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New Waterford's Fatal Day Jack O'Donnell: "Angus Timmons' personal account reveals a compassion and faith which is not uncommon among Canadian miners. John McKay (verse 10) was the treasurer of Local 19, AMWA (Amalgamated Mine Workers of America). According to the Sydney Daily Post, 'he was one of the most respected citizens of New Waterford.' He was shot lighter for the section of the mine where the explosion occurred and it is his likeness which tops the New Waterford monument dedicated to those killed in this disaster." Statue of John McKay atop the monument in New Waterford

New Waterford's Fatal Day 1 Come all you good people, draw near, pay attention. And listen to these few lines I'm now going to pen. 'Tis of an explosion, a terrible disaster Which caused the death of so many brave men. 2 It was in sixteen for my bread I did labour That day the dreadful news went around. But little I thought that so many lay lifeless. All torn and mangled down under the ground. 3 I quickly quit work, as well be imagined. All in sixteen likewise did the same. From fourteen and fifteen in hundreds we hurried On to the rescue, our comrades to save. GILLIS ?? BUILDING CENTRE I Street 'a'm' in no. 5 & Pacia' Street - To-ri-Kd Words and music by Angus Timmons mm'm' THAT NEW HOME CALL US FOR AN ESTIMATE FLOOR & ROOF TRUSSES KINGS ROAD, SYDNEY RIVER 539-0738 Ca'NWGDD HOMES ' Complete Home Packages Cottages Contact Darren Wilcox: 539-0738 4 When those sixty-five men at their work they had started In number twelve pit on that day in July. Oh, little they knew that grim death would o'ertake them And before nine o'clock they'd be called on to die. 5 When the first of the victims to the surface was carried The sorrow and grief I shall never forget Of mothers and wives, sisters and sweethearts When they saw their beloved ones lying out there in death. 6 As we gaze on those men as they lie dead before us. Our thoughts how they soared to our home in the sky. We ask our dear Lord to have mercy upon them. For none of us know how or when we must die. 7 Oh! Pity the friends of those poor Newfoundlanders As their corpses were brought home on the steamship, the Nineteen in number, 'twas homeward she bore them /Kyle. To be laid there to rest 'neath their own native soil. 8 We have heard of our boys who have fallen in battle Being shell-shocked and gassed by our foes far away. But all those things were completely forgotten When we saw what had happened in our town that day. 9 When the time had arrived for those men to be buried, When their bodies were ready to be laid 'neath the sod, With tears in our eyes and our hearts full of sorrow We commended their souls to the mercy of God 10 Those men are now gone, in their graves they are sleeping. No doubt they'll be mourned for many a long day. 11 Of one of the number I make special mention. For we all lost a friend in the late John McKay. 11 Many thanks now are due to all those outsiders Who came to our aid in that day of great woe May they get their rewards in the great hereafter And be crowned with success while they stay here below. 12 There are still many more I would like to mention; To leave those unthanked, indeed, would be wrong. The clergy, the doctors, the nuns and the nurses • May they all be



rewarded in the great world beyond. 13 Now I'll conclude and my song I will finish. A few words to the mourners I yet wish to say: Although they have parted from those they love dearly. They'll all be united on the great judgment day. "And Now the Fields Are Green": A Collection of Coal Mining Songs in Canada, is an 8-1'-by-11-inch songbook, collected with a narrative by John C. O'Donnell. It is available in book? stores, or direct from University College of Cape Breton Press, P. O. Box 5300, Sydney, N. S. BIP 6L2. Jack O'Donnell is the director of Cape Breton's coal miners' choir, called The Men of the Deeps. For a photo of Jack O'Donnell and The Men of the Deeps, see the Nova Scotia Sen? ior Citizens' Expo ad on page 77. 82