

Joan E. Petersen
English War Bride
Mauretania
March 6, 1946



These are my memories of arriving in Halifax at Pier 21 on March 6th 1946 as a 22 year old war bride along with my two year old daughter.

My husband had returned to Canada three months before and was waiting for us in Shelburne. I can remember getting off the S.S. Mauretania to Pier 21, where we had to identify our luggage, have papers checked and stamped as landed immigrants and arrangements made to travel by train the next morning at 7am to Shelburne. I thought that journey would never end, it took seven hours and the train seemed to stop in the middle of nowhere every so often. Having been used to travelling from Haywards Heath to London in England, in no time, that train trip was an experience. The other passengers on the train were very friendly and by the time we arrived in Shelburne I had a recipe for making a pound of butter stretch to two, a recipe for war cake, and a bag of apples, oranges and chocolate bars. My husband was waiting for us in Shelburne and we went by taxi to his home six miles outside of Shelburne, the road wasn't paved and was very muddy due to the spring break-up. The taxi got mired in the mud; my husband had to go to the nearest home and get someone with a team of oxen to haul us through. I had never seen oxen before and wondered what kind of place I had come to. We stayed with my husband's mother for two months, then moved to Yarmouth, and into a home of our own, and lived in this house [fifty-one years] and brought up seven children.

My husband and I celebrated our Fifty-fifth Wedding Anniversary in April 1998. Canada has been good to me and I am proud and honoured to be a Canadian Citizen. I still have a brother and sisters in the U.K. and visit, but Canada is my home.