

Gladys 'Pat' Martin
English War Bride
Ile de France
September 29, 1944



Gladys 'Pat' Martin is a War Bride originally from Great Britain who came to Canada through Halifax on September 29th 1944 on the Ile de France.



Mum, Jan and I set off from Worthing station for London where I met up with my fellow travelers. Took a night train to Scotland and then a tug out to the Isle de France. Couldn't tell Mum in my letters where we were but I recognized Dunoon as we spent all our holidays there with

cousins and Aunts, so was able to tell her without giving our location away.

The war was still on so we had to keep our life jackets on which was hard with a toddler, however I met another War Bride, Irene Norman who at that time had no children and she helped me tremendously. She left us in the East but has since moved west to Lethbridge and we have met several times and kept up with letters.

On the troop ship we traveled away south to avoid the U boats which were pretty bad at that time. So it took a long time. Felt sorry for the troops as they slept on the floor down the hallways.

Finally landed at Pier 21 which didn't look like it does now. Can't remember getting on the train, but do remember what a long trip it was. People would come on at different stations and bring us 'goodies', much appreciated. When we got to Winnipeg we were taken by bus to a large department store, Eatons I think, and I bought a red suit (with no coupons) to arrive in as my clothes were getting a bit scruffy. Can't

remember how much it was but the sales clerk asked me if I had a penny and I looked blankly at her and said 'a penny' and she said yes and I pulled out a large English penny which she looked at in horror.

My father-in-law Andrew Martin who worked for the railway, got a pass and joined the train somewhere in Saskatchewan. It was great and we sat up all night in the smoker and talked. Of course I already knew two of my husbands brothers as they were overseas and spent their leaves at my parents house.

Finally we arrived in Calgary and my husband met us. He was still in uniform and in hospital but boy were Jan and I happy to see him. Another short train trip to Red Deer to meet the rest of my Canadian relatives. They were wonderful to me and made me feel very welcome.

My husband and daughter Jan and I took many trips back to the UK while my parents were alive. Once flying to New York and going over on the Queen E. Another time we sailed from Montreal and took our car over with us. It was fairly cheap in those days. It was a Chevy with the big fins and created quite a stir in the UK.

After my parents passed away we contented ourselves with trips across the US and Canada, always returning to Red Deer where he was born. There were less than 5000 people here then and now it's over 84000.

I still love London and the British Isles and watch with interest anything on TV, we are lucky as we have KSPS from Spokane and they carry a lot of the British TV shows.



My husband passed away in February 2000, so Tina (a black toy poodle) and I moved to a smaller place. Tina is great company especially now at 85, when my tralling days are over, but I have been lucky as my health is reasonably good.

