

Betty Innes
English War Bride
Aquitania
April 9, 1946



My son was at Pier 21 last fall, he brought back these papers plus some souvenirs, so I have been going to do this all winter. General Alexander and family were on board, also live dogs. We girls thought the royal send-off was for us, not realizing his presence. I remember him taking part in the church service on Sunday morning, also the great welcome on our arrival in Halifax. He inspected a parade of Mounties in their red uniform - what a great sight!

My husband passed away at very young age in 1965 - he was 43. I was on the farm with four children - the farm wasn't paid for and I was raised in the city. I gave a lot of thought to going home to be with my family at that time, but my eldest son wanted to give farming a try. He always enjoyed working with cattle, him and his family are still there, he has been very successful, has a big feed lot with over 200 or so cattle.

Seven years after losing my husband, I married his bachelor cousin who worked on maintenance for the Department of Highways. He passed away also to cancer four years ago! I was on the executive of the Manitoba War Brides for many years. We disbanded last September, what wonderful times we had!! I made so many friends, lots of great memories!

I am enclosing a poem I wrote! We sing it sometimes. I have made a few trips back to England, which is great, but always glad to get back to Canada. I may be a British Subject but I am first and foremost a Canadian citizen. My first few years in Canada were quite a culture shock, an old shock - with mice, no hydro, had to melt snow to wash - so cold in winter! My mom said I never complained, but she said when she read my letters, she could read between the lines.

Hope I have not bored you with this scribble.

Poem by Betty Innes

It was back in 1939
When Hitler tried to score
The Canadian boys came over
To help us win the war

They charmed us and they wooed us,
Went down on bended knee
Come back to Canada they said
To our homes across the sea

You'll lead a life of luxury
No chores there'll ever be,
The maid will do the cleaning
And bring you morning tea.

We thought that this was just the place
That we would like to be
To lead a life of luxury
In his mansion across the sea.

We all packed up and sailed away
And left our kin at home.
We landed on the Prairies
Where the deer and buffalo roam.

We came with hope and happiness
And the stars still in our eyes
To live among the gophers,
Mosquitoes and the flies.

We had no indoor plumbing
The loo was across the yard,
And the winter was upon us
The seat was cold and hard.

We got so awful homesick,
At times it seemed quite rough
But these great Canadian people said:
"You're made of real good stuff"

The years have come and gone so fast
Since we all got together,
And when September rolls around
And we are here despite the weather

We made so many friendships
We have really had a ball
We hope to keep on coming back
Until St. Peter calls.

And when we reach the pearly gates

We'll tell them that we all tried hard
And hope we pass the test