

September, 2017



# *British Home Child Group International*

Design and Layout by Karen Mahoney

## Remembering the Battle of Dieppe on its 75th Anniversary -

### Warrior's Day Parade at the CNE by Sandra Joyce

This year, the Warrior's Day Parade, an annual event where veterans make their way through the Princes' Gates to the lilt of bagpipes and the beat of drums, held special significance for Canadians. Seventy-five years to the very day, the Battle of Dieppe, one of the bloodiest fiascos of the Second World War, took place on August 19, 1942. The parade also commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Battle of Vimy Ridge.

I remember my British Home Child father, Robert Joyce, marching proudly along this route. I am sure many Home Boys marched with him.

At this year's parade, a series of vintage cars carried most of the Second World War veterans, to resounding applause from the thousands of on-lookers.

According to an article in the Toronto Sun on August 19, 2017, "Harry Neill — who joined the Canadian forces at 17 and was among the first group of Canadians to go overseas in 1939 — was given the honour of



Photo courtesy Sandra Joyce

being the lead veteran in this year's parade...He actually did his training as a young man a stone's throw from the parade at the CNE's horse palace."

The Battle of Dieppe was meant to prove possible that Allies could seize and hold a major port for a short period, destroy German coastal defences and strategic buildings and garner intelligence. It failed miserably. Of the predominantly Canadian troops sent, up to 68 percent of the more than 6,000 men who made it ashore were killed, wounded or captured.

Apparently, there was not sufficient air bombardment and critical strategic and tactical errors were made. Even the most seasoned soldiers would not have fared any better.

According to Vice-Admiral Lord Mountbatten of Combined Operations Headquarters, the lessons learned at The Battle of Dieppe were, however, instrumental in the successful Battle of Normandy in 1944 and victory.

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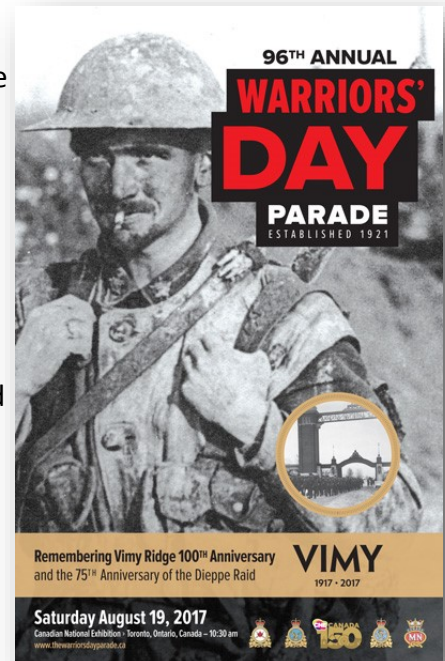


Photo courtesy thewarriorsday.ca

## Remembering the Battle of Dieppe *continued*

The CNE grounds or 'The Ex' as it is fondly called, played a major part in the training and housing of troops in both world wars.

Our British Home Boys, who served as soldiers, sailors or were in the air force were probably stationed there. In 1939, the Royal Canadian Air Force moved into the Coliseum. The Canadian Army took over the Horse Palace and the Royal Canadian Navy converted the Automotive Building into HMCS York. My dad, Robert Joyce, who enlisted in September 1939, as part of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps slept in a stall in the Horse Palace until January 1940, when he was sent to the UK.

Between the summers of 1940 and 1941, most troops were relocated from the Exhibition site.

Those troops who remained, either did administrative duties or participated in CNE displays and events promoting the Canadian war effort. The CNE had hoped to keep the annual fair open throughout the remainder of the war, but in the spring of 1942, the CNE turned the grounds over to the Canadian military for use. During the military occupation of the grounds, every CNE building, large or small, was occupied by the Canadian armed forces.

The CNE grounds remained closed and under the control of the Canadian military until 1946. Between 1945 and 1946, Exhibition Park acted as a demobilization centre for returning soldiers.

The Warrior's Day Parade is in its 96<sup>th</sup> year. Established in 1921, thousands of veterans have marched in it over the years. According to an August 19, 2017 CBC online article, Harry Neill's daughter, Jennifer Emerson, said they were honoured (to be at the parade.)

"It's amazing to see the determination of these senior veterans to remember, the willingness to come out for their fellow comrades and people of arms that they served with. I'm extremely proud of my father," she said.



Harry Neill, WWII Veteran - courtesy CBC



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## Samuel Strickland by Sandra Joyce



Photo Courtesy Martha Kidd Collection - Trent Archives

The jury is out on how much influence long-time Lakefield, Ontario resident, Samuel Strickland, had on the beginnings of the child migrant scheme. One thing, however, is sure. His book, *Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West* (present-day Ontario), published in the UK in 1853, stressed the importance of emigration. He pleaded with the British Government to send those in the workhouse, as long as they were willing to work, what could be a comfortable life, independence and a peaceful old age in the new country.

He continued by saying that those who were idle, rich or sickly would not benefit by emigration whereas those of a hardy industrious nature could reap the fruits of their labour.

Strickland also believed that the industrial schools and ragged schools in the UK should be training their children in the skills necessary for their new lives in Canada. The boys should be trained in animal husbandry and the girls taught how to milk cows and make butter and cheese.

He also made clear in his book that the British government should be commissioning ships to bring the children to Canada and set up depots in places such as Montreal, Quebec City, Kingston and Toronto to facilitate the care and placement of the children. Matrons and Governors should be put in charge of these depots and see to the terms of their apprenticeships.

Born into a wealthy English family of eight children in 1804, Strickland's life seemed mapped out. However, his father died soon after suffering a financial disaster. Strickland was just 14 and so, as the only male child, effectively became the estate manager of his mother's property in Suffolk. A few years later, in 1825, he received an offer from a family friend, Colonel Black, to emigrate to Darlington in Upper Canada. After a few months, Strickland married his sponsor's daughter, Emma Black.

Strickland purchased 200 acres in Douro township near Peterborough, Ontario but tragedy struck while he was clearing and cropping his land. His wife died in childbirth and his son lived only three years. In 1827, he remarried Mary Reid with whom he had 13 children.  
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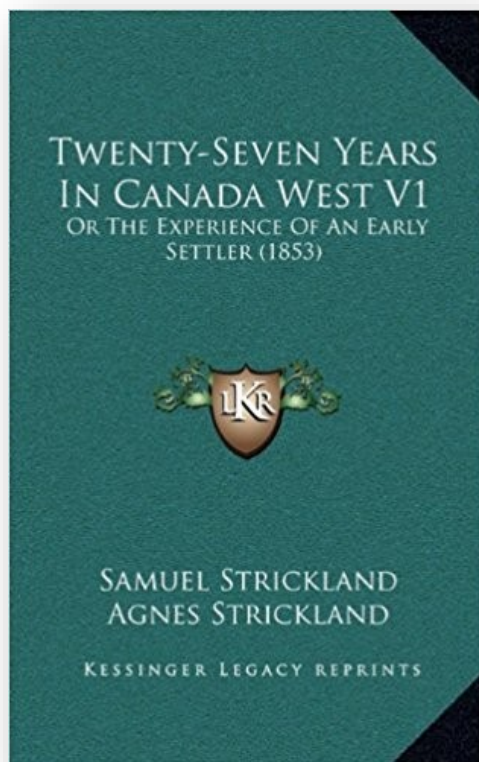
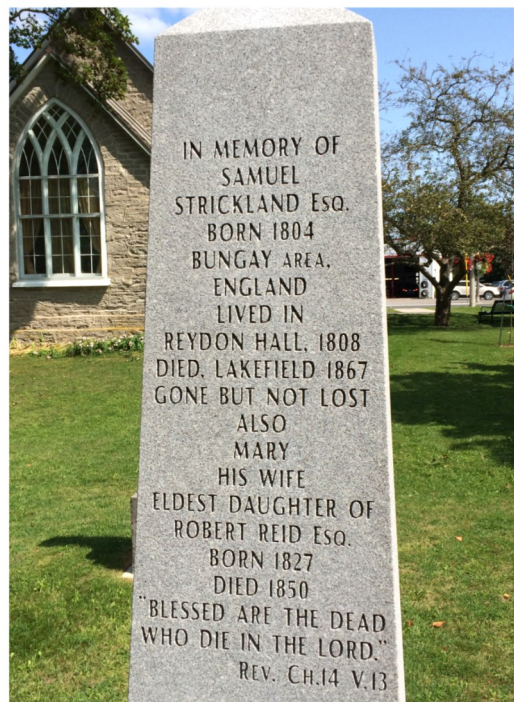
## Samuel Strickland continued

After marrying Mary, he took a job that was offered to him by John Galt with the Canada Company as an engineer where he was involved in the development of Guelph. He managed the company's stores, kept the labour rolls, and superintended the building of roads and bridges.

The Canada Company had been formed in 1826 to populate what is now known as Southern Ontario. A supporter of Galt, Strickland also left the company soon after Galt was dismissed and recalled to Britain for his poor accounting skills and failure to carry out the company's established policies. Interesting to note that one of Galt's sons later emigrated to Canada and became one of the Fathers of Confederation and Canada's first Finance Minister.

In 1832, Strickland moved back to the Douro Township and bought new land eight miles away from his original purchase. His already published sisters Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie had also emigrated from England and settled in the same area. Their seminal books on emigration were respectively called: *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836) and *Roughing it in the Bush* (1853). Both Traill and Moodie painted a picture of the hard life of Canadian emigrants.

Strickland stayed in Lakefield. He was a justice of the peace, and was president of the Court of Requests. He supported the construction of Lakefield's first mill, its bridge over the Otonabee River, and its first passable road. He also established an agricultural school where, for a fee, young men were trained in the skills necessary for land-holding and farming in Upper Canada.



After the death of his second wife, Strickland visited England. He was encouraged by another sister, Agnes, to write his version of emigration to Canada. Agnes Strickland had become a very famous writer and had close connections to prominent and influential politicians, citizens and the Royal Family in the UK.

Agnes became the editor of *Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West* and while the book is candid in its description of the hard life of emigrants, it is also optimistic in tone and assures prospective emigrants that they will have a better life in Canada if they set their hearts and minds to it.

Whether Strickland's book influenced the idea of the child migrant scheme, will probably never be known. What we do know is that, in 1869, thirteen years after it was published, the first group of British Home Children were brought to Canada.



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For more information, visit [britishhomechild.com](http://britishhomechild.com)

**Trunk**  
British Home Children usually travelled with a trunk, sack or carpet bag with a change of clothes, a copy of Pilgrim's Progress and a Bible. Other articles included writing material and a sewing kit.

**Malle**  
Les petits immigrants britanniques voyageaient avec une malle, un sac ou un sac à dos contenant des vêtements de rechange, une Bible, des articles d'écriture et une trousse de couture.





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