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day, a gang of them looking for horses. There was no problem to sell them, you know. And they would get them fairly reasonably. As the years were going on, the mines were expanding and there were more men getting hired on, more coal production--and that increased the horses. In 1925, that was the year of the big strike, the coal company took all the horses out of the mine-- they were digging in for a long strike. They loaded them in boxcars and they took them into Sydney, into the old fertilizer place there at Ashby. It's not going now. The steel company was down flat at the time, and there was a big stable down there. We had over 700 horses--ponies and horses. The ponies we used for the Emery seams. They were low seams, about 2 feet, probably 3 feet at the most. When the miner was loading coal, he was practically on his knees; he had kneepads on. And there was just barely enough room to get the coal in between the roof and the top of the box. And the little pony had to haul those boxes that were over about a ton, A pony is much stronger than a horse, in proportion, and a little longer than a horse. The larger seams now, they could take a 5- foot horse or a little better. But a pony was only 12 hands, about 3 feet, to the shoulder. That's where they measure them, on the withers, And that's how they bought them, by the hands. The different collieries wanted so many horses a certain height for different places. In those days, the horses never came out of the mine, A horse went down in the mine and stayed there year in and year out, if he lasted that long. And never saw daylight till back, I guess, in the '40s, It was sometime around that. When the miners started getting vacations, they started taking the horses up. And the horses really enjoyed it when they'd get in the fields, big pasture there. As soon as they'd hit that field when they came out of the pit, you could see them race from one end to the other and kicking their heels in the air. Really, they enjoyed it. They'd be a little, likely, snowblind when they'd come out at first, from being in the dark so long. But they wouldn't be long when they'd adapt to the daylight. I remember lots of times they'd be coming out of the pit, and there'd be a puddle-- they'd jump--they're not used to seeing that, you know, a little puddle on the road. That is, from the colliery to the pasture. They're skittish, because in the pit all they'd see was what was ahead of them. But they managed very well. Bert Gouthro, Glace Bay: The men's livelihood depended on them--certainly it did-- to haul their coal. That's all I could say the horse did, was just haul the coal. Oh, probably they would be hauling stone or something else, when they would be brushing--but mostly coal. I was 27 years of age when I went to the pit. And at that time, yes, I was driving. Driving means hauling the coal from the face. The miners loaded it. You hooked your horse on and hauled it out to the landings where the trip hauled it up the deep. You took your empty boxes and the chain dropped them in off the landing, off the deep. You'd hook onto the horse and perhaps you might have 1500 feet of a haul. You'd perhaps have two pair of men or maybe three pair of men that would be filling your boxes. They were the miners, loading it. Sometimes the driver, if his men loaded enough coal and the haul was long, would get the high rate • After 1500 feet, you got 15c a



ton or 17c a ton for hauling it. I didn't qualify for the high rate until I was at least 1500 feet in. After 1000 feet you'd get what they called the middle rate. This was contract driving, travelling on rails, underground. Sometimes the horses would have to work double shifts. Perhaps they'd work day shift, then work night shift. Sometimes the coal company was criticized for people working their horses double shift. But it's not as bad as it sounds. Because by the time the driver would get to the stable to get his horse out, it'd be probably 7:30 in the morning; and he'd probably have to walk half a mile or 3/4 of a mile to where his horse was working. And probably his men would get done early and the horse went back in the stable again at 1 o'clock. And then the night shift wouldn't come for him until maybe 4:30 or 5 o'clock. So he actually wasn't working a real long day. See, he worked a spell in the morning and he had a good rest. Take him to the stable and give him his bellyful of grub. They probably took him out again in the evening. But they didn't do that continuously. If they were short of horses or something, probably the horse would have to take his turn working a double shift. I often used to tell them, put up an argument that lots of horses working on a farm--a farmer's got to make hay while the sun shines. He gets out early in the morning, and probably that horse will be going (39)