

# MUSIC

## *Cape Breton's Diversity in Unity*

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### *The Ballad of J.B. McLachlan*

Words and music by Charlie MacKinnon  
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1. This story I tell you is true, my friend;  
This story of a miner, a man they couldn't bend.  
In the annals of labour, there's none stands as tall,  
As the great J.B. McLachlan, who fought for one and all.

2. Born in old Scotland in eighteen sixty-nine,  
In a little comp'ny house down by a dark coal mine;  
Started work at the age of twelve, then sailed across the sea,  
And landed in this mining land at the age of thirty-three.

#### *Chorus:*

Jim B McLachlan, the leader of men;  
JB MacLachlan united them and then  
Held high the torch of freedom for all,  
And asked his fellow miners to never let it fall.

2. A tried and true champion of the working man;  
The coal boss couldn't bind him or shackle his hands.  
From the great strike out in Winnipeg and all across this land  
They came to seek of the leadership of this humble miner man.

3. He formed a local branch of the UMW  
And asked the miners to stand for the union that was true.  
The coal boss had to silence him, into Dorchester Jail;  
They said: "Seditious libel," and none could go his bail.

4. Blacklisted by the comp'ny boss, he then turned to the land  
On a little farm on Steele's Hill, this great miner man;  
His health did fail from his years in jail, his banner he held high,  
And he left behind a legend that will never die.

5. There are men who sail the ocean, their lives are on the sea.  
There are men who carry lunchpails, men like you and me.  
The miner and the steel man, the mightier the call,  
Must carry high his banner, and never let it fall.

*Repeat Chorus*

*Recording:*

[The Ballad of J.B. McLachlan](#). Charlie MacKinnon. T-1067. Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University.