

Hilda Bradshaw  
English War Bride  
Aquitania  
July 28, 1946



Our journey to Canada started in Southampton on the Aquitania, July 22, 1946. I remember the good food on board ship, and although I was so seasick, I especially remember the "white dinner rolls". Although I couldn't eat, I took a white dinner roll back to the cabin with me to show the girls who couldn't make it to the dining room, so we could all gaze at it in wonder. We hadn't seen bread so white for a very long time. On reaching Nova Scotia (Halifax's Pier 21) after we got all our things sorted out alphabetically, on the train we went. Being shown to our seats, we were thrilled to find we had a whole seat each, but found we needed the extra space, as the journey to Saskatchewan was a long one. It was interesting to see the various provinces roll by. A lot of us had not traveled too far from home during the war, what with the London Blitz etc.

I was lucky, having been brought up in a military school in the Nilgiri Hills in S.W. India, because my father had been in the British Army in India before she got her independence in 1947. This would also have been the first time a number of the "War Brides" as we were named, had been parted from their families which was hard for them. We looked forward to seeing our husbands again with a mixture of excitement and apprehension, but we were determined to make the best of things, so we put on a smile and took our first steps into a land which we knew nothing about. Things were of course, very different, and we slowly got used to Canadian ways.

I went on to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and was tickled to see a city so clean after grimy London. I was disappointed to find out that we were not going to live in Saskatoon but that I had another train journey to Carrot River, of all places. This was news to me, we arrived in Carrot River in darkness, and my husband and I were met by my father-in-law and an older English couple who had a car. We drove out to the farm we were going to live on (another surprise) along a dirt road, which was very narrow and there was thick brush on either side. Imagine my thoughts, surrounded by complete strangers, except my husband. I hoped that another car was not coming from the other direction. London has narrow streets, but this was quite nerve racking. My father-in-law was a very sweet person, but he had said "lets get her home tonight before day break because if she sees Carrot River in the daylight she will go back right away." We laughed about that years later. However, I did stay and

learned to do everything a farm wife was supposed to do: canning, bread making, pies and cakes, making butter and all the best of it. I learned a lot and people were so helpful. We were always treated so well on our journey, and my thanks goes out to all, from on board ship to Pier 21, and on the train. We were well received on the whole, but unfortunately there were some girls who were not well received by some Canadian families, sad to say.

Well I think I'd better close, but I hope this gives you some idea of our arrival in Canada.