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flesh was white?) Yes, and they had gray hair, and they were whiteo It's hard to describe. Just men, just little men. That's what she always said. "Oh," she said, "the fairies are back--they're after your father for that bow. They want it back." We didn't think anything of that. It's just like when we started to play for a dance at 9 years old. We thought we had to do it. She always said that. (Did you or any of your brothers or sis? ters ever actually see the fairies?) No, I don't think. Although sometimes you'd see little visions. Like you'd see shadows, like, around your clothes, and around dif? ferent things. But you try to undo those braids! You just try to undo them. If you had a wash on the line--you know in the country they used to put strings of clothes out--if you had a wash on the line, everything was beautifully braided together, er, your clothes--it didn't matter what you had--were braided. Then you'd go to the bam, and the most gorgeous braids in the horses' manes and the horses' tails. You would really actually have to see it to believe it. I was 16, 17 years old--I was old enough to remember the beautiful work they used to do--it was just unreal. (Is there any other sign the fairies had been there?) That's the only sign they ev? er left us. (So they didn't leave you a pot of gold.) No. I wish they had of! I would have had a piano! (Was it said that this bow had anything to do with the quality of your father's mu? sic?) Yes. It was said that it was a gift from the fairies. Fairy bow. That's the only thing that I could ever figure that my father got the music from, because he had no learning, he had no training. He was just a hardworking person. And there wasn't one soul in his family could play a note. And the people that he was brought up with--they didn't even know what music was. There wasn't such a thing then as radios or anything. He just sprung up, and that was it. It had to be it. (Did his music change any, I wonder, after he lost the fairy bow?) No, no. He was a marvellous, marvellous player, marvellous strathspey and reel player. Marvellous. The closest that you could ever come to his style of playing--there's only three that I could compare--there's Little Jack, and Sandy MacLean, and himself. Those three--and Mary MacDonald, of course, in Waterford--those four played so closely. There was a similarity, you know what I mean--they weren't exactly the same, but there was similarity. When I came to Sydney first, I can truth? fully say that Scottish music had gone out. It had gone out, 'cause there was Scottish music, of course, but it was played in a different style, you know what I mean? It was played like rock-and-roll. It was played in a faster tempo. And it was swing. all swing. It was like our tunes were ta? ken and they were made swing music. I remember when we started over in Ashby Legion, we used to go over there in the af? ternoon, like on a Saturday or Sunday af? ternoon. There was Francis MacKenzie and Paddy LeBlanc and myself, you know. We used to go over there for a ceilidh. And we were lucky if we got 6 people. I used to go to dances around here, you know, square dances. And I didn't play rock-and- roll and I didn't play any modern songs, really. So they'd come over to me and they'd say, "Is that all you can play? Can't you play any modern music?" You know, they'd almost slap you on the face! Well, I'd say, "That's all I can play, whether you appreciate it



or not." So over the years, we kept going, going, going. And it'd advance and advance and ad? vance. And finally--it's on the top, you know. But we took an awful beating for it. (When you came to Sydney....) That would be about 39 years since then, maybe 40 years. So that's back. The Scottish music was pretty far gone by that time, in Syd? ney. Now up in our area, like Port Hawkes? bury, Judique, Mabou, Inverness, all that place up there, it was wide open--it was all Scottish. Everybody loved Scottish mu? sic in that area. But once you came down here, it was swing music, rock-and-roll. You went and played that--what we play to? day at dances--they'd say you were crazyo "We can't dance to that, it's too slow." That's the first thing they'd say. "Can't you play anything else? Can you play any rock-and-roll?" "No," I'd say, "that's all I can play." And of course I couldn't, ei? ther, you know. So I kept on playing my Scottish music, and I'm glad I did. onme prince Beverage Room and Home of Scottish Hospitality (grill Home Cooked Meals Steaks a Specialty REEVES ST. 562-4484 SYDNEY (38)