

Ann Romkes
Dutch Immigrant
Johan Van
Oldenbarnvelt
July 8, 1954



Our First Year in Canada
by Ann Romkes

June 29, 1954:

Jack and I left early in the morning - about 6 o'clock - and boarded a bus from Dedems Vaart. The bus driver happened to be my cousin, and his wife came along for the trip to Rotterdam. We stopped at many places to pick up more people. It was kind of quiet on the bus.

I don't remember what time we arrived in Rotterdam, but it was afternoon before everyone was on the boat and the Johan Van Oldenbarnvelt started to move. The flags were all flying because it was Prince Bernard's Birthday. My cousin (the bus driver) had a white flag and we waved as long as we could see them. Then every passenger had to go inside, get our places assigned, and get ready for dinner. The boat trip was very good - no sea sickness, thank God!

We arrived in Halifax on July 8, 1954, and went from there by train to Hamilton, Ontario. At the train station, we were welcomed by Jack's Uncle John and cousin Rennie. Rev. V. Kuiken Ds. Klein was our boat minister, and I think Rev. Seganius may have been there too, because someone took a few pictures of us, which we have.

From there to the Farm in Ancaster Ontario, where we stayed 1 month. Jack my husband had started a job in the Green house (Ben Veldhuis) in Dundas Ont. In August we rented an apartment on a Italian family Farm on York RD. Durrias not too far from work, so Jack could use a bike to get there, going to work was easy all Downhill, but coming back was a different story. In the meantime I did some house cleaning jobs for others. After Jan 1/55 I started to work for Mrs. Veldhuis ½ days afternoons 1-5 (5) pen wk. Doing house work its (\$15.00 per wk) My husbands pay was \$45.00 per wk to start after that \$65.00, So it wasn't too Long before winter 1954 set in that Jack bought a small car, So he wouldn't need the bike any more. And it wasn't too Long after that, I was getting driving lessons from my husband.

The following summer /55 one day at Lunch time Jack came home and says Let's go for your Drivers License Right here in Dundas. So there I went through Town a couple of Blocks etc. I made Turning around The corners a bit too wide but other then That it was all Right I guess, because I did get my License and I still have it up till now, Our First year in Canada we met many Dutch people through the First Reformed church in Hamilton Ontario, and many Canadians also from different countries.

We were blessed in many ways, and thankful to be so fortunate.

My husband Jack passed away May 1973.