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A Visit with the MacLeods at Belfry From a Family Conversation with Ronald Thurgood

Ronald Thurgood: When I arrived at Jimmy Philip and Lena MacLeod's house in Belfry, Jimmy's | cousin Flora MacLeod and her husband Roy were visiting. Roy and Flora live in Arlington, Massachusetts, but summer at Flora's old family home in Malquish. Jimmy and Flora grew up as neighbours in their villages near Gabarus Lake. Lena was raised in Fourchu and Roy in Framboise Intervale, so all had memories of the same people and places. The MacLeods were already telling stories when I arrived, so I turned on the tape recorder and joined in. It was an evening of great hilarity. This portion of the conversation begins after they had been talking about fights at dances.

Ronald Thurgood; Was there a lot of rivalry between the different villages or did people tend to get along pretty well? Jimmy Philip MacLeod; Now, it seemed like the Village of GeQ'arus down here and Gabarus Lake, there's rivalry here.

Flora MacLeod; "Big Lak? ers." Lena MacLeod; That's what they used to say, "There goes the Big ; " Lakers." Jimmy; Well, I remember one time, there were two fells from Gab? arus . They went down one Sunday night after coming out for church--they were always into fighting. And this trip they thought they'd tackle the MacCormicks down here.

Flora; They made the mistake there. Jimmy; They brought a couple of guys out from Sydney who were supposed to be rugged. They hooked up with the wrong ones that night. Anyway. They got a licking So the Gabarus fellas invited us all down during the week to fight. There was Jimmy MacLeod down here--he had a '30 Chev truck-- and Malcolm with that '27 Chev. We were up making hay all day long and there was a big oil drum on back on each truck going down there. Drove right down to the village, pounding on the drum....

Flora; Pounding the drum! Jimmy; And there wasn't one man to be seen on the road. The only fella there, he caught us afterwards. He says, "You won't find any Gabaroosters on the road tonight." He says, "They're all in the house." I still remember. But I was only a young fella. I just went down for the drive, you know, all in our overalls. Wasn't a soul--wasn't even a wasn't a man, and nothing on the road.

Flora; Well, those MacCormicks were really-- especially Gordon. Remember the time, he was at the head of the Gabarus Lake School and he got in, was it with • was it Kenny Y. or Dan Angus? Jimmy; Neither one of them poor fellas were a fighter.

Flora; Anyway, I guess, I guess he was going to beat him to • or he did

Left: Flora and Roy MacLeod. Beside them: Jimmy Philip MacLeod. Inset: A photo of Jimmy Philip's wife Lena, who has since died. This is an older photo from the family album.

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