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John Angus MacNeil, Inverness: I was through a whole lot of it. I enlisted in '14. I landed in Halifax May 1st, 1919. You see, the war was over in 1918. Okay. We were marching on toward Germany. I only got to the Rhine. I didn't get into Ger? many. The Nova Scotia government called all the miners back. So we were up just to the Rhine. We started back, got into E- tapes. And we were there for God knows how long, because our documents were lost. And we didn't get back to Canada till May, 1919. (How was the greeting when you got home?) Oh, God bless you, wonderful, because my mother and father, brothers and sisters-- all very glad to see me. (Did Inverness put on a parade?) Oh well, of course, yes. When we landed at the station down there-- trains were still coming in then--well, the place was just black with people. I re? member on my way home from Hawkesbury, there was a certain gentleman there, he said, "We're having a dance tomorrow night in memory of the returned soldiers, and here's my invitation to you.." So I went to the dance that night, had my uniform on. So from there on, we just worked along. Far as I'm concerned, I never thought very much of it as far as being a hero or any? thing else, I thought I was just doing what I should have done. I came back and went in the coal mine. First of all, when I came back, I couldn't get a job here. The manager said to me, "What are you looking for?" I said, "I'm looking for a job." "Where are you from?" I told him. Said, "I left a job here, and I was told, when I .came back I'd get it." "Oh, there's no jobs here." "Can't stay here," I said. We were getting a few cheques, you know, but they weren't going to last forever. The lumber camps down in St. Ann's were working then. So I went down there. That was in July. And the flies near had us. Just worked one day there. I came back home. I said to my moth? er, "I'm going to Boston. I'm going to look for a job," My sister was in Boston. So I went down next evening and I bought a ticket for Bos- ton--\$15 to Boston--just imagine! So I landed in Boston, at my sister's. I was talking to her husband. He didn't know if he could help, but he'd do everything he could. I told my sister, "I'm going to take a walk down Washington Street." So I had my button on, you know, return button. So I was walking dovm, and I met a fellow. He said, "Hello, Canada." I said, "Hello. Do I know you?" "No, but I know your button. I'm one of them. When did you come up?"- I said, "Day before yesterday." "Looking for a job?" I said, "Yeah." "Take that button off you." I said, "What?" "If you want a job, take that button off you." I said, "You mean to say that they won't hire you if you have that?" "No, no." I had to do it. I was ashamed to do it, but I had to do it, because I was hungry. That's as true as I'm telling you, God's truth. I went back home to my sister's place and I told her the whole story. "You wait till Dick comes"--that's her husband. So I told the story. He said, "Wait, John,don't go away today. I'll see what I can do tomor? row." So, by God, he went down and spoke to the boss in a factory. He said, "John, there's a job there if you can stand it. It's not a nice job--it's oiling." What they were doing was hydraulic machines: there were big plates of copper, and they were squeezing that to make tubes where soft drinks were given. But you'd have to be pouring oil on it, pouring oil on it. I said, "I'll try it, anyhow." So I tried it--but oh, the oil was so bad,



gave my? self a headache. I had to give it up. So I came back home then, went back again to the pit, and I got a job. But the happiest day of our life, when Gen? eral Foch (Commander-in-Chief of all the Allied armies in France) took it over. Gen. Foch took the matter over on the 18th of July, 1918. We started that advance, and we never stopped until she ended, under Gen. Foch, God bless him. So I went back to the coal mine. I started working the coal mine. And then I got mar? ried. I married a very happy woman. And the first son I had, I called him after Gen. Foch. And poor dear soul, he went to the Second World War and was killed. So that's my history. Our thanks to Ian Macintosh for access to Katharine McLennan's paintings, presently in the care of the McConnell Library, Syd? ney. Halifax Explosion photos are from the Beaton Institute, University College of C.B.