

Transcription of Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Gabriel.

b. Springhill, 1895.

--father was a mason--he never worked in the mines.

--worked a lot in the mine.

went to school in Rodney.

lived down the road--on Church St.

used to live in Rodney. his father used to have a farm out there. brought up in Rodney till they got on their own--then drifted away, different places.

fourteen children in the family!

came to Springhill when he was 14.

he built his own house in Springhill.

'It made me scratch....At that time it wasn't always cash.' [Hardships of building a house.]

father died when he was 14. so he left Rodney to go to the mines. Worked in the mines until he was married, about 18.

drifted around from one mine to another--came back here when he was on pension

when he started out, he was 'turning the fan.' then moved up to loading coal in the mines. when he started to work he was making 52c a day turning the fan--and then he got loading, \$1.52 a day; then he got up to digging coal, that's as far as you could get.

suffered a head injury in the mine.

he was butties with another fellow. split what you made half and half.

got along fine with him.

went to quite a few UMW meetings. relief from the union in 1925: He says: "We got so much from the union--it was enough to keep us alive, anyway." She adds: "And that's about all you could say."

--he had pigs, hens. he's almost in the country, he's on boundaries of the town. --ducks, geese.

--made them give up their animals about 18 years ago.

had a big family--fourteen children all together.

--her family is from Truro.

--just came up to Springhill on a visit.

one son went down the mine--he was on that rescue.

Gabriels belonged to the Church of England; his parents was Baptist and so were hers. they switched from Baptist. doesn't know what took him into the Church of England.

--he supported Archie Terris. he followed him in each party. 'I always found him a man.'

Amw: "They were a bunch of crazy people."

--weith fourteen children: every one of them had a task.

--lost one girl from typhoid fever. but the rest of them were OK.

on strikes: her comment: "We were always wishing that they'd get to work the next day. Because there wasn't much coming in and you had to handle it awful careful."

made their own bread.

very proud that their children never went to bed hungry.

dealt with A.B. Wilson and others.

drinking beer on Saturday and Sunday.

'I think that kept most of them together'--her comment on the men drinking beer.

--he belongs to the Legion.

no barriers to coloured people in Springhill. 'We were all the same here in Springhill.'

--warmly accepted in the Legion.

'I was always used good in Springhill.'

no colour bar they remember in Springhill. 'Never no difference' in Springhill.

--she estimates fifty coloured families--too high an estimate.

--coloured families; Dormtons, Ashes, ...all moved away....

his mother hung on to the farm in Rodgey for a few years.

she did all the sewing for the family--made a lot of their clothes.

only worked a little while when the big strike came on.

after they went on strike here he went down to the Joggins. 'Oh, it's an awful place.'

--low and damp. right on side of the ocean. underneath the ocean.

worked at River Hebert and Naccan. not much money in it.

company houses in the Hottentot.

she liked going fishing off the wharf at the Joggins.

'There were a lot of foreign people lived down there. They were the best in the world.'

--house in Joggins: eight rooms, upstairs and down--four up, four down.

--rented the house--\$6 a month rent.

--had outside pumps, had to carry all your water. had to buy drinking water!

--had barrels--charged 25c a barrel for drinking water.

had a company store in the Joggins. didn't do much cheating, she believes. there wasn't many people of colour there--Reeves....six families all told.

--used to make their own beer in the Hottentot. "Every house you'd go into would have a barrel of beer."

'When Saturday come, you'd see them go with their bucket.....'

drink all night Saturday, sleep all day Sunday and be ready for Monday.

--Mr. Gabriel used to make it himself. But he didn't sell his--he drank it himself.

seam on a slant.

--lived in a River Hebert shack--three rooms. that's why he moved back to Springhill. pretty crude house in River Hebert.

--three kids for a three-room house. River Hebert--same kind of work, but not near as wet.

--conditions at Chignecto about the same as River Hebert. living in a River Hebert--would drive back and forth to Chignecto--drive horse and wagon with a friend of theirs. a neighbour of his. he was the only one working at Chignecto.

retired eighteen years ago. went through the bump here.

was on a different shift. She describes the bump: "It was just like a big clap of thunder."

six Gabriel brothers at one time in the mines. all in No.2!

they were all coal miners.

once in a while he used to go out to a ball-game.

men went away somewhere else to drink his home brew--never brought it home.

[this was an iron convention of life in the mining towns, with a lot of people.]

--go down to the wharf and drink his home brew.

had a radio after the radios came out. had an old-fashioned gramophone with a horn.

--Mr. Gabriel played violân all his life. used to go to play at dances. played mandolin, banjo, violin. played country music.

used to have square dances--used to be paid for it. \$4 all night. all around the county--went up to Amherst on occasion and played.

--When they lived at Joggins, they had a dance every Saturday night, at the Miners' Hall. Sometimes at their own homes. They'd go and play.

worked up in Amherst for awhile--at Robb Engineering. General Strike was before he was at the foundry.

--he was a company hand, did most anything.

cooked at Dorchester--cooked for 21 men in the woods. He used to be a good cook. whole family did not go to Dorchester. he went to Dorchester two years.

family would follow him to these jobs.

--town was "dead" at that time. no lively times in Amherst.

worked in Joggins after the first war--before he moved in Amherst.

between 1914 and 1921.

they were about 22 and 23 years old. 1915, 1916. during the war.

in 1918 they were in Springhill. They had already been to the Joggins.

they were in Joggins during the first world war.

foreign people all drifted back to Cape Breton, she thinks?

the name they remember : Jacobys--they were Germans.

union there wasn't as strong as Springhill.