

Sheelagh Margaret
Brunelle
English War Bride
Mauretania
August 24, 1946



My husband and I were visiting our daughter, in Halifax last October. She took us to see your newly opened museum at Pier 21, perhaps because I first set foot in Canada there. I am a British War Bride, and of course we met when my husband was in the army in England in 1944.

He was in the 1st Cdn. Parachute Battalion attached to the British 6th Airborne Division. Soon after we were married in 1945 he returned to Canada. I had to wait until our baby daughter was five months old to make the voyage to Canada to join him in August of 1946. As much as I longed to be with him I was extremely sad to be leaving my parents and family. In those days to cross the Atlantic was like going to the other side of the world with little hope of ever returning to England for many years, but my father died in 1948 and I did come home for a long visit.

So we set sail in August of 1946 and even though we were coming in summer we were under the impression that it was refreshingly cool in Canada and I thought that I would have to take a fur coat. Unfortunately I was not wearing it when we arrived in Halifax in August. The voyage was rather difficult. There were ten girls in our cabin and two or three babies and the water that we used to prepare their bottle was rusty. Nearly all of the other brides were Dutch so there was the language difficulty but the Mauretania was a beautiful ship even when fitted as a troopship.

The dining room was so impressive and the food after five years of rationing seemed wonderful. At last we sailed into Halifax Harbour - it was a lovely sunny day and our first sight of Canada was the dark green evergreens on the shore of the blue sea. It was exactly as I had imagined my new country. Point Pleasant Park, one of my favourite places in Halifax, my favourite Canadian City. Of course I may be prejudiced because it is the home of our youngest daughter, her husband and our four grandsons.

I have to admit that even though I got a great welcome from my husband and his family I was homesick for England for quite a few years. Of course now Canada is indeed my home and native land.

