



## Balsall Heath Local History Society

## THE GAZETTE

JUNE 2020

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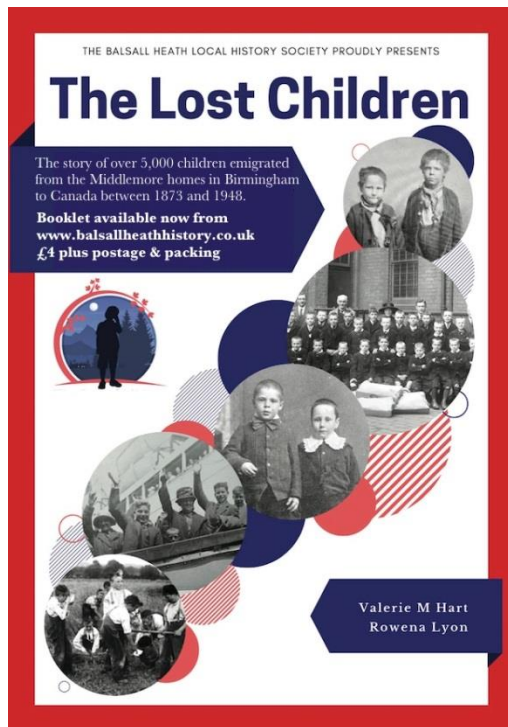
http://thelostchildren.uk/

Facebook: Balsall Heath Local History Society

## The Lost Children Booklet is at last available

The Society ran the Lost Children Project for almost two years, funded by the Big Lottery Heritage fund. This funding ended in February 2020 and the final element of it was The Lost Children booklet which came out in March just about a week before Lockdown. We managed to send off complimentary copies to contributors and made a few sales but had to stop because of the restrictions.

Now at last it is available for sale through our website <http://balsallheathhistory.co.uk/>



The booklet has 48 pages and is in full colour and fully illustrated. It tells the story of the Middlemore Children's Emigration Homes, founded by John Middlemore in 1872. Between the years 1873 and 1948 over 5000 children were emigrated, chiefly to Canada.



Initially children were sent to Ontario and subsequently to the Maritime provinces, to be placed with farmers carving out lives for themselves in the backwoods.



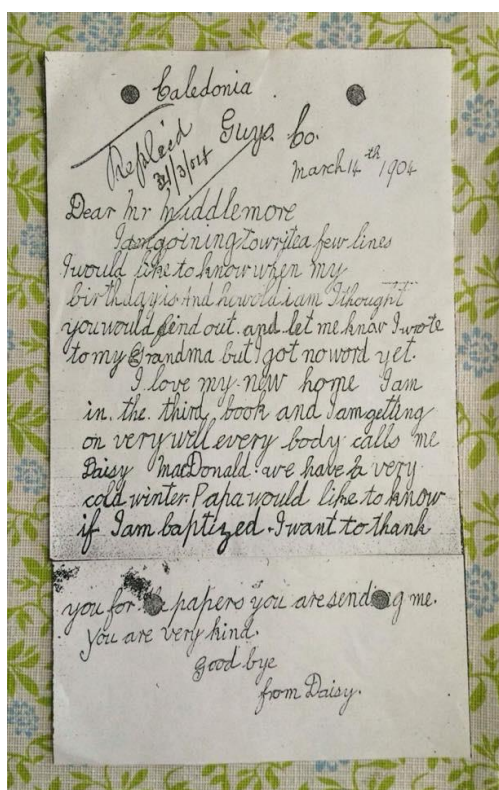
From 1935 the Homes moved into a partnership with the Fairbridge Society and children were then sent to Fairbridge Farm Schools - in British Columbia, Canada but also to Australia and New Zealand.



This is not just the history of the Homes as an institution, however. The booklet also contains many

stories of the children themselves, drawn from information sent in by families and archival research.

The Middlemore Archive is a rich source, with details of why children were admitted to the Homes and their subsequent placements. However, the personal records end when the children reach maturity. The families and relatives have given us a much fuller understanding because they tell us what happened in the later lives of the children and their families. We have also been allowed to use wonderful letters which were sent back by the children to their family in England.



There are many relatives and descendants living in England and particularly in the Birmingham area. This is for several reasons: some children were sent back by the Homes; some returned themselves, often during the First World War; and some are here because families had to make difficult choices to send some of their children to Canada while others stayed here.

As soon as we are able, after Lockdown eases, we will be calling more meetings of The Middlemore Group, relatives and descendants as well as some of our volunteers, who want to continue meeting. We

hope to be able to assist with research in the archives, when restrictions are lifted.

Meanwhile do buy our booklet!

It costs £4 plus post and packing. Details are on the website. <http://balsallheathhistory.co.uk/>

## Something to watch.

For those of you still stuck at home during the current crisis here are a few local history videos found on the internet for you to watch.

**Brum Beat** - A documentary made in the 1990s about the music scene in Birmingham in the 60s

[https://youtu.be/IKH\\_N4foFa4](https://youtu.be/IKH_N4foFa4)

**Birmingham Irish I Am** - the story of the Birmingham Irish through the memories of local people and rare archive footage.

[https://youtu.be/tO3\\_1L59YYc](https://youtu.be/tO3_1L59YYc)

**The official history of Birmingham City** - 1875-1990 - the story of the football club.

<https://youtu.be/CpAi5K2FWkU>

**A History Of Birmingham** - from its Anglo-Saxon origins up to present day

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxSNLJCdGZ4>

**Birmingham canals and history**

<https://youtu.be/OrfT6GwPYnM>

**Meetings are still Cancelled but we do hope to start again in September.**