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demning of Christ, to crucifixion. Even to the point of the scourging of the pillar. And Edgar Fortune, I remember that, demand? ed that the whip that they used--it was on? ly cloth--that knots be put on the end of it, so that he would feel the sting and show some of the pain. And they did. And they bruised him badly. When he got up on the cross--they had like flesh-coloured straps with a nail on them, to look like he was actually nailed to the cross. They had a cheesecloth curtain which was dropped in front of the cross, so it would look very mystic and very eery. He passed out at the last words--on the cross. Edgar Fortune did. Said his last words and fainted--from exhaustion. The shows were really well done, very authentic. Oh, heavens, that had to be a three-hour show. Long show. He did an afternoon per? formance, and did an evening performance on Good Friday, and on Holy Saturday, an af? ternoon performance and an evening perfor? mance. A lot of rehearsing into it. Because they did--heavy scenery, heavy costumes. The production was his own planning. A very heavy production. A big hit at the Lyceum. The Lyceum was a big part of Dad, growing up as a young man. A big part of our fami? ly, because we were all involved in it. Well, I was the only one, I guess, that sang, of the family. But music was a big part of our family, big part of our living. There were 10 in our family. Five girls, five boys, and I'm the baby. There were 7 that I remember living. Two died at birth, a way, way back. And one girl died at 22, died very young. After that I remember the KIERAN BALLAH CONTINUES ON PAGE 81 Helen Ballah Dunn: Kieran's grandfather and my grandfather were brothers. Kieran's grandfather was Jo? seph Ballah. My grandfather was Habib Bal? lah. They came, together with their wives, from the Old Country in...1885. They came to North Sydney first--both brothers with their families. And my grandmother used to always tell me that on the way over they bought fine things, you know, in jewellery and underwear, and things that they could sell when they got over here. I think in France and different places, I suppose they stopped on the way over and picked up dif? ferent things. (Do you know why they moved?) Well, you know, I think things were never very--was there ever a time of great peace? I don't know why exactly they would have moved, whether it would have been because there was unrest. I don't think it was economic. It couldn't have been because my grandmoth? er used to talk about going into the or? chard, and the farm, and all this. Now, she was a Rahey, my grandmother. And she used to tell us about her father guiding Europe? an hunters--he was a kind of a guide, I guess--and he would guide European hunters into the mountains to hunt. You see? She used to talk about that. And we used to have other little jokes, you know. The family--'course, like old fami? lies over there, they would arrange marri? ages . And they were trying to arrange a marriage for her. And she said she wouldn't have any of it. And she met up with my grandfather. You see, she had that all ar? ranged in her own mind. Which in that coun? try, I suppose, was a no-no. But she did. We used to tell her, "You eloped, Grandma!" We'd make all kind of jokes about it--she'd get right wild at us. This is what she'd say: they didn't want her to marry Grandpa, but she did. And I guess--I don't know if



she left her village when she married him, or what. But anyway, my aunts, most of them--except for the youngest one--they were born over there. So when they came, my grandmother lost a lot of children. She used to say she lost 6 children. And quite a number of them were boys. And Dad (Dave Ballah) was the only boy that lived, see. Because she used to say--she'd mix Arabic with English, telling us stories--she (was) a very dynamic kind of person. She was a big strong woman, and very dynamic kind of person. And she'd talk about: when they came to this country first, and settled here, they couldn't speak a word of English. But sharp as a tack. Money-wise, nobody could pull the wool over their eyes or try to calm them or anything--they knew all of that. But they couldn't speak any English. However, they earned their living those first years, peddling. And they would go on foot carrying big suitcases, I suppose--the old name for them, valises--filled with this merchandise that they would have bought. And they used to go on foot. They'd travel, selling, they'd travel from here to Mul- HELEN BALLAH DUNN CONTINUES
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