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on the bull's back, and away he went. And I suppose he went over a cliff somewhere, and that was the end. Oh, (John MacIsaac) he'd act that one, he'd make it so darn real, you'd imagine that you were seeing the people that were there when this happened. He had it real real good. But there were a lot of his stories I couldn't learn, I couldn't remember them all, I couldn't learn them. There was one special story that I couldn't learn at all because he spoke in low tones. And when you miss a piece here and there in the story, the story's no more good to you. It's just like a page out of a book. If there's a page torn out of a book, well you haven't got that--you don't know what happened. If you even had an idea of what could happen, you might build up on it, but when you lose that much, you haven't got anything to work with.... And it was so hard to follow him, on a hard story or a difficult story, it was so hard to follow him. He spoke softly and low, and if somebody made a little noise or something. And you watched him when he went through a kind of a performance, milking the cow or something. You would miss a word here or there, and that was putting you astray. But his stories were 1D THE TDROMTO-DOMINION BANK Your Bank. Your Way Corner of Charlotte & Pitt Streets P. O. Box 117 Sydney, NS B1P6G9 Phone 567-3610 or 539-6637 • Fax 539-6337 Breton Energy Ltd. FIREPLACE PRODUCTS 564-4949 94 Johnstone Street, SYDNEY real good. He didn't tell that many. Of course, it would take a long time--there'd be a lot of time going in between the stories. After he'd tell a story, they'd talk for awhile back and forth, and then he'd think of another story, and he'd tell another one. But he'd finally end up with that long story, and that was the best of them all. But it was, like I said, it was so hard to follow--if a person only had a recorder at the time to get his voice, and then you could read up on it. You could increase it, you could come up high enough. (It didn't matter if he told the same story a second time.) Oh no, it didn't. As often as you heard that story, it wouldn't matter. You'd still enjoy it. (And the others as well--not just yourself?) Well, most of them, I guess. But then, the great trouble with the stories, a lot of them, we'd take them for granted, we'd hear them so often. Now, there was a MacLean up here at Irish Vale; he had a lot of short stories, and they were good, too. And I suppose he used to doctor them up a bit himself perhaps at times. But then, if you'd learn a story off him, it was easy enough to use one form or the other. If he told it in a certain way at one time--if he changed it a little, well, you could either leave it the way he told it first, or you could make a little change in it, it didn't matter. But we heard his stories so darned often that we weren't learning them, because we didn't have to. You heard them. I would go there on a certain night, and he had visitors, and he'd tell that story. Well then, maybe he was after telling that same story a night that I was visiting, and he told me that story. And the second time I heard it, there were some other people in. Then for the third time, there was another visitor or two at the house, he'd tell that story. Well, I could hear it so often that there was no need of learning it--I could have it anywheres, the same as if it was in a book. I didn't have to try to learn it because you'd hear it so often, the same as if it was in a book.



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