

Transcription of Interview with Mrs. Iradelle Allbon.
Senior Citizen's Complex, Springhill.

[b. 1909. married 1932. born in Halifax. four years old when they came to Springhill. father and rest of family moved to states, Boston and vicinity-- father used to run an electric tram car. came back to Pictou co., and then they came to Springhill. father married 1900. both from Pictou co. no brothers or sisters--both died in infancy. father went into blacksmith shop work with the Dominion Coal Company. not a blacksmith by training--"nobody was then." father's father was a farmer. Pensioned off at 70. Father was never out of work--only when there was a strike, that's all. "Oh, we can remember the strikes, can't we, Vi?" --ironic because Vi's father did not have to leave work.]

[Strikes in 1920s: "You used to get a seven-dollar order for a family. Isn't that something?" father owned his own house outright. seven-room house on Main Street. "The workingmen of Springhill bought their houses, fixed them up-- except for this row over here of Company houses." Blacksmith shop used to be at the bottom of Queen Street. Long walks through the snow storms. At the Blacksmith shop made all the rails for the mine, the trollies, the chains, etc. They were making the implements for the mine. At the miner's museum is a picture of the men who worked in the blacksmith shop. must be at least 16 of them.]

[How did young women amuse themselves? "We used to walk up and down Main Street on Sunday afternoon. Go out to the pond and talk there and then come home." Snow-shoeing, skating, skiing. We'd hike to the Junction and back every Friday afternoon in the winter.]

[Her husband said, "That red coat with the fox fur she wore, that's what got me." He belonged to St. Andrew's, and she went to the Methodist Church. But he flooded her to church. Brother of Mr. Allbon that ran the Record office. Jim was very prominent in the Knights. When he died he was Supreme Representative. K of P: "It was based on the Biblical Life of Ruth and Naomi." It's a branch of your religion. My father was a Knight too. "Jim was really steeped in Pythianism." She belonged to the Rebekahs, the sister lodge of the Oddfellows.

[Allbons: C.J.Allbon Sr. came over as a young man from England. Self-made man, because while working in the mines he went to night school. Staunch Presbyterian people.]

[To question, "Are there class distinctions in Springhill," she replies, "I wouldn't go out on a limb and say that."

[What did her mother think of the strikes? "Like every other wife and mother she was disgusted with them, but what could you do?"]

[Blacksmith wouldn't get as much money as miners.]

[Q.You speak very fondly of Springhill, but in some ways it was a trap, wasn't it? A.Well, it was a trap, you were here, and that was it. You didn't get out. I had a change to go to the United States to train for a nurse...and I couldn't go.]

[Two or three of her friends went into training away and came back home to work.]
Q.Did you ever resent not being able to go and have your own career? A.Definitely. It's been a resentment all my life....]

worked in Springhill before she got married in a shoe store. "I was never satisfied with my life in a way, because I didn't accomplish what I wanted to do."

INTERVIEW ENDS AT 023.