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A Visit with Steve Whitty, Ingonish Beach I was born here in Ingonish, 1897. My father was born here. He fished mostly all his life. Farmed a little, but didn't do very much farming. Just what we needed to eat, stuff like that. My mother was born in Margaree. Came here with her parents at the age of a year and a half. She died at the age of 99. My father was going on 88 when he died. They had their 64th wedding anniversary in their house. Had Fr. Dolhanty over and they reviewed their marriage vows. All of their children but one that died as a child were there. Mike MacDougall's mother, Mary Ann, was the only girl of the nine that lived. And I think three at that anniversary were drawing the old age pension at that time. Used to go to the Bird Islands. Used to go up there to get bait, to bait our trawl gear. We'd stay there in the night. (What kind of bait?) Squid. Thousands and thousands of them. And there'd be as high as 21 and 23 boats up there. The large boats, now. Not like those boats here. They were the sailboats. Those times, there were no gasoline engines. Everything went by sail. That's a long while ago. We used to go out from Ingonish here to the Bird Islands, and there used to be a lot of Newfoundland boats come over--that's where the Newfoundland boats used to get their bait. And the most of them took their fish into North Sydney. But we used to split our fish and salt them aboard of our boats. Probably we'd stay up there 4 or 5 days before we'd come down home and sell them to Robin Jones or Capt. MacCuish. There were two buyers here at that time. But, my dear, that went on for years. (Do you use bait to get squid?) Steve laughs: No, dear. You catch them with squid jigs. You've seen squid jigs. All the little pins in it. You're liable to get as high as 4 and 5 on that jig at one time. (But how do you know they're there?) You know. They were out to the Bird Islands--that was the home of it. That's why we used to always fish up there. The darker it is, the better they'll jig. That's how we used to get so many in the nighttime. It was just like that, as fast as you could ever take them up with your jig. The least thing will take them up, but when they come up, boy, watch out. If that stuff ever went in your eyes, you won't do any more jigging for a long while. My son, I'm telling you right here. Some call it "ink." That's not what we called it. It's usually not so nice of a name. Especially when it went in your eyes, I can tell you that. (Did you ever have it happen?) Yes, thousands of times. After you jig your squid, you start baiting your gear. And then probably an hour or an hour and a half before daylight, you'd sail off down a piece to set your gear. Well, the way you used to set them, you'd have a torch. I don't know if you ever saw one. It was like a lamp, but the wick was about two inches, around that. The cylinder on the torch would be about 4 or 5 inches high, and then there was a ring on the side of the torch • and that went down over your trawl tub to show you how to set your gear. See, your trawl--7 lines of gear--was down into a flour barrel. The flour barrel had a piece of it cut off, and you made a "trawl tub," we called it. And then there were three holes went in that tub. There were two on one side and one on the other. And the rope went in this and you spliced it, and then you brought the rope over the other side and went in and tied it. Well, all right now. When you went to put your



gear in the dory, a man in the boat passed you the trawls and you fixed them in your dory--the 5 tubs. The other man was already on his oars, to row. When he'd pass you the 5 tubs to your dory, you were clear of the boat altogether. And then you start to rowing. Both dories were heading the same way, but you were probably 500 feet apart. Well, you'd go off then to the distance--whatever your 5 tubs of gear would be--there'd be 7 lines to a tub. Took you out almost a mile. Then, when you go to set your gear--you never saw it? (No.) All right, before you start to set, you tie your trawl onto an anchor--on the (64)