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given half a chance he'd go back to it today. It's in your blood. His father. His grandfather before him. Probably his great grandfather before him, who came from Ireland. It's down through the years and it's just Murphy's moonshine. Rory: You know what, I was proud to be a moonshiner, boy. At least no one told me what to do. If the kids were all grown up and I didn't have any worries on my shoulders • yes, I'd go back at it and go back at it tomorrow. Just that I like making it, that's all. It's not what I'd make off it, but I'd just like making it. I mean, it's a good life. You're sitting by a nice brook there, you've got a still going, you've got a drink when you feel like it. Have a little bite to eat and enjoy yourself. Rita: It wasn't easy. And it wasn't the life of luxury, that's for sure. It was hard. It was hard on the kids. At the time they were only small. There's a lot in it, a lot that I can't explain, really. The wife of a moonshiner? If I had to do it all over again, I think I'd do it. You meet a lot of people • awful lot of people • and you get to know your Royal Canadian Mounted Police very well. There were good times. Though we didn't abuse it. Only for moonshine in those days I don't know where we'd be at because all my kids were small. I had five babies ranging from crib to just walking age. And we weren't eating the best • but we were living. But there's an awful lot of worry to it. And it's hard work. Don't ever kid yourself that making moonshine is easy because it isn't. It's hard. Yes, I played a part. I used to go to the woods. And there's many a gallon I carried across the Glace Bay highway in a baby carriage. There was a lot of traffic up and down this road and a lot of knocks on the doors. And you never get any rest when you're making it and selling it. But I'd never allow it to be drunk in the house. And then your al? ways on your toes. You're watching the windows and you're going to the door, wondering if a mountie's going to come in the yard or not. But you're always sure of a loaf of bread on your table if you always have a drink of shine around. Never go hungry. I mean you wouldn't have steak or any of these luxuries but you were always sure to have beans, bread or whatever. You were never down without anything in the house to eat. Because you were always waiting for someone to come and buy a bottle and you were sure before that night was out that you wouldn't go to bed hungry • you'll have something to eat before you'd go to bed. The neighbours were good. The people who came to buy, they all knew Rory. We even had professionals coming to the house, buying. But that was not as weekly as the coal miners would. We trusted them all • except for the exception. We never made any money though. We never held a bankbook or had a new car, new home or anything • it was just a struggle...that was all. I suppose if I had to do it over again • I'd do it. I'm older today...but to look back on it, if I had my day over, sure I would. Rory: As far as me making moonshine, I only did it to make a living off it. I didn't do it to make money off it. Put a bite to eat on the table and clothes for school on the kids' back • that's all I made out of her. Our thanks to Eric MacEwan who first told us about Rory and Rita and who shared tapes of his own interviews with them, which make up a portion of this article. 'Som CAPE BRETON SHOPPING PLAZA SYDNBT RIVBR \_ OKN DAILT 'TIL 10 ? . M. BUYWimcONRDBICE SATISFACTION



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