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Mary Ann MacDougall: Seeing a Droke from CAPE BRETON BOOK OF THE NIGHT
We were out dancing one night, me and my husband, and when we came out to the door, ready for home, he said to me, "Come and have a look at this. I've often heard you say you've never seen a droke." Well, I had good eyesight then. And it was coming this way, and it was going right queer, making a funny noise. It was up a good piece but still you could hear it. (Mary Ann made a sound: a kind of a hissing sound, a whoosh.) Yeah, some kind of a sound. It was going anyway, over toward the church. And I think it was the next day we heard of a death--I forget now, it was so long--it was only a young child that died. And it's buried over there in that graveyard, in the same place that light went toward. Then your brother, Gabe, fell off a truck and was killed. At the age of seventeen, wasn't it, Gabe, your brother (died)? And I don't know how long it was before he died, before this happened--it might have been three weeks--that he saw his own droke. He saw the light. And this is how I always believed and I always will till I die--that there are foretokens. Because he came in that night, he came right in the front door, he came in in an awful hurry. He opened the door right wide. We were in bed. And we had our bed downstairs. And I'll never forget. We had a trunk. He sat on a trunk. Gabe, I don't know but you remember that trunk. And he said, "Are you asleep. Mama?" And I said, "No." He said, "Did you see anything, did you see a light?" And I said, "No, dear." And just as the word came out of his mouth he said, "Awww"--like that, and away he went into a faint. My poor husband jumped up ahead of me and he grabbed the water and he went in and got a rag and washed his face with it. And I jumped up, half crazy. So anyway, when we got him back to himself again, he just sat in that same place--and we asked him what happened. He said, "A light. A light gave me that fright. I was coming home and there was a light ahead of me." He said, "It passed over 'e • It kept going." Now that's what you call a droke. "And it went to pieces right at our upper gate...." So, oh, we didn't know what in the name of God to say. Begin thinking this and thinking that. So, that passed on all right. About three weeks after that, maybe a month, there was a picnic here in Ingon? ish and he went with the rest of the boys. And on his way coming home, the dear fellow fell off of the truck and was killed. And when they brought him home, his remains were laid right at the upper gate. That's as true as I've got God to meet with. They left him there to come down to break the news to us.... Mary Ann's story is one of 50 told in the CAPE BRETON BOOK OF THE NIGHT: Stories of Tenderness & Terror, a new book from Breton Books, on sale everywhere (or order direct from Cape Breton's Magazine, Wreck Cove, N. S. BOC IHO • see pages 72 and 73). Price of \$14.25 includes GST and postage in Canada (orders to be mailed outside Canada, add \$1.50 per book). Mary Ann MacDougall, Ingonish Beach
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