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looked like he was sleeping. Rose; Just--ask him to sing, and he, you know.... Helen; Oh, he had a wind like a bellows. But he was such a sweet man. My God, he was a good person. Everyone loved him. He loved every? body. If there was anything he could do for you. They were so good to help one another. You know, the neighbours, if they'd be cutting wood, he'd be there. They'd be go? ing over with one of those big saw? ing machines--he'd go to all the houses--perhaps he'd go to 6 or 7 houses during the week helping. You know, it was hard work. They'd be sawing up the wood and he'd be throwing the blocks.... You're not going to believe this. Yesterday was my husband's anni? versary. And I got up in the morn? ing. I have those books at my daughter's--I took them when I went up there. And I took down this songbook, and I sang 10 of his songs, yesterday. I was home alone. Rose; You didn't do much work yester? day. Mom! Helen; Well, I had all my work.... Rose; Oh, you were ahead of the game.... (We need to get Jimmy Curtis back here!) Helen; Well, I wouldn't mind having him back, but I guess.... (Does he ever come back and sing to you?) Well, one night I was alone here singing-- ('TER''AjN''' Joe\*s Warehouse The Food Emporium Cape Breton's Largest and Finest Restaurant Specializing in Aged Prime Cuts of Roast Beef and Steaks and One of the Most Unique Salad Bars In the Maritimes Live Entertainment Nightly! 424 Charlotte Street 539-6686 539-0408 RESTAURANT LOUNGE D BANQUET FACILITIES AVAILABLE D and I was telling the girls. I got so lonesome. So, I picked up the book--not this book--it was Songs of the Miramichi. And there was one certain song that he used to love to sing. And I started sing? ing this song. And I couldn't sing it loud enough. And I got so afraid. I thought he was pressing on my shoulders. I was sit? ting down there in my own chair. And I thought at last that I could feel the weight of his fingers on my shoulder. And I got so scared, I couldn't look around. So I just dropped the book, and I walked in that direction. You know, I had the queerest feeling, you know. I said, "Well, I wish he'd have spoken to me." (When you say you couldn't sing loud enough, what does that mean?) I don't know--to break the feeling I had that he was going to speak to me, you know. But still I was afraid. I got afraid. Because I suppose, I imagine, singing the song so much that he loved. And I sure loved him. So I suppose that I got kind of carried away. I think that's what it was-- overjoyed, perhaps? (It was joy, then.) Yeah, joy. Singing his songs. Oh, I loved that song, too. (Is that the only time you ever felt his presense, felt him coming back, when you were singing one night?) Yeah. Oh, I often dreamed about him. Oh, I really thought he was there. Our thanks to the Jimmy and Helen Curtis Family for their help over the years In our work • toward this story and on the old songs in general. The portions of song included in this article have been taken from the Curtis Family Songbook manuscript. Thanks to Charlotte Curtis MacNeli and Rose Curtis Burton for help in locating photographs. The photograph of Guy Reed is from Joe Scott: Woodsman/Songwriter by Edward "Sandy" Ives, published by the University of Illinois Press. The song "Guy Reed" is taken from the Curtis Family Songbook.