

The Petticoat Expeditions Series

PART 1

Anna Jameson



The Petticoat Expeditions uses the words and works of three extraordinary British women to recount their experiences in 19th-century Canada: acclaimed author Anna Jameson, who kept an account of her solitary journeys throughout Upper Canada during the 1830s, when it was unheard-of for a woman to travel alone; artist Frances Hopkins,

who depicted the legendary voyageurs and their way of life in her paintings as she travelled in the Canadian wilderness by canoe in the 1860s; and Lady Ishbel Aberdeen, social activist, who chronicled her excursions across the country in the 1890s in a photographic travelogue. This breathtaking series paints an inspiring portrait of three women who would not be constrained by convention, and ties their travels to key historical changes taking place in their times.

Part 1 looks at the life of author Anna Jameson and her two-month expedition through the Canadian wilderness.

Part 2 traces artist Frances Hopkins' journeys with the voyageurs during the final days of the fur trade in Canada.

Part 3 follows the life of Lady Aberdeen, who devoted herself to social reform and helped found both the National Council of Women of Canada and the Victorian Order of Nurses in Canada.

Narrated by: Helena Bonham-Carter 23 minutes, 29 seconds

Director: Pepita Ferrari Order Number: C9197 125

Producer: Kent Martin Series Order Number: 193C9197 128



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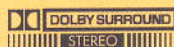
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VHS
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*The Petticoat
Expeditions Series*

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Anna Jameson

Anna Jameson

In 1836, Alexandrina Victoria, who would become the longest-reigning monarch in English history, was about to take over the throne. Social and economic upheavals, brought on by the Industrial Revolution, were spreading throughout Europe and abroad. Charles Darwin returned from a five-year scientific expedition that led him to develop his controversial theory of evolution, which he would later publish in *The Origin of Species* (1859). And author Anna Jameson left England to seek a final settlement of her marriage with her husband in Canada.

Born Anna Brownell Murphy, she was four when she emigrated with her parents from Dublin to England in 1798. She began her writing career at the age of 32, shortly after she married, with the publication of *Diary of an Ennuyée*. The book was a fictionalized account of her own disappointment in love that she had written while touring Europe as a governess a few years earlier. But because women writers were not yet widely accepted, Anna kept her identity hidden – like many of her female contemporaries – revealing herself as the author only after *Diary* unexpectedly became a bestseller.

Her next book, an analysis of the heroines in Shakespeare's plays, won high praise and recognition in Europe and America, securing her place in literary circles as a serious author.

By 1836, Anna had seven books to her credit – several of which addressed the position of women – when she joined her husband in Toronto. Anna's marriage, however, was not proceeding as smoothly as her writing. Not wanting to jeopardize her career, she had remained behind in Europe when her husband, lawyer Robert Sympson Jameson, had accepted an appointment as a judge in the West Indies in 1829, and later as Attorney-General in Upper Canada in 1833. Due for a promotion, he had written requesting Anna's presence as his wife. Her first impressions of Toronto were perhaps coloured by the bleakness of her winter arrival, coupled with her stressful circumstances. She described her new home as "a little ill-built town . . . with one very ugly church . . . some government offices built of staring red brick, in the most tasteless, vulgar style imaginable."

Director & Writer
Pepita Ferrari

Producer
Kent Martin

Camera
Savas Kalogeras

Editor
Denise Beaudoin

Sound
Diane Carrière
Norman Dugas
John Martin

Original Music
Judith Gruber-
Stitzer

Starring
Severn Thompson

**Executive
Producer**
Don Haig

Order number:
C9197 125

**23 minutes
29 seconds**



Her feelings toward her new surroundings and Toronto society in general ("a small community of fourth-rate, half-educated, or uneducated people, where local politics of the meanest kind engross the men, and petty gossip and household cares the women") heightened the isolation she felt in her troubled marriage. In the spring of 1837, while her husband considered her request for a legal separation, Anna travelled alone through Upper Canada. She recorded her observations and impressions in words and sketches, showing a particular interest in Indian lore, and in the status Native women held among their own people.

In 1837, Anna returned to England, legally separated, to resume her literary career. She published an account of her winter stay in Toronto and her summer journey through the Canadian wilderness as *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles*. The book is considered an invaluable contribution to Canadian history because it offers a rare portrait of a wide spectrum of early Canadian life. It remains in print today.

Anna continued, up until the time of her death in 1860, to write and to use the opportunities brought on by her prestige to voice concerns about the education and role of women. She is remembered as both an acclaimed author and an early feminist.

Questions for Discussion:

- 1) What factors do you think allowed Anna Jameson to break away from the traditional role expected of women in the 19th century?
- 2) The film states that women writers in Anna Jameson's time were feared. Why do you think this was? What other roles were women discouraged from pursuing in the early 1800's, and why?

Projects:

- 1) Identify some of Anna Jameson's contemporary female writers, the pseudonyms they may have written under, and their published works.
- 2) Conduct research to determine what were Darwin's theories on the roles and capabilities of men and women.