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Matheson got a little motorboat to tow the scow, and I went with him, I think it must have been in July, 1918, We operated it that year with that scow. Then the government built one • a flat scow with would carry four cars • built it in Baddeck, In 1919 we got the bigger scow and a better motor boat, A rope from the scow to the boat. And the cars came very fast. They began to improve the road. They gravelled it for the first time. It was just a mud road, you know. It was impassable in the spring and fall for automobiles. We continued that for six years. The ferryman he was subsidized a little by the government • besides what he could earn. We were charging two dollars a car • 5/8ths of a mile. It was a lot of money but the traffic was very light. But when the government built the Boulardarie • she was the first ferry? boat • she was powered • she had a diesel engine • she took 8 cars • and they charged 70 cents then. The driver and the car. Passengers were 10 cents extra. The scow was still used by the government in the winter when they took the ferryboat away. There was no car traffic. The roads were not plowed then. They left the scow and motor- boat and if the ice should happen to break up and a car or a wagon could get through • they ferried it. They'd cross on the ice if it was fit to cross but the ice was never really safe there, except in extremely cold weather. Jess Matheson and Capt. Smith; Roddy MacMillan "Then in 1928 or so "we got another boat about the same size. They were building larger ferries and we inherited this one from the Strait of Canso ferries, where the causeway is. The Breton. Then during the war • I went away in 1940 • they got the Pointe de Canso • inherited again from the Strait of Canso Ferry. That was quite a large boat; I think it would take 12 cars. After the war I came back, and we got the Sir Charles Tupper • inherited that from the Strait of Canso. The traffic was heavier there and they had to get larger and larger boats. We finally got two larger ones after the war • George H, Murray and the John Cabot • again from the Strait of Canso. And one of them burned down here, tied up at the wharf (George H, Murray), So then they built one for there • the Percy Black, called after the premier of Nova Scotia. I was retired then. I think the Black would take 20 cars easily. And the traffic had increased then that we carried over 2000 cars some days," Captain Smith continues to supervise all the ferries of Cape Breton from a building near the dock of the Ross Ferry at Big Harbour. He told us when he first came on the Ross Ferry, 1949, it was reaching 60,000 vehicles a year, when he took over as captain, 1954, it was well up to 100,000, In 1960, 180-some thousand cars crossed the Ross Ferry. On November 8, 1961, the day of the opening of the Seal Island Bridge, they ran the ferry" till 5 o'clock, and that was it. CAPE BRETON SHOPPING PLAZA SYDNEY RIVER • OPEN DAILY 'TIL 10 P. M, DEPARTMENT STORES A Division of the F.W. Woolworth Co, Limited BUY WITH CONFIDENCE SATISFACTION GUARANTEED REFUND OR YOUR MONEY REFUNDED ?? Cape Breton's Magazine/3