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• Cape Breton's Magazine CENTRE for Documentary Field Studies • Yvonne McInnes Sturgess, in Waipu from a Conversation with Don Nugent with Photographs from the Walls of the "House of Memories," Waipu in 1851, the ship Margaret sawed from SL Ann's, Cape Breton, to Australia, carrying Scottish followers of Rev. Norman McLeod. Five more ships followed in her wake, and by 1853 the emigrants had begun settling in New Zealand, centred at Waipu. Those pioneers created a kind of outpost of Cape Breton • a portion of Cape Breton that adapted to an easier climate and new opportunities. In 1995, Donald Nugent went to Waipu to visit the House of Memories and to bring back photos, documents, and interviews with descendants of those pioneers. What follows is taken from a conversation Don had with one of those descendants, Yvonne McInnes Sturgess, in the House of Memories, Waipu. Yvonne McInnes Sturgess: You will find how mild that book is {The Highlanders of Waipu, published in 1928) compared to The Gael Fares Forth (1935), and then perhaps Lion of Scotland (1952). Because people were alive then and nobody wanted to do any damage, or do anything that would reflect badly on things. "There was no contention." But there was contention. Unofficially, a great deal, much that was never said. But when they compiled that book, that was all put to one side. And to say as (Maureen Malloy, another writer) heard from every household, every person she interviewed but one, (that) all the great-great-grandmothers had gone and carried a sewing machine all the way back to Waipu from the ship • which would have been at One Tree Point • and she calls this a myth. It's obvious this is a myth (Malloy says) because she heard it from so many people.... Yvonne McInnes Sturgess with James McInnes Sturgess, grandson, 1993 What (Malloy) didn't realize was that the sewing machines were hand-turned portable ones that sat on the table. They would have been probably booked in a shipment to come, the numbers that were wanted. Now in those days, my old people lived at the North River at a point where people stopped on their way up to One Tree Point where the boat would come in • the boat bringing the goods from Auckland. And it was quite customary, definitely customary, for the women to go and carry back a lot of that stuff, because men were still breaking in the land. I have heard that it was quite customary for them to almost make a picnic of it. I mean, it was the sort of thing to rush up to One Tree Point. It was a day and a half, or perhaps two days. And if they went up the beach, they had to cross the river at Ruakaka, and they would do that when the tide was out. And they would probably walk up the beaches, most of the men did too. When they got up there, skirting the Maori Pah (a sacred burial ground) at Takahiwai, which was Maori land that you wouldn't tread on. And that would have been the quickest route by the time they waited for the tide to go down and got their things. All Types of Collision Work! Specializing in Spot Repair SYDNEY'S COMPLETE COLLISION REPAIR CENTRE 539-2848 • 539-1033 61 BEECH • SYDNEY BIP 6R7 fnxmal 3|ome 84 Main St. • Sydney Mines 736-8701 p Bob Francis • 736-3419 "Four Generations of Service



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