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(Is it common for someone to sing at the bedside of someone who's dying?) Oh, it was years ago. And I often wondered about that. My God Almighty, I said, what's going on here--why would people do that? (How do you mean?) Well, it sounded so crass, somehow--a person is dying, and you're singing away at the top of your voice. But this was the faith they had. Which we haven't got. They'd be singing before a dying person. And they'd administer to him, you know. Now all these things are done at the hospital--they administer to the dying. The Indians did that in the old days. And they knew--how was it they knew that a person was going to die? Because of their experience, I guess. They knew just when a person was dying. And they'd gather, and they'd sing, and say a prayer. (When a person does die, the Indians--do they have a wake?) They had a wake, yeah. In the old days, they'd clean up the remains, you know. They'd put the remains in a cot or bed or somewhere. Clean them up and put clothes on them. And sometimes make clothes for that person that died. And then the men would get to work and make a coffin. They'd be hammering away all night. No such a thing as Curry's in those days. They were there, I guess, but these people weren't, you know, rich enough. So they'd get boards and lumber--the cloth. And they put the remains in there. And then there'd be a wake for maybe 3 days. And they had a custom--the Indians had a custom. And there's a little bit of comedy effect, anyway. Charlie Gould told me this story--because I brought it out--otherwise he wouldn't have told it, you know. I only said this as a joke. I said, "The Indians--if one person came in. NOVA SCOTIA DELIVERS. We have programs and services to assist established businesses as well as viable new enterprises. For complete information about these opportunities contact our regional offices • In Sydney LHC Building 295 Charlotte Street 539-4768 • In Port Hawkesbury Professional Building Church Street 625-3200 • In Antigonish Antigonish Municipal Building 42 West Street 863-5707 Nova Scotia Department of Development Honourable R.J. Thornhill, Minister 5151 George Street, Halifax Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2R7 902/424-8920 Telex: 019 22548 a Stranger from some other community, they'd all gather round the coffin and they'd sing. Say their prayers, their beads, and singing, and everything. When they were through, the person, you know, the stranger, is welcomed then. Now he was welcome, all right, but it was--what would you call it?--the proper thing was done, the custom had been fulfilled. So, 15 minutes later, another stranger comes in--all over again--the same thing all over again." And I said, "I guess maybe there was a little bit of competition there. Because let's say somebody died in Barra Head, and there was a group coming from Whycomagh or Bayfield, they made damn sure that they had a singer with them--somebody that could recite the beads, the rosary and that. And I very seldom saw a group of people coming without a prayer leader. And," I said, "I wonder if there isn't a bit of competition involved there, or a little bit of showmanship." My God, Charlie Gould opened up then. He said, "There is. There was. I can attest to that. Because I was with a bunch one time. And Simon Morrison was there. And," he said, "Simon was the driver. So there was old Stephen



Gould, my father, and there was Johnny Gould, and there was Noel Moore, and there was somebody else, another singer, and I was only a young fellow," he said. "And we came to this house in Bar? ra Head where--I don't know who happened to be waked at that time. Anyway, we ar- Herring Choker Deli At NYANZA, on Hwy 105 between Whycomomagh & Baddeck natural foods specialty ipdjan Bs' Bskery East Coast Kitchens "THE KITCHEN PROFESSIONALS" Don't Settle for Second Best!! We specialize in quality lines of cabinets & vanities. At East Coast Kitchens you don't have to look close... the quality and beauty stand out! Drop in your plans or make an appointment for FREE DESIGNS AND ESTIMATES. HURRY NOW-NO COST OR OBLIGATION EAST COAST KITCHENS If you're building or buying a packaged home, or remodelling your kitchen, don't settle for unfinished cabinets when you can have factory-built, factory- finished cabinets for the same price; or very little extra. 87 Industrial Dr., Sydney 539-9682 (55)