feelings expressed in the tone and timber of our voices when we tell our stories. I reflect on how my experience of being haunted has informed and produced performance pieces: *Sending the Little Ones Home* (2020), *Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer* (2020), and an installation, *Persistence of Memory in Place (When You Can’t Go Anywhere)* (2021).

Reflecting on my artistic practice and the creation of an archive of hauntings, I’m inspired by Anne Cvetkovich’s *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Feeling and Lesbian Public Cultures* (2003). Cvetkovich’s analysis veers away from an analysis of trauma which focuses on catastrophic events like “war, genocide, the Holocaust” (3). Instead, Cvetkovich focuses on an analysis of the traumatic which includes its everydayness, what she sees as “the emotional field around trauma, that requires as much attention as that which narrowly fits the definition” (281). Following Cvetkovich’s focus on the everyday, my conversations with my mother and grandfather document the everyday lives of our ancestors, and through my making I share these

experiences in my own “archive of feeling”. In my archive, I focus on emotional experience rather than historical exactitude because my ancestors are not here to give testimony to their experience with migration. While my mother and grandfather do their best to tell the story of their ancestors, their version of events is not the “truth,” but rather their perspective as descendants. However, as Cvetkovich writes, “the nuances of everyday emotional life [of my family] contain the residues that are left by traumatic histories, and they too belong in the archive of trauma” (280). Cvetkovich's analysis, like my own creative practice, doesn't just focus on the traumatic, but instead sees trauma as “a point of entry into a vast archive of feelings, the many forms of love, rage, intimacy, grief, shame, and more that are part of the vibrancy of queer cultures” (7). While Cvetkovich uses trauma as a point of entry into other affective experience, I resist a definition of trauma because my archive doesn't seek to verify trauma or to assess how traumatic the program was for my ancestors. My analysis is about the experience of being told stories and how acquiring knowledge about the child migration scheme exposes a range of familial affects that are shared as stories, across five generations.

Margrit Shildrick's *Queering Social Imaginaries of the Dead* has also been important throughout my writing and creative practice. Shildrick introduces queer time to examine the ways in which hauntings confound notions of temporal linearity. Queer time is a “radical departure from the notion of temporality as a succession of ‘now’ moments that confidently assert the distinct realities of past, present and future. It is not a teleological progression but one of discontinuities loops and emergence that radically destabilize normative expectations” (177). I use queer time to place my mother and grandfather in conversation with each other, and to repeat and reverse narrative clips and sounds of our hauntings. As part of an analysis of queering the memory of the dead, Shildrick introduces Jacques Derrida's hauntological ethics in which the

living “might configure a new imaginary of living well with the dead” (171). Shildrick’s conception of hauntological ethics works in tandem with queer time, so that the ‘fissures, breaks, and contradictions’ queer time lays bare of our histories are seen as “opportunities to configure an ethics, not of belated recognition, but of response and responsibility” (177). Shildrick’s hauntological ethics becomes my ability to respond by sharing stories of my ancestors, alongside my lifelong fear of poverty.

The train station is about a 45-minute walk from my house. I walk up one of the busiest streets in the city. Cars zoom past splashing me with salty slush. The work of carrying the archive to my mom’s place warms me a little bit too much and I begin to sweat, so I awkwardly unzip my coat. Humid heat leaps out into the winter air as I walk the rest of the way with my coat unzipped. The entire archive and clothes couldn’t fit inside my backpack. I had to pack a second bag. It begins to slide down my arm. Part of my responsibility – to my ancestors and to my family is to keep these documents safe. We waited more than 100 years to read them. They cannot get wet on the walk to the train station.

My methodology is inspired by the research of Michel Foucault and Arlette Farge in their 1982 publication *Disorderly Families Infamous Letters from the Bastille Archives* (1982) (published in English in 2016). In *Disorderly Families*, Farge and Foucault provide an analysis of the *lettres de cachet* in the Bastille Archive for the years 1728 to 1758 (20). They introduce *vies-poèmes* (poem-lives) to capture the passions of ordinary people in letters appealing to the king’s power, to resolve domestic conflicts (1).¹¹ In the opening paragraph of *Disorderly Families*, Farge and Foucault outline their approach leaving traditional notions of historical writing behind, writing: “the idea that history is dedicated to ‘archival exactitude’ and philosophy to the ‘architecture of ideas’ is, to us, nothing short of preposterous. This is not how we work” (19). Delving into the archive, poem-lives takes shape when the “passions of the common people begin to emerge” (20). In the *Afterword*, Farge (translated by Lara Vergnaud)

¹¹ Conflicts include drunken husbands, adultery, debt and abandonment.

writes about how it was Foucault's affective experience with the Bastille Archive that poem-lives came to life: "With rigor, emotion, and lyricism, [Foucault] spoke of lives illuminated solely by the 'light of justice,' thanks to which they were able to be preserved. The intelligent controlled and impassioned lyricism of his opening sentences touched me enormously. ... Speaking of emotion in those days represented a real break from the traditional way of writing about history" (269). Farge found this approach to doing historical research transformative. She writes, "...as a woman known for being sensitive, my perspective as a historian was often put in doubt" (269). Poem-lives bring to life something which is felt when a reader is moved by the written lives contained in an archive.

The poem-lives methodology reflects how I am haunted by my ancestors' ordinary lives; it inspires felt artistic expressions through performance, sound, and making. It is with Farge and Foucault's concept of poem-lives and Gordon's ideas of haunting that conversations with my mother and grandfather were developed. I conducted semi-structured interviews with some loosely prepared questions, while allowing the conversations to organically unfold. Because *Forced Migration* is about my family, the interviews sound much more like intimate conversations, intentionally blurring the authority of the interviewer, and includes memories as much as tears and laughter throughout, demonstrating the intimacy of our familial story telling.

Upon my arrival at the train station, I put my mask on and my glasses fog up immediately. A consequence of both COVID-19 health and safety protocols and changes in temperature. With COVID, I've become accustomed to taking my glasses off and hanging them from the front of my shirt when I go to pick up groceries. I do the same now. There are no attendants at this station; it is just me and a few other people waiting for the train. I live just outside Montreal, so I figure it will be mostly empty and with COVID it will be more empty than usual. I am wrong. Even though I have spent months planning this trip home, I'm worried that I'm going to mess things up. I feel like I only have one chance to share stories of my ancestors. Few others in my family have had the literacy – least of all my

ancestors – to document the story of their forced migration. The thought gives me anxiety that wraps itself around my heart, stealing my breath for an instant.

I am a haunted archivist. My archive of voices, stills, and performance is both a reflection and evidence of my haunting. In *Forced Migration: Ghosts of Familial Memory*, the website is a repository of haunted expressions in the form of installation, performance, and sound. Following Cvetkovich, my website is “organized as an ‘archive of feelings’ an exploration of cultural texts as repositories of feelings and emotions, which are encoded not only in the content of the texts themselves but in the practices that surround their production” (7). While Cvetkovich’s research focuses on trauma as an entry point into queer public cultures, my approach is more intimate and addresses the specificity of my family’s hauntings across time and place. Following Cvetkovich’s focus on affect, my approach pays particular attention to the expression of joy as much as contemplation and sadness in considering the formation of family.

I decided on a website as a container for my archive because of the affordances a website provides for collective safety during an unpredictable global pandemic. In addition, a website is not bound by the same space/time restraints as a traditional gallery installation. While my hauntings are made public through the website, the spaces in which an audience can experience my archive and writing can be more intimate and personal than a conventional exhibition space. A website is also dynamic, requiring the person who visits the website to actively listen to my hauntings with the click of a mouse.¹² I encourage the reader to visit the website prior to reading this thesis, while also moving freely between the website and writing since I reference specific parts of the archive throughout this document.

¹² While I use a website as a mode of delivery for this thesis, I’m not interested in the intricate details of the technologies I use.

In *Chapter 1: I Eat History; Come Dine with Me*, I invite readers to a family dinner where my mother, grandfather, and I discuss the migration of our ancestors. Our conversation provides a first step to learn more about the history of child migration. This is not a unique approach; Patricia Skidmore's 2018 interview for the CBC's Doc Project's episode entitled *The Children of Fairbridge Farm* pointed me to the necessity to investigate the history of the scheme to better understand my role as researcher of my ancestors' migration. I also discuss how the adoption records were produced and their availability (or lack thereof) for researchers and family members to find their loved ones. In my performance, *Sending the Little Ones Home* (2020), I push beyond the Agency's archive and make use of newspaper articles written between 1928 and 1931 to performatively express the tragic consequences of the scheme. The articles provide some detail of the suicides of four youth who came to Canada as child migrants and took their own lives. During the family dinner, I recorded the discussion we had about my cousin Mark, who died by suicide in 1990. With this conversation and my performance *Sending the Little Ones Home*, I destabilize entrenched familial narratives about Mark's suicide – which have always focused on events leading up to his death and the strange characterization of him as being “spoiled”. My experience with Mark's haunting and my embodied response shared through my creative practice is a counter-narrative to the entrenched familial narratives.

I wait inside the train station. No point in getting cold. There is an automated announcement that the train will be arriving in 10 minutes in both French and English – an unreliable time frame as most VIA Rail customers know. Others gather their things and wait outside on the platform. I eventually join the others, with mask on. The change in temperature and the mask has again made my glasses useless. As I wait for the train, I am reminded how important it is to conduct interviews in person. They shouldn't be done over Zoom or Skype, since this would be impersonal and lack the familial warmth and shared love for our ancestors that this project seeks to capture. I have to go to the places where I am haunted. This train will get me there.

In *Chapter 2: I Share This Story; Do Not Forget Me; I Am With You Always* I examine the genealogy of our family storytelling and the quotidian experience of receiving familial knowledge. The archive of hauntings is a repository of those repeated stories that make up an ongoing practice of being with our ancestors. In addition to a discussion on the role of story in the formation of my archive, this chapter focuses on a performance titled *Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer* (2020), in which I *listen* to photographs of my grandma Copeland. As the great-great grandmother I came to know well, her untold stories haunt me as much as the ones she shared with the family. The performance is documented using photographic stills because I am held in the act of listening, an aspect of the project which is also central to the conversations with my mother and grandfather. As the oldest of the fifth generation in Canada my family, I am likely the last person to remember my Grandma Copeland and I was too young when she died for her to have told me her stories. This performance is my way of inviting her to tell that story, satisfying my desire to tell her that I love her and I want to know more.

On the train, I rest my head on the window. My toque protects my head from any major rumbles caused by the tracks. The time away from writing has given me time to reflect. I realize the train I will be taking home uses the same tracks that would have taken my ancestors from the ports in Quebec to their distribution homes in Belleville and Peterborough. Along the tracks there are a few Victorian farmhouses that they would have seen during their journey into Ontario. The past and present collapse. I feel it in my chest. My heart's sinus rhythm feels like it takes a short pause before returning. And again, my breath skips a beat.

In Chapter 3, *I Cannot Look Out the Window; Waves Scare Me* I go back to places where many of these stories were first told, where my ancestors lived, worked, and attended church, to collect sounds. Throughout my life we have continually returned to Roslin to visit relatives and to attend the St. Paul's Anglican Church to bury relatives at the family plot. It is in Roslin, the village in which all three of my ancestors lived and are now buried, that I sense their presence most intensely. In this chapter, I also discuss the performance, *The Persistence of Memory in*

Place (When You Can't Go Anywhere) (2021) and reflect on place in familial memory. During my visit, I recorded sounds as much as the affects detected in our voices that invoked shared familial hauntings.

My mother is waiting for me at the train station. Masked of course. A few years ago, Belleville got a new ViaRail station. The old station sits next to the new one – made of limestone. It will last forever if it is taken care of. That is the station my grandpa Joseph and grandma Louisa would have come to when they first arrived in Belleville. With their adoption documents on my back, I can almost feel the weight of their arrival. The train they arrived on was louder than the one I arrived on. Belleville is further south than me, and winter is still wet here. Immediately everything feels soggy to the touch. Despite its weight I still toss the backpack into the backseat of the car. I forgot about the glass in the picture frames. I am pissed at myself for not taking better care of the photographs. Before I get into the car, I give my mom an intense hug. More like a squeeze. My mother's eyes are teary. Familial stress – ghosts in their own right – have been bearing down on her for months. I slide into the passenger seat of the car worried about the glass in the picture frames. It is a short ride to my mom's apartment. A few blocks from the train station is the adoption centre that my great-great grandma Louisa lived in before going to Roslin. Ghosts surround us.

In her introduction to the 2008 edition of Gordon's *Ghostly Matters*, Janice Radway writes, "what is distinctive about haunting is that it is an animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known, sometimes very directly, sometimes more obliquely" (xvi). The social violence of my great-grandparent's forced migration manifested in their everyday lives, always seemingly teetering towards greater emotional and material instability. Reading accounts of other child migrants has given me insight into the fragility and insecurity of my ancestors' social and economic status. As a family we continue to recount my ancestors' migration to Canada and the lives they created upon arrival to a small Eastern Ontario village, which consists of a sawmill and two churches. It is through telling our stories and learning about the history of child migration that we process the social violence that marked our ancestors' lives. Our storytelling and desire to know more is the 'something-to-be-done' of our haunting.



Figure 2: Mark Hart after going fishing with my father aged 14 (1986).

HAUNTING 1: I EAT HISTORY; COME DINE WITH ME

Me: “Do you think that there is a relationship between the experiences of those three people [Joseph, Louisa, Eleanor] and [my cousin] Mark?”

Grandpa: “Ya could be. Could’a been.”

Me: “But have you ever thought about that?”

Grandpa: “No. I haven’t.”

Over Christmas 2021, I organized a dinner with my mother and my grandfather – meat pie, no veggies, and wine. Sharing meals has often meant telling stories of our ancestors and their voyage to Canada. This meal was a way to converse and collaborate with my mother and grandfather and to return to stories that can be added to an archive of hauntings.

During our conversation, my grandfather comments on Mark’s upbringing: “My sister had a tragedy with her son” (Story: Family and Mark). Mark is my cousin who was also a descendant of all three of my child migrant ancestors and is also a ghost who haunts me as much as my ancestors. As a child I listened to adults speak about his suicide and over time I’ve become uncomfortable with the narrative I would hear of his life. I often thought that characterizations of him as “spoiled” lacked compassion. I open this chapter with an extract from my dinner conversation with my grandfather because it is the first time I have spoken about Mark with my grandfather, even if I had often heard family talk about him. It was the first time I proposed a different narrative of his life. After his death, I visited his mother and grandmother on the farm, and I remember putting a bucket down the well to get water for the day with the help of my aunt (Story: Family and Mark). While I cannot make claims as to the reasons why he took his own life, I think there is more to the story than what we have told each other. I can’t help but tie the lingering and persistent impact of the child migrating program with the subsequent material hardships, and Mark’s decision to end his life.

Family conversations are not the only way that descendants of child migrants process the social violence of forced migration. There is also a need to learn more about lives lived by reading adoption papers, published accounts of other child migrants, newspaper articles, and histories of the program. In delving into the archives of child migration, we learn that we are not alone in our experiences, and we also learn about our ancestors' lives through the stories of other families and survivors of the program. Charlotte McNay learned that her father was a child migrant when she discovered her father's copy of Phyllis Harrison's *The Home Children Their Personal Stories* (1979) (1182). She then began learning and writing about his history and experience with coming to Canada thereafter.

Child migration has a history lasting more than 350 years. The first shipment of children occurred in 1618 and officially continued in Australia right up to 1967 (Bean and Melville 1). However, children continued to be sent to Australia from the UK as late as 1970 ("Child migrant reunited with Brothers after 43 Years"). The first shipments of children to Canada, South Africa, and Australia took place in 1834 (Honeyman 98) (2012).¹³ As the industrial revolution continued to change British society, children began to be sent *en mass* by several organizations beginning in the 1860s (Bean and Melville 28). While most of the organizations ceased to send children to Canada because of the depression (29), The Fairbridge Society continued to send children to Canada as late as 1949 (Fairbridge Society). Survivors of the Fairbridge Society farm school on Vancouver Island remember living there in the early 1950s (Meuse). It was popularly believed that the colonies would be better for these children rather than the squalor of an industrial city (McNay 1186; Bean and Melville 38).

¹³ It is important to note that the United Kingdom passed the *Act for the Abolition of Slavery* of 1833 and freed all slaves in the British Empire in 1834 (Henry).

In the latter part of the 19th century, two public enquiries identified that children were put at risk because of the child migrant scheme (Kershaw and Sacks 19) (2008).¹⁴ British social worker Andrew Doyle's 1875 report to the Government of Canada, as quoted by Kershaw and Sacks, says that "the whole machinery of indentures ... appears to be worthless or delusive. To the employer it affords no security for the service of the child; to the child it affords no protection so long as there is no efficient agency to see to the fulfilment of the conditions" (38). In their analysis of Doyle's report, Kershaw and Sacks write "the word 'adoption' was loosely used, especially for older children, what was really meant was 'apprenticeship'". They go on to write, that "In Britain the letter of the law dictated that a child could not be emigrated without the consent of a legal guardian, and yet children were sent abroad without it" (38). Two decades later, John Kelso, the Canadian Inspector of Juvenile Immigration Agencies authored a scathing report on the work of Maria Rye in 1897 (50). Despite the governmental knowledge of the failure of the program to protect children, the practice would continue another fifty-plus years in Canada and seventy-plus years in Australia.¹⁵

It is easy for some to place child migration in Canada's distant past. However, families and the few survivors who are left live with the ever-present memories of forced migration. My Grandma Copeland arrived in Canada in 1910, and I was 12 years old when she died in the summer of 1998. I remember her funeral and before she died, and to this day, we say "God don't want her, and the devil won't take her" as a way of describing her difficult character, which was

¹⁴ Governments in the UK saw no need for oversight over children in the program because they directly benefited from sending children to the colonies by reducing the tax burden on UK rate payers (Kershaw and Sacks 13). Bean and Melville write, "In the late 19th century, for instance, it cost £12 a year to look after a child in Britain. To send one overseas was a one-off payment of £15" (5). This is an enormous cost savings to both the taxpayer and the Christian organizations sending them overseas. Summarizing the Doyle Report from 1875 Kershaw and Sacks write that there was a "100 percent profit on each child sent out" (39). This profit included money paid to the guardians by Government of Canada over and above the cost of passage and care. Kershaw and Sacks write, "MacPherson had the nerve to ask her children to pay their passage back, quoting the cost as £6 or £7 when it was actually half (39)."

¹⁵ Doyle and Kelso are not alone in their unheeded warnings about the dangers to children in institutional care in Canada. As the links point out, the Government of Canada was also made fully aware of the abuses taking place at Indian Residential Schools:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/chretien-letter-stannes-1.6229543>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/peter-bryce-exhibit-ottawa-church-residential-schools-1.4142766>

shaped by her forced migration to Canada (Story: Eleanor Copeland). The hauntings of my ancestors confounds traditional notions of linear time in ways that queers have already theorized: Margrit Shildrick's *Queering Social Imaginaries of the Dead* introduces queer time to examine the ways in which hauntings disrupt traditional notions of linearity. Shildrick's use of *queer* indicates "a thorough-going critique of normative thought that emerges both as a response to particular conditions of precarity and as a way of opening up a different understanding of futurity" (170). For Shildrick, hauntings are the 'remnants and remainders' of lives lost in which 'death refuses to settle' (170). In writing about hauntings, she introduces 'non/living' to indicate a "state not of inertness or of the inorganic but of, at very least, spectral presence" (171). Queer time breaks with chrono-normativity, life/death and the living/dead (180), and embraces "discontinuities, loops and emergence that radically destabilize normative expectations" (177). The conversation with my mother and grandfather and the sounds which I collected were recorded over a two-week period and are intentionally presented in a non-linear fashion. Sounds are introduced that were recorded separately. This practice breaks with linear time, using sounds collected in the present to bring us affectively back to lived locations of a distant past. I like to think that there is a queerness to my family's storytelling because we refuse to let the lives of our ancestors settle. In other words, our stories are the 'remnants and reminders' of the past that we carry with us into the future (Shildrick 170; Rieff 22; Cvetkovich 14).

The dinner conversation made it clear that my family continues to feel the impact of my ancestors' migration in the now. Midway through dinner, after taking a bite of his meat pie, my grandfather shared for the first time that grandma Louisa was shipped to Canada in 1894 still bandaged from burns. While I have long known that she came to Canada having been burnt by hot water, it was new to learn that she was still bandaged during her voyage. My mother is

surprised to learn this, exclaiming “That’s disgusting.” My mother’s mouth closes, and she clenches her jaw. My grandfather quickly agrees, “It is disgusting” (Story: Louisa Hart). What was a free-flowing conversation suddenly pauses. For my mother this is difficult information to take in. She lowers her fork. It clicks as she rests on the plate. My grandfather lowers his to the table. I also felt the “disgust” that they both expressed. I assumed that my mother was never told she was still bandaged when she came to Canada as a way of protecting her as a child from the reality of her grandmother’s life. In the recording, I repeat “it is disgusting” before playing the full conversation with my mother and grandfather. By clipping the narrative short and repeating it, I evoke my disorientation and shared feeling of disgust. When the sounds loop, we stay with the affect longer feeling both my mother and my grandfather’s *disgust*. This part of the conversation marks a change at the dinner table. Until this point, we had found joy in the act of remembering, but the tone of the conversation shifts with the cruelty of this image.

One of the ways that individuals and families come to terms with the personal history of child migration is through the bureaucratic accumulation of documents created by the state’s adoption process. It is common for descendants to use archives as places to seek out information about family. In a 2018 documentary entitled *The Children of the Fairbridge Farm*, produced by CBC Radio’s *The Doc Project*, the children of attendees to the Fairbridge Society’s Farm School on Vancouver Island share their parents’ experiences in the program. In an interview for the documentary, Patricia Skidmore speaks about her experience with trying to reconstruct her mother’s life in the UK and in Canada:

... so [it] took me ‘till 1996 when I moved back down to Victoria. I went back to finish a degree. I had the opportunity to do family research. So, I started researching. One thing my courses directed me towards was the archives. And that’s where I found my mother. ... I found all of the little pieces of her life and

started to slowly [put her life story together.], [It]took me 12 or 13 years to slowly put that story together (Meuse).

The 'something-to-be-done' of Skidmore's haunting, as with my own, compelled her to find the traces of her mother in archives housed in the UK and in Canada. In 2016, I collaborated with my grandfather on obtaining the adoption documents, filling out the forms, and having him sign them. Currently, the documents are only made available to the eldest surviving relatives of a child migrant, requiring their signature to have them sent (Appendix: 3). I pair still images of performance documentation with the collected sounds and stories which tell the story of an ancestor's forced migration. The still image is a GIF of performance documentation as a haunted instance. The GIF fades in and out, looping over and over while the audio plays. The looping of the GIFs is a reflection of queer time's constant return. The GIFs fading in and out gives them a haunted quality of presence/absence, reflecting Shildrick's undoing of the life/death binary (180). My approach to making builds on modern documentary practices which produce "affective archives". Cvetkovich writes, "the particular ways in which new documentaries create affective archives are constructed for the ongoing project of creating testimonials, memorial spaces and rituals that can acknowledge traumatic pasts as a way of constructing new visions for the future" (14). Cvetkovich's analysis informed the felt effects and their arrangements on the website. In the recordings, I include moments when emotions change; for example, when joy shifts to sadness or when the noise of activity shifts to silence. When speculating on the intellectual capacity of my grandmother Copeland, and what she might have done with her life had she not been displaced, my mother's voice cracks with sadness (Story: Eleanor Copeland). I believe my mother's voice cracked at this moment because she felt my Grandma Copeland's loss of opportunity even though her capacity should have transformed her life had she not found herself living in Roslin.

During the dinner, when I proposed the possible connection between Mark's lack of access to basic amenities on the family farm, as a contributing factor in his suicide, my grandfather slows his speech to consider my proposition that such a tie to my ancestors' difficult lives exists (Story: Family and Mark). Moments of affective exchange are part of the familial experience of hauntings, they are the moments "when disturbing feelings cannot be put away" (Gordon xvi). These feelings exceed the bounded time of the scheme – in which children 'age out' at eighteen.

My documentation practice did not seek to discover the 'truth' of my ancestors' experience. I document feelings, perceptions, and perspectives. My mother and my grandfather's memories do not hold the definitive story of my ancestors; instead, *Forced Migration* can be understood as a "fiction of the real" (Gordon 11). Gordon writes, "questions of narrative structuring, constructedness, analytic standpoint, and historical provisionality of claims to knowledge direct sociology to the ways in which our stories can be understood as fictions of the real" (11). *Forced Migration* forms an archive of fiction through both the stories I have collected and their arrangement, but it is a fiction that affectively brings us closer to the lives of others. My desire to reconsider Mark's suicide can also be read as a partial truth: connecting his life and death with that of our ancestors' is intended to destabilize long-held familial narratives about Mark. I chose to record only sound when in conversation with my mother and grandfather because for me, audio (sounds, voices) creates images in our mind's eye. As a visual medium, the sounds become an abstraction of events and happenings so the images that each of us construct is not prescribed like a photo, allowing listeners the opportunity to create an image which is unlike anyone else's. In this way, our experience with sound is deeply personal – informed by our own collected history but still connected and shared with others. Sounds and

voice are like spoken poems that bring listeners closer to the ghosts of my ancestors and their complex intimacies and lives. While my primary interest lies in familial memory, my investigation into the history of the child migrant scheme also validates the experiences of children who have been stricken from the official record, whose records in many cases cannot even be obtained, and whose voices are limited to an obituary in a smalltown local newspaper. In *Sending the Little Ones Home*, I perform alongside child suicide obituaries and a photograph of my cousin Mark from 1985, taken one year before I was born, and 4 years before his death in 1990. In my performance, I painted 5 circles – one for each of the generations between me and my ancestors – on an 18-foot sheet of fabric using ink. The circular form I used grew out of my fascination with the British archeological show *Time Team*, in which archeologists use post holes, footings dug into the ground to support dwellings, to reconstruct entire communities. These traces on the earth form a memory of homes in which people lived, played, and worked, which helped me to imagine the people who lived there. The people who lived in these homes are ancestors of child migrants who can feel the absence of descendants who were forced to leave the county. For this performance, I use circles to represent homes in the UK where the children from the obituaries lived before coming to Canada.

In *Sending the Little Ones Home*, I use movement to make the connection between the suicide of other child migrants with that of my cousin Mark. I begin the performance by dusting my chest where my heart is with powdered Woad (*Isatis tinctoria*) and drawing a line with it down my body to the fabric and earth. With each obituary I repeat the same movements: I hold it to my heart and I lay next to it, and then I create a path with Woad to the next circle. My movements draw the lives of these children together using queer time. I loop my gestures to bring the memory of children who died nearly a century ago into the present. My making and

arrangement of objects breaks with chrono-normativity by disrupting linear time and bringing together shared experiences, regardless of chronology.



Figure 3: Performance Documentation Sending the Little Ones Home (2021)



Figure 4: Performance Documentation Sending the Little Ones Home (2021)

In the centre of each large ink circle is a piece of paper with gold and silver circles representing the body of a child migrant who has taken their own life. Sewed to the gold and silver circles is a copy of an obituary detailing the circumstances in which the child's body was found (Appendix: 4, 5, 6, 7). Lastly, sewn to each obituary is a token – a glass bead or a bundle of strings. I have a desire to connect these children back to the family that loved them but could maybe not care for them. My use of tokens is inspired by the 18th century practice used by mothers who would leave a small token (e.g., altered coins, printed fabrics) with their child at the

London Founding Hospital so that if they were ever able to take the child back, they could be identified through a description of the token (Berry 44-5) (2019).



Figure 5: Mark Hart circa 1985 (Original Photograph) (Family Archive).

By bringing Mark into the conversation, I created an opportunity for my grandfather to perhaps see Mark differently. Because of my family's limited access to education and economic mobility, many of us, including Mark, have continued to live with stark class divisions from Victorian and Edwardian eras. For Mark this meant living without running water, a reality that my grandfather minimized as if material circumstances had not changed since my grandfather's life in 1936 and Mark's life up to 1990 (Story: Family and Mark). Even though in 1936, the year my grandfather was born, the transition to indoor plumbing had already started, I don't think my grandfather saw Mark's lack of running water as a problem. In fact, there has been a persistent belief that Mark was somehow spoiled because he owned material things – like a car. In our dinner conversation, my grandfather scrutinizes Mark's revving of his car's engine, even though

it is a behavior made popular by movies in the 1950s. While a car may seem like an extravagant expense for anyone living in a city with public transit, for those living in a small town, a car is a sunk cost. In *Sending the Little Ones Home*, I felt the material extremes of Mark's life, where on the one hand he had no access to running water, but on the other hand, he was deemed "spoiled" for owning a vehicle. I'm unconvinced that Mark was spoiled.

In this chapter I navigated the history of the program as a descendent of three child migrants. I use queer time to loop gestures as part of a performance to draw together shared experiences across time and space. In *Chapter 2: I Share This Story; Do Not Forget Me; I Am With You Always*, I will examine the genealogy of our familial storytelling, establishing the quotidian experience of the transfer of knowledge to my grandfather, my mother, and myself.



Figure 6: Eleanor Copeland adoption photograph after being admitted into Barnardo's aged 10.

HAUNTING 2: I SHARE THIS STORY; DO NOT FORGET ME; MY STORY IS WITH YOU ALWAYS

They [Joseph, Louisa and Eleanor] talked about coming to Canada, but they never talk about their past life. They could have amongst themselves, but they certainly didn't with their family. Maybe they did with dad, Charlie, Stanley, and Harold. But they never talked to us [my grandfather and his siblings] about it. I never had a conversation about their past life. Never. Grandma often told me about coming and being all bandaged and her mother was going to wash clothes (Grandpa).

This chapter focuses on a performance entitled *Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer* (2020), in which I *listen* to photographs of my Grandma Copeland to hear untold stories about her migration experience. The performance is documented using photographic stills because it holds me in the act of listening, an aspect of the project which is central to how conversations with my mother and grandfather unfolded. Similarly, I listened to the various expressions of my mother and grandfather: voice, sound, emotion, tone, and silence.

Gordon makes listening central to her methodology in *Ghostly Matters*. She writes: “...we will have to learn to listen to ghosts, rather than banish them, as the precondition for establishing our scientific or humanistic knowledge (23)”. Similarly, I also focus on listening to ghosts in this chapter, a role I’ve had as a fifth-generation story carrier. I now listen differently through my practice of telling the stories of my ancestors.

The telling and the retelling of family stories has a genealogy of its own. For my grandfather, stories were told in place of radio and television on his grandparents Joseph and Louisa’s farm where he spent summer breaks. Through memory he came to tell me how he learned about his ancestors’ migration to Canada: “We didn’t have a television. A radio that worked sometimes. And the family stories were important at that time because just as a natural human being we like to hear stories.” (Story: Joseph Hart). For my mother, the stories of her

great grandparents were part of her everyday as parents and grandparents told stories of child migration while she played on the floor of her parents', grandparents', and great grandmothers' homes: "I understood from stories that I had heard, or like overheard, not that I had been told, but you, the kid on the floor with the wooden cars, is listening to the adults talk" (Story: Eleanor Copeland). Children are always listening to the talk around them, absorbing information that little ears aren't expected to hear or remember. My mother's experience mirrors my own; sometimes I'd hear stories narrated for my listening, and other stories, about Mark for example, I heard them from another room. Little ears, like ghosts, aren't invisible (Gordon xvi).

Many of the hauntings which my ancestors felt about their own lives are in the intimate family details found in the adoption papers: the death of parents from industrial accidents or disease, time spent in a Victorian Workhouse, and the date they were "given up" for adoption. I was struck when I learned that my grandma Copeland had been taken to the Dr. Barnardo Homes after her father had died of Bronchitis. This is a detail which I'm certain my grandma Copeland didn't know about her father's life. In conversation with my mother, and corroborated by a first-person account I found in the Hastings County Archives, I learned that my grandma Copeland was deeply impacted by her mother putting her up for adoption, hinting at how much she missed her mother in her life. In 1987, my grandma Copeland submitted a short personal account of her arrival to Roslin as part of a writing contest with the Hastings County Historical Society.¹⁶ In the one-page biography, she writes: "The first thing I saw was an Apple Tree just covered with red Apples + [and] I said I wish my mother could see those Apples" (See Appendix: 8 for the full

¹⁶ While my grandma Copeland's education was limited in Canada by her adoptive family (See Appendix 11), she would have attended school and learned how to read and write as a child in London.

text).¹⁷ My grandma Copeland writes about feeling the absence of what was left behind through a desire to reconnect with her mother. Even at the age of 88 she still felt the absence of her mother enough to write about it in a one-page autobiography.

When I read my grandma Copelands' writing for the first time in the spring of 2021, I could sense her feelings of abandonment, while also documenting a desire to reconnect. In Gordon's analysis of hauntings, she writes about "disappearance as a state of being" (Gordon 111). In their own way, my ancestors were 'disappeared' from the UK; having gone missing from the family, churches, schools, and communities that would have supported their growth and development. My ancestors were given away or taken from the families that loved them or could have loved them if support had been provided. Writing her own story is the 'something-to-be-done' of Grandma Copeland 's haunted disappearance.

The sense of being disappeared by her own mother in the UK was so formative for my grandma Copeland that it was a source of family conflict. My mother witnessed this while visiting a retirement residence:

I remember one rip roaring good fight in the Hastings Manor nursing home. Years later, between my grandmother and her sister Sissy who was one of the oldest kids in the family. And the fighting was about Sissy not understanding what it was like to be given away, and Sissy arguing back that she didn't know what it was like to be kept at home as nothing more than a working tool. So it affected all of them. The impact wasn't just on my grandmother. It was on every single one of them (Mom) (Story: Eleanor Copeland).

Her forced migration had a role in shaping her personality into someone who was considered "difficult". Even with a 77-year gap between her arrival in Canada and when the one-page

¹⁷ It's no surprise that she would sense the loss of her mother her entire life. The Australian film *Oranges and Sunshine* (2010) tells the story of child migration from the Australian perspective. An important element of the film's narrative is the emotional toll that absent mothers have on survivors and the desire to reconnect even after decades spent living in Australia.

autobiography was written, she felt the loss of her mother. Gordon addresses the difference between death and disappeared when she writes, “Death exists in the past tense, disappearance in the present” (113): the present nature of disappearance is why she continued to write and speak about the absence of her mother decades after leaving the U.K..

Over five generations we have kept the story of my ancestors' migration alive from the point of view of family. In contrast, the adoption records present the perspective of the institutions that produced and preserved these records for over a century, with values that focused on cost savings to taxpayers over the developmental needs and well-being of poor children. Policies which focus on the cost savings of the state, then and now, place individuals, families, and communities at risk of harm, always teetering towards greater precarity. However, the traditions of counter-memory “introduces new information or ‘the untold story’ and highlights the selectivity and partiality of the dominant knowledge that was made available to the public by those in power” (Gutman et. al. 56). My family’s tradition of storytelling reveals the personal and intergenerational impact of the child migration schemes’ cost saving measures.

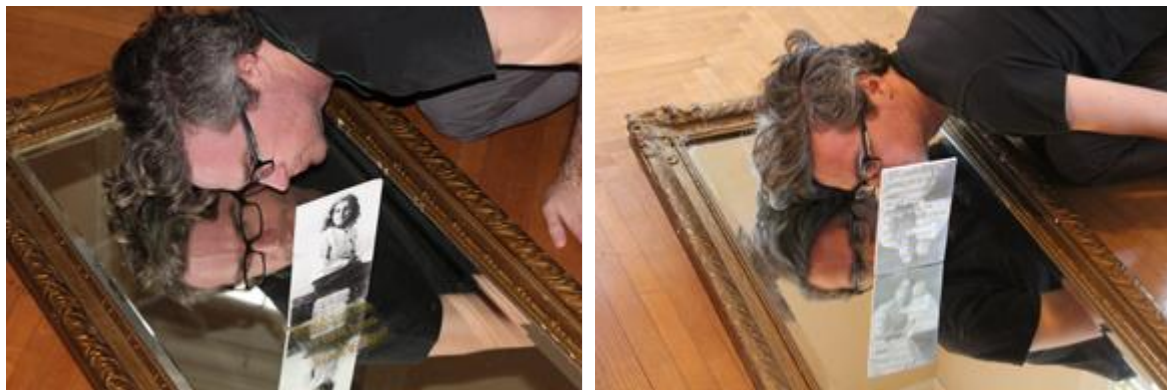


Figure 7: Performance documentation Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer (2022)

Figure 8: Performance documentation Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer (2022)

While my mother and grandfather have done much to tell me about their lives, some stories have been lost and kept from them. My performance *Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer?* (2020) connects with the capacity of my grandmother Copeland's adoption photograph and a photograph of her and her daughter to imagine a story of migration (See Appendix 9 for original photograph). Figures 7 and 8 are two photographs documenting myself *listening* to the photographs. These images are balanced on a mirror and include text written in gold. In the first image, there is a copy of my grandma Copeland's adoption photographs and on the glass is the question "Would you like to have been loved longer?" I ask this question to her adoption photograph in defiance of a question posed off camera to descendants and survivors of the Child Migrant scheme to evaluate if their participation in the program was worth it. (Forgotten).¹⁸ I find this question to be problematic because it forces the child migrant to compare their loss of family in the UK with the love they have shared and received from friends and family as adults. Asking her childhood self the question "Would you like to have been loved longer?" was about trying to understand the impact of the abrupt end of the love from her mother and siblings.

In the second photograph, I pair an image of my grandmother Copeland and her child Vera Hart née Copeland (See Appendix 10 for original photograph) with a quote from a book on child migration entitled *Nation Builders Barnardo Children in Canada* (1997). The book includes first-person accounts in addition to the history of the program. The anonymous quote reads: "If I had four children and no way to support them, I would have slit their throats and mine before I'd let them suffer the heartbreak and the loneliness that I've known" (Corbett 88).

¹⁸ In the documentary *Forgotten: Canada's British Home Children* (2017) the filmmakers ask survivors of the scheme if their experience with coming to Canada being adopted was 'worth it' A more appropriate question might be: "What do you feel was missing from your childhood that you think was needed?"

In choosing this quote I wanted to interrupt the convention in family photography to document an idealized familial closeness that does not accurately reflect the complexities of family life (Hirsch 47). I wanted to address how forced migration makes cross generational love more complicated than the convention of family photography allow..

Although I *listen* to these photographs, I'm aware that these are my projected affects surrounding my grandmother Copeland's experience of coming to Canada, and the unknowns live in my archive of hauntings as silences. What I do *hear* is the story of how she made a life with her daughter, after she was married at the age of 15. I hear the story of her escape from adoption from the family she lived with after coming to Roslin through marriage, and her desire to establish a family with her husband Robert Copeland. I hear how the formation of this family and life with Robert was not what she expected it to be as she grew older.

I find ways to listen so that in time and in my own way, I will re-tell these stories in mediums that speculate in order to be with "difficult" ghosts in their "turmoil and trouble" (Gordon xvi). The sound of silence is reflexive and is also the time and personal space when listeners can hear their inner dialogue, and new connections to the past can be made. It is in these moments that personal hauntings can be felt. What I hear in *Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer* are my fears of the life that my Grandma Copeland lived. In Chapter 3, I return to places where many of these stories were told.



Figure 9: Louisa Hart aged 74 and Sherry Hart a few months old in 1960.

HAUNTING 3: I CANNOT LOOK OUT THE WINDOW; WAVES SCARE ME

Mom: "...the trip on the ship."

Hauntings pull us back to Roslin. It is in Roslin that our stories take place, and where our story telling is the richest. So much so, that a few years ago, after moving back to Ontario, my grandfather took me on a road trip to Roslin to show me where some of our family had lived, where they were buried, worked, and farmed. That tour contributed to the everydayness of my experience with the memory of my ancestors and the haunted expressions of familial stories. How can these stories not be deeply connected to Roslin, the destination of my ancestors' forced migration to Canada? All during my trip to Roslin with my grandfather I felt ghosts in the local church, homes, barns, and fields. My return to Roslin is a demonstration of the "something-to-be-done" of my haunting (Gordon xvi).

In 2002, I was asked to be a pallbearer at my uncle Stanley's funeral. Stanley was the son of Louisa and Joseph. I remember him at family Christmas parties, locked in an intense game of euchre, often with my grandma Copeland. I also remember visiting him at the Hastings Manor Retirement Residence in Belleville. During one of these trips was also the last time I saw my grandma Copeland. Both are now buried at St. Paul's Anglican Church, grandma Copeland with her husband, and Uncle Stanley with his mother and father. The church and farms are significant places where I collected sounds, as much as the stories my mother and grandfather told on the road trip to Roslin. Our conversation in the car reflected our relationships with the places we visited, and with stories emerging as we traveled. Sounds such as church bells, wind, tractors, cars, and the clicking of a car's turn signal reflect the environments in which the original stories

are told and are part of my sensing memory as a haunted archivist. I cannot tell the stories of my ancestors without returning to Roslin.

According to my grandfather and mother, our grandma Louisa would often talk about her passage to Canada: “she related that story several times over the years” (Story: Louisa Hart). The experience of her passage to Canada wrote itself so deeply into her being that when she was in the hospital with dementia, her passage was triggered in the form of flashbacks, and she had to be moved away from the window where she could see the water:

“The trip on the ship. It was very traumatic. I'm not sure what month of the year she came. But I guess it was a very rough voyage. But, as I told you the other day, later in life when she was suffering from dementia, they had to move her hospital bed away from the window, which was looking out over Lake Ontario because there was a storm on Lake Ontario and the wave action on the shore below her window made her relive the passage. I know that story because of my aunt, who was her daughter in law, told me that story” (Story: Louisa Hart).

Louisa Hart lived a full and long life with the joy and difficulties of marriage and motherhood in a historical context that made it extremely difficult for women to experience a life outside of marriage and children, yet it was her voyage to Canada that seemed to have had the most lasting impression. I pair my grandmother Louisa’s story in the hospital and on the boat to Canada with the sounds of wind collected from the water’s edge along the Bay of Quinte in Belleville. Her fear of the wind and the water is a response to her own personal haunting, it is the moment “when the over and done with [from her childhood] come[s] alive” (Gordon xvi). I have heard this story many times over the years as we have driven past the Quinte General Hospital. The same hospital where I was born.

Our stories are so intimately tied to place that I thought it was important to address them through installation. In *Persistence Of Memory In Place (When You Can't Go Anywhere)*, I recount my experience returning to Roslin to hear stories in the context of COVID-19, when

even venturing outside of the safety of home comes with risk of contagion. My ancestors' migration to Canada occurred in the later part of the Victorian Era and into the Edwardian Era. To acknowledge this as part of the experience of their migration, I used a Victorian doll house and suspended it upside down using macramé and a plant pot with a spider plant. Hanging from the doll house are two photographs, woven into a tapestry which has been partially deconstructed and touches the ground (Appendix 9 and 10 for original photographs). Within the doll house I placed two first-person accounts of child migrants from the book: *The Home Children Their Personal Stories* (1979). I have chosen these stories because they speak to the absence of love and the intensity of their labor, two aspects of the child migrant scheme which haunts me the most.

I am one of the emigrant boys that came to Canada in 1907 on the White Star Line. I landed at Halifax about March 22. We went to the Brockville Home and were there for two weeks – 100 of us boys. We were the cheapest slave labour the farmers ever had.

I was wondering how you got to even thinking of such people as us. I thought we were long forgotten as we were only Home boys and it didn't matter much about what happened to us. We were of no importance.

George Mackie, *Pembroke, Ontario, (Harrison 51)*.

I remember saying to the first lady in Nova Scotia 'How I wish I had someone to love me.' She said 'Well we love you.'

'I never get any hugs or kisses.'

'Well we feed and clothe you, What more do you want?'

I saw to it that my own children and grandchildren got and still get lots of hugs and kisses.

Winnifred Titus, née Jordan, *Toronto, Ontario, (Harrison 126)*.

These first-person accounts come from Phylis Harrison's 1979 book *The Home Children Their Personal Stories*. Harrison, a social worker, began collecting the stories after working as an Information Officer for the Children's Aid society in Ottawa. Like the adoption archive my

grandfather received in 2016, Harrison's first-person accounts document the values which governed the lives of children in the program and corroborate the experiences with labor documented in the Doyle report to the Canadian Parliament in 1875. These values saw children who were legally expected to go to school work for the families with whom they lived instead; many children found themselves working on farms and in homes without pay and denied an education. Because children were seen as a source of income for the families they lived with, they were not afforded the kind of touch we now understand to be central to a child's early development. These values shaped the lives of my ancestors and in turn, the lives of their descendants.

The experiences of my grandma Louisa and Eleanor mirror that of George Mackie and Winnifred Titus. In my grandfather's and mother's conversations with me, both indicated that my grandma Louisa labored hard during her childhood. My grandfather saying she had to do "boy's labor" suggesting that she had to work in the fields. And my mother saying she "only got to go to school when there was no work to be done." (Story: Louisa Hart). A letter from Mrs. Howe to Dr. Barnardo's agency indicates that my grandma Copeland's education was limited because she was expected to stay home and work. Mrs. Howe writes, "I think I will have to keep her home a few days next week to help me through with the work I have cleaning" (Appendix 11). For both Louisa and Eleanor, their labor and gender restricted their access to education, significantly reducing their potential to freely move where they wanted, to get an education, and to join the workforce.

Inside the upside-down doll house, alongside George's and Winnifred's first-person accounts, I have placed a crocheted doily from my grandma Copeland (Appendix:12) and a photograph of my grandpa Joseph and three of his sons, John, Charlie, and Stanley (Story:

Joseph Hart) (Appendix: 13). The crochet and the photograph document beauty, joy, pleasure, and family in a new life, which they could have never anticipated for themselves as children in the UK.



Figure 10: Installation documentation Persistence Of Memory In Place

Figure 11: Installation documentation Persistence Of Memory In Place

Place becomes visible through the abstraction of sound. While my archive is structured across four narratives, sounds are repeated across all of them, queering time across the archive and reinforcing that their lives and mine are intimately and presently connected through sounds that mark place. St. Paul's Anglican Church is significant to my haunting because it is the place where all my ancestors attended church and where they are buried today. For my family, it is a place where the living return to visit specters of my ancestors. In each recorded narrative I repeat and reverse the sound of church bells. In addition, I reverse the sounds of the bells because visiting the church “alters [my own] experience of being in time” (Gordon xvi). The church is a place where past and present collides in my haunting. The church bells also represent a

contradiction in my ancestors' lives: Christian charity brought them to Roslin against their will, yet it is at a Christian church where they chose to be buried. The sound of the church bells also captures my disorientation with the contradiction of where they rest. Their burial at a Christian church gives me a glimpse into what Avery Gordon identifies as "complex personhood":

"...those who live in the direst circumstances possess a complex and oftentimes contradictory humanity and subjectivity that is never adequately glimpsed by viewing them as victims or, on the other hand, as super-human agents" (4). This is also the *complex personhood* which I sought conversation about with my grandfather regarding Mark's suicide. Neither my making nor my writing can ever capture the complexity of personal choices that may on the surface appear to be contradictory.

It was important for me to document the places where I experience the haunting of my ancestors the most intensely, the farms on which they lived and worked and the church they all attended and we as family continue to attend. The intimacy of sounds corresponds to the intensity and intimacy of my haunting. Do these hauntings propose possibilities for designing a new ethics for being with ghosts? In my concluding chapter I speculate on the something-to-be-done next as a researcher, artist, thinker, and maker.



Figure 12: Family Photo. From left to right. Top Row: Sherry Hart aged 26. Clifford Hart aged 50. Vera Hart aged 69. Elenore Copeland aged 87 and Leslie aged a few months in 1986.

I FOLLOW YOU; I SIT NEXT TO YOU: A CONCLUSION TO HAUNTINGS

When I began to conceptualize *Forced Migration*, a mix of emotions informed its shape, regarding the invisibility of ancestors who lived and died in a quiet village. The non-linearity of what I've presented insists on *the feel* of displacement and haunting involved in children's forced migration. My ancestors came a very long way, without many choices about who they could be in this world. These three small children survived the journey despite the violence of displacement and my family carries their voices. Shildrick's hauntological ethics, quoting Derrida, sees a necessity to stay "with ghosts in the upkeep, the conversation, the company, or the companionship, to live otherwise, and better. No, not just better, but more justly" (179). Our stories are how we have stayed with our ghosts for five generations, and my website pushes that practice into public view. It's also how I can be with these ghosts more 'justly'. There is justice in making their hardships public when interpreting the state's normalization of child migration schemes...

The two weeks at home were an emotional roller coaster. In addition to being surrounded by ghosts and collecting stories, my parents had recently separated. If working on this project wasn't stressful enough, the added layer of their fraught separation made it at times crippling to deal with. While I managed to interview my mother and grandfather several times over my trip home, I left my mother with one of the recorders, just in case I needed something more. Over the course of my fieldwork, the project began to feel like "our project", something intimate which was shared between my mother, grandfather, and myself. My responsibility feels more like our responsibility to tell these stories. This realization shifts my embodied experience. The tension around my heart and breath is released. What was at first enveloped in anxiety to call forth ghosts, soon felt like a shared responsibility that was moved not just by my questions and methods to collect sounds and stories, but also by a need to revisit stories in the here and now. I am even excited to be with these ghosts, not alone, but with my mother and grandfather.

Gordon writes about the necessity for sociological research to address unknown and undocumented histories. My writing, documenting, recording, and making is my response to Gordon's call to tell marginal stories, and to Cvetkovich's commitment to building queer archives that fly under the radar of dominant histories. My artistic practice keeps the lives of my ancestors and the lives of other child migrants in the present, thus, breaking with a life/death binary, that Shildrick insists we undo. *Forced Migration* undoes this life/death binary with a felt methodology of poem-lives that was experienced by listening to my mother and grandfather, and in my performative responses to familial and extrafamilial ghosts of migration..

I return to the introduction in *Ghostly Matters*, where Janice Radway writes, "Gordon believes sociology must seek also to detect how conditions in the past banish certain individuals, things, or ideas, how circumstances rendered them marginal, excluded or repressed" (vii). Through my writing and making, it's the stories of my ancestors over so many years that inspired the quiet performances, listening, and sounds that I've shared.

My mother kindly drops me off at the train station for the journey home. The train barrels down the tracks and slows to pick up passengers. I give my mom one last hug. We say goodbye. Tears again. She struggles with being alone for the first time in her life after separating from my father. I get on the train. My train ride home is a time of contemplation, as I start imagining the voices and sounds that I will bring together.

Gordon writes about how hauntings become known to us "when disturbing feelings cannot be put away" (xvi). The feelings which I cannot put away about the lives of my ancestors are directly tied to their poverty and inability to move freely in the world. At this project's end I've come to recognize this as a fear that I believe derives from the disabling impact of poverty. In conversation with my grandfather, I refer to it as a poverty of the imagination. I fear a poverty that paralyzes in this way. I fear the poverty of choices, not only in terms of a lack of material

resources, but also in terms of imagining futures that stem from choice. I fear poverty that normalizes the idea that some are not worthy of having clean running water.

After I arrive home, I unpack the physical and emotional archive. I am pissed at myself for not taking better care of the framed photographs, that now return in cracked glass and scratched frames. The glass can easily be replaced, but the frames are 112 years old and can't be repaired. Furniture polish will have to suffice. The recorder I left with my mother is indispensable as I begin to stitch the voices together on my computer. My mother doesn't have a computer to send me the audio files via email, and instead places the recorder in the mail and sends it to me. It arrives a few days later. As my mother was kindly collecting sounds for me, she told me about the locations – and the weather during our weekly phone conversations. The walk along the Belleville waterfront was particularly cold. Because I haven't heard the sounds, the recorder has a new weight. I transfer the sounds to the computer. I am enamored by the sound of the wind at the waterfront. The wind was so powerful that it deformed the diaphragm of the recorder. When I listen to it, I can feel the diaphragm giving out under the pressure of the wind. The recorded sound is disorienting- it resembles the sound of the hauntings I've felt.

As a child, I listened to the stories of my ancestors. In *Forced Migration* I listened again but differently. I became a kind of conductor of specters that amplified the ghostly voices that haunted me. Tracking ordinary lives which have been buried in official state documents, like adoption records, has inspired me to think about what future hauntings might emerge in the communities of descendants that creatively map the lives of child migrants from villages and cities in the UK to the colonies. What would it mean to not only name the boats, ports, and distribution homes that mark the passage of poem-lives, but also Indigenous lands and peoples whose lands were stolen. Narratives about child migration to Canada have tended to “reinforce nationalism when constructed as a wound that must be healed in the name of unity” (Cvetkovich, 16). In doing so, these narratives erase Indigenous people from their lands. To date, research has not yet acknowledged in any depth that the labor of child migrants effectively cleared, made ‘productive’, and extracted wealth from Indigenous territories in Canada, and across the Empire.

Forced Migration develops a hauntological ethic in which the intimate, private, and familial is made public. Because little is known about the child migrant scheme, the website is a space to write and speak publicly. I value recounting the material impact of migration on my ancestors, and in turn, I acknowledge that their lifelong poverty has deeply affected me. My performances, *Sending The Little Ones Home, Would You Like To Have Been Loved Longer*, my installation, *The Persistence of Memory in Place (When You Can't Go Anywhere)*, and the website, contain partial truths that express ordinary lives in archival documents, what Arlette Farge and Michel Foucault have described as *vies-poèmes*. Furthermore, recorded narratives do not seek to convince listeners of 'truths' about a past, instead, they are poetic vibrations that have brought my ancestors into the present.

APPENDIX: A HAUNTED ARCHIVE

Appendix 1

MC/MAR/VCS/229322797

28th January 2016

Private & Confidential

Mr C R Hart
410 Grills Road
Belleville
Ontario
CANADA
K8N 4Z5



Making Connections
Records, Counselling and Support Service
140 Balaam Street, Plaistow,
London, E13 8RD
Tel 020 8552 1004
Email makingconnections@barnardos.org.uk
Web www.barnardos.org.uk

Dear Mr Hart

I am writing with reference to your request for information relating to your grandmother, **Louisa PANTER**, and to thank you for your payment of £45.00 for which an official receipt is attached.

I am very pleased to inform you I have now concluded my research and can provide you with the information you have requested.

Louisa was born on 9th May 1888 and was admitted to the Macpherson Home of Industry on an unknown date from the Painswick Union (workhouse).

Louisa left the UK aboard the SS Vancouver on 31st May 1894 and arrived in Quebec on 9th June 1894 and was admitted to the Marchmont Home.

The records of the Marchmont Home (the Macpherson Receiving and Distribution Home in Belleville, Ontario), along with those of its sister charitable child care organisations, namely the Annie Macpherson Home and the Liverpool Sheltering Home, were entrusted to Barnardo's for safekeeping in 1925 following the gradual winding down and eventual closure of its operations. It was from these same records your grandmother was identified.

It is unfortunate, however, that the methods employed by the Marchmont Home in recording family background information on a child's admission into its care was not as comprehensive as its counterpart Barnardo's and consequently there are very few family details and sadly no photographs to share with you. I am so sorry to disappoint you in this respect.

Appendix 2

Leslie Corbay
60 Shermans Pt Road
Napanea

28th April 2014

Dear Leslie,

Enclosed please find the information you requested on Joseph Henry Hart. It consists of two pages copied from one of the large history books I have here in the archives at Bridge of Weir. These give everything that was known about the family at the time and the reasons why two of its children had to come into the care of the Orphan Homes of Scotland (As Quarriers used to be known)

You will see that Joseph was admitted to care on 22nd March 1886. He would have been received at the City Orphan Home in James Morrison Street, Glasgow where he would have been medically examined and if necessary treated, cleaned up, fed and clothed. As he was of working age, and the City Home was also a hostel for working boys and girls, Joseph appears to have stayed there until August when he was transferred to the main part of the organisation here at Bridge of Weir to help in the bake house. Joseph was here until 30th March 1887 when he was sent to Canada as a child migrant. The R and numbers following his migration refer to reports sent back to Bridge of Weir on his progress in his new country. Unfortunately, due to a misunderstanding, these were largely destroyed when the Canadian end of the organisation closed down many years ago.

Joseph's sister Anne was admitted to care on 3rd April 1888. She would have gone through the same admission process as Joseph and arrived here on 7th July. Annie was sent to Canada as a child migrant on 30th May 1889.

The next two pieces of paper are their entries in the admission diaries of the Homes. They give basically the same information as the pages from the History Books.

The final last four pages are copies of their migration parties and their first addresses in Canada.

Like all the files from the time there is nothing about their day to day activities when here and I hope you are not too disappointed at this. If there is anything you do not understand or I can help in any other way, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Josie Bell
Records and genealogy




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Barnardo's Family History Service
Questionnaire for Canadian and Australian Migrants

**Believe in children**
Barnardo's

Are you searching for details of a relative who was migrated to:
(please tick as appropriate)

Canada ☐ or Australia ☐

FORM A

INFORMATION REQUEST FORM (please use block capitals)

Details of the person to WHOM INFORMATION IS TO BE SENT:

Title: First names: Surname:

Address:

..... Postal Code:

E-Mail Address:

I am enquiring about:

Who is my: mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, other: (please specify)

Consent:

1) **I am the** nearest direct descendant because:

Signature of nearest direct descendant

OR:

If you are not the nearest direct descendant please arrange for them to complete this section:

2) **I, as the nearest direct descendant,** (full name)
give my consent for my.....(relationship, e.g. son, grandson)
..... (full name)
to receive family background information from Barnardo's records **about**
my..... (relationship, e.g. father, grandfather)

Image Credit: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-10/FHS%20Form%20Overseas.pdf>

Appendix 4

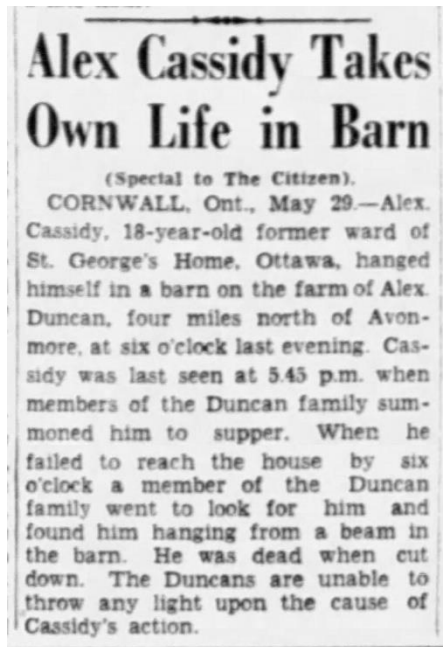


Image Credit:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10216364169232397&set=pcb.2704507066305916>

Appendix 6



Image Credit:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10216134807698502&set=pcb.2647754511981172>

Appendix 5

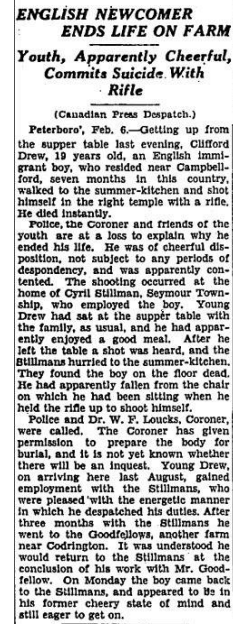


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Appendix 7

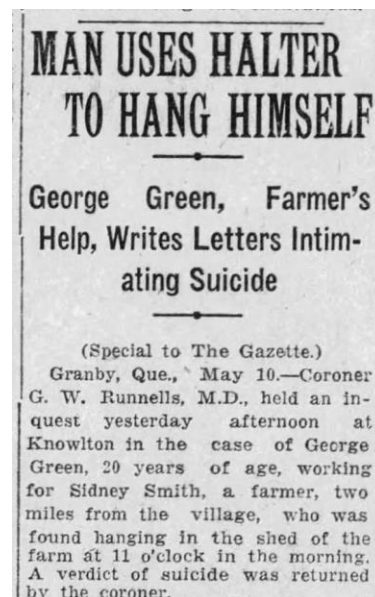


Image Credit:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10216102620493842&set=gm.2638832002873423>

3515-3

My New Home in Canada.

I left England the 1st Oct /19-10 with around 300 more children from Mr Barnodos Home. I don't remember what date we arrived in Peterboro. I think it was about 22nd or 24th. Then I went to a home in the country. It was a long ride with horse & buggy to what it is called now Roslin, P.R.I. The first thing I saw was a Apple Tree just covered with red Apples & I said I wish my Mother could see those Apples. The Woman was very kind she asked me if we never saw apples on a tree before. I said no, she said I could have all I wanted to eat but not make myself sick. She said she had to go & finish milking the cows & told me to sit in the window & watch as the cows went used to seeing little girls, that was something.

I think I was there about a week when I had to go to school. Two of the neighbor girls took me. I took a lunch in a paper bag, it was a very small frame building all the classes were in where from 7 to 14 the teacher was very nice, her name was Miss Bertha Cook from Belleville. When you got to class 14 you had to go to Belleville to try your entrance. I didn't get the chance to go, as I was 14 then & I had to go to a nother place to live & do house work & I had to help in the field to put up grain. I was to get 4.00 a month, after that is another chapter.

Eleanor Copeland
Hastings Manor.

Sept. 14, 1987

(Image Credit: <https://discover.cabhc.ca/h-c-h-s-adult-writing-contest-reminiscences-copeland-eleanor-my-new-home-in-canada-barnodos-homes>)

Appendix 9



Figure 13 Elenore Copeland's adoption photograph taken after being admitted to Barnardo's in 1910. (Adoption Archive)

Appendix 10



Figure 14 Photograph of Elenore Copeland age 17 and her daughter Vera Copeland (Age a few months) (1917). (Family Collection)

15 4.12
Broom Cleaned 71
(13) 4.10
Hakston ap. 16

Dear Miss Kennedy
 Received your letter and
 the Cheque for fifteen dollars
 for which I am thankful
 Fenna is quite well & going to
 school she was sick for 3 or
 four days last week with gripe
 but she is all right now I think
 she is trying to learn all she
 can at school. she is a big strong
 girl and can work quite well
 where she wants to try
 I think I will have to keep
 her home a few days next
 week to help me through with
 the work of house cleaning.
 I had her saying she was going to write
 to you.
 yours lovingly
 Mrs J. Howe

Appendix 12



Appendix 13



Figure 15 Photograph of Joseph Hart with three of his sons three sons: John, Charlie, Stanley

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