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Murdoch MacDonald then. They had big long oars --eighteen- foot oars. One oar, one man-- that was it. When it would come flat calm you had to row. Well, there'd be three oars in the boat. One of them wouldn't be very big. Other two would be. And then the fish pens, covers for the fish pens-- boards--well, these all floated. Well, Uncle John could swim, but he wasn't going to try to swim from there ashore. They were way off on the bank, on Fourchu Bank. Be over two, three miles off, see? And Murdoch and the other fellow each had an oar. And Uncle John, I guess, had this little oar, and some of the stuff, too. This fellow from Grand Mira, he could swim. And he had the notion that he could make it. So he shucked the oar--he didn't keep the oar--and he started to swim. Now, after I would like to congratulate the management and staff of Cape Breton's MAGAZINE as they celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the magazine's founding. Cape Breton's Magazine has contributed a great deal towards the preservation of our multi-ethnic culture here on the Island, and I sincerely hope that their work continues long into the future.

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that big puff that struck, you know, then there was nothing--just a gentle breeze. But they saw him go--Uncle John did. They saw him being got so far, and he went down. Well, Murdoch was there with my Uncle John. And Uncle John had this other oar and then he got it instead of the boards. And Murdoch had the oar.... Well, there was no sign. There were no boats around them, you see--no other boats handy. There was a schooner picked my Uncle John up in the afternoon, coming down. You know that would be the route for coasting schooners--freighters used to come down. (What time was it when the boat...?) It was in the morning. I don't know--it would be before mid-morning anyway. 'Cause they'd be out there not too long before daylight. They'd row out--perhaps leave at midnight and row out. Wooden oars--they said wooden ships and iron men, but I guess that's what--the wooden oars--a wooden engine and an iron man. (Annie Shepherd. Art's niece: So he drowned when he was with the oar, did he, this Murdoch?) This Murdoch? He just gave up. (Annie: Fagged out, I guess.) Now Uncle John's talking to him, trying to get him to hang on, you know. But he was losing courage altogether. He just gave up-- threw up his hands and went.... That's how Murdoch MacDonald.... It was along in the afternoon, quite awhile after that. Uncle John still hung onto the oar. Along in the afternoon this coasting vessel was coming down, a schooner. He was right in their track--they saw --they picked him up. (Annie: Did the boat sink right there?) Oh, the boat sunk--she went complete, yeah. But Uncle John lost another boat. It was a schooner this time, too, coming, winged HORYL'S Superior Stmsagc Co. jCtd. 5247 Union Hwy. • NEW WATERFORD • B1H 4K4 Phone 862-7177 or 862-7178

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