

Turley Family
by Michael Turley
English Immigrants
1950



Canadian Museum of
Immigration at Pier 21
Musée canadien de
l'immigration du Quai 21

Note: See images below and Scotiabank Research Centre collection for a television footage of the brothers returning to the UK and a 2002 BBC radio interview with Robert Turley.

My Father Daniel Turley was a British Merchant Seaman From Liverpool England. In Early 1946 his merchant ship docked in the St. Lawrence River, Montreal. Whilst ashore he met a local Canadian girl named Victoria Craddock, they had a whirlwind romance, and several months later they married on 13th December in Montreal. In the months prior to getting married my Father Daniel had failed to rejoin his Merchant Ship. The authorities caught up with him, and informed him he would have to leave Canada and return to his native England. My Father Daniel signed onto another Merchant Ship, and worked his passage back to Liverpool, England.



My Mother Victoria, at the time of her husband departing for England was pregnant with her 1st Son Daniel George. Some months later, and eight months pregnant, Victoria Boarded - The BEAUTIFUL SHIP - AQUITANIA at Pier 21, on the 8th of July 1947 bound for Southampton, England. My Mother Victoria was reunited with her husband Daniel in July 1947, 4 weeks later their 1st Son Daniel George was Born on 14th August 1947 in Liverpool. Victoria and Daniel lived in Liverpool from 1947-1950, in that period they had 3 sons Daniel, Victor & Robert, unfortunately their 2nd Son Victor died on Christmas Eve 1948, aged 4 weeks old. On this sad note it was agreed that my Mother Victoria was to return to Canada with her 2 remaining sons, Daniel 2yrs and Robert 4 weeks old.

On 15th March 1950 my Mother and her 2 young sons boarded R.M.S. EMPRESS OF CANADA at the Pier head in Liverpool, bound for Pier 21, Halifax, N.S. My Father Daniel followed some months later. They set up home in Mackayville on the Southshore of Montreal near Greenfield Park

St. Hubert. Here 3 more sons were born to the family in Montreal, Michael in 1953, Russell in 1955 and Kevin in 1957. My Mother Victoria at the age of 28 years, had given birth to 6 sons, 3 Born in Canada & 3 Born in Liverpool, England. Victor their 2nd son who had sadly died in Liverpool at the age of 4 weeks old on 24th December 1948.

Life in Montreal was going really well for the family, my Father was in good employment with the Steel Works of Canada in Montreal, employed as a crane driver. We had a car and Canadian life was going well. All that changed on a tragic night on December 3rd 1957. In the early hours of that day the wood and tarpaper house we lived in caught fire. My mother had alerted my father Daniel, and he managed to rescue his sons Daniel, Robert & Michael. In the confusion my Mother Victoria, had placed her young baby son Kevin in his pushchair/stroller, and pushed him to the rear of the blazing house, and then returned into the blazing inferno to try and rescue her other young son Russell, but cruelly the 3 of them Perished in the blaze. On April 23rd, three months after the tragic fire my father put his 3 surviving sons on a plane for his native England to be split amongst his relatives.

Our father Daniel remained in Canada for a further 4 years before returning to England to be reunited with his sons. Living in England is a story on its own (the struggles, and upset of being in a strange country



without parents to guide us through life.) The 3 brothers Daniel, Robert, and Michael, (who was born in Canada) returned to Montreal, Canada in 2002, for the first time in 44 years to visit their Mother Victoria, and brothers Russell, and Kevin's Grave in Hawthornedale Cemetery in Montreal. As children we were not allowed to attend their funerals in December 1957, our visit was filmed and reported on by CBC News, & The BBC Manchester, England. There is a lot of our story that I have not touched on, I have newspaper clippings from all the the Montreal newspapers French and English which reported the fire, and sad events that took place on that fateful

night on December 3rd 1957. There is also achival film footage from when we arrived as young children in England on April 23rd, 1958 that was covered by the BBC.

Photo captions:

(Above)

Turley brothers pictured with their father , Daniel Turley, at Dorval Airport, Montreal on April 23rd, 1958. The three young brothers were about to leave Montreal, Canada for Liverpool, England without their father who remained in Canada. The brothers to be split up amongst relatives in their father's native Liverpool

Pictured from left to right:

Daniel George Turley (aged 10 yrs)

Michael Brian Turley (aged 5 yrs)

Daniel Turley (centre) (aged 33 yrs) Father

Robert Francis Turley (aged 8 yrs)

Newspaper clipping from Montreal Star & Herald depicting the story of the Turley family house fire in Mackayville, Montreal, 3rd December, 1957 Original Montreal Star newspaper clipping depicting tragic house fire of the Turley family in Mackayville, Montreal, December 3rd, 1957

Montreal Star coverage of Turley house fire in Mackayville (covering story)



Father, Daniel Turley, shows how his young son, Daniel, (aged 10 yrs) had his hair singed in the inferno whilst being rescued by his father, Daniel Turley



Pilgrimage to tragic past
3 Turley brothers Danny, Robert, Michael, return to Mackayville, Montreal on 2nd April 2002, 44 yrs. After tragic house fire story covered by newspaper Liverpool Echo



Happier times setting up home in Mackayville in 1952. Pictured Daniel Turley holding his young son, Robert. In picture his wife, Victoria Turley with young son, Daniel



(Below)

4 young Turley brothers pictured outside 1525 De Gaulle Street, Mackayville, Montreal (1957) some months before tragic house fire
Pictured from left to right:

Daniel Turley

Robert Turley

Michael Turley

Russell Turley (who perished in tragic house fire 3/12/1957



(Above)

Turley family photo 1950's , Montreal
Pictured left to right
Daniel Turley, (mother) Victoria Turley
Russell Turley, (father) Daniel Turley
Michael Turley, Robert Turley



Pictured outside 1525 De Gaulle Street, Mackayville, Montreal (1957)
(mother) Victoria Turley with her 5 sons: from left to right
Daniel Turley
Robert Turley
Michael Turley
Russell Turley
Baby Kevin Turley (held in his mother's arms)

This photograph could possibly have been the last photo taken as a family. Victoria Turley (mother) and two of her sons, Russell and Kevin, perished in the tragic house fire 3rd December 1957 in Mackayville Daniel, Robert, and Michael survived the blaze after being rescued by their father, Daniel Turley.