

Page 12 - Dan Alex MacLeod: a Working Life

ISSUE: Issue 41

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1986/1/1

Danny was going into Grade 9. See, the teacher here taught him till Grade 8, and a very good teacher. When he was going in? to Grade 9, he was going to St. Peters. And Kenny Angus Ferguson was going up to St. Peters, and I told him, "Pick up Grade 9 books for Danny." This was just a week before the school started. So when he came back, he said, "They haven't got them. Have to wait two weeks till they see if there'll be any left over in Arichat or L'Ardoise or someplace." I jumped in the truck. I went up there, and I said, "I'm here for Grade 9 books for Danny, my son." "Oh," she said, "we haven't got any. We've got to wait a couple of weeks." "Well," I said, "order a set." "Oh, can't do that." "Well," I said, "let me use your phone." I said, "I'll call a fellow in Halifax, and I'll guarantee you there'll be a set of books on that express coming out of Hali? fax." I have a first cousin in Halifax--oh, he'd tear the damn place apart if he wouldn't get what he wanted. She went into the back room, boy, and came out with a complete set of books. Just holding them there to see if any of the other schools wouldn't need them, and to hell with my son down here. I got the books, anyway. (So you really feel that this end gets the last of everything.) Oh, yes. Always has been the case. Oh, I trapped. I bet you I wasn't much big? ger than that fellow (Dan Alex's young grandson) when I got an otter. Oh, I could trap, oh yes. I used to trap muskrats and set snares for fox. (How did you learn?) My grandfather. (What would he tell you?) You wouldn't understand it, it'would be Gaelic. It'd be just telling you how to set it, and showing you, and setting one, that's it. That'd be all Gaelic, you know, there'd be no English. Then it was a good thing he did teach me, because in the Hungry '30s, in 1931 and '32, I worked at McGuire's Ice in Sydney in the stmimertime--\$3 a day. And I used to guit the 15th of October and come home and get my trapline ready. And then when the season opened, I used to leave as soon as it would be light enough to see in the woods. And I'd go in here and travel all the back country. Twice my wife got people to go looking for me--I wouldn't be back. But I made twice the money in the trapping season that I did all summer in Sydney. (Did you enjoy trapping?) Oh, did I ever. Any day I'd enjoy it. I used to make sand? wiches of beans. You know, to make the bread right juicy. Oh, I loved that. I'd have a sandwich in this hand, and I never stopped to eat it, I just kept walking. I remember one day in the wintertime, I got 5 fox, and I had to skin 2 of them, they were too heavy to carry. And I got some other little furs beside, muskrat or mink or something. Duncan MacLeod, he'd be another old man that, after my grandfather died, he was pretty old, he was dying--he was telling me wrinkles about catching fox. Just how to set your snares. See, lots of people set them round; he used to make them kind of oblong. How to set things so it would kill them, you know. So that they'd get choked, so they wouldn't cut the wire. I Keddy's Motor Inn 600 King's Rd., Sydney, N.S. 164 Rooms Air Conditioned Colour Cable TV Licensed Dining Daily Features Restaurant Hours 7 a.m. 5 p.m. 2 p.m. 9 p.m. Featuring Cape Breton's Only Complete Indoor Recreation Facility • Pool • Sauna • Whirlpool Bath • Oasis Pool Bar • Games Machines ENTERTAINMENT& DANCING NIGHTLY AT IVORY'S LOUNGE For Reservations Phone



539-1140 DRIE DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION working to develop: • manufacturing and processing industries • export trade • tourism • medium & high technology ocean industries • Cape Breton investment, by means of the Cape Breton Tax Credit OUR OFFICE IN SYDNEY Main Floor 66 Wentworth Street Sydney, Nova Scotia BIP 6T4 Tel: 564-7007 Manager: Ed Mroz Canad'a