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only \$2.80 a day. But they worked their 5 days. But these fellows here were only on tonnage. No tonnage for the week, no pay. I saw a pay once as low as 360 for a week's work. That wasn't too much. Gordon Kehoe: (Do you mean to tell me you went to work some days and didn't earn any? thing?) Certainly. Never got a thing. It happened different times. (But you'd get up, you'd go to work, and there'd be nothing doing. So would you go home?) No. They'd tell you there was a boat due. And probably no boat due at all. No boat at all. I've seen them keep us there one night for a boat that was due. And the boat the day before had loaded coal from North Sydney and sailed. And they kept us out there waiting for that boat that night • We were on tonnage. They weren't paying us. If they were paying us day's pay, we wouldn't have been there. It wasn't costing them anything to keep us there. Oh, they got away with murder. (And what were you getting paid when you did get paid?) Well, you worked 6 days. And then you worked every day. There was a boat in every day. Oh, you got \$30 a week, or \$28, and the like of that. Big pay. I forget what the highest was we made there. I believe it was 30-some dollars. We were on tonnage. And I remember what we shipped, too, that week--120,000 ton of coal. By God, that was some pile of coal. Everybody thought what a big pay it was. I believe it was \$32 or something like that it was. Everybody thought, oh, what a big pay. So it was, at that time. Hector Devison: Like rain, shine, or anything else, you worked all the time. That's one thing was good about it. You never lost any time. And not only that. There were times you'd go to work say around the middle of May, and you worked till the 15th of November. Then the shipping was finished, and you went on--when there was unemployment to get, you went on unemployment. But there wasn't too much to get at that time. I suppose when we started on unemployment first, it* was around \$24 a week. That was in the 1950s. We were lucky here (living in Louisbourg) in one way • we could charge. Like your groceries and that, you could charge them. Often, several members of a family worked at the Coal Piers Sandy & Gordon MacLennan worked there. Their brothers worked there~ Their father, and their uncles on their mother's side, worked on the Coal Piers. Pretty well everywhere at that time you could charge. And the only tough part about it: by the time you got your bills paid, you were back on unemployment again, no work. That was the tough part about it. (That means you'd be back on credit again.) Back on credit again. Mrs. Devison: You were practically credit-- continual credit, you could almost say. Because by the time you'd get your bills squared up then--you'd be paying all summer on your groceries that you were getting, plus what you owed. And then you'd be going back, by November, you'd be still--practically credit all the time. But that's almost better than it is today. Because without work today, you'd just starve. Hector Devison: Like the way it was, you'd do good to make \$3000 a year. (That's in the '50s.) Yeah. Abbie Neville: I saw them one time waiting for the Caribou, was coming up for bunker-- the Caribou was the Newfoundland boat. So in the wintertime, she'd come up to Sydney for her coal bunker. 'Cause our coal was better steaming coal than the North Sydney coal. Well, she was coming at 8 o'clock



in the morning for coal bunker, and the harbor was frozen solid, and she took 12 hours to come up. And those shippers and trimmers--there were 8 trimmers and 4 shippers --they stayed from 8 o'clock in the morning till 11 o'clock in the night, just to give her her 100 ton of bunker. They might have made 40 cents apiece for that 12 hours--on tonnage, that's all they got. (And that's what you mean by loyalty?) Loyalty, yeah. David Lewis: (You'd be there the full shift, and there'd be nothing to do?) Oh yes, yes. There was a time that happened. But you know, Abbie Neville was the superintendent there, he was very good to us. He'd say, "Now, there's nothing doing," and tell us to go home or something like that. Lots of times he told us to go home • We weren't making very big money at that time. We were available when he needed us. And he realized that when he needed men, we were going to be there, and we were going to drive her. That was the main thing then. We were reliable. There was no such thing as missing time or being drunk or anything of that. Although I've seen lots of Druker Insurance Charlotte St., Sydney . . . 562-5504 Mayflower Mall. 564-1818 WILSONVILLE DAILY ANY CAR, HOUSE OR BUSINESS COMPARE RATES. YOU COULD SAVE. Phone Toll Free 1-564-6000 BUDGET PLAN AVAILABLE IN EMERGENCY: Awie Druker, F.I.I.C. 564-6615 ??(39)