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Lobster Factories around Cape Breton f* * e?? D. L. and Alex Morrison and a picture at their lobster factory at Wreck Cove in the 1930s. Left to rightt Katie Dauphney, Evelyn MacDermid Smith, Katherine Dauphney Mor? rison, Mary Buchanan Smith, Murdock Morrison, D. L. Morrison, Josie Shaw, D. J. Mac? Donald. Ruth MacDonald Matheson, Alex Morrison and A. J. Dauphney. Below; Annie Mar- garet and D. J. Morrison. D. J. Morrison, Wreck Cove: Our first fac? tory had a building I suppose 25 feet long and likely around 18 feet wide. And the system they had at first was vats • copper vats. One to cook the lobsters in as they'd come in, in the shell; the other one was to boil the sealed cans. I suppose the vat would hold about 5 barrels of lob? sters. They were square copper and tin tanks with a wooden cover we made at home. It would sit up about 2 feet over a kind of fireplace built of bricks and stone. And 4-foot cordwood went in under there to feed the fire and boil the water. They'd have to be cutting cordwood in the winter? time and have it at the factory ready for the spring. They would have to get all that going in the morning before the smack boats would get ashore with the lobsters. And the women would have as the first job in the morning the lining of all the day's cans. That was in the early days, before we got the enamel-lined cans and the seal? ing machine. Then when the lobsters would be in boiling water 20 minutes, they'd take them out with a dip-net, put them on the cooler. Annie Margaret: The cooler was like a counter. D. J.: Yes, only it wasn't flat. It had a very slight dip toward the centre to drain off the water. (Gussy Carmichael of Judique told us of this method: "In the early spring you'd cook them about 15 min? utes • and you hoist them up out of a boil, it ran on a track over, and you came to the cooler and you dumped them. There was a hose there and you took the hose and sprayed the cold water on them. You chilled them right away. Because if you don't chill-them right away the meat will stick to the claws and the devil won't crack it. If you cool them right off, the meat comes away from the shell. They're easy to crack. And as the year went on, o- ver in July, they took less cooking • you only cooked them 9 to 10 minutes.") D. J.: After they'd cool, then they'd sep? arate the claws and the tails, and the bodies would be put into a barrel that they had right near. They'd take the claws off and throw them in one box and throw the tails in another box. And the bodies went into the barrels. The bodies were go? ing out for waste. They used the bodies on the farms, for fertilizer. They'd spread them on the farms before they'd plow them. CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE, NUMBER TWENTY WRECK COVE, CAPE BRETON, NOVA SCOTIA SECOND CLASS MAIL • REGISTRATION NUMBER 301'