

Jean Hadfield
Feliksiak
British Evacuee Child
Anselm
1940



In the summer of 1940 I was an only child living with my parents in Middlesbrough on the north East Coast of England. Middlesbrough was prime target for German bombers because of the steel industry, the docks and the location across the North Sea.

I was among children sent out to rural areas of Yorkshire. After a few days there, my father came to bring me back to Middlesbrough when he was informed that there was a ship available to take me to Canada.

My father was medically unfit for armed forces, but was doing classified essential work. He was forbidden to leave his work to see me off to Canada.

My mother and my grandparents took me to Middlebrough Railway Station to start my journey to Canada. I was 8 ½ yrs old. There were many other C.O.R.B. children at the station, some younger than me. As we boarded the train I saw my Dad running towards the train. He had on dirty brown overalls. He had sneaked off from his job to come to say goodbye to me. The train started to move and my Dad ran along side blowing kisses. I waved and waved and blew kisses until I couldn't see him for my tears and the distance.

This moment I will NEVER forget!!

I didn't see my parents again until spring 1945.

I arrived in Halifax on board the Anselm and came through Pier 21 with the other C.O.R.B. children. We were the first group of C.O.R.B. children to arrive in Canada.

We spent our first night in Canada at the Deaf School in Halifax (or maybe the Blind School).

We went from Halifax by train to Alberta. In Alberta I stayed with my Uncle George Armstrong and his wife Auntie Mary on the farm near Clive Alberta.

My nine cousins became my brothers and sisters and remain so to this day.

I spent the first summer learning to ride a horse so I could start school at one rural school in the fall of 1940, riding to school 3.5 miles on horseback with my cousins.

My brother was born in England in January 1941 and was named Clive for that place in Alberta. I didn't see Clive until he was four years old. There are so many memories, too many to record and poignant and emotionally upsetting, to think about.

P.S. After spending so much of my childhood in Canada I had difficulty re-adjusting to life in the UK and came back to Canada to settle permanently in 1957.