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In 1965 I was appointed the Provincial Inspector of Mines. That entailed going to the various collieries and examining the collieries for ventilation, and all the things pertaining to the Coal Mines Regulation Act, which was not followed very good. But when you compare it to the mess that they done out in Westray Mine, they were angels here! But that Number 12 was always on my mind (the New Waterford Explosion of 1917). That telegram. So when I used to go into Number 12 mine and that area where the explosion occurred in 1917--I did get up (there) and take a look at it sometimes just for curiosity to have a look at where those men were congregated on that day. A lot of them that I knew, a lot of them that I worked with after. You see, it happened in 1917 and thirteen-and-a-half years later I was working in the pit myself. So some of the men who were actually into this explosion, the younger ones, that is, I knew them. I even worked with some of the older fellows, some of the officials that were in charge of Number 12. But anyway, I used to go down into the Nim-

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for information her 12 pit and I always had that in my mind --the terrible day that
happened. And so I would get up and just take a peek...then I'd go down to the real
area where the ac? tion was. So Nimber 12 between 1970 and '73 was being
programmed to continue While they shut down one mine in Glace Bay. They were
going to shut down one mine. But she was programmed to go. Should have never
been going at all, gas was too heavy and the reach for coal was too far from the
sur? face. They had three mines within one, they were just transferring from one
slope to another and then finally to the surface.... On the third of March in 1973,
about twen? ty-minutes-after-three in the morning, I got a call from a fellow by the
name of Barry Matheson, he was the lamp timekeeper in Number 12. So he called
up. He was on the phone and the person who was supposed to call me was the
manager. The manager was busy, he was trying to get the men out of the mine
because there was a fire. I asked him where the fire was, he said he didn't know for
sure but he thought it was down on Number 3 slope and it was out of control. So
there were 119 men in the mine. I went down, I looked at the tote board, 119 men
there. So I talked to the manager, the man? ager was on the telephone and what he
was do? ing was putting evacuation orders through. So I said to him, "Okay, you do
what you got? ta do. That's okay, I'll go myself." So I got ready and I went down in
the mine. So I went down the mine and I got down to the Number 3 deep and they
were taking up their men. The rake was coming up. The rake is a car--they call it a
rake--it's for hauling men. They're little low cars that the men ride in. And so they
were hauling like hell to get out, they wanted to get out of the pit, you see, the



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