

Robbie Waisman
Jewish War
Orphan
Samaria
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Arrival

I was seventeen when we landed in Halifax on Dec. 1948. I was disappointed to learn that I was not going to either Montreal or Toronto. As I spoke French and not English I was hoping to go to Montreal. My second choice had been Toronto because I had some contacts there. I wasn't told that I was going to Calgary until I was already on the train. On the trip west, I couldn't get over the immensity of the huge spaces and the sparse settlements along the way. You could see forever. As I crossed Canada by train, it occurred to me that so many people could have been saved in this vast country. So much land and yet no room for Jewish refugees during the war. We were accompanied by Roweena Pearlman, a Congress volunteer who was just a wonderful lady with a heart of gold. I think she used psychology on me, telling me how wonderful the Jewish community was in Calgary and suggesting that I stop over in Calgary for just a few days to meet her family. To please her, I stopped over for two days and stayed nine years.