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# Hard to top this tale of romance and adventure

**T**HE Love Boat can't compare with this true story of romance and wilderness adventure in the Atlin and Cassiar region of northern B.C.

It is a territory of forest covered mountains, deep valleys, plateaus and wild rivers with huge boulders, rapids and log jams.

Joseph and Madge Mandy met

in the summer of 1928 aboard the Alaska CPR cruise ship Princess Louise, going north to Skagway.

Joe was a mining engineer, born in South Africa of English parents who had migrated there to work for Cecil Rhodes in the development of diamond mines.

It was a piece of tough chicken on her plate, so tough she couldn't cut it, that brought Joe and Madge into conversation.

She was a dainty five feet; he, a strong, handsome six-footer. She was born in Jeff Village, Indiana, which made her a hoosier. She was a professor of speech (public speaking) at a Kansas college when she took this holiday trip.

Joseph was educated first in England, then at German universities to gain a PhD in mining. He then came to Canada, but was soon over in Siberia with our army engineers building railways.

Joe returned to Canada in the early '20s, came west and prospected for gold out of Alert Bay. He joined the B.C. department of mines as a field consulting engineer to help prospectors and



**PRIMETIME**

**CHUCK  
BAYLEY**

small mining operators. His field was from the Queen Charlottes to Telkwa and the vast, mostly unmapped virgin country north to the Territories.

This was the man Madge married in Vancouver's First United Church at Gore and Hastings in April, 1933. "There were only seven present: ourselves, the Rev. Andrew Roddan, two friends, the organist and soloist."

But back to the chicken on Madge's plate, during dinner on the Princess Louise in the summer of 1928.

"When I was a young girl, I heard of this wonderful cruise from a neighbor. I determined to save and some day take it. At Prince Rupert, I saw this man board the ship in dramatic fashion. The ship was starting to back away from the dock; a taxi came flying down; the passenger jumped out with a packsack, waving his free arm and shouting to the captain. The captain brought the Louise back alongside and lowered the gangplank.

"At supper that night, a voice on my right said, 'Could I cut that chicken for you?' That's how our romance began. He was going to Skagway. We talked for two days; we unfolded our lives. We were compatible even though he was of the rough north and I of the academic world.

"We continued to correspond, through Christmas '32 when Dr. Mandy (as she referred to him throughout our conversation), travelled to Jeff Village to ask for my hand.

"Wherever he went, no matter the danger, I was determined to accompany him. There was no danger because we both understood the wilderness. We carried a gun. A trapper gave us this eight-foot wolf skin. We were never touched by bears or wolves.



**MADGE MANDY with eight-foot wolf skin**

"For six years, until I became pregnant, we travelled by pack horses, dug-out canoes, bush freight planes and river boats on the Stikine.

"Remember, I had never ridden a horse, been in a canoe or plane, nor had I cooked over a camp fire or slept in an abandoned shack with mice running over us all night. I had never forded a river or edged along a log to cross a creek.

"We did this spring, summer and fall, and spent winters in Rupert. It was magnificent and I've written a book, *Our Trail Led North*. The problem is to connect with a publisher interested in publishing it."

Joe was transferred to Vancouver in 1943, retired here and died in 1968. A bush pilot scattered his ashes above Dome Mountain.

Madge says, "I carry no scars from those wilderness years except some arthritis in my hands, living as no other white woman has lived. I'm a senior senior. What great memories of nature's grandeur and our life together. It's all written, ready to be published and ready for those who have some feeling for the undisturbed north."