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A Visit with Marguerite Gallant Marguerite Gallant lives at Cheticamp, at La Pointe on the island. On Hallowe'en she will be 83 years old. "I came into the world with the goblin and the owls and the pussycat." She makes wines and vinegar, has onions in the ground as soon as the soil can be worked, and keeps a gracious and welcoming home. Her home is known as a place where things will receive a welcome reception: shells and old dolls, photo? graphs, bits of glass and rock, antlers, book ends • things that others do not want and yet would not want to throw away, these things they bring to her. Her grandne- phew told us that in this house are many of those things he would otherwise never expect to see again in the world • paintings and objects he'd made as a child, kept safe in Margie's home. And to what comes to her, she adds things she has made, such as dried apples and potatoes she has painted and dressed like animals and small men. And as things gathered here, and were loved by Margie and displayed, the very walls of her house became her creation, developing into extraordinary collages. And it is in these rooms she lives, welcoming whatever comes to her, discovering the best in each thing. And it is here we visited her and had the conversation from which the following is taken. If it wasn't for nature I don't think I would have bothered to learn to read. I didn't like to read. But nature, oh, I don't know, I couldn't explain to you what nature is. When you look at a thing. When you want to look at something that is really wonderful, you look at the wild geese when they come. There may be a dozen different flocks of them, and they all fly different ways • some fly straightj some fly in a V, some fly in a triangle. And they always have a leader. And the minute that fellow the leader gets tired • oh, it is done so wonderfully. They just change that position. It's unbelievable. It's a miracle and a mystery. It's a God-given power of nature. That's what it is, to me. There used to be a blue heron. He used to follow me. And never moved when I came near. But I guess he died. Then there was a little blue kingfisher. I used to have an old table but the wind just blew it a- way. It was rotten really because it was made with old planlcs from boats sunk to the bottom of the harbour here. And the little kingfisher used to come and sit while I'd be shelling peas. She'd sit there and she'd go br-r-r-r-1, br-r-r-r-1. And one day she brought me • I believe she did it on purpose • a little yellow pebble. It looked like a pea. And then all of a sudden I suppose she died. I have the pebble in a little box here. It's unbelievable. I will show it to you. This is what my little kingfisher brought me* CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE, NUMBER FIVE SKIR DHU, CAEB BRETON, NOVA SCOTIA SECOND CLASS MAIL • REGISTRATION NUMBER 3014 Pi.)6*jT- (C*eoT TI?AM.,