

Transcription of Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Garvin Wolfe.

Mrs. Wolfe b. 1908.
Born in Road End (near Joggins).

father b. Stellarton.
mother b. Parrsboro.

father was from a mining family.
passed on from generation to generation.

her dad started operating mines when she was a girl.

she says he came to Joggins as a boy.

worked as a fireman on the railways before going to mines.

father d. 1959, he was 77 when he died.
he was married in 1903.

near as she can remember, he was always a sub-contractor.

he worked in the pit in Pennsylvania when everything was flat in Joggins--
c. 1926 or so.

her dad worked in a mine in Drumheller, Alberta. he started a mine out
there.

he'd been running mines in River Hebert--she was thirteen when the family
moved to Fenwick.

--he started the three Maple Leafs, started the Five-and-Ten.

putting down the original slope. he had the old mine operating in Fenwick--
he started the new ones. he didn't own these mines.

he'd hire the men--he'd be in charge. He went to Beersville, N.B.--he
went broke. Her father lost all her money in Beersville mine--he couldn't
make a go of it. coal was no good--too thin. He always said, "He lost
his money in Beersville." Active there in 1923.

--he was in Beersville in 1922, 1923, and 1924.

--he was manager at Beersville. Wherever he worked he was the manager.
He was manager at Fenwick, etc. He managed the Maple Leaf after he started them.

--her husband worked for her father. in C.B. 'We had a little squabble and
disagree...Perhaps he'd get mad and chew the rag or something, but it was
all over, it didn't last.' this a comment on negotiating with her father
the manager while he (husband) was the nightboss.

'He didn't stand over you.'

--left Joggins, for Fenwick. she was 11 at Fenwick.

--five-room school in Joggins.

--at Fenwick, children boarded with another couple.

"There were a lot of little shacks where the men batched," but there were
houses too. Boarding house too.

--boarding in Joggins--didn't live in Fenwick as a child.

they went out to Fenwick. 1919.

used to have a locomotive connecting Fenwick to Athol.

--shopped at the store in Fenwick.

'The men made big money in the mine.'

--farms around Fenwick. some of the miners came from Springhill--Joe Letcher,
Cecil Letcher, Joe Clockley from Springhill- quite a Springhill contingent.

teamsters hauling coal from Beech Hill to the station.

Mr. Wolfe.

b. Strathcona, 1907.

attended school in R. Hebert. 6-room school.

his father worked in the mine all his life.

quit school 1926. went to work with the telephone company--little local company.

paying \$30 a month. had to work all day repairing telephone lines in a horse and wagon.

so he decided to go to the pit.

started in the pit in 1926. December.

pits used to shut down. worked on the railroad a little while.

worked up in Petitcodiac.

worked up in North Springhill.

coal mine going up there.

Guy Lockhart working that mine.

--he lost all his money through back wages with North Springhill folded up--didn't get his money back.

--this happened c. 1949.

went to Cape Breton in about 1949.

--his father worked in all the rest of the little mines around here.

--Garvin started in the Maple Leaf mine.

--his grandfather worked in the Maple Leaf mine when he started

--He became bank overman. "Why wouldn't I be, when my father-in-law was..."
[suggesting family contacts helped him get ahead.]

--Mr. Wolfe's grandfather and grandmother came from Germany. settled in Minudie at first.

never said when his grandparents came over. his grandfather died when he was 6 months old.

they were a farming family. his grandfather ~~work~~ never worked in the mine. grandfather was a sea captain.

his father went to sea some--in his younger days.

--worked 7 days a week for 19 years up in Cape Breton--thought he had got it made.

his father had a shotfirer's certificate but not sure he used it.

got \$3 a day, at Maple Leaf No. 4.

old Standard used to be called the Sweet Cake Mine.

coal is awful low here.

'You had to lay down to load coal.' --at the Maple Leaf.

the subcontractors made the money--and the guys got their share. but the miners didn't get much of a share.

UMW here. didn't go to many meetings. sudden wildcat strikes. doesn't think it was right. he resented losing the money.

he is Church of England. belongs to the IOOF.

smoking in the cellars of the school. theft of candy from stores.

lots of children at Fenwick.

families entirely.

family was in Fenwick. then family went back to R.Hebert--still had their home in R.Hebert.

John David Betts was her father.

was living out in Road End when he went out to Drumheller.

--he worked first with Maritime Coal.

--worked as an official for them.

--she can't remember a time when the kids couldn't get anything they wanted.

she was 6 years old when her father bought her first car. they had two cars in those days.

Joggins went flat in mid 1920s.

--he lost all his money in Beersville. 'That was his downfall.'

--her mother always had a maid.

--she doesn't think she's any better.

[It's interesting that she speaks the vernacular the same way as others--
'It don't bother you', etc.]

--her father's family...

--her oldest brother worked in Fenwick, under her father.

--he liked working under his own father.

--"My father was a great Orangeman. Very high up in the Orange Order."

mother belonged to Church of England, father belonged to the Presbyterians.

children had to go to one church in the morning, and the other Sunday School in the afternoon.

'The only thing I can tell you is a little joke, and I don't care if you're taping it or not. My mother hooked a mat for Dad, with the Crown and the two and a half....We pestered Dad as kids, "What's 2½ stand for?" You'd see that "2½" on the Orangemen's emblems...."Can't tell you." ... And this night he said, "I'll tell you--you promise you'll never reveal it?" We thought we were really hearing something. And he said, "A half an Orangeman is better than two Frenchmen."

--as kids we believed that!

He was a Black Knight in the Orange Lodge. It used to be very strong--now they don't have a hall any more.

--biggest building in R.Hebert used to be their hall.

'Dad never wanted us kids to mix too much with Catholics. But he had more friends Catholic than he had Protestants.'

--would have Catholics in the house, etc.

Father Curry used to drop in to the house all the time, used to pick up berries from the garden, cherries, raspberry bushes too.

If Father Curry had to go to somewhere in the night to see someone who was dying, he'd call her father and he'd come and pick him up.

Take him to his destination.

'I guess he didn't want his children to marry into the Catholics, that's the only thing I can say.'

--French people would have people boarding at his house--drive teams for him.

--her father used to have three teamsters--they ate at the house and slept up in his sister's.

theatre in R. Hebert too.

teachers didn't stop them from playing cards during recess.

[topography goes Jiggins/ Road End/Beech Hill/River Hebert.]

'Jiggins and River Hebert never did get along.'

--Father Curry used to have a big picnic on labour day. The protestant kids would still go to it.

they went to house dances together.

listened to fiddle music.

they went together until she was 19.

--had two theatres in River Hebert., and ~~two theatres~~ one theatre in the Jiggins.

--skating rink, too.

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cheapness of miners who were batching it at Fenwick

the community was highly temperate.

Hottentot and the Black Track---much the same neighbourhood.

a lot of bootlegging going on in the Hottentot.

revere a doctor called William Rockwell. he stayed in R. Hebert for years and years and years.

there were midwives around this district.

--at the Headx of the River there was a woman who took in women patients--Mrs. Jack Lloyd.

her father's people were always conservative. the Burchills were Liberals.

'I always was a Tory and I always will be.'