

Aukje Roe nee  
Terpstra  
Dutch Immigrant  
Samaria  
March 27, 1949



### Our Memories

After having visited Pier 21 this past August, I have gathered some of our memories as the Terpstra family immigrated to Canada in March of 1949. Our family of 5, Dad (Jan Karel), Mom (Tjerkje), my brother (Stendert), his twin sister (Imkje) and myself Aukje immigrated to Canada March 19, 1949 at my dad's desire to improve life and obtain land and sought out a place where he could find work. This place was Warren , Ontario where the Spaul family had a place for us to live and my dad could work on their dairy farm.

As young children (my brother and sister were eight years old and I five) we remember my parents packing their furniture into two wooden crates which would arrive about six weeks later in Canada. My brothers stayed to help my parents pack and my sister and I were sent off to my maternal grandmother in het Bildt. I also remember telling my friends that I was going to Kanada, as we pronounced the C as a K, and it seemed like a holiday, an adventure as a young five year old. However my brother and sister have vivid memories of saying good-bye to our families and that there were many tears as our elderly grandparents would say I will never see the grandchildren again, and they didn't. It wasn't till the mid 1960s that my parents first returned to Holland for a visit. We left Holland by train from Amsterdam to LeHavre by way of Paris where we boarded the Samaria. Our recollection of the boat trip which took 7 days was not pleasant. We were all sea sick except my dad. My brother was shuffled between the ladies and the mens dormitories as he was too young to stay with the men and too old to be with the ladies and children. My sister found a friend whose family was immigrating to Manitoba. It was this family that took the photographs of my sister and myself and was kind enough to later send them to my parents.

Upon arrival in Halifax at Pier 21 on March 27, 1949 my parents, each carrying two large suitcases with as much clothing as the suitcases would hold, and my brother and sister carrying a large leather handbag between them and I tagging along, we boarded the Canadian Pacific Train for our trip to Warren which took 2 days. The Spaul family were there to greet us and after having breakfast in their kitchen they took us to a small house (summer cottage) near their place. What a shock! It was still

winter as I remember the snow banks and we literally could see through the walls. Our only source of heat was a wood burning fireplace. Needless to say my dad soon demanded better living conditions. We got a huge 2 storey house and when our furniture finally came we lived there quite comfortably for 2 years.

My brother and sister started school in the village of Warren and I stayed home to keep mom company. I do remember many days where she cried of loneliness and I was too young to understand any of it. That September we all went to a one room school in the country.

Within 2 years my parents were able to buy a farm and started a dairy farm in Warren. They became successful but it was always a struggle as the area was not the greatest farming area. My dad had wanted to move to Southern Ontario within two years of being in Canada but my mother refused to move again. They did eventually move to Southern Ontario in the early 1970s but by then my dad no longer farmed. My brother followed a year later and was able to become a successful dairy farmer. We were the first immigrant families to come to the Warren area. Many families followed from many different countries. Reflecting back on the many hardships that we endured in coming to a new country not knowing the language or anyone and leaving all your relatives behind I often have thought of what our paths would have taken if we had not immigrated to Canada. In Holland my parents had a nice home and my dad was in business for himself. They had many wonderful trips back to Holland and did enjoy their retirement. My dad passed away on August 1, 1993 at the age of 80, my mom is now 88 and is living in a nursing home. My brother has since retired from farming and my sister has retired from teaching while I retired 5 years ago.