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can't do it. Cheticamp today is modern. When I went there, it was not modern. What a letdown. For a start. (And you were 16?) That's right. (Your parents, what did they say?) I never told them, actually, the way things were. No. Because my mum had a large family too. I didn't want to-- I knew she couldn't help me. She helped me in a sense, later, that she would send me clothing for the children. (Were you able right away to do what you would call women's work in Cheticamp, as compared to the work you did in England?) Well, yes. I cooked meals and scrubbed floors and washed my kids' clothes on the scrubbing board, you know. And drew the water from the well--there was no indoor plumbing or anything. (Had there been in England?) Oh yes. We lived in the city. Gee whiz, we didn't even plant a potato. If we planted anything, it was flowers. (Did your husband ever say, "I'm sorry"?) No. He was so happy to get back to the land and to his fishing boat. It was hard on me, but I understood. He wasn't happy in England, I wasn't happy in Canada. (But you were able to make a family together.) Oh yes. (Today, that marriage would have ended in an hour.) Definitely. Today, you have transportation all around you. When I went to live in Cheticamp, there was one car. I cried enough tears to float a battleship. I used to go sit up on the hill and cry and cry. I was so lonely. I was so despondent. I couldn't talk to them, they couldn't talk to me. But they were very good to me. The diet--they used to salt their meat and fish to keep it over the winter. That's what it was, a salt diet, and I couldn't go to that at all. So my mother-in-law, she did the best she could for me. She used to say, "Well, would you like some potatoes with butter on them?" Yes, I would like that. But we were three generations living in that house. There was myself and my husband, his parents, his grandfather, and his grandmother. And the grandparents, they didn't think much of that--that I should have butter on potatoes--they thought it was really a waste. Why couldn't I eat like they were eating? But I couldn't. I really couldn't eat salt meat, salt fish--I couldn't eat it. So I existed mainly on butter, potatoes and butter, and preserves--my mother-in-law used to make nice preserves, and homemade bread. She taught me how to make homemade bread. Eventually, I learned. The very first word of French I learned--my mother-in-law was going out to the potato patch, weeding or something. I was all alone with the grandmother. And I wanted to sweep the floor, I wanted the broom, and I couldn't find it. So I was making signs--eventually she caught on. She went and got the broom--she said, "C'est le balai." So I kept that word--there, it was "broom" in French. My husband would go away to the fishing cabins. He would leave on a Sunday night, come back the following Saturday. So, all during the week--conversational French is like in English, there's a lot of repetition--the words, you know. So, I would try and hold on to a word or two, and when he'd come home on the weekend, I would tell him what I had held in my head, ask him what they meant. And he would tell me. And eventually, I could put a few words together, eventually I could make a sentence, and then I could converse a little bit. And when my first baby was born--well, before he was born, I used to stay in my bedroom. My mother used to send books, and she used



to send me material and patterns to make baby clothes, and I would stay in my room. But once the baby was born, I had to mingle with them, to go into the kitchen to get the warmth from the fire, to bath the baby. Couldn't do that in the bedroom, with no heat. So by that means, I started to converse. And they helped me as much as they could. And I was young, and when you're young, you learn easily. And then again, there was something else. There was the question of religion. I was not a Catholic. We lived in Halifax for two years; in there it didn't make much difference, because you didn't know your next door neighbour. But when I went to Cheticamp, oh boy. I was in trouble. One day my husband said to me, "We'll have to go and see the priest." It was- in the winter, I think it was March, and Cheticamp Harbour was frozen over, or the bay. We went over the bay, and went to see the priest, and--oh, my stars. He wasn't a bit enthusiastic. I was three months pregnant. I had no children at that time. "A good Treasure Cove Gifts and Handcrafts BRASS GLASS HANDCRAFTS CHINA TOYS WOOLENS LEATHER GOODS TARTANS A SELECTION OF QUALITY BOOKS Phone 564-8158 Corner Charlotte St. & Townsend St. Sydney ym Ski Loft 199 Townsend St., Sydney SKI SUITS by Woolrich Joffe Liffa Sunrise Ellesse Fera Roffe SKIS by Fisher Elan Volkl Dynstar Elan Sundins > Cross Country BINDINGS by Looh Salmon Tyrolia Marker Phone 539-7165 (49)