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With Jessie Morrison of Cape North- a Cape Breton-to-Alberta Pioneer From Conversations with Ronald Reichwein in Edmonton, Alberta INTRODUCTION: Readers might be interested in learning how we came to know about Jessie Morrison of Edmonton, Alberta. We got a call from Ronald Reichwein, ordering a copy of the book The Cape Breton Giant She said it was for a friend, Jessie Morrison, who had been born in the Aspy Bay region in 1904. We said, "We'll send you two copies • one for yourself and one for Jessie • and in return, please sit down and do a little taping with her, ask about her life." It turned into several visits • hours of taping • about a family that pioneered in Cape Breton, searched for employment in the Boston States, and then pioneered again in Alberta. Jessie told much more than we can offer in one article, but we can offer a lot. Ronald began the first visit this way: Ronald: This is the story of Jessie Morrison of Cape North, Cape Breton. Go ahead, Jessie. What have you got to tell us today? And Jessie said: Well, I have a lot. As you know I have a long tongue!... Jessie Morrison: Well. I was born September the fifteenth, 1904. I used to tease my mother and say, "Well, that's great. You were married on September the fourteenth, and I was born September the fifteenth!" But I wouldn't emphasize the twelve months that elapsed between the two occasions. Now, Mother was living with her parents (at Cape North)--my Grandfather MacKinnon and Grandmother MacKinnon--and there I was born. And Aunt Grace came home from Boston to be with my mother when I arrived. So, hence my name: Jessie Grace. Meanwhile my father had apprenticed as a carpenter with one of the local (men) and he was really a very, very clever, a very skilled craftsman. And at first it was that my father would take over the Morrison Farm (photo at right). but it just didn't work out that way. So he went to Boston and secured employment with a construction company. There were many Cape Bretoners so employed. And two years later, in 1906, my mother joined my father. And this was a great emotional trauma for my grandmother who adored her grandchild-- who was me. And Mother said that Grandmother taught me my first words. And I always say that my first language was Gaelic COMPLETE MENU Informal family dining • Fully Licensed • 945-2244 ...Two of Cape Breton's Best... Listed in WHERE TO EAT IN CANADA DUNCREIOA' Mabou r ACC 0 nCI I on the Ceilidh TraU, Route 19 COUNTY INN UArt 01 UtLI the Scenic Coastal Route to the Cabot Trail MABOU Fine Accommodations and Dining ON THE HARBOUR 945-2207