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From Breton Cove & Boston, Part 2- Conversations with Josie Matheson Bredbury
Our conversation turned to memories of Jo's life in Cape Breton. Josie was re-
minded about her father, the time when he saw a light: Oh, yeah, I'd forgotten that
one. Well, see, after they got married, they had a boy. Rory was his name. And Papa
was fishing. And, so every morning Mama'd get up and get his breakfast, and then
he'd go off over to the shore. And that day--see. Mama was big-busted. But anyway,
he went over there (and he did something) which he never did before. There was a
little brook there, and there were just a couple pieces of wood to cross there. So,
before he crossed there, he turned around and looked over at the house. Well, at
that end of the house, upstairs, there's two little windows. And the stairs go up
there. So anyway, he looked over there. And there was a light in the window. And
he thought, "Well...." This must have been around 5 o'clock in the morning, you
know, going fishing like that. And he wondered why Effie (his wife) was up there.
So he didn't think anything more of it. He went fishing. He came home. And when
he came home (he learned). Mama went back to bed (after he left for fishing). And
she was nursing the baby. She fell asleep. And her bust smothered the baby. And he
died. And then, they made the little box for him, to bury him. He's buried down at
Breton Cove, going down to the shore. And (Papa) was sent upstairs. And at the
foot of this window there was a box of wool. And he was sent up to get some wool
out of that box (for the child's coffin). And as he did that, he looked out the window,
and there he saw where the light was. He didn't see the light through the window,
you know. But he thought in his own mind. Now that's why he saw the light when he
looked over. (He was now where the light was, over the box of cotton.) M-hm. That's
the very window. There were a lot of people that saw things. And he saw that, and
he--in his mind, that's why he saw the light. He was (later) sent to get that wool, to
fill the little box, you know. (What a painful death, for the family.) Oh, it was. And
their first son. Then there were 7 girls in a row. And he wanted boys, you
know--wanted boys. I was supposed to be a boy. I got the--black--I was the black
sheep in the family. He was very--very much hated me, really. (Your father.) Yeah.
Oh, yeah. (Because he wanted you to be a boy?) Yeah. He didn't look at me for a
whole week, when I was born. Granny Urquhart was over one day. She grabbed
me--I didn't know anything about it, but Mama told me that-- and she put me in his
arms. Belle MacIntyre. Josie's niece: Did you have an experience at the bridge?
Josie: You rascal!... Yeah, there was a yarn (told) about--at the foot, you know, that
little bridge that goes over between my house and Johnny MacInnes's, before you
go up the hill--over the brook. There's a field towards the mountain--a big field
there. Well, that used to be a big hay- field where the grass used to grow. And
anyway, I don't know whether somebody was killed. I did hear something, that a
woman went out in the woods, away out in the woods, and was killed. Or she
committed suicide--! don't know what it was. But 35