

Doreen Doré nee  
Boniface  
Daughter of an  
English War Bride  
Queen Mary  
May of 1946



In May of 1946 we joined thousands of other war brides with their children and boarded the Queen Mary bound for Canada.

The ship had been used for transporting soldiers during the war so it was not the Luxury liner it had once been but to us children it was a wondrous adventure and how well I remember my sister and I riding up and down the elevators and the large swimming pool, which held no water at that time. We disembarked in Halifax at Pier 21 and rode the train across Canada to Vancouver where my stepfather Joseph Pitman was waiting for us to start a new life together as a family. He had been stationed in England with the Canadian Scottish Regiment and had married my Mom on Feb 11 1942.

He was a wonderful man and never once did he ever refer to my sister and I as his stepchildren. We were his daughters and he was our Dad our own father Frederick Boniface died in France from wounds suffered in the battle of Dunkirk during World War Two.

We were on the Queen Mary for almost four days when I got seasick. Doreen was eight years old and Betty was 7 and Ronnie was 3. The crossing took a week --

We arrived in Montreal and stayed in the hostel all together with the brides. The next day we got the Steam Train all through Canada. Flat lands and beautiful Rockies. Gorgeous and beautiful mountains but the trip was somewhat annoying at times. The children got filthy and black. I tried washing the girls hair but they were hopeless, their hair ended up sticky and goey. Ronnie had diarrhea and what with washing diapers, I nearly died. We were all pretty dirty by the time we all met my husband but very grateful. We were on the boat one week and on the train one week. My husband met me in Vancouver and he was so excited too. But coming over on another boat I wonder what would be happening next as I was so tired. I thought I was coming to the end of the world. When would this journey ever end?

Then we came over gravel roads by an old Jalopy. Then we finally reached Port Alberni..

Mom was not a happy camper there she missed her family in England we went back in 1952 , times were hard over there & dad could not find a decent job ---so we came back to B.C. in 1953.

I treasure this story that my mother wrote about the journey on the Queen Mary---my mother Irene Pitman died Sept 9 1999 from pneumonia after a bowel Cancer operation -- and my stepfather Joseph Pitman died Oct 12 1989 of a massive heart attack -- they are sadly missed.