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With Evelyn Smith, Wreck Cove INTRODUCTION: This is much less an Interview than a neighbour's visit from Evelyn Smith. It took place in 1988. It was a sickbed visit; she came to pass the time, and we decided to tape our conversation. That explains the tone and in? timacy of the exchange. Brothers and sisters re? ferred to are Margaret MacRae, Annie Mae Mac? Leod, Eddie, Kenny, and Danny MacDermid. Our talk at first ranged from searching for Eve? lyn's grandparents' graves in Hardwood Hill Ce? metery in Sydney, to her mother's parents' farm up the Wreck Cove River, where no one lives to? day. Her father's grandparents, John MacDer? mid of Harris and his wife Mary Morrison, were the first of the family to come from Scotland, the first on the land where she grew up. Evelyn never saw any of her grandparents. We specu? lated about how things were when they first ar? rived in Cape Breton. We were both touched by the lack of knowledge available about these things, the fact that her parents Alexander "Sandy" and Christie Ann MacDermid (pictured below) had not shared more of their history. And then, explaining further, Evelyn said:

Evelyn Smith, Wreck Cove: And then, my mother taking a stroke when I was 7. and not able to communicate with us after that. That was another minus for us. (Your mother was unable to communicate with you?) Yeah, from the time I was 7 years old. So we didn't get any information from her. (She couldn't talk at all?) No. All she could say was a few words in Gaelic, so that you could under stand. But she couldn't put a sentence to? gether. She was an invalid for 23 years. She was only 48 when she had the stroke. She died when she was 71. She never spoke. (Would you say, besides not being able to speak, that she raised you?) No. My Aunt Christy came (to live with us). She worked in Murray at that time--she wasn't mar? ried. (Christy worked for the North River Lumber Company at Murray Road, St. Ann's Bay--the location of the dock, mill, boarding house, and so forth. See Issue 7 of Cape Breton's Magazine.) And as soon as my mother had the stroke. Aunt Christy came, and lived with us from then on. And she had more to do with raising us than my mother did. Me, especially--I was 6 years younger than the others. The First World War came between Margaret and I. Margaret was born before my father went to the war, and then I was born after--1921. (So your mother was there in the house.) Oh, yes, yes. But she had no part in it. often think of it, and it makes me feel bad, even now, thinking of it. Thinking of myself, when I was 48. and Mary (Evelyn's daughter) at that time would be--I think I was 35 when Mary was born--she'd be about 12 or 13. And how badly you would feel. (Forgive me. I had the sense that, although she had had a stroke and Evelyn Smith's moth? er, Christie Ann (Mac? Leod) MacDermid Cape Breton's MAGAZINE • Number Sixty-Five Wreck Cove, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia BOC IHO Publications Mail Registration Number 3014