

The Barrett family, James Barrett and his wife Margaret, with Susan (17), Conn (12) Danny (15) and Tina (7).

DANNY BARRETT

A British Army Murder

BY
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MURRAY



DANNY BARRETT (15 YEARS)

Shot dead by British Army Sniper, 9 July 1981.

50p

DANNY BARRETT

Killed by British Army Sniper, 9 July 1981

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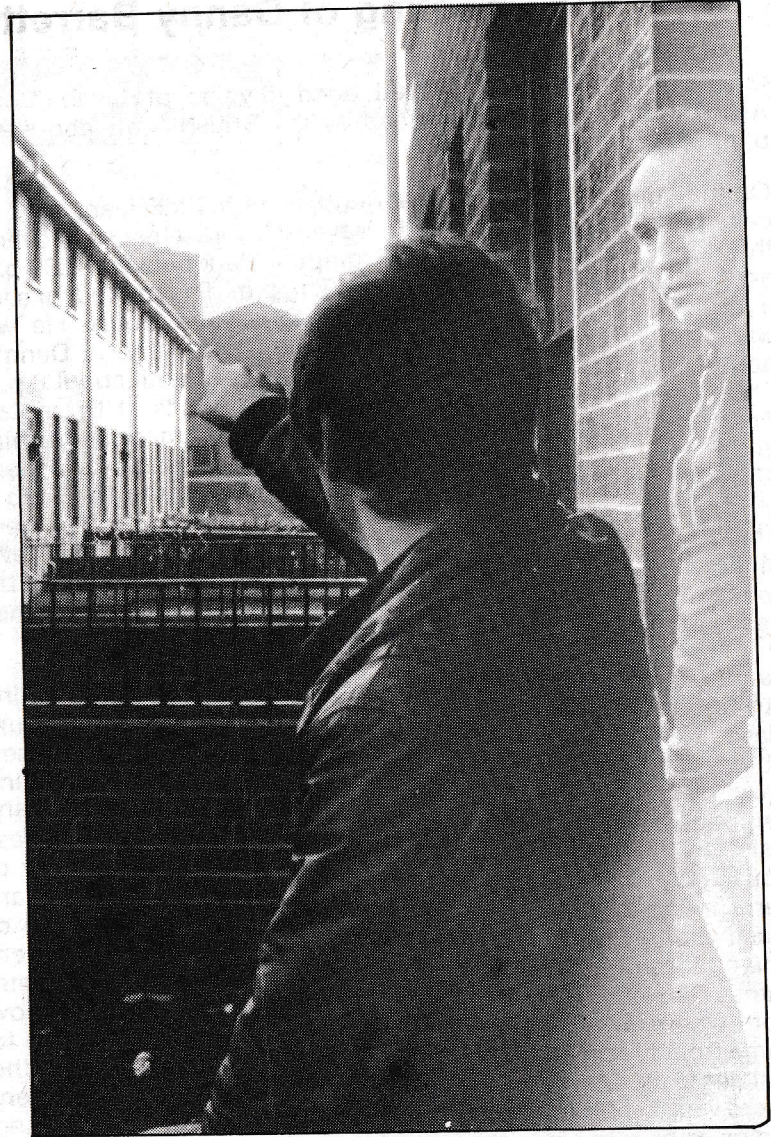
The Shooting of Danny Barrett - Fr Raymond Murray

STATEMENTS OF WITNESSES:

George McErlean, his friend
James Barrett, his father
Joseph Foster, his friend
Kevin Mullen, his friend
Patrick Clarke, neighbour
Veronica Clarke, neighbour
Susan Barrett, his sister
Sean McGuinness, neighbour
Margaret Barrett, his mother
Lilly Canavan, his mother's friend.

Guns and the Law - Fr Denis Faul

First published, January 1982.



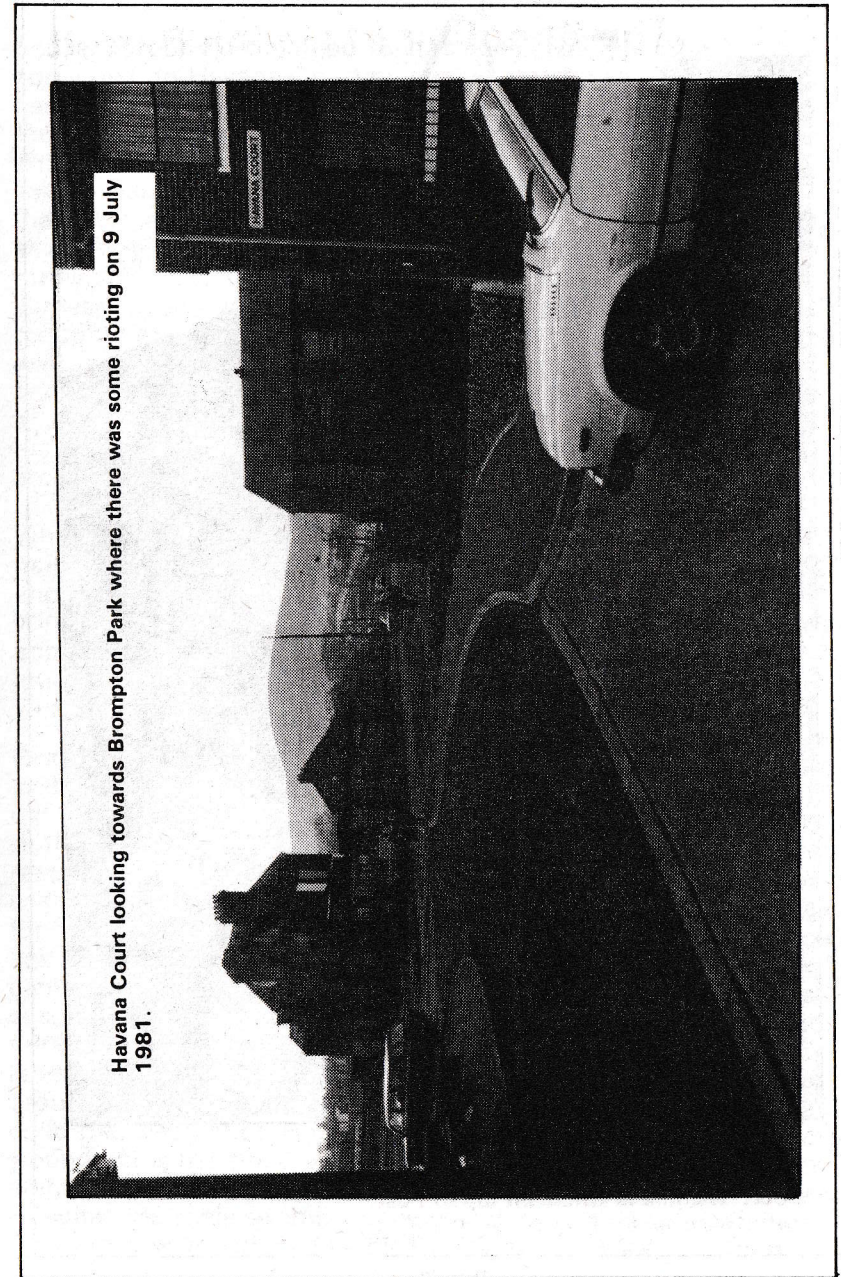
Boy sitting on wall, on which Danny Barrett was killed, points to the Observation Post from where British Army Sniper fired. Danny's Father, as then, stands at the door of their home.

The Shooting of Danny Barrett

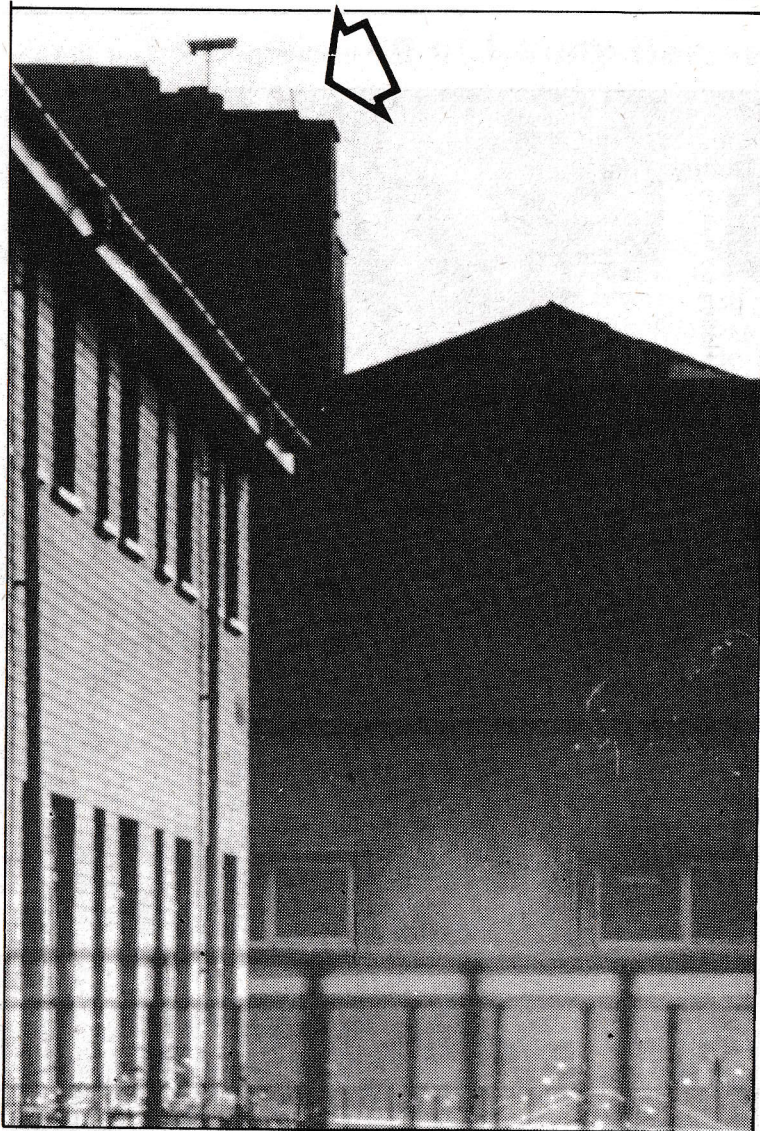
On 9th July 1981 Danny Barrett, aged 15 years, of Havana Court, Ardoyne, Belfast, was shot dead by the British Army about 9.30 p.m.

On the afternoon of 9 July his friend, George McErlean, aged 16, called for Danny at his home in Havana Court. They went over to the Pool Hut at the bottom of Brompton Park between 6.30 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. and came back about 7.15 p.m. They called for a few minutes at Joseph Brown's house at Havana Court. He was watching "Top of the Pops" so they left and came to Danny's house. There they watched "Top of the Pops" until about 8 p.m. They went out and met the rest of their friends at Brompton. There had been a Black Flag March, not an uncommon thing during the Hunger Strike at H Blocks, and there was a crowd there. They did not want to stand around so they went to the Club at Herbert Street to go to the disco. There were four or five of them. There was no crowd at the disco so Danny, George, and Kevin Mullen returned to Danny's house. There was rioting down at the waste ground beside Holy Cross School. They watched and then heard a couple of shots. They went back to Danny's house.

James Barrett, Danny's father, recounts that despite some rioting at the bottom of Brompton Park all was quiet in Havana Court. Havana Court is a small square of newly built red brick houses. There is a main entrance from Flax Street and the high building tower of Ewart's Mill on top of which is a British Army camera and sentry post, visible to the eye, dominates the area and gives a clear visionary line right down the little front gardens of the row of houses where Danny lived. These small front gardens are surrounded by low brick walls about two feet high. A number of plastic bullets were fired at the rioters who were mainly children. The children threw stones; then ran to retrieve the plastic bullets. James Barrett also heard the number of shots fired but didn't know from where or at whom. The shooting, he thought, seemed to come from the direction of Brompton Park. When Danny heard the first shots he rushed into the house along with the other children. There was a short lull and Danny walked out to the front again and James went with him. James stood at the door. Danny sat on the low wall at right angles to the house and was facing towards Flax Street. George McErlean was standing in the hall of Danny's



Havana Court looking towards Brompton Park where there was some rioting on 9 July 1981.



British Army Observation Post in Flax Street taken from Havana Court. Camera is visible on top of Post.

house. Joseph Foster, aged 16, had been at the Pool Hut and had come over to Havana Court by himself. He sat down on the wall beside Danny. Kevin Mullen was standing further down the path to the house. Gerry Ferguson was standing between James Barrett and Danny. Then there was a further number of shots. Joe Foster said to Danny - "Get down". Danny said - "Ach it's alright". Then there was a single shot and Danny fell back over the wall. James saw Danny fall back over the wall. He thought at first Danny had thrown himself back to get down for cover. Gerry Ferguson got up. James looked over the wall and saw his son lying bleeding. He thought he had hit his head when he fell over. He jumped over the wall and saw he was losing a lot of blood. He knew then Danny had been shot. He was unconscious and appeared to be dead. He said an Act of Contrition in his ear and held him in his arms. He took off his shirt and tee shirt and tried to stem the flow of blood. An ambulance was called.

When Danny was shot there was panic among the children and neighbours who had been drawn to the doors by the rioting and shooting. There had been some running to and fro by parents to bring children away from Brompton Park. When Danny was shot some others in hysteria thought they had been shot too. Some ran into Mrs Veronica Clarke's house next door to Barrett's. Some were screaming.

Patrick Clarke, husband of Veronica, says that on 9th July he went to the local disco at around 8.45 p.m. to bring home his eight year old son. On his way home he saw two RUC landrovers driving up Butler Street. A third landrover was further down the street. He reached the junction of Butler Street/Flax Street at the same time as the landrovers. He heard shots being fired from the direction of Etna Drive/Brompton Park at the landrovers. He grabbed his son and ran back to the old houses at Butler Street. The third landrover came racing past him to join up with the other two. He heard a second number of shots which sounded different from the first firing and he assumed this was the RUC returning fire. The RUC landrovers went into Ardoyne Avenue. Patrick crossed the waste ground and went home. He heard a lot of people shouting that a child had been shot. He saw young Danny Barrett lying on the ground; some neighbours were beside him; they were waiting for an ambulance. When it came, he went with Danny to the Mater Hospital. He realised that Danny was dead. Half way down Flax Street they were stopped by the British Army. He was questioned

as to who Danny was and all the details. This took about three minutes. At the bottom of Flax Street they were again stopped by the British Army who wanted to know details. The ambulance crew protested at the delay. They had to give all the information again and this took three minutes. The soldiers then said they would escort the ambulance to the hospital. 150 yards down the Crumlin Road they were stopped by the RUC. The soldiers who were in front of the ambulance drove on. They had to give the RUC the same information again. The RUC went with them to the hospital. When they reached the Mater, the doctors were waiting at the gates. They came into the ambulance and pronounced Danny dead. The RUC asked Patrick to identify Danny. He did that and then they went to the Morgue.

At the time of the shooting Danny's mother, Mrs. Margaret Barrett, was visiting her friend Lily Canavan at Strathroy Park, Ardoyne. James went to the house to tell her. He was pale and shocked. Mrs Barrett was sitting with her back to the window. Lily Canavan said - "Here's your Jimmy coming. There must be something wrong." Mrs Barrett said - "Jimmy, what's wrong? Is it our Danny?" He shook his head and she ran out and down the entry. He followed her and said Danny was shot. People were out of their homes. Mrs. Barrett did not know Danny was dead. She saw the British soldiers and the RUC. She wanted to go to the Hospital. She saw the priest at the hospital. She ran away - she knew he was bad. The priest told her he was dead and she came back home.

Immediately after the shooting the RUC and the British Army came on the scene and searched the Barrett home. They looked through Tina's schoolbooks. The officer in charge said they were looking for arms and not to go through trivial things. They searched through the yard, bin, coal bunker, and back garden. They searched all the bedrooms and cupboards upstairs and down. They also searched Micky Holland's home - Danny's chum. There was no one in the house at the time and they broke the back lock and window.

The next morning, 10th July around 6 a.m. the RUC, British Army, and forensic expert came to the outside of the house to examine a bullet hole in the next door neighbour's house. James Barrett went out and spoke to them. They were pointing in the direction of the highrise building in Flax Street which is a British Army base. There is an Observation Post on top of it. The forensic men told James that was the direction the shot came from.

Danny Barrett was buried after 10 o'clock Mass on 14 July from Holy Cross Church. Some statements have been made to the RUC but as yet there has been no inquest or any further development in the case.

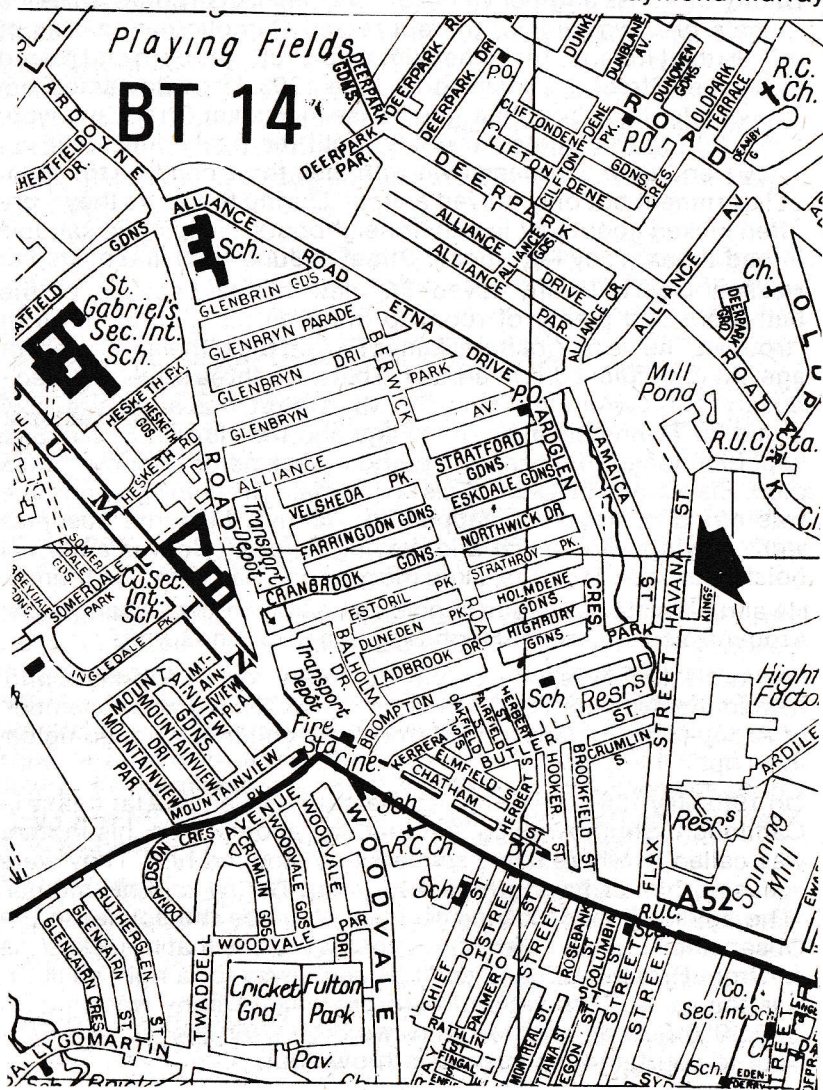
Danny Barrett is another victim of the British/Irish conflict. His life reflects his own people, the oppressed Catholic nationalists of the north of Ireland. His father Jimmy Barrett was born and reared in Hooker Street. He married in June 1963. His wife came from Unity Flats. They bought a wee house in Hooker Street and were there during the whole "troubles" until the peace line went up. They went up to Gormanstown with their three children the night of internment but only stayed a night. During the years they were often kicked about just like their neighbours, sleeping in schools in bad times. They left Hooker Street in June 1980 and moved to Havana Court. Danny loved the new house because of the bathroom and plenty of room to bring all his chums. In all the "troubles" he never got hurt. James Barrett the father is 40 years of age, an unemployed cranedriver. There are three other children - Susan (17), Conn (12), Tina (7). Mrs Barret was always terribly afraid for Danny because of his age and the Hunger Strike. She kept him home from school the whole week before Bobbie Sands died. His school, St. Gabriel's, is on the main Crumlin Road and she was afraid of anything happening. Danny's favourite pastimes were playing pool, disco and playing records. He was a normal boisterous lad of his age, liked the girls and had plenty of friends. He and his sister were due to go on a holiday to Bray arranged by Ardoyne Youth Leaders Hugh Magee and Brian Gormley.

Danny's father was one of the Voluntary Youth Workers who helped the Ardoyne Youth Club each year. Danny was a member of Ardoyne Youth Group and around 30 children were going on the Trip.

On 19th May 1981 five British soldiers were killed by a landmine in Camlough, South Armagh. On that day about 4 p.m. his mother was called to where some soldiers had stopped him. They were accusing him of having hi-jacked a car. Danny told his mother "The soldier is after saying to me - 'You see the soldier in the Observation Post; if he identifies you as the one that hi-jacked the car from Brompton Park, you'll be sent away for a right spell!'" It was the same Observation Post from which Danny was shot. In July 1980 he was arrested with two others for alleged rioting. It went to court and the case was thrown out.

Who will take an interest in the case of Danny Barrett shot by the British Army? Is he to join the 11 other completely innocent men, women and children killed by the British Army and no justice follow? Are we silent too long?

Raymond Murray



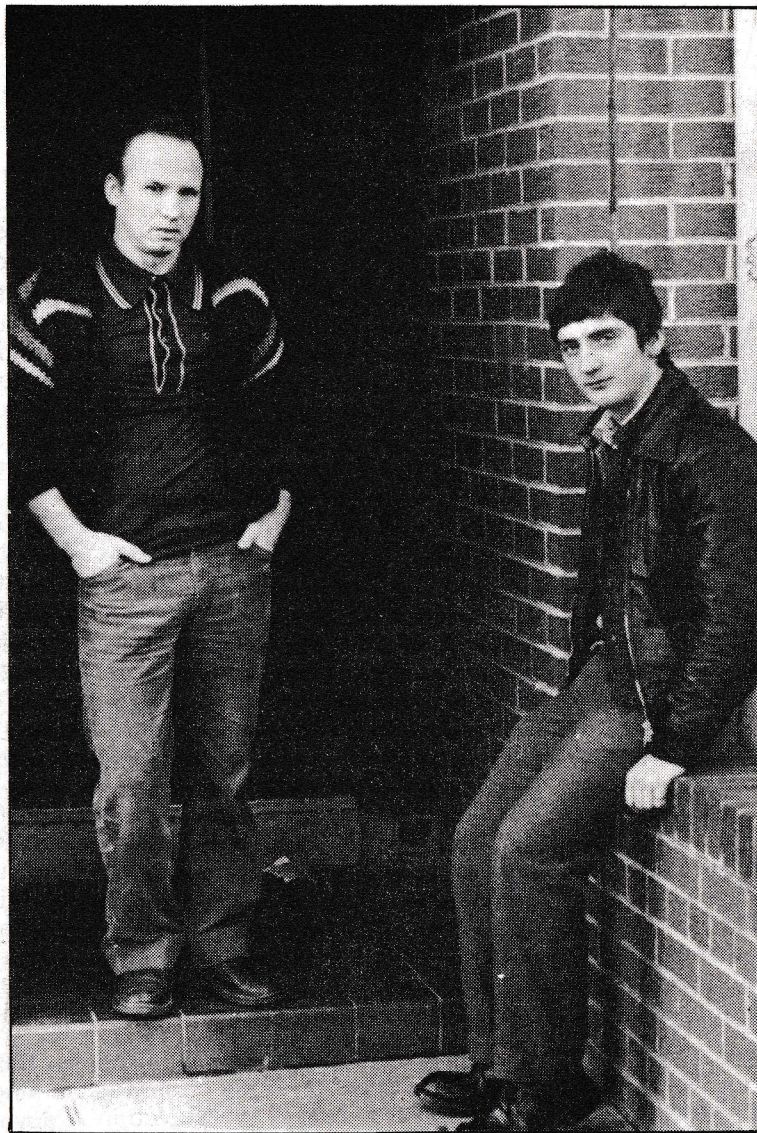
“DANNY WAS SITTING ON THE GARDEN WALL”

GEORGE McERLEAN, Holmdene Gardens, Belfast. Aged 16.

I called for Danny that afternoon of 9th July 1981 about 6 or 6.30 p.m. at his house, 11 Havana Court. He asked me to go to the shop for him, just over the street as he wanted to do something. I went to the shop and came back. Then we went over to the Pool Hut together, at the bottom of Brompton. We went between 6.30 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. and came back about 7.15 p.m. We went to Joseph Brown's house around the corner in Havana Court. We called for him and he said he was watching "Top of the Pops" until about 8.00 p.m. Then we went out and met the rest of our mates at the corner of Brompton. It was just after the march and there was a crowd there. It was a Black Flag March. We didn't want to be standing about so we went down to the Club at Herbert Street to go to the disco. There were 4 or 5 of us. Two of them went in but the rest didn't want. There was no crowd, nobody at it. Me and Danny and Kevin Mullen came around back to Danny's house and sat. There were crowds out in the street and we went out. They were all running down towards Flax Street. There was rioting down at the waste ground beside Holy Cross school. We were just watching it and then we heard shots, a couple. We went back to Danny's house, just out at the door, Danny was sitting on the garden wall, facing down towards Flax Street. I was standing in the hall. I went to sit beside him and I heard another shot. I seen him falling back. I came into the house and saw people all running over here. I ran out the back and on home. I went up to Jamaica Street and seen Kevin Mullan's brother, Martin. He called me into his house. I only stayed about five minutes. I went on round to my own house. I heard somebody was shot but didn't know who it was. I stayed in my own house and somebody came in and told me Danny was dead.

I was a year older than Danny and had left school before him. About 7 or 8 of us went around together. None of us was working. We went to Discos and Pool Hut together. We stayed in Ardoyne district all the time, never went out of it.

Signed: George McErlean
Witness: Fr Raymond Murray
Dated 15 November 1981



James Barrett standing in the door of his home. A boy sits where Danny was when he was shot.

“I STOOD AT THE DOOR”

JAMES BARRETT, Havana Court, Ardoyne, Belfast. Aged 40. Unemployed Cranedriver. Father of Danny Barrett. Children: Susan aged 17, Con aged 12, Tina aged 7.

I have been living in Ardoyne all my life. I married my wife in 1963. She came from Unity Flats. We had four children, Danny being the second eldest. He was shot dead on 9th July 1981 by a British Soldier in Ardoyne. He was sitting on a low wall at the front of the house at the time. One of his friends, Kevin Mullen, was beside him at the time. I was standing at the front door. The time was around 9.30 p.m. but it was a warm, very clear night. We were simply standing at the door. There was some rioting going on around the corner at the bottom of Brompton Park. At my home all was quiet. A number of plastic bullets were fired at the rioters which were mainly children. The kids threw the stones then ran after the plastic bullets. It seemed to be a game to the children. The wall around my house is about two feet high. Danny was sitting with both hands in below him. There was a number of shots fired though we didn't see from where or at whom. This shooting seemed to come from the direction of Brompton Park. When Danny heard the first lot of shots he rushed into the house along with my other children. There was a lull of around five minutes or longer and Danny walked back out to the front and I went behind him. He then sat on the wall again and I stood at the door. We then heard another number of shots being fired. Kevin Mullen was standing further down the path. Gerry Ferguson was standing between Danny on the wall and me at the door. I saw Danny fall back over the wall and my first thought was Danny had thrown himself back to get down for cover. Gerry got up and I looked over the wall and saw Danny lying there. He seemed to be bleeding but I thought he had hit his head when he fell over. I jumped over the wall and saw he was losing a lot of blood. I knew then he had been shot. He was unconscious and appeared to me to be dead. I said an act of contrition in his ear and held him in my arms. I took off my shirt and tee shirt and tried to stop the flow of blood. An ambulance was called and Danny was taken to the Mater. A neighbour went with him while I tried to comfort my family. On arrival at the Mater Danny was found to be dead and taken to the morgue. My wife was in a neighbour's house in Strathroy Park and I went to break the news to her.

Immediately after the shooting the police and army came to the scene and came and searched my home. They looked through my daughter's school books and the officer in charge told the soldiers they were looking for arms and not to be going through trivial things. Both police and Army then searched through the yard, bin, coal bunker, and back garden. They also searched all the bedrooms and cupboards both upstairs and down. They were raiding Danny's friends home in Jamaica Street at the same time. There was no-one in their house at the time and they broke the back lock and window. The following morning around 6 a.m. the police, army and forensic experts came to the outside of the house to examine a bullet hole in my next door neighbours wall at No. 12. I came out and spoke to them and they were pointing in the direction of a high-rise building in Flax Street which is an army base. There is an observation post on the top of the building and the forensic men told me that was the direction the shot came from. Danny was buried after 10 o'clock Mass on 14th July from Holy Cross Church. The following day the police came and asked me to go to the station and make a statement which I did. On the date of this writing there has not been an inquest or any further developments in the case.

Danny was still at school at the time of the incident. His favourite pastimes were playing pool, disco and playing records. He was a normal boisterous lad of his age, liked the girls and had plenty of friends. He and his sister were due to go on a week's holiday to Bray the following week. I had got their money changed to punts for them. He was a member of Ardoyne Youth Group and around 30 of them were going on the trip.

Signed: James Barrett
Witnessed: Clara Reilly
Dated 15 November 1981

I SAID "GET DOWN" AND HE SAID "ACH IT'S ALRIGHT"

JOSEPH (JOE) FOSTER, Kingston Court, Belfast. Aged 16.

I was in the Pool Hunt and came over to Havana Court by myself. Danny was sitting on the wall and I sat down beside him. I heard shooting around the corner and I said "Get down," and he said "ach it's alright". The next thing I heard another shot. Danny fell

back. I ran into Mrs Clarke's with Deirdre. I looked out the window and saw all the blood. Then I ran out and seen Jimmy taking off his white shirt and putting it around him. Then I just ran on up home to my mother and father. That was it until the next morning. I came down to see Molly and Jimmy. That night I heard he was dead.

I was paling around with Danny for four or five months.

Signed: Joseph Foster
Witnessed: Fr Raymond Murray
Dated: 15 November 1981

"I HEARD ONE SHOT"

KEVIN MULLEN, Jamaica Street, Ardoyne, Belfast, Aged 15.

I was with my friend Danny Barrett on 9th July 1981 in the path outside his home when we heard a number of shots. We ran into Danny's house; then after a few minutes went out to the path again. Danny sat on the wall and I was about three feet from him. I heard one shot and saw Danny fall over the wall and his legs kicked in the air. I fell to the ground, then got up and ran into the house. Danny's daddy ran to Danny and jumped over the wall. Mr Barrett took off his shirt and put it to Danny's head. I then realized he had been shot. A lot of people came on the scene and Danny was taken away in the ambulance. I later learned that Danny was dead. He was my friend from he moved into his new house which was about 14 months ago.

Signed: Kevin Mullen
Witnessed: Clara Reilly
Dated 15 November 1981

"THERE HAD BEEN SPORADIC RIOTING IN BROMPTON PARK"

PATRICK CLARKE, Havana Court, Ardoyne, Belfast.

On 9th July around 8.45 p.m. I went to the local disco to bring home my 8 year old son. There had been sporadic stoning in Brompton Park. On my way home I saw 2 police landrovers driving up Butler Street. A third landrover was further down the

street. I reached the junction of Butler Street-Flax Street at the same time as the Landrovers did. I heard shots being fired from the direction of Etna Drive, Brompton Park at the landrovers. I grabbed my son and ran back to the old houses in Butler Street. The third landrover came racing past me to join up with the other two. I heard a second lot of shooting which sounded different from the first. I assumed it was the police returning fire. The landrovers went home. I heard a lot of people shouting that a child had been shot and when I reached my garden I saw young Danny Barrett lying there, some neighbours were beside him and they were waiting on an ambulance. When it came, I went with Danny to the hospital. I realized at this point that Danny was dead. Half way down Flax Street we were stopped by the army. I was questioned as to who Danny was and all the details. When they got his name and address we were allowed to go. This took about three minutes. At the bottom of Flax Street we were again stopped by army who wanted to know the same details. The ambulance crew were protesting at the delay. I had to give all this information over again which took another three minutes. The army then said they would give us an escort to the Mater. We had only travelled another 150 yards down the Crumlin Road when we were stopped by the police. The army who were in front of the ambulance simply drove on. We had to give the police the same information again. Ambulance crew still protested and told the police they had been stopped three times. The police then came with us to the hospital. When we reached the Mater, the doctors were waiting at the gates. They came into the ambulance and pronounced Danny dead. The police asked me to make an identification of Danny which I did. We then went to the Morgue. I went to the police later and made a statement.

Signed: Patrick Clarke
Witnessed: Clara Reilly
Dated 15 November 1981

"OUR DEIRDRE CAME RUNNING IN SCREAMING"

MRS VERONICA CLARKE, Havana Court, Belfast, Aged 39.

The night of 9th July 1981, my young wee boy, Eamon, aged 8, we couldn't find him. There was some rioting in Brompton Park. I was in and out watching to see if my husband had got him. I went down

to the corner of Havana Court facing Flax Street. Danny and a couple of his mates were coming up this way. I had asked Danny had he seen him and he said that he was alright that Paddy had got him, the wee boy had been round at the disco. I had my daughter's wee baby in my arms. Danny's daddy, Jimmy, was at the corner and we were talking. There was some petrol bombing and rioting over at Brompton. I came up to go into the house, I live next door, and Jimmy brought Danny with a couple of his mates. I was in the house and I heard a burst of shooting. My oldest daughter Deirdre aged 20 was at the door and a little boy called Foster was also at my door. I went to the door and told them to watch themselves; there was nothing going on in the street, just Brompton. I saw Danny sitting on the wall. Then I came in and I heard shooting again, this was after the first shots, and I didn't know whether it was one or two shots. Then our Deirdre came running in screaming - she thought she was shot and wee Foster came running in too. He thought he was shot. I tried to go out and women tried to hold me back, crowds had come at this time. - I still thought Deirdre was shot. But I did get to the door and saw Danny lying but I only saw his feet. Jimmy was on his knees over him. Deirdre then said - "It's Danny". The women that was in here phoned doctors. Danny had been taken away in an ambulance. I had got tablets. There was a lot of soldiers in my hall and at the window because it was in my garden he fell. There was R.U.C. there too. My husband, Paddy, went with Danny in the ambulance, because Jimmy went to break the news to his Mammy. Paddy said that while he was in the ambulance with Danny it was stopped by soldiers and R.U.C. in Flax Street and searched and stopped in the Crumlin Road again - they looked into it again.

Then they came back and I was told he was dead.

Signed: Mrs Veronica Clarke
Witnessed: Fr Raymond Murray
Dated 15 November 1981

"IT'S DANNY, IT'S DANNY"

SUSAN BARRETT, Havana Court, Ardoyne, Belfast, Sister of Danny Barrett, Aged 17.

I was in my home on 9th July 1981 when we heard a number of shots being fired. I walked to the door. Danny was standing in the path with his friends. I heard loud bangs. I didn't know if this was

plastic bullets or live rounds being fired. I ran back into the house and was in the hall with my young sister Tina when I heard more shots. The next thing I remember was my daddy running and shouting "It's Danny. It's Danny". I ran out and looked over the wall and saw Danny lying in a lot of blood. I started screaming and ran around to my friend's house who I knew had a phone and phoned for an ambulance. I hardly remember returning to the house, but the ambulance came and Danny was taken away. It had only reached the corner when it was stopped by soldiers. People started to shout at them for holding the ambulance up and they then let it go. I was told later Danny was dead.

Signed: Susan Barrett
Witnessed: Clara Reilly
Dated 15 November 1981

"I WAS WALKING TO THE FRONT DOOR WITH A BABY IN MY ARMS"

SEAN McGUINNESS Jamaica Court, Ardoyne, Belfast.

On 9th July 1981 at around 9.30 p.m. I was in 12 Havana Court. I saw some kids rioting and went to the door as I was expecting my wife. I walked to the corner and looked up Brompton Park. There was a lot of stoning going on by young kids. I walked back towards No. 12 and was walking to the front door with a baby in my arms, when I heard a number of shots. A young lad came rushing into the hallway and I thought he had been shot. He had hit his leg on the wall and was grazed. I saw some people gathering outside No. 11 and when I looked saw young Danny Barrett lying in the garden of No. 12. Previously I had noticed Danny sitting on the wall as I passed. The ambulance came and took Danny away. The forensic later ringed a bullet hole in the wall outside No 12 where I had passed to enter the house.

Signed: Sean McGuinness
Witnessed: Clara Reilly
Dated 15 November 1981

"JIMMY, WHAT'S WRONG, IS IT OUR DANNY?"

Mrs Margaret Barrett, Havana Court, Ardoyne, Belfast.

My son Danny was shot dead by the British Army on the 9th July 1981. He was 15 years of age. I was not in the house when it happened. I was four streets away when it happened, visiting a friend in Strathroy Park. About 9.20 p.m.

I was sitting with my back to the window, "Here's your Jimmy coming, there must be something wrong." "Jimmy, what's wrong?" "Is it our Danny?" He shook his head and I ran out and down the entry. He followed me and said that Danny was shot. Everybody in Ardoyne was out of the houses. I wanted to go to the Hospital. I did not know he was dead. I saw the soldiers and the Peelers. They came in and searched the house. They also searched Mickey Holland's home - he was Danny's chum. They went away. I saw the priest at the hospital - I ran away - I knew he was bad; the priest told me he was dead and I came back home.

On the day the five soldiers were killed I was sitting with friends about 4 p.m. Susan (16) came running in and said, "The soldiers have taken Danny away round the backs." I ran out with a friend and I saw the soldiers taking Danny and standing him at the entrance of Brompton Park. He was holding Danny by the arm and he was talking into the wireless. Danny was a bad colour. I said to the youngsters; "Don't be shouting, I don't want these soldiers to be in a bad temper". The people said they had arrested our Danny and accused him of taking a car. I shouted over, "Danny, are you o.k.?" So as he would not be afraid. Rioting started from Etna Drive and in Brompton Park. The soldier let go of his arm and he turned to see where the rioting was and I shouted, "Come over" and Danny came over to me. And he says "The soldiers is after saying to me; you see the soldier in the observation post; if he identifies you as the one that hi-jacked the car from Brompton Park, you'll be sent away for a right spell." Danny asked me to sign a form in case they came over; it was a form to prove that he was at school that day. I signed it. Danny just came into the house with me. The soldier in the post knew Danny was not the boy who hi-jacked the car. It was the same observation post from which Danny was shot.

Last year on July 8, 1980 the soldier arrested Danny along with two others and said he was rioting; he was brought to Tennant Street. The three of them were charged with riotous behaviour. The Probation officer was sent to see what he was pleading. His Daddy insisted in it going to court. They brought the soldiers three times from Germany and the case was thrown out of court.

Signed: Mrs Margaret Barrett

Witness: Fr Denis Faul

Dated 15 November 1981

"ONE SOLDIER LOOKED THROUGH TINA'S SCHOOL BOOKS"

LILY CANAVAN, Strathroy Park, Ardoyne, Belfast.

At around 9.30 p.m. I was in my home with my friend Mrs Molly Barrett. Molly's husband Jimmy came into the house. He looked very pale and shocked. Molly when she saw him jumped up and said "Jimmy what's wrong, is it our Danny?" Molly ran out and Jimmy went behind her. We went after them to their house. There was a lot of people outside including police and army. I heard the police say they wanted to search the house. Three of us went into the working kitchen and we watched while the soldiers searched in drawers and cupboards. One soldier looked through Tina's school-books and even shook out all the pages. Everyone was in a state of shock for we thought Danny was only injured. We only found out later he was dead. Before we knew this we went by minibus to the hospital. We were stopped in Flax Street, by the Army and they ordered us all out. We started to shout at them and they then let us go.

Signed: Lily Canavan

Witnessed: Clara Reilly

Dated 15 November 1981

GUNS AND THE LAW

The use of Guns in any society must be controlled by the strictest of regulations and the maximum degree of accountability.

A Gun is an instrument for killing; for putting an end to life, human or animal. There is no philosophy of the Gun, no aesthetics of the Gun; no art of the Gun; it is a purely destructive instrument that has only one possible function, a lethal one. It kills persons and animals, puts an end to the essence of life and destroys all future possibility of life and development.

There is no beauty, no attraction, no friendliness in seeing a man carrying a Gun; he is a threat to life, even if he holds that Gun as a legally nominated agent of the state. Only if the community can be assured that any false or reckless or lawless use of that Gun will be immediately investigated and severely punished can the community consent to persons carrying Guns, ostensibly in their defence, although quite often the Guns may be carried to enforce an alien rule or philosophy.

What is remarkable in modern society is how many voluntary organisations and societies have appeared in order to keep watch on the state and its agents; so many "para" groups have to be formed to ensure that the citizen can get justice against the state that is supposed to protect him and cherish him with equal justice and care. The state has to be watched and the operations of its agents. They may do terrible injustices and use all the power and influence of the state and its civil service and its power over the judiciary and the processes of law and order to cover up the killings and tortures and injustices of the agents of the state.

The abuse of Guns and emergency laws and massive cover up operations have been features of the life of Northern Ireland for many years, especially in the last ten tragic years. The small Catholic Irish community has suffered grave abuses of law and human rights with massive cover up operations used by the British and their agents. The Catholic community has been left with 120 persons dead, completely innocent persons killed by the British Forces/RUC and over 1000 cases of serious ill treatment in custody and the fact that no British Soldier or RUC man has served a day in jail since 1968 for killing or ill treating persons while on duty in Northern Ireland.

The Catholic community have a very few Guns since most of the legally held shotguns in the hands of Catholic farmers were removed in 1980-81. The Protestant and Unionist community have a very large number of legally held Guns, both in their membership of the farming community and of full time and part time "security" forces.

It is the lack of Guns on one side and the abundance of Guns on the other side, combined with a lack of will to investigate rigourously and strictly every death and wounding by firearms by B Specials, RUC, RUC Reserve, UDR and SAS, which gives rise to paramilitary groups and encourages young persons to join them in the belief that they are defending their community against a system that holds Catholic lives cheap.

Against this background we have appeased for over six months in vain for an investigation of the seven innocent victims of the plastic bullet Guns, with no result and no likelihood of any justice for the relatives, especially the relatives of the two schoolgirls who were killed by the British Army in manifestly non riot situations. What have the RUC done about these cases? What have the Army investigative branch done about them? What has the DPP done about these seven killings? NOTHING, and nothing will be done because a colossal cover-up is operated when the killing is done by the forces of the crown. The cover-up is by the Crown and the people who are empowered to protect the human rights of the citizens appear to conspire to remove them, even the right to life itself.

Danny Barrett was 15; he was sitting on the low wall beside his own front door in the clear light of a summer evening, talking to his father who stood in the door. He was murdered by a shot from a soldier from the top of Flax Street mill. Immediately his home was raided by the RUC and British Army. No RUC man has ever visited his home or communicated with his parents about the case; neither has any British Army man. No investigation has been carried out; nothing has been done for the Barrett family. Danny Barrett was expendable in the Hunger Strike hysteria when the British government seemed to give its forces and the RUC *carte blanche* to maraud and kill and beat and break up meetings and houses throughout the Catholic community to stop H Block protests. Immunity from effective prosecution seems to have been

guaranteed. Nothing will be done about Danny Barrett, school child, innocent, killed by a British Army bullet and by damn bad colonial law dishonestly administered.

We Catholics repudiate murder with all the authority of our religious beliefs. We are against it; we will have no part of it in our community. We will not have murderers rule over us and shape our future by Guns and fear. But remember this applies not only to the various paramilitary groups, but to the British Government and its agents in Ireland who have a long and dishonourable record of murder of Irishmen in their history past and present. The name of Danny Barrett, schoolboy, Catholic of Ardoyne, is only the latest sad addition to a record that dispairs of justice, that cries out for justice and for just and concerned government and not cover-up of murder. How many more Danny Barretts will there be before there is justice for the poor Catholic Irishman in his own country?