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door. "Oh, thank God, they're here now," I said. I opened the door, and the priest was there. "Come in. Father." "Oh Mary," he said, "I have sad news for you. Jim was killed today." (Tears.) I couldn't stop crying. "I'm very sorry for you. If there's anything I can do to help you," the priest said. "Could you go over and tell Charlie? He's in the barn." (Tears.) Charlie, Peter Alexander, and Alec Dan were crying out? side. Went with Jim after the mare, she was in Glencoe. Alexander made the rope too short, and he had a scissor bit (mouth piece), and he put that in the mare. He twisted it and it cut the mare right inside here (pointing to the sides of her mouth), and of course she had to kick. Poor Jim didn't have the rope long enough. She got him here somewhere (on the forehead). If Charlie was there, he wouldn't have been killed. Tears and a lot of heartbreak. (Did you ever see a Taibhse yourself?) We were over (at the MacMillans') for a frolic, they were hauling pulp. Jessie was at home staying with me, and we made bis? cuits. Alec Dan (MacMillan) came home late. "Wait and I'll drive you home," he said. I made some tea and everything, and then we started home. As soon as we got on the sleigh, a bird came, and an awful screech rang through my head. The horses got scared. "What's that?" I said. He said, "That's the big bird." We drove a little, and the bird followed us back and forth. His father Neil died a few days after that. A great big bird, with a little red here. It scared the wits out of me. Eeeeeeeeach!! It sounded something like that. Jim MacDonald's mother had it. A bird was screeching in the woods behind the barn. Charlie and Mike Fortune were out and they heard it. That's a sign someone's going to die. Mary MacMillan had it too. If I see anything like that (today) I think I'd go foolish. (Your brother Alec Dan must have had some good stories, some ghost stories.) Yeah, 'eah, but he wouldn't tell them. He'd he sitting singing songs or something. (Did Alec Dan ever talk about the war with you? World War One?) No. (Pause.) Alec Dan went to war and nev? er came home before he left. He went from Halifax. Somebody else from Glendale, one of the boys from Glendale that knew Alec Dan, told us he went to the war. He never told us anything, and Ronald never told us. They were on a great big boat. There was a man from Glendale, a MacEachern, he was on the boat too. Halfway over, he died on the boat because his heart got broken, you know. To remove the dead there were no caskets; they would throw them out in the sea. He was a nice violin player too. I knew him; he was a MacEachern. They threw him out; that was his grave. Alec Dan would talk about how tough it was over there. You know, they wouldn't get enough to eat. Sometimes they would get horse meat. If you'd get enough of that you'd only get a little bit; there were so atIONA CENTRAL CAPE BRETON (ALONG ROUTE 223) In the Heart of Cape Breton Highland Heights. A cozy retreat off the beaten track, but on the road to everywhere in Cape Breton. A gorgeous view of the Bras d'Or Lakes, private baths, two dou? ble beds in each room, pleasant, relaxing surroundings • plus a licensed dining room with a full menu of seafood and local dishes, featuring trcKli- tional Cape Breton entertainment. Open till late October. INNKEEPERS: SHEILA AND BRUCE MacNEIL BOX 19, ROUTE 223, IONA, CAPE BRETON NOVA



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