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ing to see the fields dip and sway as we went towards the bam! Late in my country life, the colt was sold and Minnie was alone again. At moving time my brothers drove her down the road to North Sydney, with a cow following behind. It was indeed a long walk. A year later Minnie was taken to Glace Bay (I don't know by what means) and began a new and strange life for her. No longer was she the center of a family. She was lodged by herself in a neighboring bam and soon was hired out to some carter. I did not see her again. Around this time a stranger came to see us. As he talked solemnly to my parents, I learned Minnie was dead. "She began to get unruly, hard to handle, and at last I had to stop working her. One morning when I entered the stable, she started kicking and wouldn't stop. I got the vet in to see her but it was no use. She just died. The vet couldn't tell what was wrong with her." I can see my parents still, not saying a word but listening carefully. An economic resource was gone • but also a friend that they had so often relied on. Whenever I think of Minnie, I have her in my mind tethered in an unfamiliar stall and kicking wildly in protest against the unfairness of things. Nobody had thought of what the change meant to her. Animals seem to love the familiar, the homely, the unchanging surroundings of Ufe. They can have heartbreak too. I ASKED MY AUNT CATHERINE about the beginning of my family in the New World. She began to talk with a wonderful assurance of the first settlers in Boisdale. Her mind was completely saturated with stories of these first people. "But tell me about my own particular family." And she began to tell me, not 270 GEORGE ST. SYDNEY, N. S. B1P1J6 BRETON BEAUTY COLLEGE ?? Locally owned & operated • Qualified MHI instructors Basic Cosmetology (Hairdressing) Courses Begin: SEPTEMBER • JANUARY • JUNE New Course in Esthetics Begins: OCTOBER • JANUARY ENROLL NOW! 562-1208 (FAX 562-4104) FULL HAIR CARE SERVICE Instructors: MARGARET McVICAR/QERRY CONDON Stay Tuned through the Summer! "Welcome to Cape Breton" 9:00 am to 10:00 am FEATURING • Traditional Music Local Cape Breton Information Tourist Destinations ' • Special Events CJCB AM Stereo- Cape Breton's Super Station! in the style of a scientific genealogist, but in that of the story? teller, seated beside the fire on a wintry evening. The following is what she said: My progenitor landed in Sydney with many of his family, but he separated from them and got employment with a farmer at Low Point. The reason for this diversion was that he was engaged to a MacNeil girl who went on to Boisdale with her family before him. He remained there for the whole winter, laboring for his board, and learning the hard lessons of pioneering. He worked chiefly in the bam, taking care of the cattle • cleaning up, feeding, milking, assisting at the birth of calves. He also worked in the woods, clearing the land and bringing in logs for burning. In the spring he made up a pack, which contained all his meager possessions, and prepared to leave. The farmer, who had become his friend, paid him nothing, thinking that the board had cancelled out the labor given. But the farmer presented him with two axes as a gift, a precious gift at that time of his life. He put a cord through the axes and hung them around his neck, one before and one behind, and



set on his way. At first there was a road, then there was a path, then there was nothing at all. When he reached the Bras d'Or Lakes he sometimes went along the shore, sometimes he fought his way through thick woods; all of it was difficult. Finally, the pack very heavy on his back, he reached Boisdale and the girl's family. They were married a few days later. One reason for the hurry was that there was no place for them to stay. For the most part the settlers were living in one-room log houses, built the autumn before. The forest, the enemy, was all around them. In the air there was the constant smell of burning wood, as the settlers cut down and burned the trees. The fields they cleared were fields of stumps, which would remain in the ground for years. The trees were frequently very large and so were the stumps. Some of them endured in the ground for many years as being too difficult to remove by ordinary means. As the years went by the stumps got fewer and fewer and eventually almost vanished. There was no English to be heard, only Gaelic. My progenitor's name was, as we say today, James, but what they called him was more like Hamish, nearer the Gaelic. No details of the wedding have come down to us. Perhaps they were married by Father Alexander MacSween, who had come over with the Boisdale settlers. If so, they were married by a stern representative of the Church. He was noted for his Jansenist teaching. One woman who told him that she could not keep the Lenten fast and that the spindle was dropping from her hands through her weakness was told to give up the spindle and to preserve the fast. In any case, they were married and moved to Ironville where he had been given a large grant of land. It is certain that their cabin was built by a community effort, as Tianning ahead can offer peace of mind. We encourage you to consider funeral prearrangement and invite you to call or send for our free prearrangement guide. T. W. Curry Parkview Chapel Leo J. Curry, Bill Curry Funeral Directors Phone 539-3002 7b5 George Street, Sydney, Nova Scotia Four generations of service