

Kathleen 'Kay' Garside
English War Bride
Samaria
June 1945



I was introduced to my husband Fred by his Sergeant. The Sergeant and I had been dancing together at the local hop, and he invited me over to the pub during our interval for a drink. My husband-to-be was there on his own, so the Sgt. and I were only friends, I agreed. It later became a joke that that was the only time a private ever beat out a Sgt.

We dated for quite a while, then lost touch due to family problems on his part. He wrote me one Xmas and asked if we could meet again to which I agreed. As time went on we became very close and one evening Fred asked if I would like to go to Canada with him after the war. He never actually asked me to marry him and he always insisted that my reply to his question was "I thought you'd never ask". I was an only child so my parents were less than thrilled when we broke the news to them. Not only that, I was Catholic and Fred Protestant. This necessitated filling in many forms, special permission, both from the Army and the Church. The wedding was set for November but Fred contracted Yellow Jaundice and was hospitalized so arrangements had to be cancelled. Finally on January 29, 1944 we did get married in a small quiet ceremony with family and a few friends present. During the evening at the tiny reception at my house, the air raid sirens went and everyone scattered for home. Fred and I left the next morning to spend our two week honeymoon with his cousin in Manchester, the only trip we could afford.

The day after our return, Fred was advised he had to return to camp immediately and two weeks later he left England for Italy, where he remained until the following March. We corresponded regularly but sometimes I didn't feel I was really married. Life went on as usual for me. Working in my London office during the day, listening to sirens at night and spending time in the air raid shelters and occasionally going to dances and the movies with my girl friend.

The war in Europe came to an end May 8, 1945 and I sent in my application to travel to Canada. We would be living on the farm with Fred's parents till they retired and we took over. I left England in the middle of June, sailing on the S.S. "Samaria" from Liverpool to Halifax. I had never realized what it would be like to leave my parents and friends for a strange country and living with strangers but I didn't once think I

would not go. It would be 19 years till I returned to England. My Dad passed away two years after I came to Canada and that was a very hard time for me. Fred returned to Canada four days after I came and my new life began. By then I was pregnant and very sick. Our takeover of the farm didn't work out and the loss of our baby made this a traumatic time for us. We moved to a small town for a few years, then to another and finally in 1949 we came to live in Regina. By then we had two children and I was very happy to live in the city again, with running water and a flush toilet.