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us: "Hughie and Allan." And that's how it all started, and we never looked back. It just went on and on. And then they called us up there one day to sit down and have a talk with them and they talked money and everything else, and we went on the first year as regulars for 39 weeks, and we had to scratch gravel now, to come up with stuff to be there. But it was "Cape Breton Barn Dance." they called it. And there was fiddlers and singers and dancers, and we just sort of emceed it and threw in a story as we went along. And it wasn't that tough. We didn't have to have more than 3 or 4 or 5 stories. We just fired them in as we brought the other people on. (Hughie and Allan played television's "Cape Breton Barn Dance" for a run of 39 weeks.) And then the producer of "The Don Messer Show" heard about us, and he called and he asked us to come up and see him, to Halifax. So we went up on a Saturday--Hughie was off on Saturday, and I could get off work. Wanted us to do a spot on the "Messer Show." And at that time, that was big money, I think we started out at \$45, and then we were on the "Messer Show" 8, 9, 10 times a year. And we were on, I think, about ten years, and I think at the last of it we were up to \$85 apiece for a show. That's plus travelling expenses, and hotel, and meals, and all the frills. The first couple or three years that we were going up (to Halifax) there was no such a thing as tape, it was just all live. But then, after awhile, it got to point where we could go up and probably tape 2 or 3 shows. 'Cause our spot was probably, you know, 5 or 6 or 7 minutes out of the half hour. The majority of Cape Bretoners, their father or their uncle or their brother or somebody, had a drawl, you know, and did some funny sayings and all the rest of it. (Nobody ever came to give you a punch in the nose.) Never. We were really concerned about that. But in the next week we were asked to 10 places. And, like I said to somebody one time shortly after that. Said, "Are you busy?" I said, "Yeah, we did 8 last week." "Eight!" he said. "There's only 7 days." I said, "I know. We did one in Glace Bay and jumped in the car and went to Sydney Mines and did another one." We were in every hall that ever existed. Never stopped. And 70% of it for nothing. (For nothing?) Oh, they'd call--the priests, particularly, knew I was a mickey. They'd call and, "Oh, we'd love to have you, we're trying to raise some money." They always were trying to raise some money for something. And then Hughie'd get hooked on the other end. Hughie was Presbyterian. So, it just went on and on. Sometimes you'd get a 5-dollar bill each, or something like that. But we went for a long, long, long time that we never--you know, we might have made an extra \$20 a week. And it wasn't fair to my wife--she was here with 5 kids, you know. There's always a lot of work to do when there's 5 little kids growing up. But, never stopped. (And she didn't stop you.) No, no. Well, you know, I was in the car business, and in those years, you sold cars



in the summer. The rest of the time, very seldom. A fellow had to smash his car or something before he'd trade in the wintertime. It wasn't a year-round deal like it is now. There were lots of times in the winter that the extra 20-30 bucks that we picked up at night came in handy. But oh, we did a lot of freebies all over mvAScam today's labour marm, a " • radm and ??'iCf'r Department of J" Education n'muTES ofLoVT. John D. Steele's Sons, Limited MONUMENT CENTRE & DISPLAY 32 William Street 794-2713 NORTH SYDNEY, N. S. (after hours: 794-4411 & 794-3171) • A CAPE BRETON INDUSTRY SINCE 1896 •