

Page 74 - Charlie MacDonald, Taxicab Driver ISSUE : <u>Issue 52</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1989/8/1

of the morning--icy. Slippery. Well, I saw this truck coming. And he was just going like that. (Charlie showed weaving with his hand.) Although I had chains on, he didn't. So I saw him coming, and I pulled over. I knew he was coming with a load of slag, you know. And whether he was doing this-- probably getting a cigarette or rolling a cigarette. And he was just touching the wheel so it would stay straight. Then all of a sudden--BUMP--put on the brakes. I guess when he saw me. What the hell did he do, but he went that way and over the bank and tumbled into the Tar Pond. "Oh, God!" I said to the two men. We watched her tumble. She made one whole round, and then the wheels went in the HistoHc Open Fireplace Conrsfortable Dining Room Telegrapli House A diarmmg Victorian House, where Dr. Graham Bell chose to stx' and royalty stall chooses to dine, features rooms with period decor as well as modem motel units. Egjoy home cooked meals in our licensed dining room, beside the warmth of open fires. Est. 1860 - Five Generations of the Duntop Family Baddeck, Nova Scotia BOE 1 BO Telephone (902) 295-9988 tar. And it was like mush. And she started to sink. So I said to the men, "I'm going to get down and get the driver--help the driver." He was there trying to get--he couldn't--wooden cabs then, you know. He couldn't get the cab door open. So I went down to try and help him. And I took a piece of rope. We always carried a rope and a bench axe at your feet, for to give a pull or tow or something. And I took the bench axe and the rope, and I went down. The other two men got out and they said, "You can't get out there, driv? er! Don't try it! That truck is sinking too fast!" And poor (fellow) there--trying to holler, and he knew me, he said, "Char? lie, get me, get me, get me!" Well, I got out. Then, she was down below the engine hood. And I got on the engine hood. And she was tipping me--not back? wards --she was tipping in. So, I had a hell of a job. I just barely made it (off the hood), and I fell on my belly. I left axe and rope there. I couldn't--you know, trying to grab a few trees or the little limbs. And the frozen--there was no snow-- there was ice, but it was frozen. And, trying to grab it, you know. She went down. She was there. She went down in 22 feet of tar and water. (Did you get him out, though?) Oh, no. As the men said, "You nearly lost your own life. Another second or two on that engine hood," he said, "you'd have been down with him." "'trNm A DREAM INTO REALITY K MART PLAZA MxUtmUt Kitchens Plus "tfie onCty name ifouneedi to know* So, that was when they were building that. Government wharf. That was 1936. Dumping slag in for the foundation. They had it ready--nice wharf--when war broke out. Lovely wharf. My God, the things I saw! Terri? ble, terrible, terrible things I saw and went through.... Now, like, if you were setting there in your car; if you were a cab driver. There was another car there. It was an old--it on? ly had the curtains--a '22 or '23 Studebaker. I knew him. So, I could hear them coming down, singing and hollering. They were at a party, you know, all drunk, you know. And it was a nice night--you could see the moon. But you used to get those squalls. And the ice was clear. And those squalls would run on the ice and block your visibili? ty, see, if you didn't know where you were going. So anyhow, they came down, and they came over talking to me.