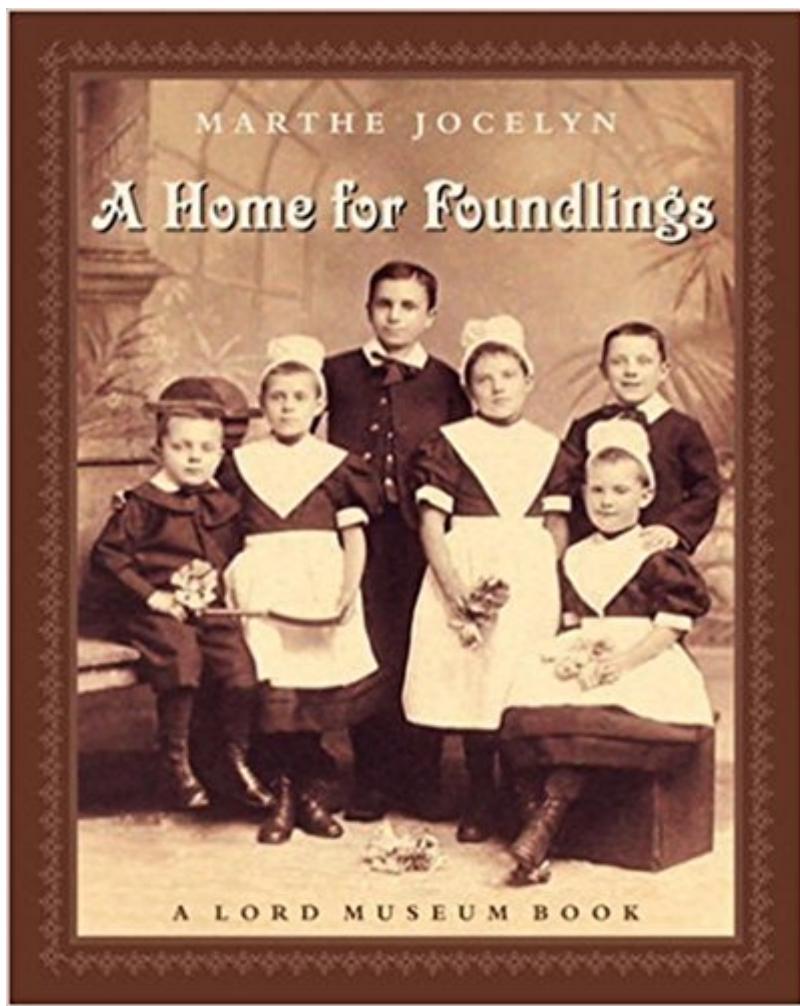


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# A Home For Foundlings (Lord Museum Book)



## Synopsis

Nominated for the 2005 Norma Fleck AwardThousands of mothers carried their babies to the gates of the Foundling Hospital desperate to save them from the cruel streets of eighteenth-century London. Each baby was left with a personal “token” to identify if a repentant mother ever returned to reclaim her child.Captain Thomas Coram, himself childless, was inspired by the sight of babies abandoned on dung heaps to petition the king for support in building a home for England’s poorest children. Coram’s vision saved countless children’s lives.A Home for Foundlings describes the hospital Captain Coram founded, the luminaries involved including Handel, Hogarth, and Dickens and the daily lives of the foundlings themselves.Full of archival photos and materials, and published in cooperation with the newly established Foundling Museum in London and Lord Cultural Resources, A Home for Foundlings is a fascinating, heartbreaking, and timely book. Author Marthe Jocelyn’s text has particular resonance: her grandfather, Arthur Jocelyn, was raised in the Foundling Hospital.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 5 UpInspired by a desire to learn about her grandfather’s childhood in an English orphanage, Jocelyn unearthed the history of London’s Foundling Hospital for the Maintenance and Education of Exposed and Deserted Young Children. Founded in 1739 by retired shipbuilder Thomas Coram, the institution took in babies whose desperate mothers might otherwise have

abandoned them and trained them to be useful citizens who would serve in the British military or work as domestic servants. Among the hospital's famous benefactors were the artist William Hogarth and the composer George Frideric Handel, who raised enormous amounts of money by performing the Messiah there year after year. Because of the excellent education they received, many of the children went on to have musical careers. In its more than 210 years of operation, the facility cared for approximately 27,000 children. After World War II, a change in the philosophy resulted in the orphans being placed in foster families, and the Hospital closed in 1953.

Black-and-white reproductions of early admission documents and ledgers as well as period photographs and engravings appear throughout. This is a useful resource for large collections or those with a particular emphasis on the history of childhood or agencies serving children.  Ginny Gustin, Sonoma County Library System, Santa Rosa, CA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gr. 7-10. Details create drama in this history of Foundling Hospital, a London orphanage that took in more than 27,000 children from the time it was established in the eighteenth century as a home for abandoned babies. Part of the Lord Museum series, the book brings childhood poverty close through short biographies of orphans (including Jocelyn's own grandfather) and accounts of famous benefactors--among them, Handel and Dickens. The detailed source notes are part of the story. Lots of photographs, archival sketches, prints, and official documents relay the facts of daily life: what the orphans wore and ate, the horrifying abuse they suffered, the kindness they received. As Jocelyn notes, there's enduring appeal in orphan stories, from Oliver Twist to Harry Potter. Hazel Rochman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

I enjoyed reading about the life that my great grandfather led. He came out of there with a skill to support his children with, a sweet nature and a great sense of humor. It was very tough, but better than what could have been.

From Oliver Twist to Anne Shirley (of Green Gables fame), Harry Potter to the Baudelaires, orphans and their stories have fascinated young readers; the idea of trying to survive without parents both compels and repels. "A Home for Foundlings" tells the real story of how children who had no parents and -- possibly more tragically, children whose parents could not support them -- lived in London's Foundling Hospital. Starting with the author's search for his family roots, this book traces the history of the Foundling Hospital from its foundation by the kind Thomas Coram to its ultimate

closing in 1953. Readers learn about the children's daily life, including work, education and diet, as well as some of the adult foibles that may have resulted in their placement in the founding hospital (the book gently but frankly addresses the struggles of unwed and/or abandoned mothers). With lots of illustrations and photographs, this is an interesting and uplifting look at the tough lives of more than 25,000 orphans and foundlings.

A Home For Foundlings is a beautifully written and incredibly informative book. Marthe Jocelyn manages to use the history of the Foundling Home to give a sense of the greater social history of England from the 18th century through the early twentieth century, particularly as regards the situations of women and children. At the same time the book is fun to read! The many photographs and illustrations are beautiful and fascinating, and the historical detail is carefully sifted through so that it is interesting, memorable and accessible. The stories of individual foundlings are very poignant. Even kids who aren't history buffs will enjoy this book very much; those who like history will be enthralled.

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