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Amelia Cook CONTINUED FROM INSIDE FRONT COVER had the croup. But she did all right, she's a teacher today. and I remember for a sore • say you cut your? self • I remember seeing Mama sending my brother Pat and me to get the little balsam buds off of the fir tree, on the bark • and we used to scrape that and get all the balsam buds we could get, and Mama used to take that and put it on a kind of block or little flat board, and she used to pound that to make a kind of sticky salve, and she used to put that on • and you know, boys, it was a good cure. (Would she heat it up?) No. (Mix anything with it?) No, nothing at all, just the balsam. And do you know, fir balsam • if you get the buds and add a little water to that and steep it on the stove, it'll make the best cough medicine. I hardly ever bought cough medicine, always made it. Take the balsam in the little buds and steep it" on the stove • it was an old Indian man told me that. Just make it the texture of cough medicine. And you know, it had a nice taste to it. Take a teaspoonful • used to take it any time I felt like it. And any time I ever got a cough in my life, I went out and skinned the bark off a wild cherry tree and steeped it on the back of the stove. Give it a little bit of water and if it got kind of low, I'd add a little more. I always had a dipper of that on the back of the stove. It was great for a cough. And back to salve. There weren't many Balm of Gilead trees down around Port Hood, but we have them here. The Balm of Gilead bud is full of balsam. You can take that and pound it too and get the balsam out of it to put on a sore. And Balm of Gilead buds steeped on the stove is great for weak lungs • nothing better. (What is a weak lung?) Well, could be TB, or if you have bronchitis, your lungs are tender and the cold will settle in the lungs. (Amelia, starting from the top, could they do anything for falling hair?) I never heard anything for that. But I'll tell you one thing I used to laugh about. Old superstition. When anybody would get their hair cut, they used to make them burn their hair in case they take a headache. Now whatever that had to do with a headache, I don't know. "Sweep it up and burn, it before you'd get a headache," Mama would say. I used to see Mama use herbs for a stone bruise. It's kind of a brown bruise. You'd run and bump your leg but it wouldn't cut it, and it'd be sore • stone bruise. I used to see Mama get a plantain leaf and she used to bind that on. It's a great big leaf and they're out in the dooryard everywhere, and in the fall of the year little seeds come up on a prong. She didn't do anything to it, just bound it on. It grows wild, but we used to kind of plant it • dig up a root and put it where it would be handy if you wanted it. And tansy • that's recommended for swelling. It was good for horses, too. We used to put a big bundle away every year; then if the horse got a swollen leg or a sore leg • or even people • we'd make that tansy tea and we'd wash the leg down. Bathe it. You cut the tansy when the little yellow bloom comes on it • just a little yellow bud. I used to take it and put it in a paper bag and tie it together and hang it head down • put it upstairs behind the flue to dry. Then when you need it you take the leaves and steep it • the leaves are what you wanted. And they used to dig roots. Blackberry roots if anybody had cramps in the stomach • steep that. And she used to send us out for gould thread. Probably you've seen it.



You pull up the leaf and there's a long yellow root on it. I suppose it's gold thread, but Mama used to pronounce it C & G MadEOD LIMITB) And No Birds Sang by Farley Mowat 13.95 Balls by Richard Rohmer 12.95 Songs & Stories from Deep Cove Cape Breton as remembered by Amby Thomas '.95 ~ Cape Breton, photos by Owen Fitzgerald 9.95 Louisbourg, photos by Owen Fitzgerald 12.95 DOWN NORTH; The Book of Cape Breton's Magazine 19.95 hardcover . 12.95 paperback The Little Boats, Ray MacKean & Robert Percival 12.95 Highland Community on the Bras d'Or by P.J. MacKenzie Campbell 5.50 '4aii Orders Cape Breton's Maga2ine/3' 361 Chorion\* SirMt - P. O. Box 658 SYDNEY, NOVA SCOTIA A Specialty