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It's just like, if you were sitting on the chair here, you could picture yourself with the floor just leaving right here against the walls, and jamming you right up on the roof. Everything, This is what happened up at Springhill. I never saw anything like that. The roof wasn't down. What really happened there was that the floor came up and - went up to the ceiling. That first night I went down there, it looked like somebody took a saw and sawed out the floor, and that whole block just came right up into the roof. Where we went in on the top level was very low. It was almost unreal, what was there a- head of us. Our job was to clear out that level. The air would be returning out that level, and up the airway to the surface. But with the obstructions that were there, and the way the floor was lifted and heaved and everything was thrown around, it had like almost a complete blockage of air. And when the barefaced men tried to get in the bottom levels and centre levels, they were turned back by the amount of gases that were there. So our job was to put our gear on, go down into that place and crawl into that top, and try to clear up some of these obstructions and get the air flowing. So most of the bodies that were taken out, and people that were taken out, were taken out by the barefaced fellows, because they had more access than we did to the people. The way the obstacles were there, to try and get through, the size of the stone that was there. You know, you had no way of getting around it without--you'd claw out with your hands, and you'd load it on the stretcher, and they'd pull it out a piece. and you'd try and find a place to dump it. Stone, (And you're doing this with a pack on your back and your face covered?) No. We had a mouthpiece and a nose clip, when I was there. (This was an older machine?) And a heavier one. It was quite different from what we have today. A lot lighter today--28 pounds--where we had 40 pounds on our back. And besides that, this equipment was all manual, that you had to stop every 15 minutes or so, clear the bad air out of it. If you didn't, you got an awful back pressure, you couldn't breathe. But with the newer equipment today, that's all automatic. Anyhow, what we were trying to do was to clear the obstructions that were blocking that air. So once we got that clear, then this would allow the barefaced men to go in? to that area--so they'd have good air to go in to work with--or good as possible, to keep them alive. And they'd be able to work, and try to dig their way in. And thank God they did, because at the top there were people waiting, in that little corner they had up there, that was after falling around them--so many men that were alive. They got them out--it was just a miracle. I remember back in 16 we sealed off the east side. What happened was they were brushing in the place--the shotfirer fired the top stone, shot it all, and it was cleaned up. So all that was left to take was the bottom brushing. They take that bottom stone in order to put their road rails in. And he fired a shot, and there must have been a pocket of gas in the strata above, and when he fired, it ignited that gas. And this was just blazing, A lot of fellows stayed with the overman and they " Come for the summer, ' stay for the fall colours- X you are welcome to Victoria County "CIAD MILE FAILTE" • ' One Hundred Thousand Welcomes VICTORIA COUNTY The Warden. Councilors and



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