



Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace and the Children He Saved and Failed

Stephen O'Connor

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In mid-nineteenth-century New York, vagrant youth, both orphans and runaways, filled the streets. For years the city had been sweeping these children into prisons or almshouses, but in 1853 the young minister Charles Loring Brace proposed a radical solution to the problem by creating the Children's Aid Society, an organization that fought to provide homeless children with shelter, education, and, for many, a new family in the country. Combining a biography of Brace with firsthand accounts of orphans, Stephen O'Connor here tells of the orphan trains that, between 1854 and 1929, spirited away some 250,000 destitute children to rural homes in every one of the forty-eight contiguous states.

A powerful blend of history, biography, and adventure, Orphans Trains remains the definitive work on this little-known episode in American history.

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