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Stories from the Clyburn Valley From interviews by Maureen Scobie. Ingonish. and CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE TodayT'the Clyburn Valley is the world famous 18-hole Highlands Golf Links, as well as a splendid place for hiking and cross-country skiing--part of the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. Although the pioneer settlers had left the valley around the turn of the century, the land--considered among the most fertile farmland in the Highlands of Cape Breton--continued as pasture land for cattle. Local history tells of 17th century mining; there was a brief flurry of gold fever that brought people to the Valley in the early 20th century. Remnants of that enterprise still survive. Only two families lived in the Clyburn Valley when the national park took over in 1936: the Doujettes and the Donovans. Neither family had many years before the park closed the valley to human habitation. Maurice and Emma Donovan Maurice Donovan: We lived in the Clyburn Valley. Clyburn--we got a son called Cly? burn. He was born up there, and we called him Clyburn. And if we had of stayed, and had another girl, I'd have called her Franey (after the peak overlooking the Val? ley) . Emma Donovan: Oh, my father thought that was the worst name in the world. He near had a fit, being we called the baby Clyburn. Maurice: Called after the river, and the river is called after the first white settler that settled in Ingonish. (Your house when you lived up the Clyburn, where was it?) On Number 9. (That's the golf course today.) Emma: There's an apple tree there. Right where the house (was). Maurice: At that time the river, the Cly? burn River, was teeming with trout and sal- CAPE BRETON'S MAGAZINE mon. I counted 129 salmon one evening there in that pool, just looking down from the rocks at them. The trout--our kids used to catch more trout--they were there all the time fishing. Emma: We had no water in the house. We had to go down the hill to get it from the brook. One morning I guess there was too much water used--what the kids used in the nighttime--so I said, "Charlotte, you run down and get some water for breakfast," or before they go to school or something. He (Maurice) had to rig up and go and hunt for her, for she had a rod hid down by the brook. She was down there and she had 9 trout when he got down. Maurice: She was shivering, but still fishing. STORY CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE NUMBER FORTY-NINE WRECK COVE, CAPE BRETON. NOVA SCOTIA SECOND CLASS MAIL -- REGISTRATION NUMBER 3014