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And she'd make what she called a floor cloth • a piece of canvas • and spread the fine sand on the floor, and scrubbed it with the canvas. In other words she was sandpapering. And boy, she'd scrub that a couple or three times and it would be as smooth as that and right white, just the same as if it was planed. And with my caulking iron out of a piece of stick, I'd be sitting down on the floor, going along the cracks in the floor, caulking the cracks. I'd be at that till mother would kick me clear of it. And I caulked every inch of that first vessel with father • caulked more of it than he did • and the news went around then, I could caulk. And everyone had a boat to caulk came after me. And by god, I was noted as a caulker in Victoria County. You know, the only time I was ever inside a school as a young man was to go to a show or a concert. No school to go to. And where I lived from 1929?? there never was a school there • not in the history of the world. And in the early 30s I got a program that I was going to try for a school. There were 31 kids ready to go to school • five of them were my own. And I knew there were 31 more that would be ready in a year or two. So Jim MacKinnon in Baddeck was the school inspector. He only had one eye • but he could see more than any man I ever saw with two. And my wife used to tell me, "You can save yourself the trouble, looking for a school." But I kept at it. But when they found out I was looking for a school, the old folks • my father as well as the rest • said if I kept a-going and got a school, it would be the worst thing that ever happened. Well, I asked father one day that he said it, "What do you mean by that? I thought it would be one of the best." Father said, "If you get a school going, they'll take everything we own for school tax." And I figured I had the biggest assessment of any man in the district. I said to father, "Here goes it, I'm getting her going." And by god, I think it was in 1935. there was a parish priest came to the country. And he and I became terrible good friends just after he came. I walked to his place to see him about this school. He said he . could hardly believe it • 18 families and 31 kids ready and no school. I said, "I've come over here to see if you'll help me." I wanted to know if he'd allow me to use his name at the head of posters I wanted to put up for a meeting. He said, "You use my name for anything that is reasonable, and I'm sure that school is quite reasonable." The first meeting we had, that they passed the verdict, everything was sanctioned, trustees, secretary, site of the school, and everything. The priest wasn't half a mile from the house when they shifted everything. No good, the site was no good, nothing any good. Back I go again. Had another meeting at my place. I put up the posters. And when the priest came this time he had the school inspector with him • and they didn't shift it this time. And see, this school was supposed to be built voluntarily. We were going to try to do it at cost. And we started. I tell you, I did some terrible work. And the neighbors worked along with me • once we got the thing organized. So, we carried on, and that fall we had the school ready. And we had a teacher from Margaree, And one of the old fellows • he had quite a family • and he wouldn't send his kids to school. I was one of the trustees, so I went down and asked him why. And he jumped up, and came down on the table with his fist.



He said, "There was a man in here yesterday and he told me that I was the smartest man around here." "Well," I said, "there can't be very many smart ones or otherwise he's making fun of you." I said, "Listen. I didn't come here to hear that. I just came to find the rea? son why you're not sending your kids to school." I said, "Tomorrow morning I'm go? ing to school. And if your kids are not in school, I'm going to the Education Depart? ment. I don't want to do this--but I got to do it. Because you've got a perfect right to send your kids to school and not have them to grow up like you and me." I said, "We can get along quite good now. But there's a day coming when those kids are not going to be able to get through the world without a little education." So the next morning I was there ahead of the teacher. His kids were the first ones to , the school. No trouble after that. At first there were problems, yes. But once it was understood, the neighbours pitched in, and they were the finest kind. Phone (902) 79'-7251 Cabel. BRENNANS Telex 019-351'9 Night & Holiday 736-8'79 79'-3178 Brennans Travel Agency 158 QUEEN STREET, NORTH SYDNEY STEAMSHIP • AIRLINE • RAIL AND HOTEL ACCOMHODATIO}' BRIAND'S CAB Cape Breton TOURS Gaelic College see the heautiful CABOT TRAIL 564-6161 564-6162