

THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

OTTAWA, CANADA, MONDAY, JUNE 11, 1956



THE ANONYMOUS PILGRIM

—Photo by Newton

Walks 50 Miles A Day In Anti-War Struggle

A slight, grey-haired woman who uses only the name of "Peace Pilgrim," arrived in Ottawa on foot on Saturday, on the last leg of her 248-mile trip from Toronto, having walked the last 100 miles from Kingston.

On her navy blue tunic, with numerous pockets in which she carries all her worldly goods, are the words "Walking 10,000 miles for World Disarmament."

Since she started her walking pilgrimage three and a half years ago, she has walked 8,600 miles and worn out 11 pairs of shoes.

"I first walked a continuous 5,000 miles which took me in a zig-zag pattern across the United States, from Los Angeles to New York City," she said.

"This 5,000-mile journey includes at least 100 miles on foot in every one of our United States and also our neighboring countries of Mexico and Canada."

Peace Pilgrim entered Canada at Niagara Falls, visited in Toronto, rode to Kingston and walked from there to Ottawa.

25 Miles A Day

She said she averages 25 miles a day on foot but has walked as much as 50 miles a day. The many people who stop to talk with her bring down her average to 25 miles a day.

"This journey," she said, "is undertaken as a pilgrimage on foot and on faith as an undertaking and as a prayer, and as an opportunity to talk with people and perhaps inspire them to pray and work also."

"My pilgrimage is for world peace and my special prayer is for world disarmament. I am not affiliated with an organization," she explained. "I started out unknown, penniless, with only the clothes I wear. I took a vow that I would remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the ways of peace, walking until I am given shelter and fasting until I am given food. I never ask for anything and yet I have never skipped more than four meals in a row—and here in Canada I have never skipped one meal. People have been very friendly to me."

Leaving Tuesday

Peace Pilgrim had her picture taken in front of the Peace Tower at the Parliament Buildings and said she planned to tour the tower today. She hoped to see the Prime Minister but had little hope as the House is in session. She leaves for Montreal on Tuesday and plans to re-enter the United States by way of Vermont.

She publishes a news letter periodically, "about every six months," in a religious vein, and sends it to about 10,000 people she has met en route. She seems able to remember the name of every person she has ever met or whose name she has been given.

She will not tell her name, her age, birthplace or religion—other than that "God is my religion."

She makes her headquarters in New Jersey.