

Joan Cameron
English War Bride
Letitia
June of 1946



The first time I saw the man I married was in 1940. I was fourteen; he was seventeen. On his army records it said he was older because he had lied about his age to enlist. It was one of my older sisters who had brought him to our home, he got along very well with all our family members, so over the years, anytime he had leave he would come to visit.

We were married in August 1945 and I arrived in Canada in June of 1946 on the TSS Letitia.

I guess it was better for me arriving in a strange land, than some of the other young brides, because I already knew my father-in-law. He had enlisted at the same time as my husband and had visited my family a few times.

I come from a family of four sisters and my mother. My father died when I was two years old. Coming from an all female household that got along well with each other, to a small town where I only knew two people, was very lonesome.

Like most war brides coming over here I was surprised that most people thought they had had a hard time with food rationing. To us everything seemed so plentiful, no standing in line at the grocer's or the butcher shop to get rations that had to last a week, like we had had to do for many years.

Two of my sisters married Canadian servicemen and they settled in BC. My mother and younger sister immigrated to Canada in 1947. They too settled in BC.

I still live in the small town that I came to. I look back on my memories some good, some not so good and I accept it all, the good and the bad, as part of my life and just hope that because of it all I became a better person.

Letitia
author unknown

Have you ever rode the briny deep
While the Atlantic rollers dip and creep
And one clammers over the other side
And the ship is full of Canadian Brides
And the cabin baggage is not all there
And the girls come in and pull your hair
And the passengers weep and the babies bawl
And some say they don't want to sail at all
And some want a lower instead of an upper
And first sitting for dinner and second for supper
And then the wind begins to rise
And the waves rise up to a stupendous size
And the mothers are sick and the babies not
And the nurses want to drown the lot
And the stewards go around with the mop and pail
And the wind creeps up and becomes a gale
And the soldiers' arms are full of babies
And the nursery sounds like pups with rabies
And the skipper over the mike shouts out
"We've engine trouble!" and turns about
And the ship turns back to Britain's shore
And the brides say please "No more, no more"
And if you think this is funny and want to laugh
We'll sign you on as one of the staff.