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there, but that wasn't the thing that we were preoccupied with. We had our job, our shift, and we had to do all kinds of things. It was very much like going down in the mines. When I started working in the mines, I could see right away that the old miners didn't have control of the situation. There were old-timers who were activists, but there was a need to get involved. I noted that as soon as I did, I immediately gained the trust of all these fellows. For some reason or other the old miners trusted me very much. I think a lot of that probably had to do with the respect they had for my father. If he was the foreman or superintendent, the owner didn't come around and interfere. My father ran the show. No one messed around with his men. I think those who knew him saw some of my father in me. In any case, within four months of joining the union I was elected recording secretary of Local 7101 of the United Mine Workers. I was 17 years old. My whole directive was against the system and the bosses. Union leadership was not something I actively pursued. The men were very, very astute. You didn't play games with them. Once you did, then you were finished at home. Once they found out that you were just an opportunist who wanted to use them, you were dead in the water. They saw through you very quickly. I was only 17 when I first became actively involved in contract negotiations. It was tough, very tough. Henderson Coal Company owned the Port Hood mine. I remember Dominion Rubber was involved with Henderson, and they wanted to sell stocks in the mine. So they ordered that a solid block of coal be taken out of the pit. They intended to put it on display at the Toronto Exhibition, as they were selling stock at a dollar a share. But the coal had a grey-stone ash seam in it. Well, it took the miners about two weeks to take that block out and get it to the surface. It then had to be moved into a boxcar. In order to make sure that it looked all black when it was put on display in Toronto, my brother and another fellow were assigned to take Two-in-One black shoe polish and shine over the grey wherever there was a little touch of stone or anything. They put the Two-in-One on it to make sure it looked black, "pure coal." That was shipped to Toronto and they sold stocks. I suppose they made a million dollars, who knows? I'm sure that they had it so that nobody could touch it. Just see it or look at it. They didn't want any of the black to rub off!

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be closed down a week to re? build the slope. The company paid the 50 cents, then, very easi? ly. They had no trouble finding it. And the same thing in the boiler room. We wanted a raise, and they wouldn't give it to us. So we let the steam go down, and the hoist would stall on the slope coming back for an hour. Not a pound of coal came out of her. The company got the message. It's the same message you have to give today. It's not different. But that's the way we had to do it. If you got on a drunk, which miners often did, and you arrived to pick up your lamp in the morning to go down, the bosses had put a stop sign on your lamp. So you went to the pit and you said, "Boys, Lord Jesus, they won't give me my lamp." That was it. Everyone knocked off until you got the lamp. Nobody questioned whether you had been drunk or . where you had been. We used to have a saying that you threw your lunch pails up in the air to take a strike vote. If they stayed up, you worked. If they came down, you were on strike. And try to get improvements in safety 11 remember when they were splitting the seam. They were supposed to leave 60 feet between rooms. They'd come back, split the seam, and get some quick coal. Trying to get the Nova Scotia government mine inspectors to go down into the mine was difficult because they were all former officials of the Dominion Coal Company. Got their jobs politically. I remember one time telling one of them, "There's two ways to go down this pit. You go down in that box or you roll down. Now you got 20 goddamn seconds to make your mind up which way you want to go." He got in the box and went down.

The Boy from Port Hood is a 6 x 9 quality paperback, 194 pages, and sells for \$15.95. To order it, use the Order Form on page 71.

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