

RESEARCH GUIDE
to the
Children's (Middlemore) Emigration Homes Index
(CEH Index)

by

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Note: Access to the **CEH Index** is through the BIFHSGO Name Index

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Note. One does not have to read this document from start to finish to find answers to questions about problems found in a child's document, just click the specific section or file from the **TABLE OF CONTENTS** list. The repetition in this document has been included on purpose.

None of the archived non-governmental files of the CEH are online.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Research Guide is to help researchers use *The Name and Reference Index of the Children's (Middlemore) Emigration Homes and its sources (CEH Index)*. The *CEH Index* contains all the legible names and references of the children brought to Canada by J. T. Middlemore's Children's Immigration Homes (CEH)¹ between 1873 and 1932.

When using the *CEH Index*, this Research Guide will help researchers:

- familiarize themselves with the contents of the 12 different CEH files used to create the *CEH Index*. No child has references in all 12 files, most having references in six or fewer files
- understand that different files may have variations in the spellings and ages of specific children being searched for
- learn how and where copies of the reference documents listed in the *CEH Index* may be examined and obtained
- learn, by using case numbers, how to find if any siblings of a child of interest were accepted into the CEH and settled in Canada on different dates
- learn how to find if the child of interest had any siblings without case numbers who were accepted by the CEH and settled in Canada
- understand some of the unusual challenges relating to the names and ages of the CEH children listed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The original files of John T. Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes are almost all archived at the Wolfson Centre, Birmingham, England. Microfilmed copies of most of the relevant CEH files are archived at Library and Archives Canada (LAC) as Collection MG28-I492, the *Middlemore Children's Emigration Homes Fonds*.

¹ The Children's Emigration Homes had several names one of which was Middlemore Emigration Homes to honour its founder who died in 1924. The name was changed in 1925. To keep the connection between the agency's name and its founder it is sometimes given as Children's (Middlemore) Emigration Homes. The name of the Homes during the times the agency was associated with emigration is abbreviated as "CEH" in this and other documents.

The *CEH Index* is to be found on the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa's (BIFHSGO) website at www.bifhsgo.ca. By clicking on "Search Name Index" you will find the search page with four boxes labelled "Surname", "First Name", "Research Source", and "Comments". The Research Source box has a dropdown list with the *CEH Index* listed as "Children's (Middlemore) Emigration Homes." The *CEH Index* has nearly 6,000 names on 600 pages.

In 1993, before the foundation of BIFHSGO in 1994, the CEH records were microfilmed on behalf of the Australian Joint Copying Project and the National Archives of Canada (now Library and Archives Canada), with the kind permission of the Sir John Middlemore Trust, Birmingham, England. Each country received those microfilm reels containing files relating only to itself. Both countries received microfilm reels with mixed files of various interest to both. The microfilm reels Australia received are archived at the National Library of Australia while the microfilm reels Canada received are archived at Library and Archives Canada [LAC] as Collection MG28 -1492, the Middlemore Children's Emigration Homes Fonds.

The *CEH Index* contains the names and all legible documentary references to the children settled in Canada between 1873 and 1933 by John T. Middlemore and the CEH staff. The first party of 29 CEH children were settled in Ontario in May 1873. The last party of 3 CEH boys, all over 14 years old, arrived at Halifax in May 1932 so a file search for new CEH arrivals was ended that year. Since the Great Depression was in full swing, the boys who arrived in May 1932 were kept at the Middlemore Home at Fairview Station, Nova Scotia, until late 1932 or early 1933 to learn more about Canadian customs and farming before being placed with settlement families. The last CEH girls settled in Canada were members of the 1930 party.

Most of the children settled in Canada by the CEH came from the filthy, overcrowded districts of industrialized Birmingham. However, about 20% of about the 5,200 children settled in Canada by the CEH came from other institutions—about 17% from various workhouse unions and about 3% from industrial schools, reformatories, orphanages and private sponsors in the English Midlands or London. A few over-aged young adults (i.e., 18 years or older), most accompanying younger siblings, were also included because the files gave the date they departed for Canada, even though there are no other CEH Canadian records for them.

The search for information on CEH children settled in Canada ended with the year 1941, as by then all CEH children in Canada were beyond the age of care (i.e., more than 21 years old). That same year the superintendent of the Middlemore Home at Fairview Station retired, and the Home was sold.

Not included in the *CEH Index* are the CEH children whose guardianship was transferred to the Fairbridge Society starting in 1925. The Fairbridge Society was a late comer in the assisted juvenile emigration movement. It was founded in 1909 by Kingsley Fairbridge from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) while a student at Oxford University. Although the idea was to bring children to many of the British colonies including Rhodesia, the Fairbridge Society concentrated on establishing several farm schools in Australia starting in 1912 with the Farm School at Pinjarra, Western Australia, and in 1935 with one in British Columbia, the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School. The Fairbridge Farm School in British Colombia was closed in 1948 and all the Fairbridge Farm Schools in Australia were closed in 1954.

This change in guardianship happened in 1925 when the British government accepted the 1924 Bondfield Report recommendation that 14 be the minimum age for emigration of assisted juvenile emigrants to Canada (this restriction did not apply to Australia). Children could not enter the CEH unless their parents or guardians gave signed agreements that their children could be settled in Canada. Thus, between 1926 and 1954, CEH children less than 14 years old, whose parents or guardians had also given permission for their children to go to Australia, came under the guardianship of the Fairbridge Society and were included in the Fairbridge parties to the residential Pinjarra Farm School in Western Australia. Between 1936 and 1948, the guardianship of some CEH children was transferred to the Fairbridge Society for inclusion in parties going to the new residential Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School in British Columbia.

In total, to produce the *CEH Index*, 12 files prepared by CEH staff were extracted, two of which are not part of the LAC Collection MG28-1492.

The names of all the CEH children settled in Canada were obtained from the *Admission Register*, *Application Book*, *History Book* and *Settlement and Reports Folio*. Mentions of CEH children settled in Canada were searched for in the seven other files—the *Annual Reports*, and the *Correspondence* and *Minutes* records—until the end of 1941 and the two files not part of the LAC Collection MG28-1492.

The CEH records were developed and maintained in mostly handwritten format until about the end of the First World War (when typewriters became more available), in mostly unpaginated books or folios. The microfilms of the 1870s to 1900 files were sometimes too dark to read, some pages were torn, some with unintelligible handwriting, and with the ink on some reference documents was too faded to read, meaning that some references for a few children are incomplete. The methods of record keeping and the people who kept them changed over time and some records have been damaged, lost or destroyed. As a result, some inconsistencies exist in the files.

Many of the files contain information about children who were not brought to Canada by the CEH or whose guardianship was transferred to the Fairbridge Society for settlement at its residential farm schools in Western Australia and British Columbia, Canada. None of these children's names appear in the *CEH Index*. Only children brought by the CEH for settlement in Canada are included in the *CEH Index*.

SOURCE FILES USED TO CREATE THE CEH INDEX

Files archived in LAC Collection MG28-1492 and Descriptions of their Contents

1. Application Books (0 to 4 entries per child)
2. Admission Registers (0 to 2 entries per child)
3. Parents' Consent Forms and Care and Custody Orders (1912–1920) (0 to 2 entries per child)
4. History Books (0 to 2 entries per child)
5. Settlement and Reports Folios (0 to 3 entries per child)
6. Annual Reports (0 to 5 mentions per child)
7. CEH Committee minutes (0 to 6 mentions per child)
8. House Committee minutes (0 to 20 mentions per child)
9. Correspondence from Birmingham (0 to 17 mentions per child)
10. Correspondence from Canada (0 to 22 mentions per child).

Included in the descriptions of each of the source files used to create the *CEH Index* are:

- the years the file covered
- the year beyond which no further search for records of CEH children was made
- the type of information the file included
- the approximate number of pages of reference document(s)
- specific problems to watch out for.

Many of these files contain more than one entry or mention of specific children, and some children are entered under more than one surname. Names and records of the children the CEH brought and settled in Canada were extracted from the first five listed files of the LAC Collection MG28-I492, starting from time they arrived at the CEH until they passed out of the care of the agency, or the file was closed. Minutes, correspondence, annual and other reports make up the other source files. They were all searched for mentions of children to the end of 1941, by which time all CEH children settled in Canada were beyond the age of care. Most children have references in six or fewer of the source files.

Application Books 1876–1954

(For the *CEH Index*, names and references were extracted for all CEH children brought to Canada by the CEH between 1876 and May 1932.)

The applications for entry into the CEH may have been made by parents, guardians, police missionaries, or the people who found needy children on the streets at night. *Application Book* entries did not begin until 1876 and are ordered by date of application and case number.

All *Application Book* entry applications for the CEH include a "family" case number, meaning that all children from the same family normally had the same case number. The entries usually included information about the child(ren)'s family background, although until 1900 the amount of information entered about the different children was inconsistent.

Children not entered in an *Application Book* do not have case numbers. These were children who entered the CEH before 1876, and children who came from workhouse unions, other agencies, or children who were considered "private" because of private sponsorship. Their background information stayed with their original agency or sponsor. Some background information about children without case numbers was occasionally included in their *Admission Register* or *History Book* entries. In a few instances, the names of children *with* case numbers listed in an *Admission Register* have not been entered in the *Application Book*. In these circumstances the *Application Book*'s case number space for the name and information is empty.

Several unrelated children were accidentally given the case numbers belonging to other families. As a clue to distinguish those children with the same case numbers in the *Application Book*, the *CEH Index* gives the entry date and the name of the child of interest and the name and date of entry of the child preceding the child of interest.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, case number and approximate number of pages.

Admission Registers 1872–1954

(For the *CEH Index*, names and references were extracted for all CEH children brought to Canada between 1873 and May 1932.)

Each *Admission Register*—two for boys, and two for girls—has at least six columns stretching across two pages. The columns are headed on the left-hand page by “Date” (with the year handwritten below), “Name,” “Age,” “Address” (usually the parents’ or guardian’s address, or sometimes with both name and address of parents or guardian). On the right-hand page, the headings are “Remarks” (often including the name of the person who made the recommendation to the CEH) and “How Dealt With” (i.e., what happened to the child): for example, date of departure for Canada, ran away, returned to parent, sent to an asylum or to a training school, and why.

Each entry consists of a one-line entry written in the columns across the two pages (double page). There are about 40 names per double page. The month and day of entry were given for each child in the first column of the left-hand page.

The records are usually in chronological order by date of entry but have no break between the years. Sometimes, especially in a *Boys’ Register*, there are two or more double pages per year, while in a *Girls’ Register* one double page may include two or more years.

The earliest records in the *Admission Registers* include only the boys’ or girls’ dates of entry into the CEH, their names and sometimes the date of emigration. These early records are not always in chronological order. From the mid-1870s, all entries are in date order and all columns have information. Starting in 1896, case numbers were also included, first on the right-hand page, but later switched to the left-hand page.

Some children emigrated by the CEH did not spend time in the CEH before leaving for Canada. Most of these were workhouse union children, children from other agencies and children with private sponsorship. The date of entry for these children was the date Middlemore or the CEH Committee secretary became their guardians, many on the date of a party’s departure for Canada.

To find information about children from workhouse unions and the location of the union workhouse archives, see Peter Higginbotham’s website *The Workhouse: The story of an institution* at <https://www.workhouses.org.uk/>

Boys’ Registers: The boys’ *Admission Registers* are not paginated except for the first 17 left-hand pages of the first register, covering 1872 to November 1880. The first seven double pages usually contain only the date of entry and name of the boy. The information from these seven pages has been re-entered, starting on page 8 and continuing to page 14, usually with the addition of each boy’s age. Therefore, the first seven pages have not been included in the *CEH Index*. Entries are not in date order until page 10, making the search frustrating. Starting in March 1875 some background information on the boys was usually provided.

Note: The boys’ *Admission Register* entries on the double pages for 1910 (starting May 23 and September 30) and the 1912 double pages (starting May 18) have been muddled—the information on the left-hand pages does not match that on the right-hand pages. The *CEH Index* contains the references for the left-hand page and the correct matching right-hand page. The case numbers on the right-hand pages were useful in determining the correct matching left-hand pages.

If you wish to have a copy of a boy's information on the left-hand pages for 1910 and 1912, as mentioned above, be sure to include the information on the dated matching right-hand pages with your request for copies.

Girls' Registers: The girls' *Admission Registers* are not paginated. The first few pages of the first register have dated entries, but they are not in date order. Frustrating! Entries on the fifth pair of double pages headed "1875" have not been indexed, as they have the word "checked" written across them and include major errors, e.g., the given date of departure for Canada was before the child had been admitted to the CEH. The left-hand page of the 6th pair of double pages is also headed "1875" and contains the corrected information from the fifth pair of double pages. Most of the entries include background information, but this is not consistent until February 1876.

Reference for a selected child consists of the LAC reel number, volume number and date of entry.

Parents' Consent Forms and Care and Custody Orders 1912–1920

(For the *CEH Index*, names and references were extracted for children brought to Canada during this period.)

Records in the files of *Parents Consent Forms and Care and Custody Orders* cover the years 1912 to 1920, but a few records from 1911 are included. Except for the few 1911 records, pre-1912 records have been lost or destroyed.

The *Parents' Consent Form* contains the parent's or guardian's consent to transfer the guardianship of their child(ren) to John T. Middlemore or George Jackson (CEH Committee Secretary) at the CEH. It was signed by the parent or guardian, and witnessed and dated, usually by a CEH staff member.

A *Care and Custody Order* was initiated by a magistrate, most often in Birmingham. This occurred when parents had been sentenced to prison for such crimes as cruelty and neglect of their children and there were no suitable relatives willing to care for them. Guardianship of each child was transferred legally to Middlemore or Jackson with authority to take or send the child abroad. A *Care and Custody Order* was sometimes accompanied by a school or work record but rarely by a signed *Parent's Consent Form*. About two months before the annual CEH party was due to leave for Canada, a letter from the British Under Secretary of State for the Home Office was sent to the CEH authorizing the emigration of the child or children to Canada. In the period before the First World War, the permission letter sometimes contained the names of several children travelling in the CEH party. After the war, one permission letter for each child was sent to the CEH.

Most of the documents within this file are the *Parental Consent* forms that are sometimes accompanied by a medical report or a birth registration form. England and Wales have two birth registration forms—the long and the short. The short birth registration form is usually the one found in this collection. Much less frequently included is the long birth registration form. The short form bears the child's name(s) and date of birth only. The long form also includes the place of birth, sex of child, names of parents, mother's maiden name, rank or profession of father, and name and address of informant. Both forms were signed and dated by a registrar.

In 1922, a bilateral agreement between the U.K. and Canada (under the U.K.'s *Empire Settlement Act* of 1922) brought about the sharing of the travel costs for emigrant children between the ages of 7 and 17, from the emigration agencies' receiving homes in the U.K. to their distributing homes in Canada.

The CEH refused to receive any child deemed unsuitable for emigration. If children who entered the CEH on a *Care and Custody Order* were settled in Canada and became so “troublesome” that the CEH returned them to England (usually to a family member, workhouse, or other suitable institution), the *Care and Custody Order* had to be revoked because the CEH was not an orphanage or long-term care institution.

Note: Most of the documents in volumes 96 and 97 were microfilmed on LAC reel A-2091 but the earliest documents in volume 96 were microfilmed on LAC reel A-2090—a closed reel. LAC has poor photocopies of some of the volume 96 microfilmed documents contained in R5592 Box 1 (make a request for this box two weeks in advance). Good copies of the original documents can only be obtained during an in-person visit to the Wolfson Centre in Birmingham, U.K. to see MS 517 volume 96, following a pre-requested appointment. The relevant document(s) may then be transcribed or photographed.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, and number of pages or LAC Reference: R5592 Box 1, volume number, file part, and page number.

History Book 1873–1893

(For the *CEH Index*, names and references were extracted for all children brought to Canada during this period.)

Entries in the *History Book* began in 1873, after the first CEH party was settled in Canada, and continued until 1893 when Middlemore discontinued settlements in Ontario and made the Maritime provinces his area of operation. The entrance of some children to the CEH was recorded only in the *History Book*. Children from other agencies may or may not have been entered in the *History Book*.

Each child’s entry was handwritten on two pages with the child’s name in copperplate writing at the top of each page. The left-hand page usually contains the child’s age, the date of departure from the CEH, sometimes brief comments on the child’s background, and often one-line summaries of CEH visitors’ reports, while the right-hand page usually includes a list of settlement families and addresses, with dates of annual contract renewals. Case numbers were not included.

Some *History Book* entries refer readers to the superintendent’s correspondence files or to the children’s letter files. Unfortunately, these correspondence and letter files have been lost or destroyed.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, page number and number of pages.

Settlement and Reports Folios 1876–1952

(For the *CEH Index*, names and references were extracted for all children brought to Canada by the CEH between 1873 and 1932 with last settlement in 1933.)

Each *Settlement and Reports Folio* contains the children’s name, age, date of departure from England or arrival in Canada, the name and address of the settlement family, number of settlements and number of visitor reports, often detailed visitor reports, and any letters the children wrote to CEH staff.

Visiting stopped when the child turned 18, even though the CEH was responsible for the children until they were “of age” (21 years). Some children kept in touch with CEH staff long after they had passed beyond the age of care.

Entries in the *Settlement and Reports Folio* started in 1876. Usually, two pages of the folio were devoted to each child, with the child’s name in copperplate handwriting at the top of each page. Since the

Settlement and Reports Folio was rarely paginated, the names of the children were usually grouped alphabetically according to the surname's initial letter, but they were not arranged in alphabetical order within the letter group. To help find a child's record within any letter group, the *CEH Index* provides the names of the preceding and following children. Where paginated, *Settlement and Reports Folio* entries were not alphabetically arranged. Page numbers are given in the *CEH Index* only when transcribers could clearly read them on the microfilms held by LAC.

The children's settlement agreements were folded and usually pasted on the left-hand page of the folio and their folded CEH visitors' reports on the right-hand page. Occasionally all forms for a child were put on one page. Usually, the date of the document is clearly visible in the folded state. These documents were individually unfolded for microfilming, but occasionally a folded document was accidentally microfilmed unopen. (A pre-arranged in-person visit to the Wolfson Centre, in Birmingham, U.K. is the only way of getting a transcription or a photograph of the document.) There are usually fewer than 10 documents per page but sometimes many more.

Note on New Brunswick settlements 1885–1891: *Settlement and Reports Folio* records do not exist for most of the children who were settled in New Brunswick between 1885 and 1891. The names of some children were entered in the *Settlement and Reports Folio* at the top of two pages that are otherwise blank. In these situations, “(name only)” has been entered in the *CEH Index*. The CEH visitors' reports of a few of these children were placed with the children's entries in the *History Book*.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, the page number, or the names of children appearing before and after the referenced child and the approximate number of documents on the referenced pages.

Annual Reports 1873–1967

(For the *CEH Index*, names and mentions of children settled in Canada were searched for and extracted until the end of the Annual Report for 1941.)

Access is open to all the *Annual Reports*. These are small hardcover books containing letters from children, photographs, information about the agency (its policy, finances and activities) and lists of people who gave donations, paid for the training and voyage to Canada of one or more children, collected money to support children, and worked in sewing circles to produce children's clothing.

Until and including 1916, the *Annual Reports* also contained descriptions of the voyages to Canada and/or the settlement process in Canada. These annual descriptions are included in some reports as a supplement without page numbers. To maintain the context of a child's mention in any description of a voyage or settlement process, researchers are advised to order the whole supplement (usually three or four pages). Even if a selected child was not mentioned by name in the annual report for the year the child was brought to Canada, any annual report up to and including 1916 is useful for the experiences any child could have had on the voyage and/or during the settlement process.

After 1920, children's names were usually replaced by initials, especially after the letters they wrote to CEH staff, and in the financial parts of an *Annual Report*. It has not been possible to identify many of these children. No children the CEH brought to Canada are mentioned after 1939.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, report number, year the report covers and page number(s).

CEH Committee Minutes 1893–1954

For the *CEH Index*, names and mentions of children settled in Canada were searched for and extracted until the end of 1941.)

The CEH Committee was equivalent to a board of governors and was usually called “the Committee” or sometimes “the English Committee.” The earliest existing *CEH Committee Minutes* start in 1893.

The major management issues dealt with by the CEH Committee concern the children, only a few of whom are mentioned by name. The mentions tend to be for children who had difficulties, for example, a child in difficulty in Canada who was returned to England or one who had difficulties on a personal visit to England and sought help from the members of the CEH Committee to return to Canada. Such references can be useful in completing the history of what happened to a child. Also included in the minutes are a few mentions of deaths, or special achievements by CEH children in Canada.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, and date of CEH Committee meeting.

House Committee Minutes 1921–1954

(For the *CEH Index*, names and mentions of children were searched for and extracted until the end of 1941.)

This sub-committee of the CEH Committee was established in 1920, and its minutes are listed in date order. The minutes contain details of the admission and release of children, their illnesses, brief summaries and updates on unsatisfactory children settled in Canada (taken from reports of the Canadian superintendents), and what happened to those who were returned to England for cause.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, and date of House Committee meeting.

Correspondence from Birmingham to Canada 1904–1941

(For the *CEH Index*, names and mentions of children were searched for and extracted until the end of 1941.)

The earliest existing correspondence from Birmingham to the Canadian superintendent dates from 1904. It was mostly written by George Jackson until 1924, at which time he was replaced as secretary to the CEH Committee by Robert Plenderleith. Most of the correspondence is not paginated but is usually in date order.

References to correspondence relating to individual children have been extracted, while correspondence on management and political matters have not. Included are letters to the guardians of various workhouse unions who sent children with a CEH party for settlement in Canada. Some letters concern a single child, but most, especially correspondence with the Canadian superintendent, include comments on more than one named child.

Correspondence was frequent between the CEH secretary in Birmingham and the Canadian superintendents, as confirmed by notes in children's files and superintendents' reports mentioned in the *CEH Committee Minutes*. Unfortunately, the earliest correspondence has been lost, although sometimes references to it may be seen in the *History Book* under a child's entry.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, by page number if paginated and date of the correspondence.

Correspondence from Canada to Birmingham 1916–1941

(For the *CEH Index*, names and mentions of children were searched for and extracted until the end of 1941 when the Canadian CEH superintendent retired.)

The earliest correspondence from the CEH's Canadian superintendents to Birmingham often referred to in the *History Book*, has been lost. The earliest existing correspondence dates from 1916. It is voluminous, coming from the Canadian Superintendent William S. Ray. Most of it dealt with children, but it also included management issues and political changes at the provincial and federal levels of government in Canada that affected the policies and activities of the CEH and other juvenile emigration agencies. While much of the correspondence dealt with children who were in some sort of difficulty, the successes that some children achieved as adults (and reported in Canadian newspapers) were also included.

References for a selected child consist of the LAC reel number, volume number, and date of the correspondence.

FILES NOT ARCHIVED IN LAC COLLECTION MG28-1492 AND THEIR DESCRIPTIONS:

Both of the following were produced by CEH staff.

Gerow, Frank A., Report on the Middlemore home, Fairview Station, Halifax, N.S. for 1905

This document, produced by Frank Gerow, the CEH superintendent of the Middlemore Home at Fairview Station, Nova Scotia, reports on his activities during 1905, his first year as CEH superintendent. Although widely distributed to the Maritime governments, churches and newspapers, it was found in the archives of the Government of Canada, Department of Agriculture, Immigration Branch. It contains references to some CEH children who were settled in the Maritime provinces between May 1893 and June 1905. It also contains several letters by CEH children to staff members. The *CEH Index* includes a note under the subheading "Supplementary Notes" about the references it contains about the children mentioned in the document.

Gerow's report may be accessed online at no cost from *Héritage* on the digitized microfilm LAC reel C-4731, starting at image 723 https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_c4731/723

Parents' Consent Forms and Care and Custody Orders 1921–1925

(For the *CEH Index*, names and references were extracted for children brought to Canada during this period.)

LAC does **NOT** have microfilms or copies of these 1921–1925 files—they are available only at the

Wolfson Centre, Birmingham, U.K., as they were not microfilmed with other CEH documents in 1993. In 2022, the references in these files to the children brought to Canada during 1921-1925 were extracted by a BIFHSGO volunteer from the original documents held at the Wolfson Centre in Birmingham. The catalogue references for these children in the *CEH Index* are those of the Wolfson Centre files.

At the Wolfson Centre, the original forms and documents are kept in separate bundles, one for each year from 1921 up to and including 1925 (the original documents are not numbered). Generally, the *Parents' Consent Form* documents are in chronological order by the dates of the witness signatures within each year's package. The *Care and Custody Orders* were incorporated in the packages using the earliest date of a document signature.

With the Wolfson Centre's permission and using Wolfson Centre guidelines and reference numbers, the references for these children are being added to the BIFHSGO Name Index in the 101st year after each child's arrival in Canada. The information for the years 1921 and 1922 was added in 2023 and the information for 1923 was added in 2024. Therefore, the BIFHSGO Name Index includes two sets of files bearing the same name but with different dates, different subheadings and different methods of viewing and obtaining copies.

After finding a child's name in the Name Index, be sure to click the "More Details" box. Record all the references for the child in the listed subheadings and check the subheading "Supplementary Notes" for any additional information.

To see or copy an original of any CEH microfilmed reference at the Wolfson Centre requires an appointment for a personal visit. When making the appointment (online only and at least two weeks before the visit), you will be asked to name the files you wish to see. At the Wolfson Centre you will receive the original bundle of documents for the year requested through which you must search to find the person of interest.

References for a selected child consist of: Wolfson Centre reference MS 517, file 99, date of the witness signature and number of document pages.

OBSERVATIONS AND TIPS ON CHILDREN'S NAMES AND AGES

Given the many files used to prepare the *CEH Index*, at times it was difficult to be certain that the references in the various files were for the same child. Challenges included: differences in the spelling of a child's name, unrelated children having the same names, use of more than one surname for the same child, and siblings having different case numbers. Members of the same family received by the CEH on the same day always had the same case number.

The following sections describe how researchers can overcome some of these difficulties when searching for specific children or possible siblings.

Spelling of Children's Names

The spelling of surnames was not standardized in the 1800s, mostly due to illiteracy, so phonetic spelling was common. This is true in the CEH files, meaning that a child's surname can vary among records. Furthermore, a child may sometimes have been known by more than one surname. Not all files were

accurate with respect to dates and sibling relationships. To complicate matters, the handwriting ability of the initial recorder may not have been exemplary, and transcribers may have misinterpreted some of the original handwriting.

The *CEH Index* includes all the *legible* references for each child—no matter how many different surnames or spellings of a child’s name may have been used in the titles of the relevant CEH reference documents for a particular child.

Since the *CEH Index* comprises extracted information from 12 different files, any surname of a child used in a file title may be used to find the selected child in the BIFHSGO Name Index. If there are documentary references under another spelling of the child’s surname or under a different surname, the subheading “Supplementary Notes” will contain a “See [name of child]” note directing the researcher to those references.

The spelling differences may include a change in one vowel (e.g., ASBARY/ASBURY), a doubled consonant (e.g., ALDRIDGE/ALLDRIDGE), the addition of a consonant (e.g., READON/REARDON), a change in the first letter of a name (e.g., KEILEY/REILEY), or the addition or deletion of a final “e” or “s” (e.g., COOK/COOKE). Some children had two or more completely different surnames (e.g., MOUNTNEY/LEWIS), perhaps due to a broken home, illegitimacy, parents’ marriage, remarriage, or informal adoption. Where recorded in the CEH files, the new names of girls who married in Canada are also included in the *CEH Index*.

Sometimes the visitors who monitored the children’s progress in their Canadian settlement homes confused the forenames of the children, e.g., FRANCES/FLORENCE. Sometimes a child’s middle name was not used, or first and middle names were reversed, e.g., JOHN JAMES or JAMES JOHN. Where any of these challenges were observed during data extraction, both names were recorded. Sometimes a child’s reference was misplaced in another child’s file. In this case the subheading “Supplementary Notes” in the BIFHSGO Name Index has guidance for locating the misfiled document.

Always check the subheading “Supplementary Notes” in the BIFHSGO Name Index for additional information.

Numbering System for Children with Identical Names

Some surnames and first names (forenames) are very common, leading to some children having identical names. Therefore, while preparing the *CEH Index*, a numbering system was used for the first name of each child to determine which reference belonged to which CEH child of the same name.

Consider a researcher wanting information about John Charles Jones believed to have been settled by the CEH in Ontario in the late 1870s. Using the BIFHSGO Name Search the researcher entered “Jones” in the “Surname” box but realizing that “John Jones” was probably a common name put “John Charles” as a short-cut in the “First Name” box, then clicked “Research Sources” and from the dropdown list selected “Children’s (Middlemore) Emigration Homes.” Up came the message “no entry”.

Sure that there was a CEH child named John Charles Jones, the researcher went back to the research page, re-entered the information as before, but only entered “John” in the “First Name” box. This time up came 6 children with the surname “Jones” and first name “John”: Jones, John (1) Charles; Jones, John (2); Jones, John (3); Jones, John (4); Jones, John (5); Jones, John (6) Thomas. The numbering system was

carried into the BIFHGSO Name Index and became part of the name, at least for CEH children. Since first and second names are often reversed, it is useful to also use the second name as a first name for a search.

Conclusion: Don't try short-cuts. Enter only one name in the "First Name" box.

Case Numbers

All *Application Book* entries for a child or children include a "family" case number, meaning that all children from the same family normally had the same case number. This may seem easy, but complications can appear. For instance:

- some siblings entered the CEH in different years with each receiving a different case number
- children not entered in the *Application Book* do not have a case number
- some children who were not siblings have the same case number
- some children who have case numbers may have siblings who do not have case number
- how to find if any siblings of a child of interest were accepted into the CEH and settled in Canada on different dates.

How to Find possible Siblings with the Same Case Number

To see if a selected child who was settled in Canada by the CEH had siblings who were also settled by the CEH (for example a child settled after 1876 may have had a sibling settled in Canada before 1976):

- record the selected child's case number
- insert the child's surname on the BIFHGSO Name Index search page, leaving the "First Name" box blank
- click the "Research Sources" box and from the dropdown list choose "Children's (Middlemore); Emigration Homes". This brings down all entries for that surname with all their forenames
- choose a first name and click the "More Details" box, first checking that the case number under the subheading "Application Books" is identical to the selected child's case number. If it is not identical, select another first name from the list and try again
- the case of "no match" does not necessarily mean that the selected child did not have siblings settled in Canada by the CEH. Rather, any siblings accepted by the CEH at different times usually had different case numbers.

How to Find possible Siblings with Different Case Numbers

Where a familial relationship among children having different case numbers is known, under the "Application Book" subheading in the *CEH Index*, the case numbers of all the family members are included with each family member's entry. The case number for the selected child's *Application Book* entry is always given first. The second (and additional) *Application Book* entries each give the case number for a sibling, but not the sibling's forename. The surname of each sibling is the same. Any sibling with a different surname will have a separate *CEH Index* entry under that surname and the relationship may or may not have been recognized.

To begin the search:

- go back to the BIFHSGO Name Index search page and enter the child's surname, leaving the "First Name" box blank
- click the "Research Sources" box and choose "Children's (Middlemore) Emigration Homes" from the dropdown list
- click the "More Details" box for one of the names that appear
- check the *Application Book* reference for the recorded case number, comparing it with the case number given from the second (or later) *Application Book* reference of the selected child
- if there are no matches, the conclusion must be that no siblings of the selected child were settled in Canada by the CEH staff.

How to Find possible Siblings who lack Case Numbers

Names of children who entered the CEH before 1876 or who came from union workhouses and other non-CEH sources were not entered in an *Application Book*. Such children did not receive case numbers until the late 1920s. For this reason, it is not easy to find or recognize many children's siblings. If two or more children with the same surname from the same workhouse union were taken by the CEH for settlement in Canada in the same year, it is likely they were siblings. More information to prove a relationship may be obtained by using the information on union workhouse records from Peter Higginbotham's website *The Workhouse: The story of an institution* at <https://www.workhouses.org.uk/>. Sometimes the familial relationship may be revealed in the children's records, e.g., they may be recorded as having the same mother.

If clues about sibling relationships were found in the CEH files during the creation of the *CEH Index*, the name(s) of the sibling(s) are found under the subheading "Supplementary Notes".

Number of Source Files that may Include References to a Selected Child

In most cases, a child is not referred to in more than five or six different files. All 12 files are used as subheadings in the BIFHSGO Name Index, but they will not be found in a CEH child's list of references unless the child has a reference in that file.

Reports on children who had problems and how they were dealt with are found under the subheadings "Correspondence" and "House Committee Minutes". Many references for a child under one of these subheadings indicates that the child had problems or challenges that had to be met and dealt with by the Canadian superintendent, usually in consultation with Birmingham staff. For such a child, this could mean:

- receiving a talking-to by the CEH superintendent or the CEH settlement-home visitor
- a letter from George Jackson, the CEH Committee Secretary
- a change of settlement family,
- being returned to the CEH distribution home for further training or
- despite all efforts, being returned to England for cause.

Once all references are found for a child, copies of the selected documents may be evaluated or obtained at one of three public archives (Wolfson Centre in Birmingham, U.K., LAC in Ottawa, Canada, and the National Library of Australia in Canberra, Australian Capital Territory), depending on the dates of the records concerned and the operational guidelines of the selected archive.

After finding a child's name in the BIFHSGO Name Index, to locate any additional information be sure to click the "More Details" box and record all the references for the child listed under the subheadings listed there, including "Supplementary Notes".

Children's Ages

In the time before age-tested social support programs, birthdays were of little significance to the poorest working-class people in the U.K.

When attempting to identify a CEH child's birthdate, consider the following:

- On admission to the CEH, a child's actual date of birth was rarely recorded, instead their age and the date that the child had already turned or would turn that age was noted.

Therefore, the child's age, given under the subheading "Age" in the *CEH Index* was the age reported on the date of entry to the CEH, while under the subheading "Birthday/Birth Anniversary" was the date on which the child had turned or would turn the age given. When the actual date of birth was given, the age under the subheading "Age" was recorded as "0."

In the case of workhouse children and a few others, only an age was recorded on entry to the CEH, so the child could have turned that age at any time during the previous 11 months. In these cases, the information under the subheading "Birthday/Birth Anniversary" includes the comment "Before [month, year]" to indicate that the child may have had a birthday between the date of entry into the CEH and the date of departure for Canada.

- Birth certificates were not required for admission to the Children's (Middlemore) Emigration Homes (CEH) in Birmingham, and few are found in the CEH files, except in those files entitled *Parents Consent Forms and Care and Custody Orders*.
- Birth registration in England and Wales was required by law as of 1837 but not made compulsory until 1875.
- There are two birth registration forms for England and Wales—the short form and the long form. The short birth registration form records only the child's name and date of birth. The long birth registration form also includes the place where the child was born, its sex, its parents' names with the mother's maiden name, the father's trade or occupation, and the name and address of the informant. Both forms were signed and dated by a registrar.
- As happens today, children were often known by a forename other than the one their parents had registered at birth.
- Family circumstances between the birth of a child and its entry to the CEH, such as a death, divorce, marriage, remarriage or informal adoption, may have changed and the registered surname and/or forename may have been forgotten and the birth certificate lost.

Note on Adoption: In the U.K. at the time most home children were brought to Canada, there were only informal or familial adoptions. This was usually a word-of-mouth agreement between the birth parent(s) and a relative or a friend. It was not until 1926 that the British parliament passed the first adoption law, the *Adoption of Children Act* that covered England and Wales. Similar adoption laws followed for Northern Ireland (1929) and Scotland (1930). Children whose father had died or deserted them were often called orphans in the U.K., a term that often followed them to Canada.

In Canada, the first provinces to pass adoption laws were New Brunswick in 1873 and Nova Scotia in 1896. Ontario did not pass an adoption law until 1921, making all adoptions before that time informal—called familial or kin adoptions. Some home children were indentured, which some people considered was a type of adoption, but this was a legal process based on Ontario’s 1851 *Act Respecting Apprentices and Minors* and its subsequent amendments.

After finding a child’s name in the BIFHSGO Name Index, to locate any additional information be sure to click the “More Details” box and record all the references for the child listed under the subheadings, including “Supplementary Notes.”

ACCESSING THE RECORDS OF THE CHILDREN’S (MIDDLEMORE) EMIGRATION HOMES

All records of the Children’s (Middlemore) Emigration Homes (CEH) children entering Canada 100 years ago are open to the public. Access to the records of children who entered Canada between 75 and 100 years ago is restricted by access to information and privacy legislation but depending on the policies of the archive may be made available to researchers.

Location of the Children’s (Middlemore) Emigration Homes (CEH) Records:

- The Wolfson Centre, Birmingham, U.K. holds the original CEH records.
- Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in Ottawa, holds most microfilmed CEH records, LAC Collection MG28-1492, ranging in date from 1872 to 1954.
- The National Library of Australia (NLA) in Canberra, ACT holds microfilmed CEH records ranging in date from 1918 to 1972.
- Starting in 1926, the CEH Committee transferred to the Fairbridge Society guardianship of some children under the age of 14 (whose parents or guardians had given permission for them to be taken to Australia). The Fairbridge Society then included those CEH children under their guardianship in their parties to their farm school in Pinjarra, Western Australia. From 1936, the Fairbridge Society received guardianship of some CEH children who joined its parties to its Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School in British Columbia.
- Some Fairbridge Society original records that are held by the Wolfson Centre are available on microfilm as part of the LAC Collection MG28-1492.

None of the CEH or Fairbridge Society non-governmental records are online.

Reference Numbers

The reference number for all CEH records at the Wolfson Centre starts with MS 517 followed by a file number.

At LAC, the reference number for CEH records starts with a LAC reel “A” number followed by a volume number. The LAC volume numbers are the same as the Wolfson Centre file numbers for the same

information. For example, the Wolfson Centre reference for the first *Application Book* is MS 517 file 245. For LAC, the microfilmed record of the same material is LAC reel A-2104 volume 245.

Restricted and Closed Records

At LAC, some unrestricted CEH records (i.e., those over 100 years old) are on the same microfilm reel as restricted records (i.e., those between 75 and 100 years old). This makes the whole reel restricted.

It is still possible to consult and make copies from restricted records at LAC, but the LAC Middlemore form *Restricted Access: Application for Access* must be completed and submitted to LAC before access is granted or copies provided. Records less than 75 years old are closed, making any LAC reels with records less than 75 years old, closed.

Documents NOT Available at all Three Sites

LAC also has microfilms of the CEH *Admission Registers* (1872–1954) and CEH *Annual Reports* for 1872/73 to 1890. As far as is known, the National Library of Australia does not have either of these files.

The Gerow Report for 1905 is a Government of Canada document that is freely available online at no cost from H ritage on the digitized microfilm C-4731, starting at image 723

(https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_c4731/723).

The *CEH Index* also includes source references extracted from the Wolfson Centre collection MS 517 volume 99, a volume **only available** in Birmingham, U.K.

OBTAINING COPIES OF CHILDREN’S (MIDDLEMORE) EMIGRATION HOMES (CEH) DOCUMENTS

The *Name and Reference Index of the Children’s (Middlemore) Emigration Homes and Its Sources* (commonly referred to in this document as the *CEH Index*) has been incorporated into the BIFHSGO Name Index under the name “Children’s (Middlemore) Emigration Homes”. It contains the names, references and legible mentions in the source files of all CEH children brought to Canada between 1873 and 1932.

The National Library of Australia (NLA) has microfilmed copies of records for those CEH children whose guardianship was passed to the Fairbridge Society and were settled in Australia starting in 1926. The NLA collection has documents ranging in date from 1918 to 1972. (Note: As of 2023 the NLA collection was listed online as “not available.”)

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO) **does NOT hold** any CEH records.

Before ordering copies of the documents of interest, be aware that the CEH records were developed and maintained in mostly handwritten format until about the end of the First World War (when typewriters became more available), in mostly unpaginated books or folios. The methods of record keeping and the people who kept them changed over time and some records have been damaged, lost or destroyed. As a result, some inconsistencies exist in the files.

The original records (and their microfilms) from 1872 to 1900 were sometimes too dark to read, some pages were torn, some writing unintelligible, and the ink on some reference documents too faded to read, meant that some references for a few children are incomplete.

Once the documents containing references to a child or children of interest are known, it is possible to obtain copies of those documents as follows:

From the Wolfson Centre

Wolfson Centre
Centenary Square
Broad Street
Birmingham B1 2ND
U.K.

Email:

archives.heritage@birmingham.gov.uk

archives.appointments@birmingham.gov.uk

Web site:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50134/archives_and_collections/1552/archives_and_collections/4

Documents archived at the Wolfson Centre, Birmingham, U.K. may **only** be viewed or photographed during pre-arranged **in-person** visits booked at least two weeks in advance.

If you found the references for CEH children in the *CEH Index* and wish to see the source documents at the Wolfson Centre, when ordering them in advance you must **replace** the LAC reel “A” number with “MS 517,” followed by the rest of the reference.

From Library and Archives Canada (LAC)

Library and Archives Canada
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
CANADA

Tel. 613-996-5115

1-866-578-7777 (toll free in Canada and the United States)

Fax 613-992-5921

Email: reproduction@bac-lac.gc.ca

Website: <https://library-archives.canada.ca>

Please note that as of late 2024, the only way to get copies of Middlemore’s Children’s Emigration Homes documents appears to be by a personal visit to LAC or by contracting or hiring a researcher to do the work. Make sure you have the name of the child, and the list of references generated for that child in the BIFHSGO Name Search. We are hoping for further information from LAC soon.

You may **view** and **copy** microfilmed copies at LAC, of the CEH children’s records on LAC Reels beginning with “A” or LAC reference R5592, Box 1, that are listed in the BIFHSGO Name Index, but before requesting LAC for copies of records listed on the BIFHSGO Names listed, consult *Home Children Records* on the LAC website, especially ***How to Access the Records or Obtain Copies*** found on the *Home*

Children Record page at <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigration-records/home-children-1869-1930/immigration-records/Pages/immigration-records.aspx> .

Pay attention to the LAC note “**Entries with references from RG 17, for Middlemore microfilm reels with “A”, “C”, or “R” numbers (including Middlemore MG28-I492 records).**”

The LAC Copy Services webpage includes a section “Ordering copies online”: <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/services/public/copy-services/Pages/copy-services.aspx> where you will find information about prices, time frames and delivery methods. A secure online order form is provided: <https://reproduction.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng> Please cite the complete reference for the searched child as it appears on the BIFHSGO Name Index entry, not forgetting the child’s name. After submitting the online form, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement with your order number.

If the order contains requests for any restricted reels, this will be mentioned in the automatic acknowledgement and will require your completion of the LAC Application for Access form for Middlemore (CEH) restricted reels available from LAC Copy Services. Middlemore Children’s Emigration Homes fonds MG28 1492 in the LAC Collection search database contains the Restricted Access Form. It also contains the list of microfilm reels that indicate which are Open, Restricted, or Closed. Click on the “Ordering and viewing options” tab: <https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.redirect?app=fonandcol&id=107020&lang=eng>

After receiving the automatic acknowledgement of your order from LAC, download and complete the Middlemore access form and send it as a scanned attachment by email to reproduction@bac-lac.gc.ca, or fax it to 613-992-5921. **Be sure to include your order number.**

Researchers wanting to see a record at LAC for a child listed in reference R5592, Box 1, volumes 96 or 97 (*Parents Consent Forms and Care and Custody Orders, 1912 to 1915 and 1916 to 1920*) must order the records at least two weeks before a planned visit. Information about ordering material is to be found at <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/services/public/consult-lac-material/order-archival-material/pages/order-archival-materials.aspx> .

All references for CEH records starting with the LAC reel “A” or LAC reference R5592 Box 1 are on the *CEH Index*. Researchers are warned that the copies of LAC reference R5592 Box 1 are mainly poor copies. There two ways to obtain better copies:

- Scroll through LAC Reel A-2091 (currently under transcription)
- Make an in-person visit to the Wolfson Centre in Birmingham to see reference “MS 517” volumes 96 and 97.

Those records starting with the letter “C” are online on the *Héritage* site, on digitized microfilm C-4731, starting at image 723 (https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_c4731/723).

Note: LAC does not make copies of documents that are already online.

From the National Library of Australia (NLA)

National Library of Australia
Parkes Pl. W
Canberra, ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Phone +61 2 6262 1111

Website:

<https://www.nla.gov.au>

In 2023, the microfilmed records of Middlemore's Children's Emigration Homes were listed as "not available." This may be because the microfilm reels include records less than 100 years old or are closed.

Contact the NLA for information on the microfilmed records for when and how they might be accessed. Be sure to include the name of the child, the approximate date of emigration, the title of the file, and the volume number(s) of the record(s) in which you are interested.

RESOURCES

- Bondfield, Margaret Grace, *Report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, President of the Oversea Settlement Committee, from the Delegation appointed to obtain information the situation of child migration and settlement in Canada* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1924). LAC reel 76, vol. 67 file 3115, part 16.
- Doyle, Andrew, *Emigration of Pauper Children to Canada, Report to the Right Honourable the President of the Local Government Board* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1875). Please note that "Pauper" in this report means children from workhouses.
- Fairbridge Society: <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about-us/research-policies-reports/fairbridge-society>
- Lane, John, *Fairbridge Kid* (Freemantle Arts Centre Press, 1990). This is the autobiography of a Fairbridge child who was originally a Barnardo child. It is well worth reading by anyone interested in home children. Available to order online from AbeBooks. A copy is at the Ottawa City Archives (OGS Collection).
- Library and Archives Canada
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4 CANADA
Tel. 613-996-5115
Fax 613-992-5921
Email: reproduction@bac-lac.gc.ca
Website: <https://library-archives.canada.ca/>
- National Library of Australia
Parkes Pl. W

Canberra, ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA
Phone +61 2 6262 1111
Website:
<https://www.nla.gov.au>

- Roberts-Pichette, Patricia, *Great Canadian Expectations: The Middlemore Experience* (2016), GlobalHeritagePress.ca. See <https://globalgenealogy.com/> Email: sandra@globalgenealogy.com
- Wolfson Centre,
Centenary Square,
Broad Street,
Birmingham, B1 2ND, U.K.
Email:
archives.heritage@birmingham.gov.uk
archives.appointments@birmingham.gov.uk
Web site:
https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50134/archives_and_collections/1552/archives_and_collections/4