

Ed and Laura Mason
English Immigrants
Aquitania
October 25, 1947



In 1946 Ed and Laura Mason, whose home was in Tottenham, London, England, decided it was time to uproot and emigrate to Canada. After many trips to the Cunard booking office the family finally secured reservations on the Aquitania, sailing to Halifax from Southampton on the 21st of October 1947. At this time the family included two sons, David aged two and a half years, and Teddy seven months.

On arrival aboard the Aquitania, which was still equipped as a troop ship, women and children were placed together while men were put up in two-tiered bunk dormitories. We all assembled in the dining room where we sat eight at each table. Everyone was impressed with the food, especially the white bread. Our first day aboard was taken up with exploring the ship and socializing.

After passing Ireland we noticed the crew bringing up coils of rope and piling them at various places around the ship. This meant one thing- a possible storm, which materialized about the third day. Not many people came to breakfast that morning but David was there with Dad. The children's playroom was at the rear of the ship above the propellers, so David was taken there where he found a playmate. The children seemed to weather the storm well but the nurse in charge was noticed to hide behind a pillar particularly when the ship would heave and the props would clear the water, causing the whole ship to vibrate. By this time the ropes had been strung zig-zag across the decks and stairs, and when looking down or up the hallway it was like being on an escalator. The storm became so bad they had to alter course which delayed our arrival in Halifax.

We arrived near midnight on October 25th, 1947 at Pier 21. In the morning we disembarked where our train was waiting to take us to Montreal then on to Vancouver. We reached at our final destination Victoria, B.C. on October 31st, Dad's birthday.

The voyage to Canada was one of the good things we did, even though we were homesick for family for most of the first year. Making new friends helped and we all settled down in our 'new' little old house, just us, no more living in rooms in someone else's house.

