

Herbertus H.  
Grimminck  
Dutch Immigrant  
Waterman  
May 16, 1953



### A Young Passenger of the Waterman

I, Herbertus H. Grimminck, was born in Lewerdorp, Zeeland in the Netherlands, July 1942. In May 1953 my parents, Ferdinand and Geertruida Grimminck, left the Netherlands with 12 children, of which I was the fourth oldest. I was ten years old at the time.

We sailed on the ship S.S. Waterman across the Atlantic Ocean. The oldest children wore army backpacks and some of my younger brothers and sisters were wearing homemade harnesses so they could not run

away or get lost.



I recall that my Dad was seasick most of the time and the boys were to sleep in the same cabin as Dad. The girls slept with Mom in a cabin that was in the center of the ship, and it

was not long until all the boys also slept in that cabin because it was not as rough in the middle of the boat. First thing every morning the boys would rush back to our own cabin so that we wouldn't miss getting the oranges that were brought to us.

During one of the first days on board my older brother and I had to go to the bathroom, after we were finished we pulled a lever to flush and got soaking wet. It was then that we realized we had used the showers by mistake. The two of us had a habit of getting into trouble. On another day all the passengers were asked to go to the main deck because it was

very stormy, but my older brother and I went to the top deck instead, only to get caught by the captain, he wasn't very happy. We also had become friends with some of the crew and one day we asked for some coke and they offered us some beer. Of course we accepted it, then drank it and got drunk, Dad was furious.

We arrived in Halifax May 16, 1953, and my first recollection of Canada was wondering why all the houses had ladders on the roofs by the chimneys. I think it was around 3:00 pm when we disembarked from the boat and I remember the Grey Nuns helping my parents. Once on shore and through immigration, Kad, my brother and I went up the hill to buy some bread and sausage, because we now had to feed ourselves.

Later, all 14 of us boarded a train to go to Blenheim, Ont., where a priest had sponsored our family. Dad had trouble trying to rent a house because he had such a big family, so we lived in two rooms for a short period of time and he then bought an old home and rebuild it himself.

My parents had 3 more children in Canada, a total of 15. My father died in November 1973, and my mother in April 1991, survived by their children, 44 grandchildren and numerous great grandchildren.



