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Bay area • 'being laid down. These are laid down in lime? stones and sandstones. And they are the product of an equa? torial forest • a rainforest like we see in Brazil or Zaire or Indonesia today. I don't know so much about the coal seams in Cape Breton, but I know that they're thick and they are certainly very abundant. And they're very similar to the coal seams in Britain, and in France and Germany. They're all the same age. They were de' posited in the Carboniferous Period. We're talking about fairly recent history, compared to the older part of Cape Bre? ton. We're talking about 300- or-so million years ago. ing: forest, drowned by sand; another forest developing on that, drowned by sand again; and so on, up through the maybe 20 or 30 million years of time. (When you say deposit, what we really are saying is that this was a forest in another lati? tude....) In an equatorial latitude, as Nova Scotia gradually moved northwards across the globe. (This forest grew, fell, and became compressed.) It rotted away, and the carbon or? ganic material became compressed into seams of coal. And every now and again a river would flood across those proba? bly ancient peat bogs and buried them with another layer of sandstone. So we have got a top to the coal seam. And then another forest would develop on top of that sand, and anoth? er coal seam would be developed. So we've got a sequence of coal seam upon coal seam. Mean- (And while this process is taking place,) Cape Breton is gradually moving northwards at a speed somewhere from 2 to 3 centimeters a year. And that really is about the end of the story. Because from then Cape Breton Island was really untn the ice Age, there reaiiy isn't any record of what was at the centre of a huge continent • happening in cape Breton Probably, Cape Breton was all far from the sea. We were in the southern latitudes, hot and dry. Cape Breton Boarding Kennels MODERN HEATED FACILITY FOR DOGS AND CATS • Open 12 Months • Indoor - Outdoor Dog Kennels • New Cattery Separate Building from the Dogs' • Certification of Vaccination Required 737-2281 R. R. #1, GLACE BAY, N.S. • Pick Up and Delivery Service Available • 'r HomEnergy ?? FURNACE OIL ?? STOVE OIL ?? LUBE OIL ?? KEROSENE ?? AUTOMATIC DELIVERY ?? BUDGET PLANS - SERVICE PLANS Serving SYDNEY, GLACE BAY, NORTH SYDNEY, NEW WATERFORD and Surrounding Areas 24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICES LeBlanc Fuels.Glace Bay..849-46261 Mercer Fuels....Sydney 539-7580 Cogan FuelsNorth Sydney .794-2010 above the waves at that time. It was not buried by any sea or ocean. It was a block of rock in the middle of a continent. If you think of somewhere like the centre of Asia • somewhere in Mongolia just now • that would be the sort of environ? ment that Cape Breton experienced through the next couple of hundred million years of time. We have no record of rocks in that time anywhere in the island, so we don't really know what was going on. We refer to that as our missing volumes. (In other words, everjrthing that we've talked about here is the condition up to that period. Which is • do we date that period?) The youngest rock that we have is referred to as the Pictou group. It's exposed on the shores of Bay St. Law? rence, and I believe is also exposed in some of the areas around by North Sydney to Point Aconi. And I'm not



sure exactly of its age, but it's going to be on the order of, perhaps 300 million years or so. The Pictou group is the name of the youngest formation. And in Cape Breton Island, it's made of sandstones, siltstones, shales, coals, and conglomerates.

Basically, throughout that last 290 million years of time, Cape Breton has been dry land. And when a piece of land is above the ocean waves, it doesn't really collect sediment. Sediment is washed off it, and so there's no record, really, of what was happening. Nothing was being laid down to record the passage of time. And nothing was rising up. It was a stable continent • as stable as the heart of North America is today. That's why there's no story. No magma is being produced, no volcanoes, no plutons. Any rocks that are being worn away, the material is simply being taken off by some great river and deposited far, far away.

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