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Published by Ronald Caplan on 1988/6/1

Sid Timmons: Pit Stories I went in the mine when I was ten and a half, and I trapped a door for two days. That's opening and closing the door for the horses going in and out--the doors are for ventilation. On the third day, one of the drivers got hurt--got a bolt stuck in his foot. So--I was used to a horse around home--so, nату? rally, I volunteered that I'd drive. And, foolish enough, they gave me the horse. And I always remember the first horse. His name was Diamond--one eye. And if you spit in his face, he'd follow you around all day 'til he got a chance to rub it off on you. He wouldn't bite you or anything, but just follow around--and rub it off. Oh, yes. In the week's pay--the overman would make up the pay--well, if you unloaded a box of timber, you got 46 cents. That all went in as consideration. Timber and consideration. You know. Was no set rate--it would cover a multitude of sins. So, if you and I were working together, the only difference in your pay would be a ton of coal. The ton was never split in two. This week you got the extra ton, and I got it next week. If there was an odd ton--you know. That was the only difference in our pays, was the odd ton. But I had a dog. He was what they call a badger hound. And he'd tackle anything-- didn't matter how big it was--anything. And he'd stay with it. He didn't know what it was to back off. But anyhow, I was on the back shift all alone, so I decided to take him to the pit with me. You know--good company. But anyhow, you and I got our pay--and you'd always compare them--you know. We'd have the same, clear of that. This fellow drew his pay and he had ten dollars (over), and his buddy said to him, "How come, boy. you got ten dollars? You didn't work any extra time." So, I took him. And the first night, he got a rat. He grabbed the rat by the head--like that. And when he grabbed the rat, the rat grabbed his tongue. I had to kill the rat in his mouth--you know. But he never made that mistake after. He could kill them. "No. But," he said, "I sold a cow to the overman, for ninety dollars. And," he said, "he's paying me ten dollars a week for nine weeks. " Consideration. He said, "That's fine. He's got to pay me, too, or I'm going to squeal on him." So, the coal company paid a hundred and eighty dollars for the cow. But anyhow, he'd be with me all night. And, while he didn't have a check number--that was alright--he knew every move, you know. So, the first day I was day shift, Monday morning, I said to her, "Don't let this dog out 'til at least half past seven." Now, where I was going to work, he had nev? er been down there. And there was a door. He'd have to wait for the door to be opened to get through--you know.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 65 COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Jerry Holland and Paul Cranford (see pages 15-33). The stones are on the MacDonald farm at Wreck Cove. For more on field stones, see pages 11 and 52 inside.