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Still in there. And the other 4 dragermen came out. There was one of them wasn't feeling just right. So they asked me, would I go in, see what we could do about getting the other fellow out. So we got a stick so long and held onto it so we wouldn't lose ourselves in the smoke. Just two of us. (You had the drager equipment on then?) Oh, yes. I got it from the regu? lar dragerman that was sick. And it came out at the inquiry that this was the bad e- quipment. So we went in to find the man. We got to him, might have pulled him 30 feet or so. He was a big man. My boss, when he was helping me put the drager e- quipment on, had said, "Whatever you do, be careful." He said, "We lost one drager? man. Watch yourself." But I guess this e- quipment was leaking. There was an air line going in. Next thing I knew, I had fallen over the air line. I was bent dou? ble, I was looking at my feet. And I was just thinking to myself, Look where I am after being told to be careful. I was lucky enough. This fellow got an arm over his shoulder, got me out to where I could get fresh air. They gave me artificial res? piration. (And the other man?) Well, they were awhile getting him out. I was in the hospital then. (And he died, too?) Oh, yes. Two dragermen died that night. (Allan, back in 1943, you were certainly a- ware that being a dragerman was not a safe thing to be. Why did you continue to do it?) I don't know. It wasn't a compulsory thing by any means. But you have men today that were at the Springhill disasters and the disaster at 26, fire at 26--they go back at it. I was studying all the time, advancing, underground manager's papers and things like this. And you were learn? ing. You were learning more about other collieries. If I hadn't been on that drag? er crew, I would never have been down an? other colliery but the one I worked in, you know. So you were learning. And the as? sociation. It wouldn't be only your drager team that would have practice that day. Might be three teams. And you got ac? quainted with the other dragermen. And when the dragermen got together, it was all pit talk. And then, well, you know, when you're 24, 28--maybe there was a lit? tle bit of pride, too. That you're a drag? erman, representing your colliery. If I had my day over, I'd do the same thing.

Gordon Whalen, Glace Bay: A fire in a mine isn't like a fire anywhere else in the world. First of all, a fire in a building, the outside world is probably only through a door or a window to you, if you're caught in that building. Or blow a hole in the wall. But the outside world's maybe 5 or 6 miles away from the guy caught in a mining fire. Different thing altogether. You have very little carbon monoxide from a fire on the surface because you've got all the atmosphere of the earth to dilute the CO. But in the mines, she's loaded with CO when you have a fire, because the fire's in a confined space. It's been known for a guy to die two miles from a fire from carbon monoxide poisoning--two miles away in the mine from a fire. It's a completely different world. So the fire's got to be handled very dif? ferently. You can get very close to a fire in a building or on the surface, and put water on it. You may not get within 1500 iB /" 1 j MEMBERSHIP NOTNUMBESHIP ISmr Credit Union Provides Rill Financial Services... for Your Kind of Lifestyle. We believe in people working together for a better future . . . and a better now! Our services prove it. Credit



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