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*This issue's Back Page is written by Lorne Brown.*

**W**e Canadians are a diffident lot. Where other countries celebrate their traditional songs, we carry on blissfully unaware of some treasures. One such gem is the Prince Edward Island song "The O'Halloran Road", printed on page 20 in this issue.

The song is about a family's westward trek in the late winter of 1857. Of course, a westward trek in PEI is not very long; in this case some sixty miles from Malpeque to the present-day Campbellton.

Composer and life-long bachelor 'Uncle' Dan Riley was eight years old when he made this journey; his niece Mary Cousins sings it in the NFB film *Passage West*. I learned it from the singing of her son John, a well-known PEI school teacher, folklorist and singer, now retired. John is a second-cousin of our new Design Editor, Meryl Arbing.

It is, as storyteller David Weale says, "a gorgeous song", and I sing it everywhere I go in Canada to try to get it better known.

As stated earlier, it is a song about one family's westward journey. But I think it's a song for all of us. We all make a westward journey in our lives. For example, my family made their westward journey when the potato famine drove them out of Ireland in 1842 and they sailed to this new land in a little sailing ship which had brought square timbers from the Ottawa valley to Liverpool, eventually ending up in the Ottawa valley in a little place called Carp.

The journey does not have to be a westward one. Our First Nations people made their trek eastward, probably over the Bering Sea.

Joseph Campbell pointed out that the the first journey for all of us is the exciting one down the birth canal and out into the world.

In fact, it need not be a physical journey at all. We all take inner journeys, spiritual journeys, if you will, journeys of the soul, inner quests.

And we all have dark moments in our lives, those times when we feel lost, and "a great dense forest" stands in front of us.

That's when it's nice to know that the O'Halloran Road is just a few short miles away. May we all find our own O'Halloran Road

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