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steamer "Saint Mala" at Sydney Coal Pier There was another fellow, they were lower? ing a chute one time, they tell me--I wasn't there then. The chute let go or something. You couldn't exactly say what happened--let go and he was fired over? board. He struck the water, and that was the end of him. Quite a drop, you know. That was the end of him. (When a person got hurt, what kind of com? pensation did they have?) Not very much. They had a little. I forget what I got. I know they had me cut down to \$10.60 or something like that, a month, at the end of it. When I went to work, I was cut, off it altogether, Sandy MacLennan: Well, I could tell you a story about a fellow going through. It'd be shortly before I went on the Pier--a- round about 1919 or 1918, or somewhere. And this fellow--it was sucking down through a hole, you know--a hatch you'd call it. And he decided--wondering--so he put the shovel in the coal, to see what would happen. And it dragged the shovel out of his hand. He couldn't get it back. And went. Then like a darn fool he turned around and put his two feet into it. And this sucked him down. And God dam. It was only an 18-inch hole--18-inch square hole. He put the two feet onto it, and let it go. And he couldn't get back again, once he started. (The coal started sucking him?) Yes, it was sucking him down. He went through it. And he came out the other end. He went that whole stretch, which, I guess, 30 feet or more--till he came out through that 18-inch hole. And his two hands were (at his side)--that's what saved him. If his two hands would've been any other way, he couldn't have got out of it. Abbie Neville: Some time when you're trim- ming a boat, you'd have the trimmers down working below and the coal would be coming from the top. Sometimes if the coal is com? ing too fast, the boat might take a list, and the coal would move. We were loading a boat once with nut coal. Nut coal is like marbles. And we buried two of them one time. But we got them out in 5 minutes. We know--there's always a deckman knowing-- and when he stopped, he knew the men were buried. The rest, they jumped in with their shovels and they got them out. Then you'd go to the captain and get them a drink, and they're cured again. They weren't hurt.. But they were buried in the coal, buried head and all over. You had some close calls. We had one old trimmer, he wasn't buried in the coal, but I think he fell asleep into it. The boat was at the pilot station, and when he woke up, the boat was heading for England--had to get the pilot boat to send him ashore! Gordon Kehoe: It was hard work. That's what it was, it was hard work. You'd be out in the rain, right open. Snow. No matter how the weather came, you were out in it. Two men to a car. Two men cleaning out cars. As soon as you finished that one, as soon as those cars were emptied, there were 4 more came in. No stop to it at all. You kept at that all day. The whole shift. When you cleaned out that car, there was a foreman there with a whistle. He blew for the cars, and they started those cars with an engine up the wharf there, what they call a little engine. Down came the cars. You were no sooner out of them, when there was the same thing right there ahead of you to step into again. Another car there for you again. No stop to it at all. You were allowed 20 minutes to go for lunch. No hour or anything like that. You IN THE HEART OF CAPE



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