

Irene Griffin  
Scottish War Bride  
Franconia  
April 11, 1945



It was 1942 and a lovely Sunday afternoon when I met my handsome soldier. My plans that day were to go with my cousin Muriel to watch the Highland Regiments at Braemar eighteen miles from Aberdeen, Scotland (where I lived) to enjoy the wonderful bands. We usually rode our bicycle's and made a day of it. However we decided to take the Blue Bird bus. While waiting for the bus Muriel changed her mind about going. I was determined to go so I jumped on the bus and it started away. She did not get on.

I stood hanging out of the door yelling for her to come on till the bus reached the top of the street. I was furious with her and jumped back off. As we were standing there looking down into the beautiful Union Terrace Gardens these two Canadian soldiers spotted us and said "come on down". There was a steep bank so we said, "No you come on up". They did just that. We were both stunned by these handsome soldiers with this wonderful Canadian accent. It started to rain so we went down into the parks shelter spending a nice afternoon with them. We made a date to go dancing at the famous Music Hall. The boys were also interested to site the area. Their leave was soon up and they went back to their camp in England. We wrote letters and kept in touch until he had another leave.

After several months, we decided to get married as in wartime we were living for the moment as we were facing air raids and bombing on a regular basis. We also knew that Service men would soon be facing heavy fighting in the front lines, so we wanted to enjoy what time we had together in case it was short. I joined the N.A.A.F.I. that stood for Navy, Army, Air Force Institute. We were attached to the Forces. You were sent to whatever area they needed you. I was sent to an Air Force base in Montrose Scotland. Our dress uniform was khaki in all the Services. The most famous saying amongst the forces was 'a cup of hot water browned off and a Rock' (Cup of Tea and a Raisin Biscuit). I worked mostly in the Food ration stores.

In September 1943 my husband went to the Front Lines after which in March 1945 their Unit went to the Western Front; Belgium, Holland, and Germany. He was with the 88th L.A.A. Regiment. Where his wife was in Britain we were able to spend seven days together, after which he

returned to the Front Lines and two weeks later I boarded a troop ship the (Franconia) It was full of returning Service men War Brides and Children.

It was the 28th of March 1945 and landed in Halifax 11th April. The convoy we were in had many smaller ships along side in case we were torpedoed. Balmoral Castle didn't look half as good to me as Pier 21 did that day, when I stepped off the ship. I was very happy that my train trip to Kentville, N.S. was short. It was a wonderful old fashioned town so different from Aberdeen the Granite City and my home - a sixteen room Mansion built in the 1600's (Sheddocksley House). We have three daughters and one son.