

September, 2016



British Home Child Group International

Lord Mount Stephen by Sandra Joyce

Design and Layout by Karen Mahoney



Lord Mount Stephen, one of the most prominent and richest men in Canadian history, never forgot his humble beginnings. In 1910, he donated over \$300,000 to the Barnardo organization 'to emigrate a good class of boys to Canada' – a sum if converted into today's currency would be \$6.5 million dollars.

He was considered one of the greatest philanthropists of all time, giving away more money in his lifetime than he would leave to his heirs. George Stephen, although born in Scotland, was the first Canadian to be elevated to the Peerage of the United Kingdom. He was created 1st Baron Mount Stephen of Mount Stephen in the Province of British Columbia and Dominion of Canada, and of Dufftown in the County of Banff. He took the name for the title from Mount Stephen in the Rocky Mountains, that had been previously named in his honour. Lord Mount Stephen was also appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order in 1905.

Aside from the gift to Barnardo's, Stephen's greatest philanthropic gifts to Canada were to build a new wing at the Montreal General Hospital. He also, along with his cousin, Donald Smith (later Lord Strathcona), purchased the Frothingham estate in the Golden Square Mile in Montreal as the site for the Royal Victoria Hospital. They gave this property to the City of Montreal with the caveat that the land and its buildings must only ever be used for education and healing.

Later, in the UK, he gave even more generously to hospitals, and worked closely with King George V to start up and build the Prince of Wales Hospital Fund in London.

Stephen was born in 1829 in Scotland in a cottage built by his grandfather. His father was a carpenter, and his mother was the daughter of a crofter. Generosity ran in the family, though, as his mother was a first cousin of the philanthropic Grant brothers of Manchester, immortalised as the "Cheeryble Brothers" in Charles Dickens's book, Nicholas Nickleby.

Having left school at the age of 14, Stephen became a stable boy. The following year he obtained an apprenticeship to a draper and silk mercer in Aberdeen before moving to London. While he was there, the rest of the Stephen family emigrated to Montreal at the invitation of George's first cousin, William who had established a wholesale dry goods business. Stephen joined them in 1850 and worked with his cousin in Canada for the next twelve years until 1862, when his cousin died and Stephen inherited the business. By 1864 he had been elected to the Montreal Board of Trade. In 1866, he was running a wool-importing company while also investing in the textile trade. *continued on page 2.....*

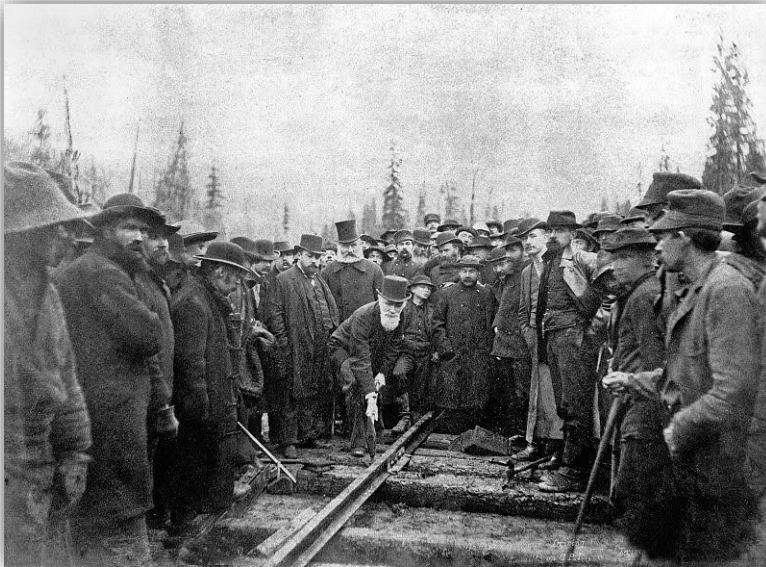
BIG DONATION TO HELP BOYS

Mount Stephen Has Given
Fund of \$300,000

(Special to The Sun.)

Montreal, March 1—Lord Mount-Stephen has donated \$300,000 to the Barnardo Home movement to assist a good class of 'boys to emigrate to Canada. The Royal Trust Co., Robt. Meighen and John Turnbull are named as trustees of the fund.

Lord Mount Stephen *continued*



By the late 1860s, Stephen was considered to be a top financier in Montreal and provided capital to prominent businessmen. By 1873, he was a Director of the Bank of Montreal and three years later became President. During his time at the Bank, he became keenly interested in railways and formed the Canada Rolling Stock Company. His cousin Donald Smith, encouraged him to attach his name to two proposals to build railway lines to Fort Garry (later Winnipeg).

Although the proposals did not come to fruition, they sparked his interest in railways. In 1877, Smith had introduced his cousin to James Hill, a businessman who ran steamboats on the Red Riv-

er. In August, Stephen visited the unfinished line of the St Paul and Pacific Railroad in Minnesota that Hill wanted to purchase and complete to the Canadian border. Their meeting led to the establishment of George Stephen and Associates – and the purchase of that line. Unable to obtain financing from London investment banks, Stephen and Smith pledged cash and collateral for their shares, securing short-term financing from the Bank of Montreal. The railway was renamed the St Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad, with Stephen as president.

In the summer of 1880, Stephen began negotiations to secure the contract to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. The final agreement provided the CPR with \$25,000,000 in cash, 25,000,000 acres of land west of Winnipeg, and 713 miles of finished railway. The CPR was given tax exemptions, relief on duties for building materials, and a 20-year monopoly prohibiting the construction of railways south of its line in western Canada. The CPR was incorporated on 16 Feb. 1881, with Stephen as president. He immediately resigned from the board of the Bank of Montreal to dedicate himself to the railway.

On 7 November 1885, at Craigellachie, British Columbia, Donald Smith famously hammered home the last spike in the railroad. Stephen and Smith's gamble had paid off and the success of the first leg of what would soon become the "world's greatest transportation system" almost immediately made them enormously rich.

Stephen refused to accept the argument that the CPR owed its existence to Sir John A. MacDonald's government. He became engaged in a very public battle over several years concerning the unpopular monopoly clause, but had to concede to public pressure in 1888, allowing the construction of branch lines south of the CPR main line. He resigned as President of the CPR in 1888 and, although he was still a very wealthy man, the creation of the CPR had taken its financial toll.

Stephen was first married to Annie Charlotte Kane, who was one of several children born to Benjamin Kane, a former officer in the Royal Engineers. While in Montreal, the couple lived in a sumptuous mansion in the city's Golden Square Mile. Years after their departure from Montreal, their home became known as the Mount Stephen Club.

Continued on page 3.....

Lord Mount Stephen *continued....*

From the mid-1880s, Stephen began to spend an increasing amount of time in England. Tired of the business and politics that surrounded his life in Montreal, he settled permanently in Hertfordshire in England. Stephen and his wife also kept a city residence at 17 Carlton House Terrace in London. Lady Mount Stephen frequently entertained the Prince (the future Edward VII) and Princess of Wales, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and the Duchess of Teck. The couple had no biological children, but had adopted a young woman in Montreal, Alice Brooke, the daughter of a Vermont clergyman.

In 1897, after the death of his first wife, Stephen married Georgina Mary (known as Gian) Tufnell. Gian had been Lady-in-Waiting to Princess Mary Adelaide, Duchess of Teck, who was a frequent guest, and who was the mother of Queen Mary. Through this connection, Gian became a lifelong friend and confidant of Queen Mary and she and Lord Mount Stephen regularly entertained Queen Mary and her husband, George V. On one occasion, Gian gave Queen Mary a diamond rivière necklace, which was later given to Princess Margaret, who wore it on her wedding day. The second Lady Mount Stephen died in 1933 at Cuckfield, Sussex, England.

Before his death, Lord Mount Stephen sat regularly in the House of Lords but avoided public speaking and committees. He returned to Canada infrequently, making his last trip in 1894, but his influence in the House was considerable, especially in regards to Canada.

Lord Mount Stephen's titles died with him in 1921, as he had left no natural heirs by either of his wives.



The Diamond necklace given by George Stephen's second wife to Queen Mary. Queen Mary in turn gave it to Margaret to wear on her wedding day.



A last minute decision to go with my husband on a delivery to downtown Toronto I found myself at a building which seemed very familiar. I was on Blue Jay Way, but as I walked up more I realized it used to be Peter Street. A quick google on my phone confirmed that yes, we were delivering to what was once the Barnardo Homes located on Peter Street. It will soon be a 44storey Hotel and Residence called the Bisha Hotel. The gentleman sitting 2nd from the left is my great great Uncle Dr. Archibald Wilson,



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who was the Medical Director for the Barnardo Homes in Canada.—Karen Mahoney

The Home Children Canada Crest



Thanks to Gail Collins for this description of the symbols on the Home Children Canada crest and pin. The crest used by this group since 1994 was devised and privately commissioned by Lizzie Smith of St Jerome, Quebec, whose father Henry Smith was sent through St George's Home in Ottawa to a Francophone family in Quebec. It was a wonderful surprise when Lizzie presented the original sketch to the founder of Home Children Canada, David Lorente at the former St George's Home (now Holy Rosary Parish) in Ottawa.

The banner atop the crest reads HOME CHILDREN CANADA, which suggests that our interest is national, and includes all children sent from the four dozen or more agencies in the UK to Canada and former colonies and dominions as well as their families in the UK or elsewhere.

The LION against a FIELD OF RED represents the sending country - the Mother country.

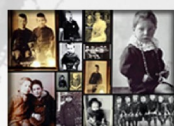
The SILHOUETTE OF THE URBAN INDUSTRIAL CENTRE suggests the places from which most poor child migrants came.

THE SHIP GUIDED BY THE STAR OF GOOD HOPE brought the children west.

THE GOLDEN SKY, MOUNTAINS, FIELDS, RIVER AND SHEAVES OF WHEAT represent the promise of the children's new home - the wide-open spaces and food a-plenty.

THE FALL MAPLE LEAF AGAINST A FIELD OF WHITE is our national emblem and our colours.

THE MOTTO is in Latin: SPES IN CANADA and means OUR HOPE IS IN CANADA.



British Home Child Group International

The British Home Child Group International, in collaboration with Fanshawe Pioneer Village in London, Ontario, are excited to present British Home Child Day on October 1st & 2nd, 2016. Admission is free for the event as part of Doors Open London and Culture Days.

Mark the dates in your calendar!!



The Corsican by Sandra Joyce



Two thousand British Home Children/Child Migrants were sent to Canada in just three years, between 1908 and 1911 on the steamship *Corsican*. During those years the ship was chartered to the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company from the Allan Line Steamship Company Ltd.

The 11,419-ton steamship was built at the shipyard, Barclay, Curle and Co. Ltd. of Glasgow, and launched in April 1907. She was used in passenger and cargo traffic between Canada and the UK. The *Corsican* was the identical sister ship of the *Grampian* and the *Hesperian*, both of which were built by Alexander Stephen and Sons. Up to this point in time, these

three steamers were the largest vessels in the history of the Allan Line.

The *Corsican's* maiden voyage, on 31 October, 1907 was from Liverpool to St. John, New Brunswick, a route she would remain on until early 1914. This passenger and cargo ship had a chimney, two masts and two propellers and was powered by two triple expansion steam engines, which allowed for a top speed of 16 knots.

The passenger accommodations were designed for 208 First Class passengers, 298 Second and 1000 Third Class. The dining room of the First Class was at the front end of the bridge deck and had large, square windows on three sides to let in a lot of natural light.

The ship had a silk-panelled music room and a smoking room with a large skylight made of teak on the promenade deck. The *Corsican* was equipped with electricity, a ventilation system for fresh air supply and a Marconi radio.

In April 1912, passengers and crew of the *Corsican* suffered a terrible scare after crashing into the same field of icebergs in which the *Titanic* sank in. The captain immediately gave orders for the vessel to slow down and, steaming less than five knots an hour, the *Corsican* picked its way through the perilous ice, reaching St. John's with all safe on board. They wired a message about to The *Corinthian*, who, it is supposed, passed it on to The *Titanic*. The *Titanic* hit the icefield a few days later.

According to the Chicago Daily News, dated April 12, 1912, passenger Henry Pratt of Liverpool stated: "It was on Thursday night that we reached the (ice) field. I believe it was toward morning.

The ship was going slowly at the time, for we knew that the danger was near. Immediately the captain gave the order, 'Full speed astern' and the ship hurled itself back from the massive formation that lay ahead.



Continued on page 6....

The Corsican *continued...*

"No one knew when another might show itself, and the captain then gave orders to lay to for the rest of the night. Next morning we proceeded under low steam. All day, in spite of the bitter cold, passengers lined the rails watching the immense icebergs rolling down with the Labrador stream. An examination of the ship proved that no damage had resulted from the collision with the berg, but I shudder to think what would have happened if we had been trying to break the transatlantic record.

Pratt continued: "'It was a terrible experience, nevertheless. I am an old seaman myself, but never have I seen such an awe inspiring sight as that which greeted us the morning after we struck the berg. On all sides were enormous mountains of ice gleaming like jewels in the bright sunlight. Only then did we realize what we had escaped and all on board thanked the captain for his care in bringing us through safely."



There are also reports of *The Corsican* hitting an iceberg later, on August 12, but with only slight damage.

From April 1914, *The Corsican* made four Glasgow to Montréal roundtrips before being taken over as a troopship in August carrying troops from Southampton to Le Havre. She then resumed transatlantic voyages and carried, among others, the first Newfoundland Regiment to leave St. John's for Europe on October 27, 1915, on her decks. During her military service, she became part of the property of the newly named Canadian Pacific Steamships Ocean Services Ltd. when the acquisition of the Allan Line was completed on 16 July 1917.



On August 24, 1918, *The Corsican* re-entered its commercial service, on the route London-Quebec-Montreal and from 30 January 1919 she returned to the route Liverpool-Saint John. On 16 November 1922, *The Corsican* was renamed *The Marvale* and her passenger capacity was reduced to the third grade. Over the next three years, *The Marvale* served Canada from London, Glasgow, Liverpool and Antwerp. A major refitting in 1922 left her with a new passenger accommodation configuration (cabin/third).

The Marvale's final voyage, from Glasgow to Montréal by way of Belfast and Québec began on 26 April 1923.

On 21 May, on the return leg of that trip, in a dense fog, she ran aground on Freel Rock, 32 km west of Cape Race, Newfoundland. Although the ship was a total write-off, all 437 people on board were rescued.

UPCOMING EVENTS - September and October 2016

Ontario Genealogical Society Webinar

September 1st - 7pm—8pm

Probus Club, Cooksville

September 15th - 10am - 12pm

Mississauga, Ontario

Norfolklore

Eva Brook Donly Museum

September 17th 9:30am-4pm

Simcoe, Ontario

Grey Highlands Historical Society

September 28th - 7pm - 9pm

Flesherton, Ontario

Hastings County Historical Society

October 18th - 7:30pm - 9:30pm

Belleville, Ontario

Brampton Library - Chinguacousy Branch

October 25th 1pm - 3pm

Brampton, Ontario

Beach Celtic Festival

September 10-11

Kew Gardens, Toronto, Ontario

Waterford

September 15th 3:30-5pm

Barrie, Ontario

The English Community

Organization of Lanaudiere

September 20th 7pm - 9pm

Rawdon, Quebec

British Home Child Day

October 1-2nd

Fanahawe Pioneer Village - London, Ontario

Brant County OGS Workshop

October 22nd

Brantford, Ontario

Huntsville Public Library

October 29th 12pm - 3pm

Huntsville, Ontario



*British Home Child Group
International*

By email: connect@britishhomechild.com

By regular mail: 97 Dagmar Ave., Toronto, ON, M4M 1V9

Our website: www.britishhomechild.com

To book a speaker: sandrajoyce@rogers.com

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