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The Bagpipe in Cape Breton From a Conversation with Barry Shears, Piper I was born in Glace Bay in 1956. I come from a family of five boys and one girl; I'm the middle child--middle boy, I sup? pose. I've got two older brothers and two younger. (How does music enter your life?) Well, actually, my mother plays the piano. She took a few lessons, but she plays mostly by ear. And my father--as far as the bag? pipe is concerned, my father always wanted one of the boys to play. So I was selected to go up to see a gentleman by the name of Angus MacIntyre. He used to live on High? land Street in Glace Bay. Who, I found out later, was descended from the MacIntyres from South Uist who were pipers to MacDo? nald of Clan Ranald. And their people had come over here in 1828 and settled in the French Road, or Rathad Frangach, between Louisbourg and Mira River. (Why did your father want a piper?) Well, I was going to ask him that, actually, before I set out today! But the only reasons he gave me when I was 12, which is when I first learned to play the bagpipe, was that he had heard bagpipes in the army when he was overseas in the Second World War, and he really liked it. And he would have heard pipers around Glace Bay, because when he was growing up there were quite a few pip? ers around Glace Bay. The situation is not the same today, of course. But you had the Jamiesons who were from Pipers Glen, who came to work in the coal fields. Actually, that family of pipers, everybody in the family could play, girls and boys. And Angus Ban MacFarlane, the bard over in Inverness County around Egypt, composed a lament when they left Pipers Glen to go to Glace Bay, to work in the "land of coal." But there was a Charles Jamieson and a John Jamieson. And they befriended the MacIntyres who had worked in Caledo? nia in the coal mines. They had come over from the French Road around 1890 or 1885, around that time. So there's quite a few pipers in Glace Bay. Those (the MacIntyres, Jamiesons, and Mac? Neils) are the ones that I've researched. FROM ANGUS BAN MacFARLANE'S LAMENT Nuair a rainig mi an dreachd Anns an robin tiiu, Neill, a' tamhachd, Fhuair mi 'n fhardach air a dunadh; Shil mo shuilean, 's cha bu nar dhomh. Nuair a chruinnicheadh na h-eolaich Staigh 'nad sheomar, mar bu ghnath leo, Bu'm biodh cridhealas gu leor ann, 'S gheibhte ceol us orain Ghaidhlig. Dh'fhalbh thu bhuainn a Gleann a' Phiobair'; Chuir sin mighean air mo nadur. I'm sure there were probably more; I just haven't gotten around to it. There were people coming in from Iona and from the country. Because the industrial-- the coal mines attracted people from all over the island. 'S ann ort fhein 's air do chuid clinne 'Chaidh a shioinneadh, tha iad ag raitinn. Seinnidh lain grinn a' phiob dhuit; Seinnidh Sin' i agus Tearlach, Eachann, Floiri, agus Seumas, Mary Jane, us May, us Searlot. Chorus: Ho gur misde, he gur misde, Ho gur misde leam mar tha 'chuis; 'S misde leam gu'n d'rinn thu gluasad Null gu tir a' ghuail a thamhachd. Isaac from Inverness around Foot Cape area And actually, Allan C New Waterford would have had quite a few pip? ers . There was Alex Angus Mac- I think he was from Allan C. MacDonald. , I think, his son married one of the granddaughters of one ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF ABOVE LAMENT



When I reached the clearing where you were living, Neil, I found the house locked up; the tears came to my eyes, as well they might. // When friends would gather in your room as they used to like to, there would be merriment a-plenty and music and Gaelic songs. // You have gone away from us from Piper's Glen, and that sheds gloom on my spirits; it was after you and your children that the glen was named, they say. // Handsome John can play the pipes for you; Jean can play them and Charlie; Hector, Flora, and James, Mary Jane, and May, and Charlotte. // Chorus: Oh, I'm the worse; Oh, I'm the worse: Oh, I'm the worse as things have turned; I'm the worse since you have moved away to stay in the country of coal.