

*EARL BAILLY*

*His  
Trials and Triumphs*

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## List of Illustrations

	FACING PAGE
<i>Earl and brother Donald on sketching trip in Lunenburg</i> . . . . . [CAMERA CLIX]	6
<i>Earl, his father and tourists just outside his studio</i> . . . . . [CAMERA CLIX]	7
<i>Earl working on lino blocks with chisel</i> . . . . . [NFB]	22
<i>Earl and mother showing paintings</i> . . . . . [NFB]	(et seq)
<i>Earl and brother at docks</i> . . . . . [N. S. BUREAU OF INFORMATION]	
<i>Earl studies a pair of oxen before painting them</i> . . . . . [NFB]	23
<i>Earl and brother Donald outside his studio</i> . . . . . [N. S. BUREAU OF INFORMATION]	38

It is a miracle that I have ever painted at all. I call it a miracle because most people think that when one has been completely paralyzed with polio from the neck down, that there is nothing left in life. When they are told that I became an artist, painting with the brush in mouth, they either look at me unbelievably or with wonder in their eyes. I guess they are trying to imagine what they would have done if Fate had dealt them the same deadly blow. Would their family have helped them to overcome this barrier to normal living and make a life from what could have been nothing.

I wonder if the fact of being made of good English, German and French Huguenot stock has given me the stamina necessary to become an artist, painting in the unorthodox manner in which I do. I like to think it has helped.

As far back as I can remember, my family on the Bailly side were blacksmiths. My grandfather had a little blacksmith shop on the lower street in the town just a block down the hill from our house. He came to Lunenburg as a very young man with little or no money and only his high-handed way of looking life straight in the eye and a loud voice to bless himself. My father was the oldest son in a family of eleven—eight boys and three girls, all of whom are living except one girl, who died when she was very young. To me she has only been a name.

Dad started at a very tender age working in the "shop" beside my grandfather, and from my earliest recollections, I can see him either making sparks fly from a great bar of iron or struggling with some huge Percheron horse, trying by sheer brawn to nail a hot shoe on an unwilling foot, and coming home telling us tall tales of how some horse had thrown him on his back or how he had been climbing the tall masts of some three-masted schooner to repair the iron work.

The words to describe mother best are "She's a good sport" and perhaps her being such a good sport made her more understanding and helpful when my aims and dreams seemed futile. I have always felt that if mother had not been a schoolteacher before she was married, and had us five kids that she might not have had the ability to instil in me the need for some formal education, and the patience and perseverance to teach me herself.

How far back can I remember? Can I remember before I was stricken with polio? I am afraid I cannot recall very vividly much of the happenings in my life before that period. I think nearly everyone can understand that at this early age things are a little bit vague and dim to most children, but being

very ill and then partially recovering from polio is bound to be vivid to the youngest of children. So it seems to me that one of the most deeply etched, painful, brutal and embittering experiences that I ever felt was the day after I had been ill for so long when my father first tried to stand me on my feet and I said: "I can't! I can't do it!"

I believe I remember, if I am truthful, that I cried, as a little child is liable to do in the face of such a bitter disappointment. I remember quite plainly, or it seems pretty clear to me now, that I was put back in bed for some time. Then, after this, there are passages in my earliest days of childhood that are very vague and lacking in form and continuity.

My brother, the oldest in the family, was also bitten partially by the polio bug, but he recovered to a much greater extent than I did. While I was still confined to chairs and bed, he could hop around and either hand me toys or take them away, from me.

Mother had a dreadful struggle with both of us ill at the same time. She tells me it was a day and night job, first tending one and then the other, as we were really only babies. I was barely two and my brother just eleven months older, to be exact.

Mother tells me that I was sick in July and stayed very ill for most of the rest of the year, because I could take very little part in my second Christmas. To me that second Christmas hardly happened at all. I can remember very little. Whether we had the usual Christmas tree or not I do not recall. Perhaps we did, but I cannot remember seeing any green spruce or sparkling ornaments.

My doctor was one of those ultra-professional men with a soothing bedside manner; a smallish, slight, light-complexed man with a little gray Van Dyke. When he was convinced that I was small enough to be moved about, my parents got me up on a chair where I would sit by the hour. I continued to grow stronger as day followed day, week followed week, and month followed month. In consequence of these improvements, I some time later graduated to a little baby carriage, on which I could sit up and be put outside in the sun and air. As the days ran into spring and became warmer, the few hours in the sun became a daily ritual. Treatment of polio when I had it, seemed to consist of very little. Not packs such as advocated by Sister Kenny, or intricate physiotherapy may have been visualized, but they were only in the theoretical stage.

By the following year, I was still not very strong. I had scarcely strength enough to sit upright and all hopes of my ever walking again had almost vanished, but not the hopes of my

parents, for they had heard of a doctor in Saint John, New Brunswick who was having some fair success with his osteopathic treatments.

If I were to be taken to this doctor for treatment, it would be necessary for the whole family to go. This was a major move, and my father, at the urgings of my mother, secured a job in a blacksmith shop there. Mother wrote to some friends who assisted in getting a house for us during our stay in the city. It was a large chise to close our house here on Pelham Street, and pack the things we would need to live for an almost indefinite time in a strange place. I remember a few impressions of my journey on the train and of my arrival at Digby, where we were to take the ferry boat across the Bay of Fundy. I recollect that somehow my uncle entered into the picture. He was with us at the wharf in Digby as I recall most plainly him holding me on his knees with his arms about me. Among other things that happened during our departure, the boat blew a mighty blast of its whistle and I was scared because I can still feel the vibrations of that sound and the sensation of the steam falling like a wet mist over us.

The next part of the boat ride I can recall is of my mother reclining in a deck-chair on the afterdeck, complaining that she was feeling ill, while I, childlike, thought it a great adventure—moving over the undulating, sunlit blue waters of the Bay. I laughed with glee at any thought of being ill on a day like that. What could make anyone feel uncomfortable—the boat barely moved? Out on the deck it was warm and there was hardly enough wind to ripple the red ensign that rode on the stern.

We must have gotten across uneventfully because my next recollections are of our life in this strange, and to me, rather forbidding city. I was now taken by my mother to the doctor's office two or three times a week, for treatments. Of these I can remember only that he would raise and lower by arms or flex and unflex my leg muscles, all this along with a massage-like rubbing action. The results were not very apparent, as I showed little or no signs of any rapid improvement in either strength or flexibility of arms or legs. This must have been discouraging to mother, and how she carried on in the face of such tremendous odds still remains somewhat of a minor miracle to me. Anyway, this is the way we lived most of that cold spring and on into the summer. The patterns changed but little through the larger part of this third year of my life. My mind must have been left quite clear and unimpaired, as I was beginning to take notice of the life going on around me. One of the bright spots during that stay was my father's playing in the band. He would come home from band practice wearing his dress uniform which included his tall, over-sized, pill-box-like fur busby, which they wore at drills or holiday parades. At Saint John we made some

new friends who would take my brother and me out walking—rather, I should say, my brother walking and me in my little carriage, from which I could watch the horse-drawn vehicles of the day. I can still faintly remember seeing the horse-drawn fire engines rushing past our street in answer to a fire. All these things were of great interest and excitement to one so restricted in movement and so deprived of the scope of action of an average three-year-old. To me the engines were like heaven: big flashing horses drawing gaily coloured smoke-belching monsters.

We were in Saint John all winter and part of the next spring, as I remember mother telling me how cold the weather was. As there seemed to be nothing more the doctor could do to restore more of my muscles to normalcy, we began to speak of returning to Lunenburg. The journey back has faded completely, I am afraid, from my faulty memory.

After our return home from Saint John, I had my first taste of education. My father would give me pencils to play with, and naturally, into my mouth they would go. After watching them write or draw some crude figures, I, childlike, would endeavour to copy any or all of the magical markings on paper. My first crude efforts at writing were not writing at all. I printed. I still plainly see my father marking out in big capitals the letters of my Christian name. Then he would say: "You make them." In my way I would imitate these marks which I just barely knew represented the symbols that were my name. Finally I successfully could print in inch-high capitals my full name. This my father would view with high praise, and we would both feel good!

Later he would draw, and I would copy the usual cats, dogs, horses, and ships which most fathers and children indulge in during these tender years. I continued improving to such a degree that I was graduated to the full alphabet. This was the way in which I learned my letters. This writing, marking and drawing must have been the first signs of an early leaning toward art. The day came, I believe, when I drew a little boat with two masts, four sails which pointed in one direction and two flags which blew the opposite way. Then, indeed, I thought I could do something! I could make marks with a pencil!

I suppose my proud parents were no exception to the proud parent rule, and they must have shown these crude efforts to our friends and neighbours who, in turn, would praise me for attempting anything. All this made the days pass more pleasantly for me, but poor mother, how discouraged she must have been, how downcast when my physical improvements were so slow and unnoticeable, for there was no sign that I would have greater use of either hands or legs. My left hand was by now obviously completely useless. I had some small trembling use of my right hand, but so little as to be almost negligible. Thus most things





Earl, his father and tourists just outside his studio.

got done either by the use of my lips, my mouth or grasping with my teeth.

The next outstanding event seems to be associated with my going out more into the streets in company with the other neighbourhood children during the winter months, as I plainly can picture the days when I would be taken out in my small sled. Those were good days in spite of my lack of movement, as the other children would make snowmen or snowhouses in my small, restricted immediate sphere for my enjoyment. This made me feel a part of the play that was going on around and about me.

However, all of the action was not going on outdoors. The gang spent many hours playing with me in the kitchen, where they would turn the chairs over and pretend they were horses. Although I couldn't take part in the more rigorous activities of the boys and girls, there was one game which we used to play in which I could match any of them. We would ask mother to clear off the table and then they would move me into position and all crowd around for a good rousing game of hockey. They could use their hands to shoot the puck, which in this case was a checker, but I had to have a miniature hockey stick whittled out for me from a piece of soft wood, which I could take in my mouth to enable me to have the reach and force necessary to shoot the puck into the nets—three small books set up at either end of the table.

Presently we would tire of the hockey game and then we would torment Mother to allow us to bring some snow into the house for making snowballs, and little snow houses which I could build with the aid of a spoon. Naturally it wouldn't be snow for long, after being brought into a warm kitchen. It would soon melt into slush and finally into water. About that time we'd hear a yell from Mother: "Get that mess out of my kitchen!" which would end my play in the snow until the next time.

In the next summer, after the doctors had finished, somewhere, somehow they came upon the idea of taking me to the beach to bathe in warm salt water. Such a move necessitated the removal of the whole family, too; and that was quite a venture in those days. Horses and wagons were the only mode of travel that could be used on most of the roads over which we had to move; or else by water, one other way we got back and forth to the beach. Most of the time we stayed right on at the same beach. They "dunked" me in warmed salt water, which they zealously carried up from the cold Atlantic and poured into an old tub to be warmed by the sun. I have no way of proving that this prolonged my life, but I think it did.

In the fall the other lads started going to school and mother thought it was time that I should have some education, too. By now I could make most of the letters in the alphabet and had

started to pick out words in my brother's school books and story books. But to this day, I do not actually recall learning to read. All I know is that I recognized small words first and then later longer words. I guess finally I knew enough words to put them together in sentences so I could read simple stories.

Mother tried her darndest to teach me the tables but to this day, I am afraid mathematics is probably my weakest point, as I battled her and figures at every turn, and refused to learn more than I absolutely had to.

About this time I began to take an interest in the children's clubs in the Halifax papers, where they used to run colouring contests. Little pictures of boats and flowers and snowmen, etc., would be printed plain and I would try to colour them with coloured pencils. At first I would just do them for my own amusement and pastime—later I took them more seriously, and even went so far as to send in my own picture of a boat, with an accompanying letter labouriously printed in nice big capitals. I was eight years old at the time. The picture and letter were printed in the club's column and brought quite a flood of mail—there were cards and letters from many places. Although faded and worn, the sketch and letter still have a place of honour on our living-room wall.

Still further along in my budding art career, I would attempt slightly more ambitious projects, like the beginnings of a harbour scene or a bit of the surrounding landscape. All this painting wasn't necessarily a howling success. Many of my earlier attempts in my crude and unformed style found a resting place in Mother's kitchen stove.

A large part of these artistic efforts took place during winter, when I was forced to spend so much time house-bound. In summer I could be found in the midst of a ballgame in our back yard, which is enclosed on three sides by my grandfather's house, (the largest of the lot), a smaller house which was occupied by tenants, and our own house. This back yard was the scene of many stirring and raucous cowboy and Indian battles. Mother tells me that among the chorus of voices mine could be heard the loudest as I would play the part of acting straw boss or self-appointed leader.

By this time my sister was four and a half years old, and she, too, had already become one of the gang. She was quite tall enough to hand me books and things which would fall from my tray or table and took a real interest in waiting on me.

Amongst the gang there were boys of a much greater age and larger size than I. They were strong, able fellows who could spend a good part of the day pushing me out and around in the town. The waterfront always held for us the same

magical attraction that it holds for most young lads. The sounds and smells, the colourful activities that are a part of any coastal town would, of course, attract us greatly. This would be almost a daily ritual. Down the hill we would go, helter-skelter, my wheelchair balanced on two wheels by some strong hand; my back at such an angle that I could hardly see where I was going, but nevertheless with a deep and abiding trust in my pals and a prayer that I would at least arrive in an upright position. We would at last find ourselves on the wharves, facing the beautiful harbour of Lunenburg.

On the docks, lumber piles were always waiting to be loaded on the coastal schooners which would take them away to the West Indies. These piles were favourite haunts of our youth. Lumber piles and railway box-cars seemed to be magical shelters, under which to relax and hold forth in some of our mischievous pranks. About this time most of us were enjoying the stolen pleasures of a few puffs from a dearly bought cigarette. Safely hidden away from the eyes of our parents and curious passersby we felt secure in our nefarious dissipations.

One evening started out as a happy lark and almost ended in tragedy or corporal punishment. I still remember very clearly that we were on the longest pier that juts out into the harbour—the pier known as the "Railway Wharf," and where we were often to be found playing on either side of the parked freight cars. This particular evening the boys were determined that they would cross through the railway cars over unto a narrow edge of the wharf—all that was left on the water side of the wharf. It was incredibly difficult for me to be taken over unto this part, but they were determined that I also should partake of such a special thrill, so not being outdone, I had to be lifted bodily in my wheelchair up, over and through the open doors of the box-car upon the little ledge, about three feet wide, with nothing from there on but water. During the interim, the train which shunted the cars down, backed additional cars down, moving my car with the open door away into another position, enclosing me on the little ledge. At a glance, it would seem I was doomed to spend the night or possibly the rest of the week there. The boys were stumped. How were they to get me back through the train and safely onto the roadway? After long and arduous inspection of all possibilities of escape, the trainmen, on their inspection round, finally spotted me, isolated on my little perch, and said, "Boy, what are you doing there?" in a tone almost of annoyance. We answered as a chorus, "Oh, we were just playing and you guys moved the train!" The brakeman grunted, murmured softly to himself sounds that might have edged on profanity, and said, "Well, come on you big boys, get ahold of this chair," and with combined pushing and lifting, I was carried some fifty feet in my chair along this part of the wharf until we came to any empty

flat car onto which they could safely lift my chair, and thus wheel me to dry land.

My sphere of activities increased with my years, and about this time I would be treated to rides in my grandfather's horse and buggy. How well I can remember grandfather's Sunday junkets "up country." Grandfather prided himself on his training and control of horseflesh. We would be treated to a display of this every time he would get the horse from the barn, harness him up in the back yard preparatory to putting the horse in action. Grandfather, of course, was always fully dressed and ready to go while grandmother, being of a calmer and more placid nature, seemed to be always just a bit late. I must say here that at that time I stood in deadly fear and trembling of horses, maybe because of my inability to jump out of the way should they have become uncontrollable. I don't think that grandfather or anyone was aware of this fact, as quite often he would accidentally lead the horse close to my chair.

It is no wonder that we kids had developed a certain form of fear of grandfather and his horses, because his exhibitions of horse breaking and training were a thing apart from what one pictures as quiet Sunday entertainment.

Unfailingly as grandfather would have the horse all hitched and ready, the horse impatient and champing and dancing around in the yard, waiting for the good feel of the road under his feet, he would call, "Nettie, aren't you rigged yet?" To this there would be no reply. As this seemed to annoy both him and the horse, grandfather would take out most of his venom on the poor animal before grandmother would make her grand entrance on the scene. He would ply both whip and voice with almost equal intensity, while on the sidelines I would sit and shiver, just barely a few feet away from the performance. Sometimes the horse would rear up on his hind legs, and I would think, "Grandfather had forgotten all about me being on the sidelines; the horse will either fall on me, kick or kill me." After all this violent excitement, grandmother would settle quietly back in the seat; granddad would back the horse out of the yard and disappear around the corner onto the lower street, as the other boys less perturbed than myself, would chortle gleefully that another Sunday afternoon had begun, and we were already making artful plans on what we would do to end it.

On later days, we would have a newer and more exciting machine to play with, as grandfather about this time purchased the first Model T within the confines of my memory. What a thing of joy and beauty; that first motor vehicle on four wheels! My uncles would take the family and myself riding out far beyond any limits that I had hitherto dreamed of. These rides were a real revelation and escape from my physical limitations for me.

Motoring around Lunenburg in those early and unenlightened days was a bit more of an adventure than it is at the present time, because hardly a ride would be successfully culminated without either a spiritual, mechanical or other difficulty. Flats were common occurrences. It was get out, jack up the wheel or wheels (as sometimes you could have two punctures from one and the same rock) and make temporary repairs.

The roads were narrow, rocky lanes of dust. Cars were few, but if you had the misfortune to encounter a fellow traveller a few miles outside of the town, your problems of passing were greatly increased. The roads along with being dusty, bumpy, rough and rocky, were also very, very narrow. I can still feel in memory, the swish of the bushes on my right as we would pull far over into the gutter in order to let the oncoming vehicle pass us.

During these years of my early youth, the townspeople, visitors and friends were beginning to take more notice of my painting and the manner in which I was producing it. All this gave an added stimulus to me to expand and broaden my so pitifully small theatre of action. Their words of sympathy, understanding and encouragement must have made a deep and lasting impression upon me as I feel even now, in my riper years of life, that without this added stimulus I might not have carried on so well under such difficult conditions.

However, as I search the dim recesses of my memory, I can perceive that I did somehow, in spite of such at times overwhelming physical and mental encumbrances, keep on trying to learn how to paint, live, and enjoy the living and painting in a wheelchair.

When I was at the unformative stage, the act of painting presented many problems to me. Putting the paint on canvass or paper or whatever I happened to be working on that was at hand at the time, to just get the improvised easel and myself into a position whereby I could perform the act of painting at all was almost a stunt. I knew so little about orthodox equipment used by other artists, and so very, very slight was my knowledge of colours, mixtures or the fundamentals of design. Anyway, paint I did,—small things in size were my chief forte at that stage of the game, and I didn't realize that some time later, I would be able to work on a much larger and more heroic scale.

At that time I was really working on very small things like Christmas cards. I would endeavour to make my own Christmas cards to send to my most intimate and personal acquaintances. The making of these presented many problems to one so uninitiated, so untrained in art, as I would do great deal of lettering, and this always brought a great de-



mand on my patience. When you stop to consider that I had to control and see small objects at such close range, the difficulties in such a method are clear. Along with the lettering, I used to place some small Christmassy bits of holly wreath or bells woven together with snake-like ribbons, which I remember I always tried to turn into graceful swirls. All this took place during the winter season of the year.

Among the many things in which I became interested was music. My aunt, a member of a music-loving family, used to get us children in grandfather's living-room in front of the piano and start us in our first early lessons in musical training. She would make us all take part in group and chorus singing, and I always tried to sing the loudest, because the others could not only sing but they had a decided advantage over me, as they could also use their hands and drum out crude melodies on the keyboard. All this no doubt gave me a deep and lasting love for music, which has stayed with me so far through my life, and which I suppose will probably be strong enough to last me out to the end. I must have had a strong voice, if not good, because I can still hear Mother saying: "For heaven's sake, boy, keep quiet. Don't sing so much! Here's a book," or "Here's your paints and brushes; paint a while instead of singing when I am trying to get a little rest around this house."

Anyway, I kept on singing and my interest in music kept enlarging, but at that time I knew very little of the fundamentals or rudiments of music and refused with the same good grace to learn my scales as I had refused along about the same time to learn my arithmetic. As a result, maybe I now am more appreciative of music and mathematics because I never forced myself, nor was I forced, to really buckle down and learn either.

Sundays we would be sure to gather around Grandfather's upright piano and do some serious singing, because our respective families were firm believers in singing the faith. As a result, I would sing the old well-known hymns as loud and as long as the rest of the boys, and aided and abetted by my aunt, I would find courage enough to sometimes break into a small solo. At this time my voice must have been a rather low-pitched tenor, which later slid down the tone scale into a high baritone, but tenor or baritone I could sing loud if not well.

It is mysterious how I ever achieved such a liking for music as the opportunities we kids had of hearing classical or serious music were very few and far between. There were the summer evening band concerts in the middle of the town up on the terraces, which are a step-like hill covered with grass and on the topmost part of this moundlike high level, the band would play in their little wooden bandstand. We would attend either en masse, escorted by the local neighbourhood boys, or go very decorously

with my parents. In any event, I must have absorbed a great part of it, as this was part of my beginnings in musical appreciation.

Other evenings would find us down in Grandfather's cellar kitchen, where we would be engaged in the delightful pastime of playing over the old cylinder recordings on the gramophone. One of our favorites was "The Rosary."

My second brother, Ray, was becoming more and more of a help to me during this part of my formative years. He was a real athletic, outdoor, he-man type of guy, and would wheel me out to the edge of the roadway when he was but a little chap, though quite strong enough to guide my wheelchair. My chair, by this time, was a full-fledged one, as I had now graduated from my baby stroller to this more adaptable type of four-wheeled chair.

This vehicle, I can still remember, because it was my first of this type, not my last. With two large wheels at back and two much smaller in front, I was raised up much higher in this world. From this greater height I gained added enjoyment and inspiration from my attempts at painting out-of-doors. The viewpoint from which one views life is most important. The somewhat older boys—Ray, Arthur and my uncle Bert, would play in the back yard, which, as I mentioned before, is patio-like. They invented a new form of thrill for me. Grandfather had a medium-sized, large-wheeled handcart in which the boys would haul one another in and about the yard, or out into the streets. Not daunted by danger or fear of broken bones or parental disapproval, Earl would find himself the very crux of this cart and wheelchair arrangement. The handle of the care they would place on the axle between the large wheels on the back of my chair. The wheelchair could then be tipped back with me in it, and we would ride, cart and chair together, down through the back yard and sometimes out into the streets and down toward the waterfront which is just a few steps away from our house. This was all a great lark for me in spite of accidents, damage to my chair and misgivings or more severe punishment when we would be caught in the act by my dad. He would say, "Those boys will kill you, lad, tipping that chair upon its back wheels! Now don't do it any more!"

I escaped more serious mishaps somehow in spite of all the close calls we had, but one day I was nearly killed as I sat in the back yard, engaged in some form of play with the rest of the lads. The door fell off the side of Grandfather's barn with a crash on top of me, and a spike, fully five inches long, hit and pierced my face just beside my one eye. Both chair and I were almost fatally crushed beneath the weight of this great door. Dad rushed down the steps and with the aid of the other men who came running to the scene, picked me out of the chaos of door,

wheelchair and broken lumber. When they had washed and fixed my face back into some semblance of normalcy, Dad said: "I'm afraid his eye is seriously injured," but after some reliable home-made remedies were put on the cut, my injury improved so rapidly and completely that today I have no sign of a scar anywhere near either of my eyes. I must have been made of good resilient stuff, like the proverbial roly-poly,—I would get knocked down but always came back for more.

Those earlier years when my brothers were growing up, while they presented more opportunity for painting, also gave a lot more for playing around as well. We had grown older and big enough to venture out into the world outside of Lunenburg, or thought at any rate, that we had.

My brother, Ray, by this time was strong enough to lift and carry me, and go with me off on the highways and byways.

My greatest struggle then was to learn enough know-how in the use of palette and paint so people would not think my efforts mere meanderings of an insane mind in a badly equipped body. That I have convinced them is, I think, proven by all the things I have been able to get done.

Among the many things I was ambitious enough to attempt about this time was the thought of having a one-man show of my painting in the City. When I speak of the City, I mean Halifax, which is 65 miles from Lunenburg. After much thought and a great deal of talking it over with the family, we finally arranged enough of the details so we could really get started. I wrote ahead arranging for our exhibition, which was in one of the largest hotels in that Maritime city. This was quite an exciting and eventful experience for two young fellows like us, as prior to that time we had not gone so far away from home. The pictures finally hung, and the other arrangements made, we began to attract the attention of both the public and press.

My paintings at that time were necessarily small in size and scope, and had been rather crudely executed on various kinds of cardboard and bits of badly mounted canvas or wood panels. How well I remember one gentleman saying to me during the first day of the exhibition, "Bailly, I would buy that small painting of the harbour and boats any day, but how in heaven's name did you get it so badly stretched?" He then explained to me that if the canvas were to be properly stretched, he would lose a portion of the face of the picture. This was very dismaying to me. Here I had a sale practically in my lap, and yet it looked as if I were going to lose it due to my small knowledge of the proper preparation of canvas before it was worked on. Anyway, he did buy the sketch, and we were both very happy about it. He said, "I'll have it mounted somehow," and I suppose he did, because it never came back, and to this

day I am not sure if he is satisfied or dissatisfied with the sum result of our little transaction. As the week of the exhibition went by, we made various contacts with people from all over the world, as Halifax is a sort of international port. One small sketch I remember was bought by a young lady who was on her way to Paris, France. This, of course, was to me very exciting, and I was quite elated to think that we would have sold anything at all to such a cosmopolitan audience as one might find in the overseas tourist circle. After the full week had passed, we closed what we considered a very successful first one-man show, came back home and started up no small amount of interest in my work, which at that time, while it was being noticed, still lacked the mark that more experienced and able connoisseurs placed upon recognized art.

So encouraged, we carried on with my sketching for the larger part of the following few months until one day we chanced to meet some tourists, who were also artists, from Massachusetts. They were, of course, interested and intrigued with my manner of painting and as a result we were engaged in quite personal and interesting conversations about my hopes and ambitions of what I would like to do in the future, and of what I had been able to do so far.

I became so deeply interested in what they told me of the opportunities to study at summer classes in Maine that I finally convinced my mother and the other members of the family that my young brother Don was capable enough and old enough at fifteen, to take me to Maine. The trip to Maine in itself was quite interesting, and bordered on the adventurous to both of us, as we had never before been out of the province. As I remember, we did have a passenger—a young lady who is some very distant relative, was returning to Boston, and she volunteered to act as sort of camp mother and guide.

The whole trip was planned around us travelling very cheaply and as they say, "travelling light," so we boys saved hotel bills by taking along a pup-tent. As it was in the middle of summer with warm and pleasant nights, this was no great hardship, but it was an escapade which I still remember very well.

Arriving in Maine, we then had to look about for suitable living quarters for my specialized needs—a place not too expensive, not too far from the school and without steps, as my brother, while young and able, wasn't able to carry me up and down steps many times a day. We found quite a comfortable little cottage—a fisherman's cottage—and got settled quite nicely. The next thing to do was to get some painting done, and with the aid of my instructor, George P. Ennis, this was quite successfully accomplished. Each day I worked almost the entire day, which for me

is quite a feat, as before that I had been used to only working for a short period of an hour or so each afternoon. The newness of this sort of life—working with an art class, was all very invigorating and stimulating to me, as before this time I had had no formal art education. But alas, this little spot of art training was quite short lived, due to financial stress and the fact that we had to get back home.

Before we did return I was able to make a dream come true—a visit to New York City. Along with two other friends we “*did*” New York City in one entire day. Among the places we visited were the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Grand Central Gallery of Art, Boxy’s famous theatre, the Paramount Theatre, Fifth Avenue, Broadway and Park Avenue. When I told my friends of this wild, frenzied, sight-seeing tour of mine around New York, they gasped in horror and said, “And you *lived* through it!” Yes, I lived through it, but I was mighty tired, because I still remember the morning after when we were driving back to Springfield, Mass., I fell asleep from fatigue.

This was only the first of many such trips my brother Don and I took together; as we later *really* got the travelling bug. Back of this urge, of course, was a sort of master plan, as it was to become for me a sort of art appreciation and educational course combined with wild dream that I might some day, somewhere, in this process of travelling about showing my painting to wide audiences, find that they would bring higher prices and become valuable enough so that my sales would bring me in a form of living.

We made it a point always to visit all available galleries or art stores which were accessible to us. This way I did, in my earlier years, see quite a good bit of the art of America and some of the old masters from Europe in collections in galleries and some in private collection. I should say, though, that at this stage of my life, most of the finer points technically, were lost on me as I had not progressed far enough to be able to fully appreciate nor understand all of them. However, I do think these opportunities which my travelling made possible did a great deal toward helping me develop and improve, as I gained more understanding of the technical side of the arts.

Travelling about as we did was not always such fun as it may seem here writing about it. We had good times and also some which were not quite so good. Naturally this travelling was mostly by automobile, and that was not always restful, as I was forced most of the time to remain in the seat of the car in one position and never found many opportunities when it was convenient for Don to lift me from the car into my wheelchair for a change of position and view.

As the saying goes “He who travels farthest on the least money, travels fast”. At any rate, this seemed to be true in our particular case as I still remember days when we would drive all the entire day from early morning until late night. When one has driven a whole day and finally arrives in a strange city, as was always our lot, late in the dark of night in the midst of strange and oftentimes almost frightening surroundings, it is somewhat of an ordeal. This would happen to us quite often as we were never too sure of how far we were going to travel in a day or just when we were certain to arrive at any given point of the day or night.

Sometime later, after our fair success at Halifax, we made plans for another exhibition, at a more distant place. This time we went to Montreal, Toronto, Rochester, Philadelphia and ended again in Boston. My exhibition in Montreal and Toronto met with a fair share of success as we made enough money to buy gas to carry us on to the next stop. This being my first visit to Montreal I found everything new and exciting there. Unfortunately I was not able to see a great deal of it at that time as the hours required of me to be on duty at the exhibition were long and I don’t need add, very tiring. Large crowds came to see my pictures and they would marvel at the manner in which they were executed. Among other things, I did have an opportunity to meet more and more fellow artists, which to me was enjoyable and satisfying.

All through these years when I was adolescent and neither boy nor man, I was trying very hard most of the time to really create something in art, and I was also trying to find myself as a person as well; trying to find the niche in life I might fit. While people would marvel at the way I painted and remark on how difficult it must be to work in such a manner, even then the thought occurred to me quite often that they took a rather unfair attitude in some respects towards my painting.

I don’t know whether anyone else could understand my feeling about this sort of painting and personality problem. Many times I’ve thought that it has been unfair to judge some of the work I was doing entirely by the manner by which it was done. Too much emphasis was always place on the man behind the canvas, or at least this is my feeling about the larger part of it, and not nearly enough thought was given to my paintings as paintings.

Many other problems were my lot also. The mere fact that I had always to be waited on was and still is many times most irritating. Even when I was in the mood to start painting, my mother or some member of the family would not be able to take time either to get me the materials or have patience with my impatience in getting them fast enough. I think I should say that

in this respect I am probably one of the most impatient fellows I know. Many times I have started painting with but a few of the colours squeezed out in front of me, for lack of patience to wait long enough for the whole gamut of the palette to be put out.

The times when our travelling was sort of at a standstill, either for lack of paintings (as I am normally of a rather lazy nature) or because of a shortage of the necessary funds, I spent a great deal of time in an average living sort of way much the same as the other fellows who were part of my group of friends.

We would sit around our front room doing a great deal of talking about everything under the sun. Much of our talk was not about art or artists or of the artists' life at all. As usual when a group of people get together, much of the talk seemed to center around what "living" consisted of and how to make one, and whether it was worthwhile anyway.

Season would run into season; summer would follow spring; winter after fall, and with it another group of paintings—enough paintings to encourage us in thoughts of another trip away from the small quiet town we called home.

During this winter, I had been housebound a great part of the time and as I have always been a fresh air fiend, at the slightest provocation I would get dressed warmly and sit out on our front porch, or if the car was available, with a driver, I would go farther afield. Not being satisfied with this small amount of air, I one day in cold February, while riding out on one of our main highways, thought I had found a brilliant new way to get a great deal of air while I was enjoying the ride. So I had them turn down the window on my side with the sad result that I was very sick with a severe attack of sinus. After some little time spent in the hospital and a much longer time spent convalescing at home (with the doctor's advice changed a bit to suit my own purposes to make it a fulfillment of one of my fondest dreams and ambitions) we started to plan, with many prolonged discussions and much advice from the family, a leisurely trip to Florida, the Land of Sunshine (so good for sinus.)

The trailer we planned to use on the trip was a home-made, jerry-built affair. We thought, in our ignorance of trailers, that it was a thing of great pride. As we knew very little about trailers or trailering, we took a few trial runs in the late summer and early fall, and finally got packed with winter clothes, fall clothes and what few summer clothes we had, hitched the trailer to the Ford V-8 and started off on the road.

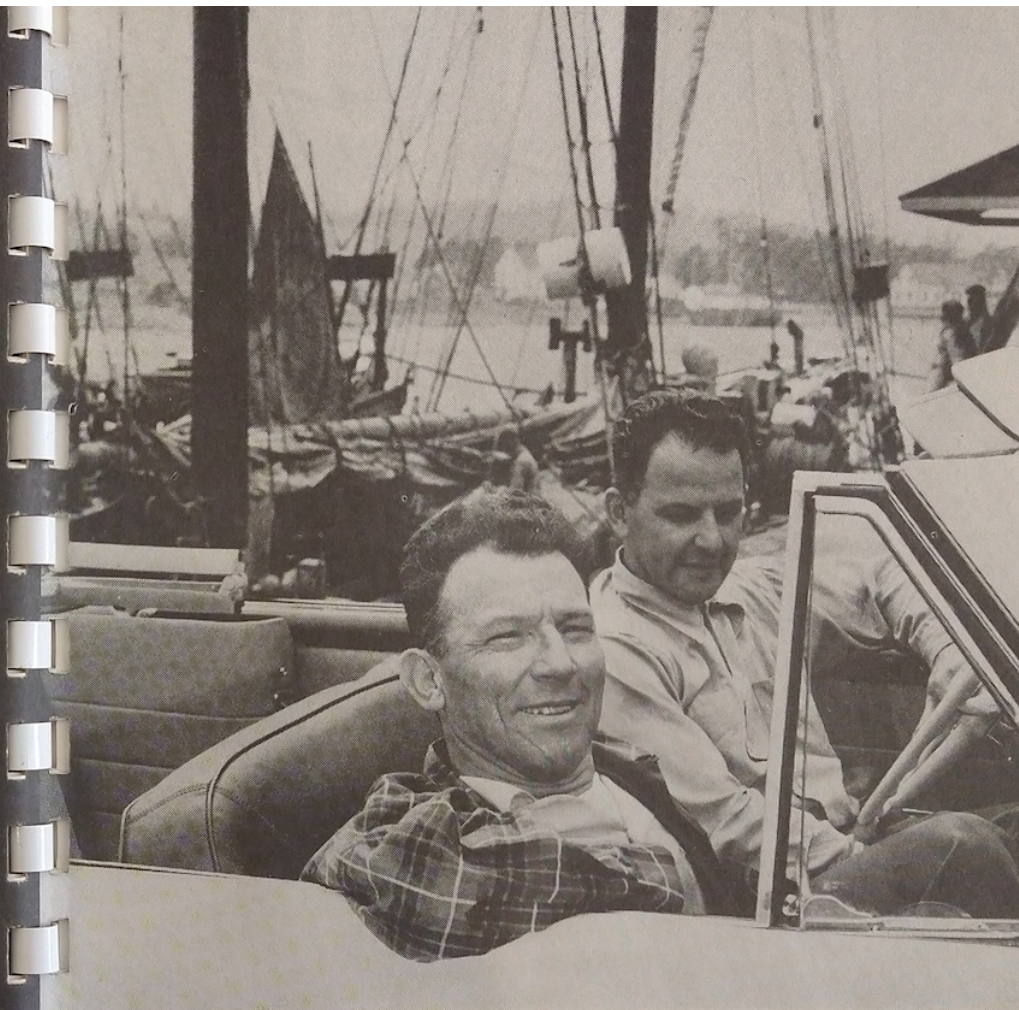
We started the trip with combined high hopes and I might add, on my part, at least, some fear and trembling, because we knew it was a long way to Florida; we would be far from home and friends in case we should run into any real trouble. We had

no definite timetable—we only knew that we planned, if possible, to make stops at Boston, where I was to have a small exhibition in a little book and print shop on State Street. After Boston, if we could possibly book another exhibition in either New York or Philadelphia, we would also stop in these places as well. The exhibition in Boston was successful and so encouraged, we started off for New York, and passed through the city rather quickly this time. Our stay in Philadelphia was quite a bit longer, as we had friends there who entertained us and took us sight-seeing and on occasion to visit people who, they thought, might be interested in helping me to obtain a showplace for my pictures. As I remember, we were not able to book an exhibition on such short notice in Philadelphia, so we journeyed onward and southward in the general direction of Florida. After Philadelphia came Washington, D.C., where we didn't give much thought to paintings or exhibitions, as Washington is indeed the showplace of America and we were all eyes to see what there was to be seen. I think we spent a larger part of a week or ten days in George Washington's City. Then another start on the road ever pointing still more southward. The country south of the Mason-Dixon Line impressed me as being rather uninteresting, as the sea-level route, on which we were travelling, did not take us over many of the back or more elevated parts of the country. After not too many mishaps we arrived in Florida sometime late in November or early December. I rather think it was the earlier part of December.

Many things that most people just take for granted to me become very important; for instance, just the fact of getting in or out of a car, going in or out of hotels or restaurants to you able-bodied folk is just taken for granted, but to me on these trips and in my everyday living, every time I go to some strange place or do some unusual thing (by unusual I mean something that is not part of my everyday routine like getting into some strange surroundings such as just going to a house I have never been in before) presents a new problem and each problem is sort of an adventure. You people who move under your own power do it so unconsciously that you do not stop to wonder about the how and why of human locomotion, so when I just baldly say "I took this trip by car" or later "trips by plane" or other means of travelling everything I did or now do seems almost like an adventure. Anyway every different kind of movement I have to be part of both mentally and physically. I am most vividly aware of it—all the different aspects of it all the time. At some times I even am faced with something like a trip in a boat and a boat is very simple to get into for the average person, as most times the boat and the wharf meet at least no more than three or four feet apart, but when I am to be taken aboard the boat, I first have to give thought to how high the ride is; how low the boat is; how rough the water is; can I be lifted into it in my chair, do I



Earl and mother showing paintings.



Earl and brother at docks.

need one man, two men or a whole army; will the boat stay on an even keel; will my chair have to be fastened with body and soul lashings; will it rock, is there a chance or possibility that I may upset—all these things are going through my mind, and while I am not a person of a highly nervous temperament, I am nervous enough and well-informed enough on matters nautical that I understand that if I do go into the Atlantic Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico, I would get pretty wet and if my mouth were too wide open, I may play Jonah in reverse.

Usually I do feel comparatively safe in the capable hands of my brother Don, no matter what form of travelling we're involved in, so during those first days in Florida when we were travelling, living and mixing in some other experiences I wasn't very worried about my getting around. Florida certainly was entirely new and quite different from anything I had ever known before. While I have lived most of my life beside the sea, the low, flat, sand-covered stretches of land were quite different from our Nova Scotia.

As we had entered Northern Florida on the eastern coast we went directly down the coast until we struck the really warm semi-tropical climate which you find around Palm Beach. The newness of this life had to be experienced and had to become part of one before I was able to really relax and start painting the Florida scene.

The first few weeks we took a lot of side trips, exploring all around the countryside. The beautiful long, unobstructed beaches, the orange groves and the unsurpassed beauty of the flowers that grow so profusely in gardens and wild along the sides of the roads were so different from anything that we knew back in the more rigorous climate in Lunenburg, that I never stopped exclaiming at their colourfulness.

After we had done a fair share of sightseeing and had really settled down enough to fall into a painting routine, I finally got started on painting some of the scenes quite nearby the particular trailer camp where we were located. Pictures of stretches of beaches, with cocoonut palms and other kinds of tropical growth were very intriguing for me to try to get down on canvas. And then there was always the beautiful ocean as a starting point—the ocean that I had painted so much. It was the same ocean but in Florida it seemed that the blues were bluer, the greens were greener and all the different shades that are caught in the ocean were so much more colourful, so much more of a challenge to me as a painter to try to get down with my brush on canvas than our often gray and cold-looking Atlantic.

I used to paint pictures of the beaches and of the palm trees, as they interested me strangely. While the beaches of Florida and the beaches of Nova Scotia have many things in common,

there is still quite a difference. One difference is that the rocks that we associate with the rugged coastline of our native Nova Scotia scene are so lacking in Florida. I felt quite lost at first, I can tell you, when I would attempt to compose some of the scenes before me, when I was faced with the fact that no rocks, no rugged terrain, no windward coast, just long, flat, wind-swept stretches of white-gold sand were all to be painted and I would have to make myself happy without Nova Scotia rocks for a few months.

The time went by quite pleasantly. I made some quite good contacts and a number of good friends. My pictures were entered in an exhibition in Palm Beach and some of them were sold there and also at private sales. With this extra cash we were able to face spring and the road homeward to Nova Scotia. The trip back was all the more pleasant because we were headed northward to our own country.

Back home we quickly got into the routine of household affairs. When I am at home, the family almost carries me along in a sort of unconscious way, which probably has been beneficial to me, as I am never aware that I place any extra burden on the house working, but very likely, in all truthfulness, I have been a care to all the members of my family. From their earliest youth, all my brothers and sister have had to take part in looking after me. Without this invaluable help given by them, it is doubtful whether I would have been able to take part in the next little episode, which comes to mind, even if I had not been tempted into this well-nigh impossible lark by the glowing verbal pictures made by my youngest uncle Arthur, who is actually younger than I.

The most remarkable and perhaps world renowned product of Lunenburg is, of course, the Bluenose. In 1933, a trip to the Chicago World Fair was the chief topic of conversation in the town and a common wish was expressed by my uncle when he remarked "Boy, if I only had a chance to go on the Bluenose, I'd give almost anything." This impressed me so deeply that it kept eating into my mind far enough that the wish had to almost become a reality. No sooner thought of than I had to do something about it, so I said to my brother Don, "I bet we could get on the Bluenose, you and I," and as he was young and full of vigour and never lacking in giving me encouragement in any schemes or dreams I might happen to voice aloud, we went to work on how we could finagle a passage on the schooner.

For some time I had been making and selling block prints, so naturally this seemed to be a way that would enable us to finance our way on the Bluenose to Chicago. This, idea, of course, had to be sold to the management of the Lunenburg Exhibitors, sponsors of the trip.

Naturally they were a bit skeptical on first being told that I would be able to live and exist on a fishing schooner, but after I told them I had been down on the waterfront and investigated how the Bluenose had been renovated with a ramp from the main deck down into the middle hold of the craft, they said, "Well, if you boys can look after yourselves and Don can have one hand for the ship and one hand for you, Bailly, O.K., then you can go."

As I had other exhibitions and commitments in another part of Nova Scotia at that time, I was fortunately unable to leave from Lunenburg by boat with them on the first lap of their journey to Quebec City. I might have done so if things had been different and I had been able to get away at the same time the Bluenose sailed. As they experienced one of the roughest and most hazardous storms during the passage from this port up to the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, I considered myself lucky to have missed this first part of the voyage. Don and I left by train for Quebec City some few days later, allowing ourselves plenty of time in order to be there when the Bluenose docked. This being one of the few trips I have ever taken by train, it was all the more interesting and entertaining for me. Don too, I believe, found parts of it quite fascinating, as we had seen most of the landscape from the highway before this time.

We arrived in Quebec days before the Bluenose and had to look up a little hotel for a temporary home. After many long looks toward the harbour, we finally spied the Bluenose coming into port. Stopping just barely long enough to take a few other people and ourselves aboard, we were taken in tow by a Canada Steamships freighter and were towed all through the night toward Montreal. This was to be my first baptism under fire, or I should say, of sail and water. I had never lived on a fishing schooner and never thought that I should ever live on a fishing schooner, even in the wildest flights of my imagination, but there we were, in the fo'c'sle—living, eating and sleeping. The sleeping part at first glance looked to me as though it was going to be the most difficult part of the journey. I had never attempted to sleep in a bunk before.

Perhaps I should describe a bunk for the benefit of any of you who have only seen pictures or read about them, and have never suffered the tortures (to a landlubber) of this type of bed. The bunks in a fishing vessel are about  $5\frac{3}{4}$  feet long and are always in double tiers on each side of the vessel, with about four feet between them. They resemble a box with the one side knocked out, and you crawl over the side and there you are. It is impossible to sit up in one and extra boards are provided to "box" yourself in during a heavy sea, when it is very easy to be pitched out on the floor.

I gazed at it with dismay. How was Don going to get me into such a contraption? How was I to be undressed and dressed



Earl working on lino blocks with chisel.



Earl studies a pair of oxen before painting them.

in this semi-subterranean darkness? How was I to sleep with all this noise and activity going on around me? If I pulled the curtains across to shut off the confusion and noise and movement, would I smother? How would I get to sleep and if I got to sleep, would I ever wake again—all this and a great deal more went through our minds, but in spite of my foreboding and mental anguish and anticipation, the act was accomplished. Don got me safely settled in the lower bunk, and he crawled away in the upper one, directly above me. Sometime early in the morning of the second day on shipboard became our first night on board, as most of the first night we spent sitting up on deck, as it was a warm and pleasantly balmy spring evening and we could enjoy the smooth gliding motion of being towed along. Alas, alas, I must have sat out on deck facing the wind too long, for this added stimulation on top of the sunburn I had acquired in the days preceding as I sat out around Quebec City, were too much for my unweathered housebound tender skin. When morning came, or what I thought was morning, and I attempted to open my eyes, it still seemed like night. The little light that could gain entry through the mere slits which were my eyes only proved that it was not still night. The area surrounding my eyes had become so badly sun and wind burned that they had become swollen almost completely shut. After much complaining on my part and some sympathizing from the younger members of our for'ard crew, word got to some of the higher-ups in the afterdeck and they came to investigate my plight. Upon examination, someone suggested a doctor they knew was coming aboard, and thought he would kindly look me over, which he did some hours later, giving me a prescription which cleared up the condition by the next day.

Montreal, our next port of call, turned out en masse to greet us. People came aboard by the hundreds of thousands. From early morning to late at night, people were still coming down to the dock to view the Bluenose. This was all quite exciting and interesting at first, but after a few days of being pushed around into small quarters, the excitement began to pall.

We were entertained quite royally during the few days we had in Montreal. One evening we were taken to one of the largest theatres in the City where we were to be presented on the stage, and I had to perform a little solo part as the programme was set out that I was to paint a fast sketch of the Bluenose while on stage. It was all quite a thrill and quite a novelty to us boys to be there on the stage, as hardly any of us had had any experience in being presented publicly. I had had some slight previous experience but nothing on such a large scale. However I did my part quite satisfactorily I think, as I was complimented by both the press, the members of the crew and the few friends that I happened to have in the metropolis.

Each day was much the same—hoards of people coming



aboard and Don and I huckstring our little black and white block prints designed by me. We sold quite a number during the short time, enough to pay our "keep" on the ship.

After what seemed like more than one-half of the population of French Canada had scrambled aboard, looked us over and made all sorts of landlubber inquiries, the Captain finally ordered "Up anchor!", the lines were cast off and we went on our merry way up the St. Lawrence, which after Montreal really dwindles into a pretty small stream, then into canals, and then into a few lakes.

The weather was getting quite a bit warmer, and as we were still being towed because we were unable to use our sails, there was not much chance of any shade on deck and very little breeze seemed to be moving as we glided along the canals—land-locked waterways lined in part, at times, by crowds of people from the small towns along the canal.

The following weeks were all much of the same pattern. We would be moving the earlier part of the day and possibly into the late afternoon, tying up each night at some small port. After a few more days of this we sighted Toronto, where we were greeted by the usual thousands of people, as we tied up at the waterfront in the shade of the Royal York. Again the same round of sight-seeing Canadians started coming aboard during the next few days, and with the added interest which had been building up through the newspapers and radio, this was what looked like almost the rest of Canada on foot. There in Toronto again, we were asked repeatedly the same questions which had been put to us so often—"How long is the Bluenose?" "How high are the spars?" "How wide is she?" "How much water does she need to float in?"

We tried to give our best answers and to please as many of the sight-seers as possible. In Toronto I became fatigued and finally accepted the invitation of some very kind friends and went to live with them for a short spell so I could get some rest and regain some much needed strength for the rest of the voyage. This little sojourn on land came as a very welcome contrast to such a public life on shipboard. Also it gave me a chance to see something of Toronto. In all my travelling by various means, I had never had opportunity or enough time to see a great deal of the big Canadian cities.

We got back to the boat in good time to say our last goodbye to Toronto and look forward to the World's Fair at Chicago.

After a few more short stops at Windsor and Sarnia, where I did get a chance to go ashore, we moved along in much the same fashion until finally we got into Lake Michigan, which is quite a large body of water—not quite as large as the Atlantic we were

used to, but big enough and deep enough that we could say "so long" to our towboat, hoist sail and proceed along under our own power. Sailing on Lake Michigan was a very pleasant experience, and I clearly remember one day in particular when we really piled on all sails. All four lowers, and topsails gave us enough speed that Don thought it would be more comfortable for me if I would leave my chair, which usually was lashed to the foremast below decks or propped against the ship's cabin on deck. By this time she had keeled over enough that it was much more comfortable for me to be reclining on soft cushions back aft, propped against the same cabin, where I could lie back and watch the graceful lines of the white sails sharply outlined against the blue of the Michigan sky.

During one of the next few days, I remember we encountered a squall. A squall on Lake Michigan can be quite a nasty experience, as fresh water seems to bring storms up violently and quickly. When this particular squall arose, I was below deck and it was a good thing I was below and that my chair was lashed to the foremast. During the worst part of the blow, when we were still unable to get sail off quickly enough, the vessel canted over so far that the articles which were on the tray fastened to my chair in front of me, all fell off and rolled across the forecabin floor. I might also have followed if I had not been securely fastened into the chair before this happened.

The morning we finally sailed into the Fair was a bright and sunny June day in 1933. The reason I can remember it so well is because it was really, really warm for a "herring choker" like me. We created some stir as the City Council, members of the yacht clubs and others interested in sailing came out to meet us in launches, speedboats and other crafts of all kinds. We had been looking forward so avidly to viewing the sights of the Fair that it was with a sigh of relief that we watched as the lines were taken ashore and we tied up at our own private dock at the foot of the artificial basin just on the fringes of the Fair.

Next we had to go about exploring all the things which looked so exciting from the ship and which we were now about to finally view at close range. One of these was Admiral Byrd's Antarctic ship, complete with fur-dressed Eskimos, dogsleds, husky dogs and arctic exhibits. The vividly coloured exhibits of the exposition contrasted greatly with the Bluenose as she was just her original self—the same garb she wore when following her fishing trade.

Don must have pushed me miles and miles through avenues and streets, past all kinds of exhibits, as the Fair was so huge. Sad to state, but true, was the fact that we didn't attract our fair share of customers, as the competition from Sally Rand, Admiral Byrd, and other things unusual, too numerous to mention, were

more magnetic to the crowds. As a result, our income was greatly cut; our sales dropped to practically zero and as each day passed and it was becoming increasingly harder to live, plans to start homeward began to form in our minds. After we had been at the Fair a few weeks, I had made several good friends, a few of whom advised us to leave the ship and come and visit with them in order to see more of Chicago. Included in these plans was an idea that we buy a second-hand jalopy and rid back home. Not understanding that such a procedure was illegal, we nevertheless went ahead and purchased a 1928 second-hand car. We put the car to good use during the few weeks we visited friends in Chicago, sight-seeing and visiting museums, art galleries and all the things of general interest to tourists.

Finally tiring of Chicago, we got packed and started north-east, anxious to get away from the heat of the middle west of the United States, back to the cooling breezes of Nova Scotia.

At home between trips, I would gradually get back in the quiet, daily routine of living and painting in the middle of family life, of conforming anew to their schedules until most of the excitement slowly became like a dream. This being away from home environment very likely brought me somewhat out of my shell. Living among and with people at that time in my life gave me experience that I otherwise may never have gained. Certainly I was forced to meet and talk with people, and be out in the public view a lot of the time. This playing the part of a painter-artist-actor and doing all or any of it well isn't always easy. There are days when one is feeling below par physically, (polio has a way of doing queer things to one), or when a fellow isn't at his best mentally either. Days when I felt helplessly lost in the inner workings of art or just the everyday workings of living. Somehow I kept on, often in rather awkward grace, it is true, but on. At other times life seemed sweet and good during days when I felt stronger—nearly everything looked easier and possible. With Don on call to take me around the countryside, we eventually would settle down to some serious painting around the old home town. All the family were greatly interested in outdoor living, so often the sketching trip would include them. Feeling quite a man of the world, I would think nothing of working in the most dangerous places—the top of high cliffs overhanging the sea, or down at the shore.

One day while the entire family were on a picnic-sketching trip, I well remember how alarmed mother became when I was painting a scene of the rocks and surf at a place called "The Ovens", a few miles from home. I was perched high on top of a great overhanging rock in a folding armchair, which wasn't too secure, so mother, who couldn't rest until I had been fastened securely in some way, tied one end of a piece of rope around the chair and the other to her foot. Only then was she satisfied and

reassured that I was quite safe and that I could safely go on in my painting.

We always had to give a full and detailed account of all our adventures to the members of the family at home and also to all the groups of friends who dropped in occasionally. The family knew and understood how difficult it was for us and especially for me to do some of these things which we had been doing away from home under sometimes overwhelming odds. When we would talk about all the things we had seen and done, how we had exhibited my paintings and some had been sold, how we bought the old second-hand car and how we managed to live through all the difficulties, I was aware that there were some people who were labouring under the impression that because I was incapacitated, I would find relief in the fact that I could gain sympathy from others. Or if necessary, even have it understood that I was not to be held too closely responsible for my acts. They'd say, "You can't expect any more of one like you." Well maybe in some ways they have something there; maybe not. I suppose they thought that people everywhere did a great deal more for us than they would do for the ordinary physically active person. In some respects, this may possibly have an element of truth, but I feel that we never knowingly took advantage of any extra sympathy they felt because of me.

After spending several months resting and painting, we finally decided upon another trip to Florida. We agreed that a trailer was the most convenient method of transportation for us. By this time we knew a great deal more about trailer living and realized that the first trailer was unsatisfactory. We went shopping around for a better one. We finally made arrangements for a factory-built one and then we drove up to Ontario and picked it up. While in Toronto, we had the very good fortune to be able to take a side trip north to Callender to see the Dionne Quints. They were just lovely children.

Again we returned to Lunenburg and home, and continued getting pictures and other things necessary to take the trip south. Practically every day found us either sketching in the car or otherwise working at home, if the weather happened to be stormy. Knowing that we now had a definite purpose and use for the paintings made work all the more interesting and vital to me. As the days lengthened into fall, and the tang of winter was in the air, I began to feel the urged to once again get down in the warm south. We left Lunenburg in the last week of October. This time there weren't only the two of us, as mother and my sister went as far as Philadelphia with us. We particularly enjoyed the autumn scenery through Nova Scotia and Maine. An added charm on this trip was the cooking and the good meals supplied by mother and my sister, on the improved gas stove which we carried in the trailer. The weather kept

warm enough so we could really enjoy outdoor living almost the whole way to Philadelphia where mother and Margaret left us, wishing us Godspeed on the rest of the way south to the palm trees.

This time when I arrived in Florida I was better acquainted and had made some very useful contacts, so in this way we were able to put on a real exhibition in Palm Beach, with the aid of some very kind friends. My exhibitions were not always held on a grand scale, as sometimes we had them in small stores; sometimes in larger places, but this one in Palm Beach was really a social affair. My friend splurged to the extent that the famous and wealthy came riding up to the doors in Rolls Royces and 16-cylinder Cadillacs by the scores. In advance of this we had gotten ourselves all dressed to kill, and I well remember that I was so nervous before, during and after the whole affair that I honestly didn't enjoy much of it at all, but it was an experience and profitable in many ways. Not that the sales were so large or so many, but seeing and meeting some of the fabulously wealthy and near wealthy (who are twice as difficult usually, as the fabulously wealthy), was to a young man an enlightening experience. Patrons of the arts can't always be judged by the length of the hood on their automobiles. I have often sold pictures to people who came riding up on bicycles.

After I was once again settled down in the trailer camp, getting over the effects of the exhibition in such posh surroundings, something much simpler and more earthy and human captured our interest. We were invited to take leading parts in the community concert which was to be held in the community hall on the trailer grounds. Our next door neighbours were the originators and promoters of this show, and as we were always singing with the windows open, they could hardly help hearing us. They insisted that I must sing and so as not to be alone, I intentionally let slip that Don played the saxophone. This meant that both of us had to attend rehearsals and get our little acts in shape. My repertoire at that time consisted of two songs, "One Alone" from the Desert Song, and "Ol' Man River" from Show Boat. They had to search high and low to find an accompanist for me, and also had a great search to find two copies of each song, but finally they did locate the copies and the big night arrived. Along with the musical part I had to play in the performance, we ran a raffle on one of my paintings, which was a very successful affair. I sang and they listened, but we'll never know who conquered. Anyway, I remember it was a very warm night and after the whole shindig was over, I had a wet shirt.

We stayed in Florida all winter, up until late spring when we felt quite sure it would be getting warm enough to hit the road homeward for Nova Scotia. Back home once more, I again

found myself going through the process of settling down to my usual small-town life.

I had met thousands of people during these years—famous people, celebrities, the high, the low, people who were interesting and some who were not so. This summer the talk was all of the visit of the King and Queen to Canada, so naturally I was as interested in all the reports of their forthcoming visit as the average Canadian.

One of their stops was scheduled for Halifax and I knew that if I were to really see them in the great press of crowds, I would have to make a request to have a seat in a place from which I could view them easily. I wrote a letter to the authorities and in the reply was stated that I would be given a reserved seat and if the opportunity and time presented themselves, I might even be presented to the Royal Couple. It was a very warm day. We left Lunenburg very early and upon arrival in Halifax went to the Garrison Grounds. There were thousands of people there and I was very lucky to have such a reserved position, as otherwise I might not have been able to see over so many tall people.

After we had waited an hour or so, the ceremony really got under way and they were coming on the scene. After the usual formal proceedings, just as they were about to leave the grounds, my old friend Mackenzie King brought them over and presented me. It had been in my mind that if I could get a chance to speak to them that I would ask the Queen for an autograph. She did ask me about my paintings, and as I gave her a small sketch, it was an ideal opening, after she requested my autograph on the back of it, for me to ask for hers in return. The people were pressing and surging in against us and when they finally became aware of the fact that I had her autograph, hands were reaching out, trying to touch it and people were saying "Let me see it". I remember saying to Don, "Put it in your pocket or we will have no autograph left." We wouldn't have had it either, if he hadn't slipped it into his pocket and refused to show it to anyone until we got back home. It now reposes under glass on my studio wall and is viewed by the hundreds of visitors who pass through each season.

Shortly after the Royal Visit, the war clouds that had been hovering over us really moved in. That meant a radical change in my life, so the plans we had made to do quite a bit more extended travelling were really nipped in the bud. I found that I really was forced to live a much more restricted kind of life than I had planned for myself. I couldn't go to places that I wanted to visit as such luxuries were impossible because of gas rationing, etc.

So I found that this part of my life had to be much quieter and most of it I used to spend painting and living out on a beach. I couldn't sell nearly as many paintings as I had previously. The Tourist trade was cut drastically. In fact, there was no tourist trade at all. It was impossible to send paintings out to exhibitions as I had been doing in former years, and all other avenues of sales were practically closed to me.

I just painted and spent the rest of the time living out on a beach in summer in the trailer with the rest of the family.

The war dragged on as though it would never end, and finally, as all things must, it too came to an end. Tourists began drifting through Lunenburg again and once more I could send out paintings to Montreal and Toronto.

I started selling a few pictures but the war certainly hit me hard. I was so far back in my paintings, because there was not the initiative to really paint in earnest, as I did not know what I was going to do with them. The large number of visitors who had always before been coming to visit my studio had disappeared during the war, but in the middle 40's I was pleased again to see that we were getting busy with visitors coming from all parts of Canada and the United States.

Up to this time I had turned out hundreds of paintings in oils and water colours. Some of them went to exhibitions in Canada or across the border to Philadelphia, Boston or New York. I was able to paint again with renewed vigour now that the terrible strain and uncertainties that had accompanied the war had ended. I could again get new stocks of paints and brushes. My brushes were all about worn out after four or five years of use. I need a lot of brushes as it makes added labour for me if I have to stop in the middle of some part of a picture to clean them before I can dip into another colour. Most of my brushes were of a special type which are made in Germany. They are fine brushes and were especially indispensable to me because they had long, thick, stout handles that I can grasp firmly with my teeth. This fact wouldn't cause a moment's thought to an average artist, but when you have to put anything in your mouth, you have to think before you buy. Shopping around, I finally found enough brushes that I could use to last a few more years.

As the war faded, I felt the urge, the need to paint—to express things more and more. Maybe I was, maybe I am still searching for the answer to a question which it put to me so very, very often by various people. Did having polio so very young, when I was unformed and highly impressionable have a great deal to do toward starting me on an artistic career? Do I keep trying to be a recognized artist because I could not find anything else I could do with the little physical strength left to me out of the ravages of polio? Would I have been an artist if I had had the

normal use of my hands and feet? This is a question that no one can answer.

Throughout the next few years I was doing a great deal of painting and taking advantage of the usual and unusual adventures which happened to come my way, always with an eye open for anything that would fit in with the painting.

During one winter I mentioned the fact to mother that I had been home for such a long time that I was about due to break out and take a trip to New York, and she said, "Well, how are you going to finance a trip to New York?" "Oh", I said, "Something will turn up" and like a gift out of the blue I received a letter from Robert (Believe It or Not) Ripley, inquiring if I would care to make an appearance and take part in a television show in New York. Naturally I was very interested, if they would make a suitable offer as far as travelling and living expenses were concerned. The distance from Lunenburg to New York City is about fifteen hundred miles, counting the extra mileage when we get off on the wrong turnpike, and the trip usually takes a good three days. Of course, such a long and arduous trip did not appeal to me as much as in the days of my frivolous youth, and I wanted this journey to be both short and relaxing. The only quiet and relaxing mode of travel is by air. We went in sort of a round-about manner to catch the plane, as for some unaccountable reason they wanted me to pick up the plane at Montreal (800 miles away) instead of at Halifax (a mere 60 miles.) Consequently we had to take the Ocean Limited from Halifax to Montreal, where we took a Colonial Line plane directly to New York City. It was all prearranged by the sponsors of that program that I be met at the airport by the press and members of the TV program. It was a very pleasant trip as we seemed to pass quickly from the slow backward Nova Scotia spring into almost summer-like weather upon landing in New York.

After we were safely settled in our hotel and had become rested, we started out on the usual round of sightseeing and visiting. Whenever I am in New York I always make it a point to try to see professional stage plays, as that is something that is missing in a small community in Nova Scotia. We saw a few excellent plays while in the City. Then of course, there were the inevitable rehearsals leading up to the rehearsal an hour or so before the actual show. All TV shows of course, must follow a script and must follow it closely; otherwise some like myself can throw professionals into near convulsions. I was very reluctant to seriously settle down to prolonged and thorough study of my script, in fact, I never really studied it until the last or dress rehearsal, when after a tryout at which I blew my lines, the feminine lead took me behind one of the large flats on the set and fairly drilled my lines into me for a solid hour. At the end of that time I had all the details straight—where I was born and

what I had done with my life to date, and most of it in the exact words of the script writer. After the rehearsal, following a short rest, we started the TV show. I will always remember Don pushing me for the first time out under the hot lights and saying aside to me, "I'll put you back in the shade until it's your turn to go before the cameras." After Ripley did his opening turn, I was rolled out under the lights and up to my easel where I was first interviewed. Next I was to demonstrate my way of painting while Mr. Ripley and the rest of the cast were to carry on a background conversation. Then Mr. Ripley was to make some explanatory remarks regarding my finished paintings and later they were brought out and placed on easels where they were televised. Still later I finished up my part of the program by signing by painting with my full name while the cameras were rolling. They told us it was a highly successful show and that all concerned were quite pleased.

For the next few days we made good use of the time remaining, visiting the art galleries and putting in some time at an exhibition of my own paintings which was running near 57th Street at the same time. The exhibition turned out to be quite an unexpected success. I sold a number of paintings while I was still in New York and a few were sold after I had left the city and arrived back home. On the way back we had a stay-over in Montreal and there I spent some very pleasant hours with some very near and dear friends. We arrived back in Nova Scotia with the same winds that bring the spring to Lunenburg and for a while I found it exceedingly difficult to de-excellerate down to the living tempo of a small town. I was all enthused and full of pep and ideas encouraged by contact with so much art in New York City. But naturally I finally brought myself sufficiently close to earth to go back into my little world and begin anew to paint the life scene that I know best. For me this was all just as easy to do as it is to write about here at this time, as I, like any other human, was in many ways influenced by different movements and schools. I had got back to myself however, and I guess I have pretty much stayed just about there since that time.

Within a short time after my return, one of my fondest dreams was realized when, in conjunction with my hard-earned savings and with the profits from the sales of the painting made at the exhibition in New York, and with the trade-in of my old sedan, I was able to buy a convertible—a car that I had so often thought of and thought would be so ideal for my use. In a moment of weakness and without premeditation I ordered a light cream colour and cream coloured it arrived, on a signal day, my birthday. I heard many remarks passed regarding the relative sea-worthiness of a convertible in this part of Canada. People said to me, "Why you'll freeze in that type of car in this part of the country", and as I was not familiar with this type of car, I wasn't always too firmly convinced that they weren't right at the

time of telling. Later, however, I found that it was quite satisfactory for my needs and up to this time of writing I am still using the same car in the same climate under the same circumstances, and I have yet to have been caught in any spot of weather where I have been uncomfortable. The first time I made my appearance in the town in the eye-catching vehicle with the top lowered, people stared and gaped as though I had surely gone mad this time. Later they seemed to have become used to the sight of me moving about the town in it as they now seem to have become fully reconciled that I like my little impractical cream car. I go riding whenever I can spare the time from painting in my studio.

I next came in contact with what has so far proved to be one of the best things that has happened to me since I first used a brush. While riding one day I met a very good friend of a very good friend who said to me, "Did you ever think of having your paintings reproduced on Christmas cards like the other famous artists, say like Grandma Moses." I had often thought that eventually this would be possible for me but up until that time there had been no concrete action taken by either myself or any other interested parties. My friend insisted that he bring in an executive head of one of the biggest publishing companies in Canada with affiliations in the United States, and after they saw my paintings and heard the story and publicity that had been achieved by the paintings, they finally decided that they were sufficiently interested to bring out a line of my paintings on Christmas cards for that year. I found all this quite exciting and thought that it would bring my work to the notice of a much wider and varied audience, as I knew some of the world's finest art now finds ready sale on Christmas cards.

I painted several subjects especially for them and with some indecision and uncertainty as to their suitability for reproduction, I sent them off to Toronto. They liked them very much and the following year my first paintings on Christmas cards appeared for sale all across Canada. They were widely admired and sold well, as the entire run was completely sold out a month before Christmas. I received many inquiring and congratulatory letters from points all across Canada and the United States, through the months before and after Christmas as the cards first went on sale during the summer. All this kept me quite busy as I got a number of commissions as a result of the appearance of my paintings on the cards.

I kept working away, sometimes slowly, and at other times at a little heightened tempo here in my pine-panelled workshop-studio.

In the earlier years of my life, much of my painting was done on location, out along the rugged coastline which lies all around my home, but in these later years I have been of neces-

sity forced to do a great deal more of it here in my studio. This also became more essential because I have in more recent years also learned that many of the technical refinements that are required to bring my work to a more professional-like high finish are easier obtained in the subdued indoor environment of a quiet working area. The physical angle also enters greatly into it, as I require the aid of some member of my family who is skilled and experienced enough to take me out on sketch and working trips, where I do so much work that requires the personal and untiring help of someone who is used to waiting on me in the trip to and from the theatre of action. These days were not uneventful as some of them brought forth quite interesting requests in the mail and often by personal contact, as people were coming to see my work and me. I was often faced with requests for material and information about my work and life, by people who had ideas that they would like to write, using my achievements as a basis for inspiration for others. I found my life not stagnant in many other ways also, as we had always been a very closely knit family, and we share each other's good luck and each other's trials and tribulations. Another thing that made life at this time, if not always interesting, still at least eventful, is the fact that producing my paintings is not always easy for me, as I have to take the good days with the bad days. Some of it looks as though it is so easily done once you see it lined and painted on canvas or paper, but behind all this, at times, if you could really see me in my throes of working, its irritation and frustration of many sorts, but along with all this I have always been supported and encouraged by my good neighbours and others; and of course, mainly by the members of my immediate family, to keep on working away, splashing paint on canvas, always with their avowed conviction that some day, somehow, somewhere all this working and striving, and sometimes scheming, will be quite worth while.

All through my life eventful and exciting things have been popping up unexpectedly. I never know who may be calling to see me; I am never really sure what ideas may be presented by the people. Since my work has been reaching a higher and wider audience, this has become often more pronounced because I am liable to be faced with ideas from artists or writers or newspapermen. Sometimes I am even subjected to gruelling tests from plain, every-day citizens. Since my paintings were reproduced as greeting cards, now more than ever I am liable to be faced with the unexpected. People come to me and talk to me about many different things; about themselves and about the things they are interested in. I find they often ask me leading questions about the things I am interested in, in the course of our conversations, and they often leave lasting impressions that give me food for thought, sometimes for days after they have gone. Some

of them talk about philosophy, some of them talk about art; some of them talk about just plain painting. They even discuss painting barns. There are others who may get wrapped up in talk about photography; then again there are those who are animal lovers and I have to try to be intelligent on the subject of dogs and cats, while still others get around to the old universal subject of health. I am sure that some of them go away feeling better after having talked with me about their particular little problem. Sometimes I almost feel as though I am a sort of father confessor to them. In all fairness, I think I should also state that I, too, at times yield to the temptation and unload some of my favorite quirks upon them. Thus I possibly find a little compensation in exchanged burdens.

I am sometimes truly amazed at some of the things that people will tell me; things that I suspect they wouldn't either dare to tell to others or wouldn't have sufficient nerve to broach. They tell me personal, intimate, private, even bordering on the dangerous thoughts, and I feel that this feeling of confiding comes to them no doubt largely because I am interested in carrying on long sustained friendly talks with them, and no doubt they feel at ease because I am a practised conversationalist. For after all, this talking to strangers has been going on for many years. It was rather forced on me as when people came to look at my paintings, they also came to look at me, and in doing so it led to a great deal of talking among us generally. Because of this, the unexpected things somehow then don't seem so unexpected to me.

In October, when the final plans of the Royal Visit were announced, it seemed only natural that I would plan to travel to Halifax, as I had in 1939, when the King and Queen came to Canada, to see the Royal couple. Whether I would actually get to Halifax or not at first seemed doubtful, but like most good, loyal Canadians, I should have known that at the last minute I would put forth almost superhuman effort to be in the City for that momentous event. My meeting the Royal couple and being presented to them was arranged under most mysterious conditions. I was not sure until practically the eleventh hour that I was really going to be presented to them, so I didn't have much time in which to get nerved up or get jittery, or get butterflies in my stomach. When the final word came that I was to be introduced to their Highnesses—then maybe I had started to get a little bit jumpy. This was the night before we were to leave for Halifax. I cannot here tell the whole or a very large part of how I really did come to see them at close quarters. People all across Canada were fighting with their Mayors, Members of Parliament, or Senators for just such a rare privilege. I really felt that I had accomplished quite an important mission, when I finally knew that I was definitely to be presented. The day of the Royal visit dawned a gray, drab, typical Nova Scotia fisherman's day. I was up early, as were the other members of

the family. I never move alone physically, not even to attend meetings with Royalty. I couldn't go to any presentation alone, as I am physically dependent on some attendant or member of the family. The rest of the family finally got ready to take off in the car for Halifax, and we made the trip without incident. The weather really developed into a full-scale Atlantic storm, arriving just about the time I did in Halifax. The Atlantic storm is really something to experience. When we have storms here, the weatherman doesn't mess around with any petty amounts of water—he really opens the floodgates, and when he turns on the wind, he doesn't fool around with any little ladylike hand-swayed fans. He really turns on a couple of billion electric fans somewhere in the vicinity of the mid-Atlantic. This gives you the effect of stepping into the biggest shower bath imaginable.

This was the kind of weather into which we unloaded the rest of the family, and the kind of wind into which I had to be projected before I could get into the shelter of the City Hall in Halifax, where the actual meeting was taking place. First, Don had to brave the barrier of Secret Service men, Naval, Army and Mounted Policemen. We had to be there a full hour before the Royal Entourage would appear on the scene. In the ensuing interim, we had to wait in a corridor lined with the City Fathers, their friends, notables and others of privileged rank.

I was interested in the people who by this time, were all about me. Some of them recognized me, and came up to speak a few excited words about what they were going to do and made inquiries as to what I planned to say to Their Highnesses, if I should be privileged enough to exchange a few words with them. I had no idea what I would say to them, if I did get a chance to talk to them. Brother Don, as always, played the part of good counsellor, so he was coaching me briefly in what he thought would be proper for me to say. As I am nearly always the rugged individualist, I take in one ear his good advice while all the time my own ideas are racing through my mind. I thought that I would tell them, if I told them anything, of how I had talked with the Princess' mother when she visited Halifax as Queen.

Outside the rain was still beating down, and I rather dreaded thinking that I too would have to finally venture out into it. The lines of people who were to be presented started to form, and I was at last told that we were to be the tail. Being the tail of a queue sometimes can be an advantage, as it turned out to be this time. For when we finally started moving out toward the platform on which the presentations were to be made, I noticed that the line had to go down the steps across the platform, and out to either side in the downpour, and there the people had to sit for about a quarter of an hour until the Royal party appeared on the scene, and they were then to come up on the platform to be presented, and pass over into the City Hall. When

my turn finally came to be taken down on the stand, Don, as usual, acting as my untiring locomotive power, pushed me out through the door and down some steps, on which we had a near accident, for as we got upon the steps we discovered that a huge oaken desk had been placed in front of the bottom step, making the passageway so small that we had to edge down sideways rather than straight on. This was quite terrifying to me, as I had visions of him turning me out of my chair and being dumped on the stage in full view of the thousands of spectators who were assisting the arrival of Elizabeth and Philip. But Don's steady, strong hands on the chair performed another spectacular "save" and gave me a three-point landing on all four wheels, on the platform beside the mayor. I must have looked rather forlornly out into the teeming rain, and my good friend the Mayor must have made a note of the fact that I would rather not leave the platform, for he quickly said, aside: "Why Earl, you don't have to go out there; you can stay with me here on the platform." Don then wheeled me to one corner where we settled ourselves down to await the big moment. It was a covered stand, so we were quite comfortable while we passed these final thrilling minutes. At last we heard the roar of motorcycles and could see the lines of the approaching cars, and we knew that the next arrival must be the Royal party. As they drove up in their black convertible, with the plexiglass top, I had an excellent view of Their Highnesses as I was right on the edge of the platform within speaking distance. The Princess certainly looked just as lovely as everyone said she was.

The people who were to be presented then started moving up to her and the Duke; were presented and moved on. Finally at the end of the line came our turn, and Don wheeled me a few feet across the platform. The Mayor then introduced me, and I asked her Highness about the state of her father's health, and told her how I had talked with her father and mother when they visited Halifax in 1939. Philip seemed to be taking a great interest in the conversation, and he added his five cents' worth. The presentation over, we made a move to leave the stand, and would have got out into the rain but Philip said: "Why, don't be foolish, stay right here where you are." So we did, and had a last excellent viewing of them as they went down the steps and got into their limousine.

This memorable event in my life was refreshed at Christmas, 1951, when I received a very characteristic Christmas card with a lovely picture of them taken during the tour, and autographed by both Elizabeth and Philip.

In spite of all the restrictions and frustrations life has offered me, I think I can truthfully state that it has also arranged some quite pleasant and rewarding compensations, as my life has been rather rich and full in many ways. I feel I have become a unique individual. When I look about and see others who have received

so little for so much effort, I deeply appreciate the great deal that has been given to me for my small efforts.

Trials will still go on, and I must still strive for better results in my paintings, but I have so many grand true friends, that life is really worth while. Leslie Bensen, also an artist, is always trying to encourage; also Harry Leith Ross, William Schwartz, Mrs. Harry B. Shane, Mrs. Margaret Landry, Charles Rawlings, Stanley Marks, Dr. Creighton.

My Triumphs are having a painting accepted, and now hanging in the National Gallery at Ottawa; also having a painting of the old schooner "Bluenose," bought by the Government, to hang in the main lounge of the new ferry "Bluenose."

Hoping many will buy this small book. I may some day Triumph, and have a larger studio, and thus may leave behind a few really good paintings, and be remembered as

*THE INVALID ARTIST.*

