

AN

IRELAND'S BIGGEST SELLING  
POLITICAL WEEKLY



# PHOBLACHT

## Republican News

# Nollaig shona dhaoibh

THE LEADERSHIP of the Republican Movement extends Christmas and New Year greetings to its imprisoned comrades and their families at this festive season.

To the families of our fallen, courageous Volunteer soldiers we extend our sympathy and recall with pride their supreme contribution to peace and freedom in Ireland. They, and the sacrifice they made, are never far from our hearts and memories.

As Britain continues to persec-

ute our people we re-pledge our commitment to the revolutionary guerrilla struggle as being the only sure means of defeating the foreign occupation of Ireland.

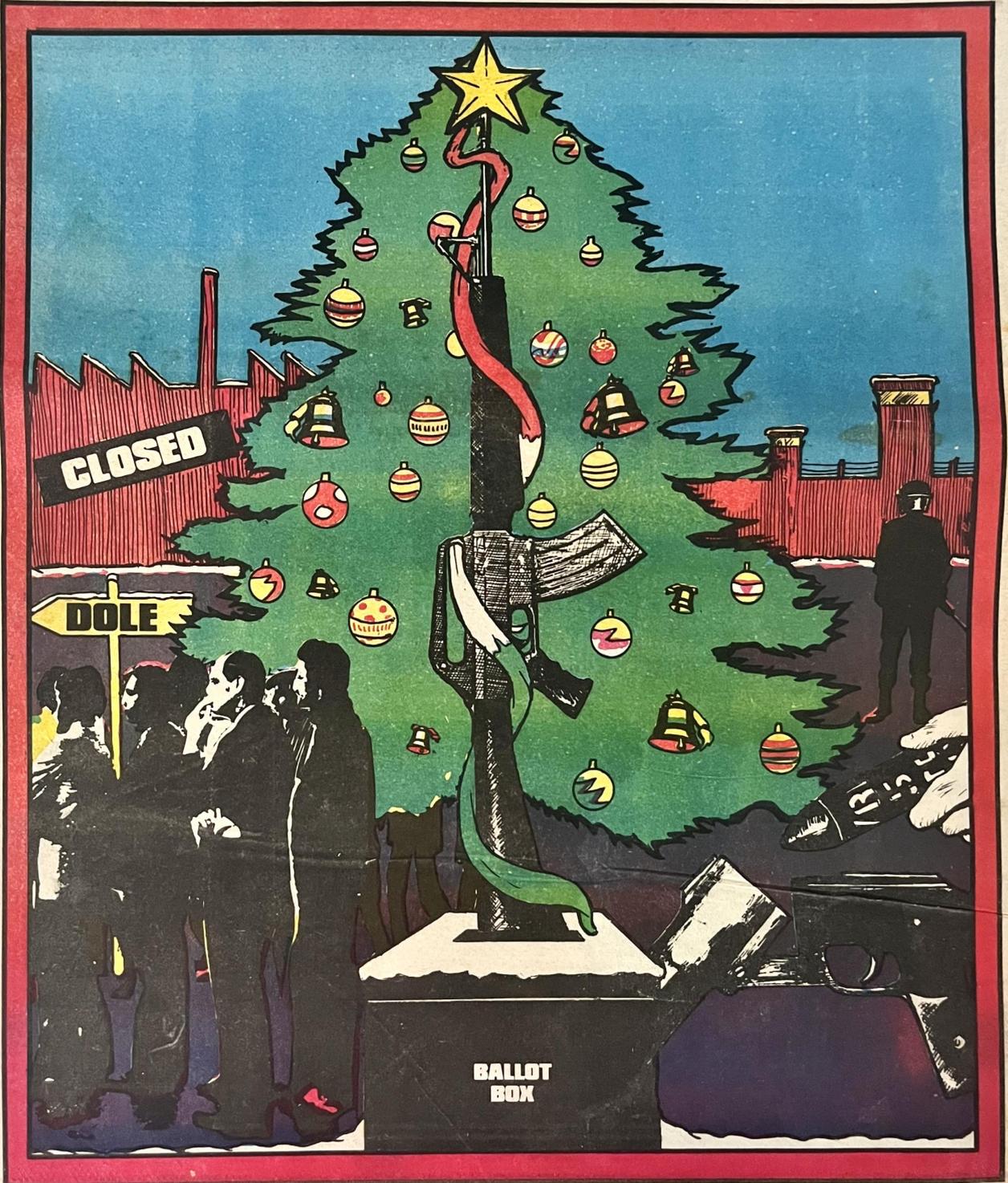
We enter 1983 as confident and as determined as ever to see this bitter war through to victory, concluding in a British withdrawal and with the Irish people as a nation deciding their own future.

Comrades and loyal supporters, the future is ours. Nollaig shona dhaoibh.

Sraith Nua Im 4 uimhir 51 Mairt Nollaig 21

Tuesday, December 21st, 1982

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# MALLON HAMS IT UP

BY HILDA MacTHOMAS

FOR OVER ten years, the SDLP has put forward the argument that the six-county state could be reformed and Irish unity achieved by peaceful means, if only they could be given a share of the power, and more votes at the next election.

A powerful demonstration to the contrary was delivered to the SDLP on Thursday of last week, December 16th, in the Armagh courthouse when two judges ruled that Seamus Mallon, elected for the SDLP in Armagh at the assembly elections, was disqualified under the Representation of the People Act, on the grounds that he was, at the time of election, a member of a non-Commonwealth assembly - the Free State Senate.

The case had been brought by the vocal Armagh assembly member and Official Unionist deputy-leader, Harold McCusker.

The hearing reached a climax when Mallon declared he would answer no further questions and, playing to the assembled gallery of journalists and photographers, walked out of the court, only to be arrested outside for contempt of court.

The same evening, television viewers were treated to a sickening display of dramatics as Seamus Mallon in the part of the 'oppressed nationalist bearing the brunt with dignity' and an Armagh RUC man 'doing his unjust duty'... but with the kid-glove treatment reserved for such as Mallon.

## SYMPATHY

Mallon announced that he was refusing to pay the £4,000 costs

awarded against him, adding in sympathy-seeking tones:

*"The only recourse open to the RUC is to come and arrest me at 6am, as they do under Section 11."*

Armagh nationalists, who for the last 12 years have been subjected to regular dawn raids and the real face of RUC terror, are likely to treat Mallon's antics with the contempt they deserve.

Speculation now surrounds the possibility that the SDLP will consider resigning all their 14 seats in the assembly, in an attempt to put pressure on the British and Free State governments.

However, the days when the SDLP were relevant to the plans of London and Dublin seem to be fading fast. James Prior had it in his power to exempt Mallon and chose not to use it, whilst the Dublin government showed no interest in Mallon's unseating. A mass resignation would not be guaranteed any better hearing.

And the SDLP, caught between the rising tide of militant republicanism and establishment indifference, will fear going the way of the IIP to oblivion. The prospect of Sinn Féin biting further into SDLP 'strongholds' will be the subject of much SDLP soul-searching in the coming weeks.

The man responsible for unseating Mallon, Harold McCusker,



● Mallon's dramatic 'confrontation' with unionist bigotry is likely to be treated with the contempt it deserves

has managed to hold the headlines on the unionist side for the last week, beginning by praising the RUC hit-squad for their double roadside murder in Armagh on December 12th.

Later that week, he stated that there were now "two mutually exclusive communities" and that "inevitable actions" would have to

be taken in consequence. McCusker explained he was talking about civil war and wanted all-out repression of nationalists.

On BBC's 'Spotlight' programme, on Friday night, McCusker further elaborated on his views that even if the proportion of nationalists in the North rose above the 50% mark, and a border poll favoured

unity, unionists would still resist.

There was no subsequent disagreement with McCusker's view from among fellow unionists who have normally claimed their interest in democracy within the statelet.

For nationalists, the week's events merely confirmed the irrefragable nature of partitioned Ireland.



## UDR soldier killed

IN THE early hours of Monday, December 20th, the IRA in North Armagh went some way to compensate for the deaths of six nationalists in the area in recent weeks, when republican Volunteers avenged a UDR soldier in Armagh city.

The 44-year-old Catholic, who had been a member of the UDR since its formation, was ambushed as he returned from duty at the Drumadd UDR base to his home on the Windmill estate.

He was shot several times and died instantly.

Claiming the action, the IRA statement, written in aptly ironic vein, fully reflected the bitterness felt by nationalists in the area at the murders carried out by the RUC:

*"The Irish Republican Army in Armagh city claims responsibility for the shooting of the UDR soldier in the early hours of this morning. He ran through one of*

*our road-blocks and was called upon to halt.*

*"He put his hand in his pocket as if to produce a gun and one of our Volunteers shot him in self-defence."*

### MORTAR ATTACK

A few hours earlier, late on Sunday night, December 19th, West Tyrone IRA Volunteers carried out a daring attack on the permanent British army checkpoint at the Camel's Hump in Strabane.

Mortar bombs were fired at the Brit post, from a mere 200 yards away, from the back of a lorry that had been commandeered earlier across the border in Letterkenney.

At least six of the mortars exploded in the vicinity of the British checkpoint.

### DERRY ATTACK

Derry Brigade IRA Volunteers were extremely unlucky not to inflict serious casualties on the RUC in the city last Saturday afternoon, December 18th, when a land-mine exploded as an RUC land-rover passed by.

The attack took place at 5pm on Saturday at Dunfield Terrace, in the Gobnascale estate, damaging the land-rover but causing no serious injuries to enemy personnel.



● The Michelin tyre factory, Mallusk, County Antrim

## A failing economy

THE disintegration of the North's colonial economic base was dramatically accelerated on Friday of last week with the shock announcement of the closure of the Michelin tyre factory at Mallusk, County Antrim, with the loss of over 2,000 jobs.

The pull-out of yet another multinational reflects the powerlessness of Northern workers to control their economic future.

Michelin, attracted to the North in the '60s, when Brian Faulkner, as Minister of Commerce, was giving away millions to attract foreign investment, has had an appalling record whilst it was here.

"Michelin," according to one worker, "felt they were doing us a favour just letting us work there."

There were many confrontations between management and unions, few of which management lost. Victimization of workers was widespread.

Now the workers have fallen victim to the uncaring attitudes of multinational philosophy which will always pull back and regroup its capital in time of recession, with total disregard for the hardship it leaves behind.

And even as the Michelin body-blow was learned, the weekend

brought news of over 200 more possible redundancies in another industry desperately lured to the North in spite of its totally speculative nature.

The Lear Fan aircraft company, which has yet to come up with a viable product, in spite of £50 million poured into it by the British government, is understood to be on the verge of collapse.

The project is but an echo of the De Lorean white elephant collapse and, like that, involves little or no loss to the speculators involved who put up hardly any of the capital involved. The loss for workers at the factory, with no prospects of employment elsewhere, will be considerable.

**No paper next week**

BECAUSE of the Christmas holidays, An Phoblacht/Republican News will not be printed next week.

The next issue of the paper will therefore be the first of the New Year, coming out on Thursday, January 6th.

We take this opportunity to extend to all our readers best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

# Sinking job hopes at Verolme

BY JACK MADDEN

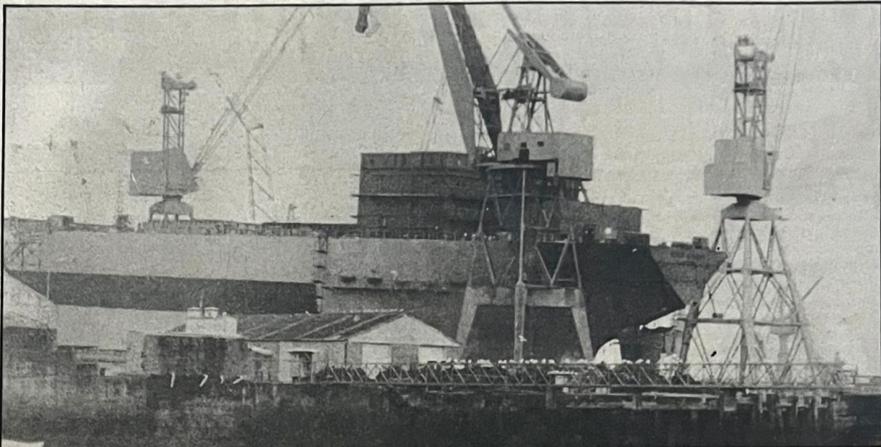
**VEROLME** Dockyard, the County Cork shipbuilders, are to lay off 300 workers in the first months of next year. Of these, 60 are craftsmen, temporarily employed, whose contracts will not be renewed when they expire at the end of January and the remainder are permanent employees who will be laid off between February and June.

Union officials representing UCATT, NEETU and the ITGWU were informed of the redundancies at a meeting with management on December 10th. The reason given was the world-wide recession in shipbuilding, said to be likely to continue for some years to come.

The shipyard, at Cobh, was opened nearly 20 years ago. It reached its peak in the year 1976-77 and was the last shipyard in Europe to go into the 'red'. The majority shareholder in the yard is the Dutch-based Verolme company, with 49% held by the Dublin government.

In the past year rumours of redundancies in Holland reached Cork, where carpenters have been on a three-day week for 12 months. So the redundancies did not come as a surprise.

But there is anger at the renegeing on a promise made in 1979 by the Free State government in relation to contracts involving two ships, one for the naval service and the



Management attempts to circumvent realistic redundancy arrangements at Cobh's Verolme Dockyard are being resisted by the workforce

other for a research vessel for the Department of Fisheries. That promise has not been honoured to date.

At a meeting last Monday, December 20th, union officials urged workers to

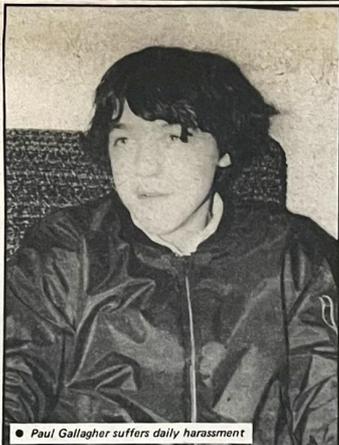
lobby for the two ships to be built. They also warned of management attempts to circumvent realistic redundancy payments by a lay-off on a 'never-never' basis, with an undertaking of unbroken service if

employment arises in the future. But the reality is, such re-employment is in the very distant future, if at all.

And the workers at Verolme Dockyard are in no mood to accept the scheme.



Mary Galloway and her son, Conor



Paul Gallagher suffers daily harassment

# STRONG-ARM STRATEGY IN STRABANE

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG

**RISING incidents of British army and RUC harassment in Strabane, have been the subject of growing anger in the County Tyrone town in recent weeks.**

With unemployment in Strabane at over 35%, and the highest in Europe, Strabane youths, on the streets, face the added frustration of constantly being stopped and questioned under threat of arrest.

On Friday, December 10th, the nationalist Ballycolman estate of about 900 homes, was sealed off from 9am for seven hours by around 90 British army and RUC personnel.

Men, women and children were stopped, questioned and searched when either entering or leaving the estate during the futile operation in which the area was gone over with sniffer-dogs and metal detectors.

During the day, 16-year-old Paul Gallagher was taken out of a car in which he was travelling, on three occasions in the space of 15 minutes, and made to repeat answers to questions despite his protests that he had given the information already.

Meanwhile on the same morning, in the Head of the Town estate, not far from the Ballycolman area, mother-of-seven Mary Galloway was forced to lift her son Conor out of his pram by a Brit foot patrol, while it was searched.

Mrs Galloway, who had just been discharged the previous day from hospital where she miscarried her baby, was then forced to remain standing in the freezing cold with the baby in her arms for over half-an-hour, while she was taunted and abused by the Brits.

The Galloway family have been on the receiving end of British harassment for many years; their home has been raided nine times in the past two years, and her husband Paddy has been arrested several times.

Lately, according to Mrs Galloway, her 17-year-old son has become the subject of the harassment. "He is being crucified by them," says Mary Galloway. "I'm just sick and

tired of them. It's the kids I worry about. It's an outrage the way then can treat you."

## LOUGHGUILLE

Two youths from Loughgulle, in North Antrim, were beaten by UDR and RUC men at a road-check, when returning from a night out in Cushendall two weeks ago.

One of the youths, aged 17, received medical attention in Ballymena Hospital after he was knocked unconscious. The other, 22-year-old Sean Carey, was also beaten about the head.

Hundreds of UDR and RUC men blocked off the roads leading to Cushendall where a 'welcome home' function was being held for local man Pearse McMahon who had been released after six years' imprisonment.

The operation, which lasted for four hours, was described by the local Roger Casement Sinn Fein cumann as "nothing but a vindictive attempt to intimidate and to use the function as an excuse to attack Sinn Fein and physically abuse the nationalist people who attended it."



# Housing action planned

**WITH £20 million outstanding to the Housing Executive in rent arrears, and that figure constantly increasing, it was nevertheless inevitable that the Thatcher government, as ever oblivious to the hardship it is inflicting on working-class families, would ignore appeals for a rent-freeze in the North and introduce a rent increase of 6%. And this even on housing which has been constantly complained of as sub-standard.**

Sinn Fein in Belfast, following its commitment to extract from the established system the maximum gains, whilst still pursuing revolutionary politics, has pledged to lead a confrontation on this issue.

In the last few weeks, in an effort to improve the effectiveness of tenants' bodies, Sinn Fein has been involved in trying to persuade existing tenants' groups to form an umbrella body representing the West Belfast area.

Speaking, as it would, on behalf of tens of thousands of tenants, it would pose a force to be reckoned with by the Housing Executive and be in a strong position to force changes of policy.

To co-ordinate that effort, Sinn Fein has appointed Sean Keenan of Belfast as its housing spokesperson.

# SECTION 31 ON RADIO

A LIVE phone-in on Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, which bans republican spokespersons on RTE, is to take place on the Dublin-based 'pirate' station Radio Leinster, on Wednesday of this week,

December 22nd.

The two-hour programme, between 12 noon and 2pm, will have Danny Morrison as a live guest, and will feature an interview with Gerry Adams.

# MAIRE COMERFORD: A LOVER OF THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM

BY RITA O'HARE

**MAIRE COMERFORD, a dedicated republican for more than 65 years, died in her Sandyford, County Dublin, home last Wednesday, December 15th, aged 89.**

She was born in Rathdrum, County Wicklow, in 1893, the daughter of an Anglo-Irish family. Her mother was Eva Esmonde and her father, James Charles Comerford, was the owner of a large flour mill in Rathdrum. Parnell was a friend of Maire's father and a regular visitor to their home.

Up to the age of 14, Maire's life was that of any daughter of the wealthy Anglo-Irish Catholic class of the time. She was educated privately, but when her father died the family learned that there was no money left and Maire would have to earn her living.

In Dublin visiting an aunt during Easter Week, 1916, Maire was caught up in the dramatic happenings. She saw the Tricolour flying over the GPO and walked all over the city finding out what was going on.

She joined Cumann na mBan as soon as she could and worked tirelessly from then on as courier and driver to the military and political leaders of the IRA and Sinn Fein. She was in the Mansion House in January 1919 for the opening of the First Dail.

## FAMILY

During the Tan War, when Michael Collins was being hunted by the British, he took on a false identity and a house was rented for him to live in. He needed the cover of a 'family', someone who would not be recognised.

"Oh, my mother will do that," said Maire and promptly sent a telegram to her mother to come to Dublin. Mrs Comerford arrived, was told what was required, and agreed immediately.

So Eva Esmonde Comerford, whose father had been awarded a Victoria Cross in the Crimean War and was Deputy Chief Inspector of the RIC in Belfast, played the role of Michael Collins' mother for several weeks.

Maire took the republican side after the Treaty and to the end of her life referred to the Civil War as the 'counter-revolution'.

She joined Liam Mellows in the Four Courts when the Free State forces started to shell it with British guns in June 1922 and acted as a courier between there and the Dublin Brigade headquarters in the hotels on O'Connell Street.

When the Four Courts surrendered she wheeled her bicycle out of a side door and rode away to the Hamman Hotel in O'Connell Street, only leaving the day Cathal Brugha was shot down as he left the blazing building with a gun in each hand. She was one of the Cumann na mBan guard of honour at his funeral.

## MOUNTJOY

Her involvement in a plan to kidnap the Free State premier, W.T. Cosgrave, in 1923, led to her arrest and imprisonment in Mountjoy Jail. There she was shot in the leg by a Free State soldier in an escape attempt.

She eventually did escape from the prison camp at the North Dublin Union. She was recaptured and imprisoned in Kilmainham Jail, but refused to eat. After 27 days of hunger-strike she was released.

She spent nine months in America on a fund-raising tour in 1924 and in 1927 received nine months

in Mountjoy for trying to influence a jury.

Like many republicans, Maire found herself unable to get work and tried to start a poultry farm in Wexford. Eventually she managed to get a job on the *Irish Press*, in 1935, and worked there for 30 years.

In the late '30s she was involved in the production of the *IRA War News* and then in the '40s in the prisoners' relief committees.

## DOCUMENTS

Over the years she devoted most of her time to gathering documents relevant to the First Dail and to the Civil War, and she was determined not to allow the truth to be distorted or events to be twisted to suit the needs of the Free State. She published her book 'The First Dail' in 1969 and was working on her memoirs, some of which have already been published in Irish.

Maire was delighted at the recent victory of Sinn Fein candidates in the North and was full of advice on election tactics. She had been an organiser in Wexford for the 1918 elections and remembers being thrown off a train in Gorey station by British soldiers when she attempted to accompany the ballot boxes to the count in Wexford town.

## WEXFORD

She was, appropriately, buried in Gorey, on the side of a hill overlooking the rolling Wexford countryside, alongside her friends, Fr John Sweetman and Eileen Keogh. She had taught in the school at Mount St Benedict, behind which she is buried.

Her two younger brothers were at school here, as well as Sean MacBride and the Dillon brothers.

Her coffin was accompanied to its last resting place, on Friday last, by a guard of honour of Na Fianna Eireann from Dublin and the oration at her graveside was delivered by Danny Morrison of Sinn Fein, a friend of Maire's, in the course of which he said:

"Maire was not only an eyewitness of history, but a conscience of a nation, who experienced and



• DANNY MORRISON



• Maire Comerford, pictured here, earlier this year, discussing the woman's role in the struggle



• Members of Na Fianna Eireann escort Maire's coffin to the graveyard where she was finally laid to rest

suffered and bore testimony to the expediency of those who suppressed the principled...

"She was a lover of the cause of freedom, a freedom fighter, a rebel and a republican activist. Conversation with her was refreshing and inspiring, whether it was about Liam Mellows or Cathal Brugha, or her comments and advice on the conduct of today's liberation struggle."

## INSPIRATION

Maire Comerford was an inspiration and a spur to the younger generation of republicans fighting today the same struggle that she

dedicated her life to. She wrote regularly to prisoners in the H-Blocks and Armagh and always had a welcome for anyone who visited her small house in Sandyford.

Her memories helped to show the legendary names of republicanism as flesh and blood people, as men and women who were more than just names in the history books.

That she will be sadly missed is not an empty expression for her many friends. We have lost a link to 1916, a friend and a comrade who, up to the day she died, still asked: "What can I do? What needs to be

done?" Maire died peacefully in her sleep at 11.30 pm on Wednesday, December 15th. But during my last conversation with her she said: "I'm going to die soon, but I have some work to do first."

And she was still thinking, arguing and planning what she could do to help the fight for Ireland's freedom.

Maire's work will not be complete until we build the republic she spent her life working for, the socialist republic where all the children of the nation will be cherished equally.

# Though prison bars divide us...

BY MAEVE ARMSTRONG &  
SIOBHAN O'MALLEY

**CHRISTMAS TIME**, and all its traditional festivities, has taken on an extra dimension for republicans over the years. It has become a time when the prisoners and their families, torn apart by the war, are particularly remembered.

These families have retained remarkable strength and unity, despite the hardships and sufferings, and continue to be the backbone of resistance in support of their imprisoned loved ones.

For families in Ireland, however, who have relatives imprisoned in English prisons, the hardships multiply simply because of the sheer physical and financial difficulties of going to make the visits in England.

Most of the families are totally dependent on a fixed weekly income. There are no luxuries, and no money left at the end of each week.

Mainly for this reason, and to a lesser extent the physical strain involved, this has meant that many relatives see their imprisoned relative perhaps once or twice a year, some not at all. The isolation and alienation from any kind of family link is an added burden for both prisoner and relative.

## ESCAPE ATTEMPT

Lily Glenholmes, from Andersonstown in West Belfast, has four children. Her youngest, Michele, is 15, but she was only 12 years old when her father, Dickie, was arrested in London and charged with involvement in an escape attempt by republican prisoner Brian Keenan from Brixton Prison. Dickie Glenholmes is serving 15 years and is presently in Hull.

Lily's last visit was in July and it will probably be next summer before she sees him again. She explains:

*"This is the first Christmas I haven't seen him. Even when he was interned you were still able to go up to Long Kesh. But the expense in going over there is terrible. That's really why I've had to cut my visits down to once a year."*

*"The last time we were over it cost around £200. You're travelling all the time which is exhausting and I had to hire a car for three days. Then there's petrol and food."*

*"Although I'll be going through the Christmas, I just have no heart for doing anything. It would be different if he was here in the North even, we could go up and down to see him."*

*"I'll just be glad to get Christmas over."*

## TOP SECURITY

The same sentiments were echoed by Mrs Patsy Armstrong from Moyard, whose husband, Billy, has been in every top-security jail in England over the last ten years and is serving two life sentences plus 20 years.

Billy Armstrong is presently in Parkhurst on the Isle of Wight which, because of its awkward geographical position presents even more complex travelling problems.

The Armstrongs have five children, two girls and three boys, who have grown into their teens in their father's absence. The youngest, Michael, was only two years old when his father was arrested in 1973.

*"I've more or less got used to him not being here, even at Christmas time,"* says Patsy. *"Of course, you still miss him greatly. It was much harder when the children were very young."*

*"I was trying to get over before now but it would be far too expensive so close to Christmas. I'll be over to see him, I expect, around February."*

## FATHER

Mary Walsh from Divis Flats and both her children, Patrick, aged 11, and Roisin, aged 9, will not see their father, Roy, until February either.

Mary was expecting Roisin when Roy



● Mrs Coughlan reads a card from her son, Martin — serving 14 years in Hull — which arrived, literally, as our photographer was talking to her



● Patsy Armstrong with her two-year-old grandson, Mark, who last saw his grandfather, Billy, eighteen months ago

was arrested in London in 1973 so really the only relationship both children have had with their father has been through visits and letters. Roy Walsh is presently in Albany on the Isle of Wight serving two life sentences plus 20 years.

Roisin, a bright and happy-go-lucky child, joked about missing her father at Christmas time and her mother quickly added:

*"They're both happy enough. They've probably got a lot more than most children*

*at Christmas but naturally they miss having their father there."*

*"I had thought about taking them over before Christmas but it's too expensive with Christmas coming. But we know Roy's alright. He was in great form the last time we were over and he's in with some other Belfast ones."*

## DUNDALK

Last Tuesday, December 14th, Rene Nordone set out from her home in Dun-

dalk to visit her son, Stephen, serving 20 years, at present in Hull Prison. Her last visit to her son was three years ago, on December 5th 1979.

*"He looked thinner and older,"* says Mrs Nordone, *"but he is coping with it and takes each day as it comes."*

After the flurry of questions about the family and friends in Dundalk, Stephen's first words were for his fellow prisoners.

*"He is more concerned for the ones who are in jail for things they did not do, than he is for himself,"* says his mother.

But although he does not complain about his own situation, Stephen feels the prisoners in England tend to be forgotten. He would welcome a general repatriation of republican prisoners to the North.

*"If he was in Long Kesh,"* says Mrs Nordone, *"sure, you'd cycle up."*

The travelling and expense involved has prevented regular visits, and this time with visits saved up, she got two-hour visits each day for four days. But the stay in a strange, and apparently hostile, town was only an extra strain.

The strip-searching of both prisoners and visitors was one of the reasons why Stephen did not take visits for so long.

In the Nordone living-room, a photograph of Stephen sits next to the model wishing-well that he made for his parents' 25th wedding anniversary. In the corner are two toy dogs he made for his young sister Donna.

*"It's a part of you that's not there,"* says Mrs Nordone. *"We miss him all the time but particularly at Christmas when the family is all together. He seems well, but he could be putting a good face on for me. He wouldn't want to worry us."*

## NO VISITS

Also in Hull Prison is Mick Murray, on the blanket for four years and locked up alone 23 hours per day with no visits allowed.

The Mulryan brothers, Andy and Patrick, from Dublin, are presently in Long Lartin Prison in England. They have had no family visits for three years. Their father, who used to visit them as often as he could, is now dead. Their mother is elderly and recently had a stroke. Their sister is in poor health.

Noel Gibson, serving life plus 111 years in Wormwood Scrubs, was sentenced in 1976. His mother visited and kept regular contact with him, and last saw him in August, just a few weeks before she died.

There are just two young sisters now left at home in Portlanning, County Laois, as Noel's father died some years ago.

## HULL PRISON

Martin Coughlan, serving 14 years, is at present in Hull Prison. He has already been in 14 different jails in England since he was arrested in 1974.

His mother lives in St Joseph's Mansions in Dublin's Killarney Street. She last saw him in June this year and goes to visit him every year. Martin's wife, Pat, and his six children, live in England and, says Mrs Coughlan, *"Pat hasn't missed a monthly visit with him in eight years. When he was in Canterbury it was a journey of 200 miles for her."*

Mrs Coughlan speaks of Martin with obvious pride:

*"There's not a bother on him. He wouldn't let them get h'im down. He's always in trouble, but he's popular."*

On the wall of Mrs Coughlan's flat is a framed photograph of Martin on the roof of Wormwood Scrubs, after the protest there. He is standing with his clenched fist raised and a smile on his face.

*"That's just like him,"* says his mother. *"It is easy to see where he gets his spirit and strength from as his mother recounts how she sang 'The Lonely Woods of Upton' for him on her last visit."*

*"The screws didn't like it,"* she says, *"but sure what could they do?"*

This optimistic view of things, in spite of all the obstacles, comes across from all the relatives. Christmas will pass, but the very evident driving force in each of them will carry on in support of their imprisoned relatives.

# The Christmas spirit

BY JACK MADDEN

*The harvest moon of '48  
Saw many a still out working late  
On mountain sides and lonely glen  
The haunt of poitin-makers then.*

**THE RENDEZVOUS** was arranged, with military precision, at a public house somewhere in South Fermanagh. There I would be identified and ferried off on 'active service'.

My encounter would not be with the British forces, however; no, I was off to meet some stalwart defenders of an ancient and revered, though sometimes maligned, Irish art. In short, I was off on a poitin run.

A sharp frost of the previous night had not lifted all day and the roads in Fermanagh could have staged the world ice-skating championships.

I was greatly relieved to learn, therefore, that the day of poitin-making in the corner of a bog, or in a sheugh, has gone and that the operation is now conducted indoors. I thanked God (Bacchus, of course), for the harnessing of smokeless fuels and laughed at the forecast of another sharp frost that night.

*And many a night outside they watched*

*And many a time they were overmatched*

*And many a race through bog and glen*

*They ran before the revenue men*

The revenue, or customs men, is no longer a threat to the poitin-maker, north of the Black Pig's Dyke. Indeed, they no longer bother to hunt the poitin, so occupied are they with the nocturnal wanderings of cattle, pigs, electrical goods and legal booze, across that imaginary line we republicans call the 'artificial border'.

Crime may not pay, but smuggling is certainly a growth area, it would appear.

## DISTILLER

The new enemy of the poitin-maker up here is the might of the British armed forces whose foot patrols and raiding parties are a thorn in the side of any self-respecting distiller.

Many a still has been dismantled in a hurry when these dreaded defenders of the law show up. Indeed, when we reached our destination a patrol had just left and the still had been dismantled.

*As the morning mist began to rise*

*The revenue took them by surprise*

*Advancing up the glen they saw  
Six stout upholders of the law*

*And yet within their stillhouse door*

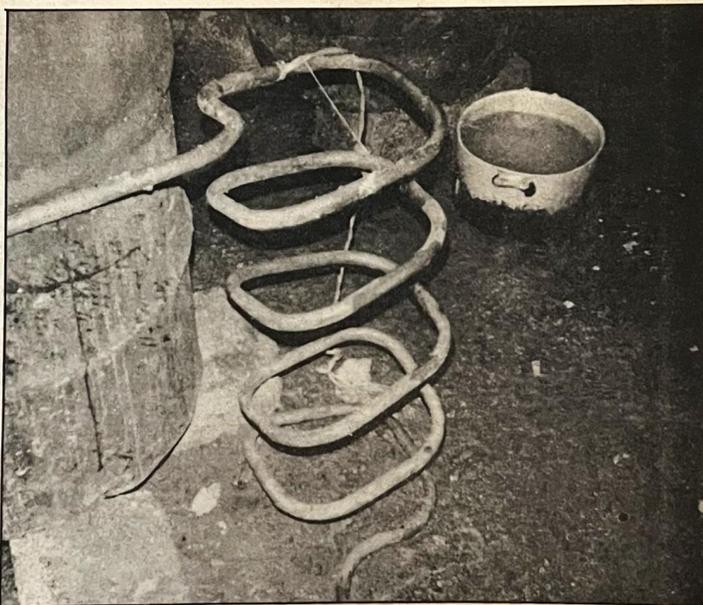
*A key was sitting on the floor.*

Luckily, for my co-conspirators and myself, the Brits had shown their traditional incompetence and had failed to locate the still. And so, within minutes, it had been set up again.

The equipment used could not have cost more than a few pounds and was so easily assembled that I



● 'Eureka!'... Our distiller tastes the poitin during a 'run'



● The 'worm' (22 feet long) is the most damning evidence of a poitin still and is well hidden when not in use

am tempted to write to Irish Distillers and recommend the still as a 'cost-effective method of production'.

For beginners in the art, the following information is essential:-  
Equipment: one metal drum (boiling tank); one lid to fit same; a supply of 'gluten' (porridge meal and water mixed into a sticky, smelly stuff); one lead pipe ('arm'); one length of spiralled piping ('worm'); and one barrel (for cooling).

To make the still, attach the lid to the boiling tank and seal with the gluten. Run the arm from an aperture in the boiling tank and connect it to the worm, which is

placed in the cooling barrel and must be long enough to protrude at the bottom. Ensure that the boiling tank is elevated off the ground a little so that a gas-ric can be placed under it.

Ingredients: one hundredweight of sugar; 8 pounds of yeast; 20 gallons of boiling water; and 20 gallons of cold water.

To make 'ale': pour sugar into boiling water, stirring continuously. Cool down by adding cold water. When a temperature of approximately 37 degrees is reached, then add the yeast. Store for three to four days for fermentation.

To make poitin: pour fermented ale into boiling tank. Bring to boil.

Fill cooling barrel with cold water. As steam from the ale passes through the arm and worm it is cooled and emerges into a saucepan at the end of the worm as poitin. The first gallon will be the best and from then the quality gradually decreases.

For even higher grade poitin, the process can be repeated using the poitin distilled in the first run. This will decrease the volume.

## INTREPID

The real test of any good theory is its success in practice, and yours truly, an intrepid reporter indeed, did not shirk his duty when asked to partake in the results of another night's labour.

So we gathered around the kitchen fire and a bottle was produced, a glass poured and aah... the wonders of tradition!

It went down like liquid fire and I felt a warm glow that would put any packet of 'Ready Brek' to shame. I had found the panacea for all ills, even those that have not been discovered yet.

In the further pursuit of knowledge I then chanced a hot glass and, pleasant as I had found the first, this one proved ever more enjoyable. What with one thing and another, and me being in no hurry to leave, my interview with the poitin men became less and less organised.

Before long tales of long ago and songs of yesteryear filled the room as did discussion on the important things in life.

The virtue of adding raisins to the run, or indeed any fruit, was discussed at length. Some thought this to be a good idea whereas others proclaimed as loudly as a Comhaltas man at a Planxty concert that this was simply contamination and blasphemy.

The advantage of the gas cylinder to the poitin-maker was also discussed. No longer did the column of smoke rising from a turf fire betray the whereabouts of an illicit still. The yeast fermented quicker nowadays because it could be stored in a warm barn for a few days rather than in a cold ditch at the end of a field.

My host told me of the '30s when "the guards had nothing else to do other than look for poitin" and when going out for the night, "boys used to take it to the dances and leave it hidden at a particular telegraph pole to be picked up later. Every other house made the stuff then and it was easy come by."

## RESERVED SIN

One area which had always interested me was the question of the 'reserved sin' of poitin making.

I was told that the era of 'The Sin' had been a period of great worry to the poitin-makers. It was introduced to combat the abuse of poitin and meant that the sin of poitin-making was so grave that it could be forgiven only by a bishop. A religious people quaked at the enormity of this confession.

*"I was a bit terrified in the late '40s for about a year or so," my host told me, "but one day I headed into a local market town and I saw the carry-on of boys drunk on whiskey and I took it into my head that the fella who took poitin was a lot more decent than those eejits. I was at home, annoying nobody!"*

*"So I changed my mind, regardless of priest or bishop, and argued with them and told them I would continue to drink poitin in moderation."*

It was late when I left the house and was ferried home by one of this rare breed of men.

I discovered that there is a great deal of do an' dare in the world of poitin, much like 'propping' an orchard: a game between hunter and fox. I had also discovered that the rising price of drink is adding to the popularity of poitin which, on the illicit market, sells at about £4 sterling a bottle.

But, most importantly, I had found a hidden tradition which relies on the cunning of an oppressed people for survival.

# QUIZ

## OF THE YEAR

### BURKE AT CHRISTMAS BY KEVIN BURKE

- On whom did Margaret Thatcher spend over £1½ million each to keep them British?
  - The SDLP.
  - The GLC.
  - The Falkland islanders.
- What didn't go better with Coke?
  - Koo Stark.
  - Tomas O Fiach.
  - It's A Knockout.
- Why was Garda Thomas Nangle not sentenced for assault in Dowra?
  - His brother-in-law was Minister for Justice Sean Doherty.
  - The chief witness against him was arrested by the RUC.
  - The case against him was dismissed.
- Where was the then (and now) Free State premier Garret FitzGerald in last January's big freeze-up.
  - Out with his shovel.
  - At his desk controlling rescue services.
  - Lying in the sun in Tenerife.
- Which elected representatives were caught in illicit activity on the border and are now awaiting trial?
  - The Pentagon.
  - The Vatican.
  - The Kremlin.
- It is said that French officers always wore red coats so that their men would not know if they were wounded. Why then do the British wear khaki?
  - In bed in Kerry.
  - Not in bed in Kerry.
  - Under the bed in Kerry.
- Who declined to turn up for jobs worth over £20,000 per annum and is therefore refused the role?
  - Five French councillors, 10 West Germans, 15 councillors from Britain and 20 from Sweden attended a housing conference in Norway in September. How many Free



State councillors went on this all-expenses-paid junket?  
 (a) 3.  
 (b) 53.  
 (c) 123.

16. Where and when did an IRA bomb kill 6 British army bandmen and injure 19 others?

- What would be the likely sentence in a Northern court for being guilty of 11 charges, which included possession of a pistol, hijacking and assault?
  - Life.
  - 10 years.
  - 2-year suspended sentence?
- Who wrote: "The road to the republic is long and dangerous, but it offers the only final solution to Ireland's misery."
  - Charlie Haughey.
  - Prince Charles's brother-in-law.
  - Ken Livingstone.
- What was the difference for most of the year between Tony Gregory and the archbishop of Dublin?
  - A tout.
  - A super-tout.
  - A very nice tout.
- Who said that a trade union should not press its aims "by labour unrest or by class struggle"?
  - The Pope.
  - Lech Walesa.
  - General Jaruzelski.
- Who dropped half their name and one-third of their seats in the recent election?
  - (SD)LP.
  - (F)F.
  - (SF)WP.
- Who was not invited to Margaret Thatcher's Falklands victory march-past in London last October?
  - The British royal family.
  - Charlie Haughey.
  - The members of the British forces wounded in the conflict.
- Who came to power this year having taken advantage of the sudden death of a political rival?
  - Yuri Andropov.
  - Garret FitzGerald.
  - General Jaruzelski.

## Answers

- (c). £3 billion spent this year on 1,800 inhabitants.
- The De Lorean Motor Company.
- (b). The absentee cardinal.
- (a), (b) and (c); in that order.
- (c) of course.
- Owen Carron and Danny Morrison, arrested at the Peace Bridge, Niagara Falls, and at the Whirlpool Bridge, attempting to cross from Canada to the United States without visas.
- (b). Pass the plate again.
- I'm sure you've got to the bottom of that yourselves.
- It had to be (c).
- Same again.
- (b) The butcher of Beirut. Betty Williams only got fined for drunken driving.
- Lennie Murphy.
- Find your own black-mail victims, but rumour has it that someone could sing very loudly on this one. That really has you guessing.
- Westminster MP and assembly member Owen Carron.
- (c) At a cost of £125,000 to the generous taxpayer.
- In Youghal, County Cork, May 31st 1921.
- (c). If the case of British army corporal Samuel Muhlolland in Ennisikill Court last October is anything to go on.
- (b) Viscount Althorp, brother of Princess D' and editor of *Eton Chronicle*, writing in that public school publication in January.
- When Charlie Haughey met the archbishop he only had to kiss his ring.
- (c) is one who looks likely to retract his evidence.
- (a). Speaking about the new trade union organised by low-paid Vatican workers.
- (c).
- (a), (b) and (c).
- (b). The death of Clare Fianna Fail deputy Bill Loughnane enabled him to bring down Fianna Fail.

### How you scored

0-6 correct. Join the garda.  
 7-12 correct. Sit up and pay more attention.  
 13-18 correct. Don't tell me you take these quizzes seriously?  
 19-24 correct. Stop wasting your time reading silly columns in political newspapers.

### WHAT'S ON

- SECOND ANNUAL FERGAL O'HANLON MEMORIAL LECTURE**  
 4pm Saturday 1st January  
 St Macarrian's Hall  
**MONAGHAN TOWN**  
 Speaker: Ruairi O Bradaigh  
 (preceded by wreath-laying ceremony at O'Hanlon graveside at 3pm)
- SEAN SABHAT COMMEMORATION**  
 3pm Sunday 2nd January  
 Bedford Row  
**LIMERICK**  
 Prominent speaker
- BALLAD SESSION**  
 Featuring The Wolfe Tones  
 Monday 3rd January  
 The Hitchin' Post  
**LEIXLIP**  
 County Kildare  
 Tickets £3 pre-paid  
 £4 at door
- PRISON PICKET**  
 2pm Saturday 22nd January  
 Hull Prison  
 Hedon Road  
**HULL**  
 Yorkshire  
 Leafletting of town centre 1pm to 2pm
- BLOODY SUNDAY COMMEMORATION**  
 1.30pm Sunday 30th January  
 Savile Park  
 Chapeltown Road  
**LEEDS**  
 Yorkshire



### Fianna calendar

NA FIANNA Eireann (Irish Republican Youth Movement) have recently issued their calendar for 1983.  
 In three colours - green, blue and orange - the calendar contains photographs of the Fianna's history as well as current activities and the armed struggle.  
 Copies may be obtained from Na Fianna Eireann, 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, price £1 plus postage.

### AN FÉILIRE FEIMINEACH



### Féilire 1983

TÁ féilire nua foilsithe ag Cíó Daoire i mBéal Feirste. Féilire feimíneach is ea í agus soláthraíonn sí rud beag bunreolaí ar ghníthe an tsaoil a bhainneann go speisialta le mná. Tá sí déanta go sléachtmhar ar pháipéar maith agus tá léaráidí agus téacs mínlíthe ag gabháil le mí. Rachaidh an sochar a dhéantar as díol an fhéilire chun cuidiú le Preas an Phoiblí.  
 Le fáil ó: Cíó Daoire, 25, St. Duibhis, Béal Feirste BT12 4DR.  
 Lucht páint, feitilín, páint fíne (Éireannach), mbóid cdlig phingín is féile mar chostas postála.

# Christmas Boxes and

WHEN I WAS a chiseller in Dublin, the few hapence was very scarce. The Da was dead. The Ma's wages were low in the shirt factory. And the costs of living and dying was high.

The Ma was a wonderwoman; she could make the rent money, the food money and the clothes money stitching shirt collars from eight in the morning to eight at night. She always brought home a shopping bag full of collar work and one of my best memories is sitting around the fire helping the Ma with the collars.

I wasn't much good, but me brother and sister were dingers at folding collars and tacking them up. And in return, the Ma provided the odd tuppence for the pitchers.

During the long weeks of childhood, I was always able to pick up the odd make (halfpenny), or wing or claud (penny), or maybe a deuce (two pennies). If I made a tanner (sixpence), I was middle class. If I made a bob (shilling), I was very rich. And if I made a half-dollar (half-crown), I was a millionaire.

## PORTER BOTTLES

The few makes or the spondoolicks, as we called money, was made in a variety of ways. There was collecting porter bottles and jam jars, for a start, or selling oranges, spuds or turf, or collecting slop (pig-food).

You never see pig-food nowadays. (Do the people eat it?) Beside the ash-bin was always the slop-bucket. Into the slop-bucket went spud peels, cabbage stalks, fat and whatever else was wasted at the table. The swanks threw out half-loaves of bread and even cakes and biscuits.

Another way was putting our hands down the dirty shores, which always brought a penny or two. We used to fish down the shop and public house gratings with a long stick and a piece of chewing gum on the end of the stick. Many's the time we got a tanner that way.

Sometimes we'd ask a rich oul fella for change as he was standing over a grating. The oul fella would take out a handful of silver and, of course, let some of it fall down the grating. The next day we'd be back for fishing.

Going on messages was only a make (halfpenny) or "thank you very much, I'll remember you in me will."

All the same now, you can say what you like, but the best way of making a few bob in Dublin in me childhood days was the Wran Boys and Christmas boxes.

"Holy Communion and Confo" (Confirm-



## By Eamonn MacThomais

ation) were fair money-spinners, but to me they could not hold a candle to the laundry Christmas boxes and a good round with the Wran Boys.

## LAUNDRY

My first Christmas with the White Heather Laundry, at the age of 13 years, I really thought that all my birthdays had come together. I was a millionaire twice or three times over.

I remember standing in the doorway of the Cat and Cage public house on Drumcondra Hill at half-past eight at night, counting all me Christmas boxes. I was loaded. I thought me coat pockets would burst with all the sixpences, shillings and half-crowns, mingling with the odd few red ten shilling notes and the four crisp single pound notes.

I was always a dab hand at counting money. I suppose it was due to me early training in the colleges of 'pitch an' toss and the pontoon card games.

Well, the tot-up on Christmas Eve, in the shadows of the Cat and Cage's gas-lamps, was eleven pounds fourteen shillings and sixpence. I'd made eleven pounds more than me week's wages!

The Ma will drop dead when she sees it. I hope I don't drop dead before I get home. And I'm not finished yet. We still have to do Hollybank, Dargle, Clontarf, Whitworth, Ballybough, Summerhill and Parnell Street. I would be the richest laundry boy in the world.

I stood out of the doorway to let a few men enter and it suddenly hit me that it was a bitter cold night. I was so flushed up totting-up me dough, I hadn't noticed the cold.

## BOVRIL

Janey, it was freezing, and the wind was brutal. Maybe I'll chance going into the



pub for a cup of hot Bovril. But what if the van comes and me sitting at the bar drinking Bovril. I'll be sacked. What if the barman won't let me in? I'll chance it.

I pushed in the door and the heat came rushing out. There were several men sitting at the bar and a few old women in the snug. The floor was covered with sawdust and there were four brass spittoons along by the window. The gas-lamps were shining against the tall tumblers and coloured wine bottles. Over the cash register was a sign in holly and ivy — 'Merry Xmas to all our patrons'.

"Are you alright son?" said the barman. Now's me chance, thought I. "Mister, have yis any hot Bovril?" "I'm sorry, son. I've plenty of Bovril, but I've no way of boiling the water."

I let the door close on the light and heat and, despite all me money, me heart was in me boots.

Still no sign of the van. Ah, shag it. I'll run down to the Grand pitcher house and see what's on for Christmas. Besides, it will warm me up.

As I started to run down the hill me money was playing jingle bells in me pockets. There wasn't a soul in sight; a couple of trams going up and down, but no-one was out walking. I suppose they're all at home getting the puddin' and the turkey ready for tomorrow, or else in the pubs or maybe in the chapel getting confession.

I was lucky meself to get it so quick in Clontarf before the big crowds came.

## BRUTAL COLD

Even the Grand was deserted. No-one, not a soul, only the doorman who was walking up and down inside the glass doors. He gave me a nod and I gave him a nod back.

"Brutal cold, mister."

The glass cases were all lit up. Pitchers of the chap and the mot. The head crook and the other crooks, mean-looking ol' fellas. The chap's mot was a beauty. I'd seen the pitcher before — 'Under the Pampas Moon'. It was a powerful pitcher, all action.

The chap's horse was a powerful racer and the crooks switched horses. But the chap knew it wasn't his horse even though it was the spitting image. Just before the race, the chap copped on.

Powerful pitcher, wouldn't mind seeing it again. Wouldn't mind seeing it tonight.

When I got back to the Cat and Cage Ivy House, Carthy's clock said it was ten minutes to nine. Wonder what time we'll finish at? Eleven, if we're lucky, or maybe later.

Maybe I'll get off the van at the Liberties and buy a few things in Meath Street. Maybe I'll buy a turkey off Ma Hannigan. I hear she sells them cheap when it gets

late on Christmas Eve. I'll buy a few presents as well.

The shops stay open till Ma Hannigan goes to bed. Thank God that Ma Hannigan is an early-riser and a late-to-bed woman. Besides, she owns a blazen or so shops in Meath Street. Yes, that's it, I'll buy turkey and surprise me Ma.

I wonder did the Ma get a turkey? What a Christmas it would be if we had two turkeys — the Ma's and mine!

## SURPRISE

Hollybank Road was kind that night so was the Whitworth and Dargle. But the big surprise was Clontarf. The cranky ol' wan — "Shut the gas on your way out" — the oul wan that snapped the land out of me hands every week and roared me about the bloody gate, swept me coat me feet.

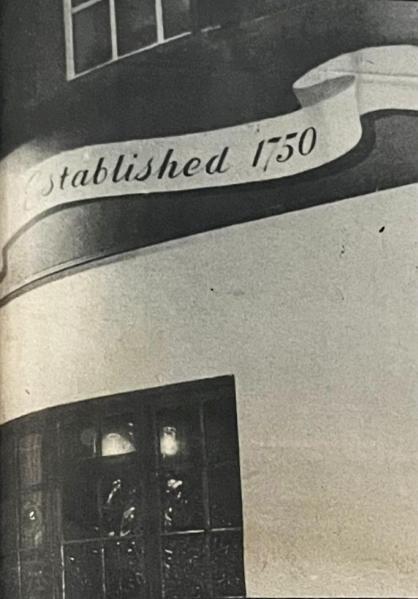
She brought me into the parlour and gave me a big tumbler of lemonade and two mince pies. The fire was roaring in the chimney and the Christmas tree beside me glittering with tinsel stars and decorations. The big clock had been moved along the mantel-piece and a real crib was in the centre.

I began to think of me own little crib board crib that me aunt bought me. Clery's for sixpence. The thing I wanted most at Christmas was a real crib de Bohem.



● "The van was up the street outside Carthy's Ivy House."

# and the Wran Boys



● (Above, left) The Cat & Cage, Drumcondra: "I remember standing in the doorway of the Cat & Cage ... counting all the Christmas boxes." (Above, right and centre) Wran Boys: "Go wan, missus, throw us a bob to bury the wran."

I'll buy a few pres-  
 on till Ma Hannigan  
 and that Ma Hannigan  
 late-to-bed woman.  
 dozen or so shops in  
 that's it, I'll buy a  
 Ma.  
 get a turkey? What  
 if we had two turk-  
 e!  
 RISE  
 kind that night,  
 and Dargle. But the  
 off. The cranky oul  
 on your way out!"  
 rapped the laundry  
 week and roared at  
 gate, swept me off  
 to the parlour and  
 of lemonade and  
 fire was roaring up  
 Christmas tree beside  
 get stars and decor-  
 had been moved  
 and a real crib was  
 own little card-  
 bought me in  
 The thing I wanted  
 and a real crib of Beth-

The cranky oul wan brought in her young daughter to pull two crackers with me. The daughter was about my own age and all giggles and blushes, but she pulled the crackers, making me win both times — two coloured hats, two little books of jokes, a tin whistle and a lucky charm. Being a gent, I let her pick the red hat and the charm.

She saw me looking at presents under the Christmas tree and she ran out of the room. A few seconds later, she appeared with a big bundle of comics, all brand new. I thought she was showing off, but then she spoke for the first time:

"Thanks for the hat and charm. I'm giving you the comics, I've read them, you can keep them."

This sure is my lucky day. On the way out, the cranky oul wan pressed a pound note into my hand and gave me a hug, the daughter was looking out the side of the window-blind and waving her hand.

I gave my thanks and pledged that the gate would be shut every time from now on. And I gave a super wave to the young wan.

I was dying to have another top-out of me Christmas boxes, but I didn't get a

chance. Between the comics, the mince pies, the lemonade and the cranky oul wan's pound note, me mind was all of a muddle. Besides, the young wan was lovely, she had brown curly hair with a pink ribbon.

**UNYOKED**

When the van got to the Liberties, I was afraid to ask the van man could I get off. He wasn't in the best of form and we were very late. Soon the van was rolling up Cork Street and into Dolphin's Barn.

I unyoked the horse in record time, gave him a quick rub down, wished him a merry Christmas, gave him a kiss and put him in his stable with an extra bucket of oats that I knocked off out of the oats bin. It was half-past eleven by Anderson's clock as I came out of the laundry gate. Just in time for the last bus home.

The Ma's eyes nearly popped out of her head as I unloaded me pockets. It took three counts before we came to the final tot — fourteen pounds and three shillings. All day I had been telling meself that I'd go fifty-fifty with the Ma on me Christmas boxes. A last-minute decision: I gave the Ma ten pounds and kept the rest.

"I'll buy you an overcoat in the January

sales," said the Ma.

"Fizz the overcoat," said I.

Having a new overcoat for Christmas is one thing, but who the hell wants a new overcoat for January with spring only a month away?

Yes, mister and missus. Ye can't bate the oul laundry round for Christmas boxes.

**STEPHEN'S DAY**

The wran, the wran, the king of all birds  
 St Stephen's Day he was caught in the furze.

Roly poly, where's your nest?  
 In the holly and ivy crest.  
 Knock at the door and make the noise  
 We are the Wran Boys.

If ye haven't got a penny, a hapenny will do  
 If ye haven't got a hapenny, God bless you.

The wran, the wran, the king of all birds  
 St Stephen's Day he was caught in the furze.

Although he is little, his family are great  
 Rise up good lady and give us a treat.  
 Up with the kettle, down with the pan  
 And give us a bob to bury the wran.

Early morning rising on St Stephen's Day, or Boxing Day, as some people called it.

"Don't be making noise on Boxing Day. Get to hell outa that from me door and let me sleep."

"Ah, go wan, missus, throw us a bob to bury the wran."

"I'll bury yis if yis don't take yerself and yer howling with yis."

The dogs of the neighbourhood were great Wran Boys. They followed us around the doors, some of them howling while we would sing our verses.

"The wren, the wren", or 'the wran, the wran', as we called him, was another cheap way of getting money. All we needed was a branch of a tree with small branches sticking out of it. This was decorated with coloured streamers, coloured paper hats, tinsel, holly and ivy, and a piece of rabbit's fur stained with red ink which was supposed to be the dead wran.

Would you give a bob to get rid of six crow-voiced singing kids and 15 howling dogs?

Yes, mister, yes missus, ye can't bate a few good crow-voiced kids and 15 howling dogs to turn the Wran Boys into a very profitable business.

ADAMS, Sean. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, daddy. Love from Louise and Clara.

ADAMS, Paddy. (H5-Block). Love and best wishes to you, Paddy, and to all your comrades. Thinking of you at this special time. With love from your loving wife Anne Marie. xxx

ADAMS, Paddy. (H5-Block). Lots of love, daddy, and happy Christmas. From Patrick and Briega Anne. xxx

ADAMS, Paddy. (H5-Block). Loving Christmas wishes to my husband Paddy. Always thinking of you. God bless. All our love from Anne Marie, son Patrick and daughter Briega Anne. xxx

ADAMS, Paddy. (H5-Block). Thinking of you, Paddy, and all your comrades at Christmas time. Love and God bless. From mother, father, brothers and sisters.

ADAMS, Paddy. (H5-Block). All the best for Christmas, Paddy. Greetings also to Micky, David Adams, Briega Ann McCaughy and all your comrades. From Dominic.

ADAMS, Paddy. (H5-Block). Thinking of you always and all the POWs in jails in Ireland and you always. Love from all the McCaughy family.

ARMSTRONG, Billy. (Parkhurst). Christmas greetings to you, Billy. Happy birthday on December 26th, one year as a POW. May your next one be spent in Ireland. From Leo Wilson.

ASHE, Jimmy; GUILFOYLE, Pat. (Albany, Garret). Christmas greetings. Jimmy and 'Tipp', and to all your comrades. 'You raised the flag on foreign soil, where fires are very few, but there where it hurts them most, before they ever knew. From the Milne family. Good luck. God bless. xxx

BAKER, Liam and Paul. (Gartree, H7-Block). Christmas greetings. Liam and Paul, and to all your comrades. All our love and miss you both and look forward to the day you're home to stay. Love from mum, brothers and sisters.

BAKER, Liam and Paul. (Gartree, H7-Block). Christmas greetings and best wishes for the coming year. Liam and Paul. From aunt Mary Anne, aunt Agnes, aunt Theresa, and aunt Bridget and family; and uncle Joe and family.

BAKER, Liam and Paul. (Gartree and H7-Block). Christmas greetings and best wishes to you, Liam and Paul. From Rosemary, Eddie and Gerry.

BATESON, Anne, Finbar, and Peter. (Armagh, H4-Block, Cage 10). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Thinking of you, daddy. Always love from mum, dad, Patsy, Dolores and family. Jimmy, Gemma and family. Eddie, Marie, and family. Dolores and family. Mary, Brian and family; and Claire and family.

BATESON, Anne. (Armagh). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Anne. Love from Gerry.

BATESON, Anne, Finbar and Peter. Merry Christmas to you, Anne, Finbar and Peter. From the Sheridan/Lee/Bateson Sinn Féin family.

BEATTIE, Christine. (Armagh). Happy birthday and a merry Christmas, Christine. Best wishes to you, Christine. From mum, dad, sister, brothers and family circle. UTP. xxx

BEATTIE, Christine. (Armagh). Merry Christmas, Christine. Hope you have a drunken Christmas (ha ha). See you soon. Love from 'The Group'. Greetings also to Briega, Patricia and to all your comrades.

BELL, Joseph. (H8-Block). Christmas greetings and a happy New Year to you, Joseph. My thoughts are always with you. From your loving wife Ann and daughter Joanne.

BELL, Joseph. (H8-Block). Christmas greetings and a happy New Year to you, Joseph. My thoughts are always with you. From your loving wife Ann and daughter Joanne.

BELL, Joseph. (H8-Block). Greetings to you, Joseph, and to all Irish POWs at home and abroad. From the Martin Hurson Sinn Féin cumann, Cookstown.

BELL, Paddy; HEAPES, Gerry; MEAGHER, Eddie. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Paddy, Gerry and Eddie. From Paddy Devine and family. UTP.

BELL, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Christmas and New Year greetings, Paddy. From Paddy Dundon. UTP.

BELL, Pat; DOUGLAS, Dave. (Portlaoise). Season's greetings and best wishes for a peaceful New Year. From Tony and it and all your friends in Cabra.

BENNETT, James. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings, 'Punter', to you and all your comrades in English prisons. From John, Ann and family; and all the Bennett family.

BOWE, Maurice. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to you, Maurice. Love from Eileen. xxx

BOWE, Maurice. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings, Maurice. From Linda, Cathy and Marriese, Derry. UTP.

BOWE, Maurice. (Portlaoise). Season's greetings, Maurice. And to all your comrades. God bless. From the Johnston family and Donna.

BOWE, Maurice. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year, Maurice. Seeing as you spend so much time in bed, I hope you have a pair of boxing gloves. Lots of love from Fran, Dublin. Peter, O'BYRNE, Dermot; KANE, Eileen; O'BRIEN, Kevin; O'NEILL, Pat; J. R. FERTY, Terence. (H8-Block). Christmas greetings to you, Dermot, and all your comrades. From the O'Byrne family.

BOYLE, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Thinking of you at Christmas, Paddy. All our love from your brothers Francis, Bernard and Tim. UTP.

BOYLE, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year, Paddy. I am proud to have you as a brother. Thinking of you today and every day. Lots of love from your sister Margaret.

BOYLE, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Best wishes for Christmas, Paddy. Our thoughts are with you. From the Cashman family, Tralee.

BOYLE, Paddy. (Portlaoise). Wishing you a happy and peaceful Christmas. From Maire Fishery, Tralee.

BOYLE, Paddy; MAGEE, 'Dinpus'; O'SE, Sean; SULLIVAN, Pat. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to you, Paddy. Love from Mary and Ted.

BOYLE, Paddy; SEAMUS. (Long Kesh). Christmas greetings, Seamus. From mum, dad and family.

BRADBRIE, Damien; McKENNA, Brian. (Long Kesh). Christmas greetings to you, lads, and a special Christmas on your birthday. From the Maire Drumum Sinn Féin cumann, Magherafelt.

BRADBRIE, Damien; O'NEILL, Maureen. (Portlaoise, Armagh). Happy Christmas to you and your comrades. Hope you've had a good luck for 1983. We're all thinking of you. From Maureen, Lorraine and all the family and friends. Love from all.

BRADY, Martin. (Long Lartin). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Thinking of you, Martin. From Eileen and Patsy McMillan and family. Jim and Annie McDonnell and family.

BRADY, Martin. (Long Lartin). Happy Christmas, Martin. Best wishes for the New Year. Will write soon. From John Clarke and family, Dundalk.

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AN CUMANN CABRACH, CENTRAL COMMITTEE, sends festive greetings to all our prisoners in jails in Ireland, England and America.

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COSGROVE, Eugene. (Portlaoise). The Leonard/Ahame Sinn Féin cumann, Roslea, Aghadruid, and all the other to you, Eugene, and to all the boys. From Fermanagh and Monaghan lads. Bids an bua again!

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KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). Happy Christmas, daddy. See you in the New Year. Love from all of your six pups. KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). Greetings to you at Christmas, pal. From Blondie, 'Ver Man', 'Soup', 'Goldfinger' and all the gang, xxx. Will be spreading the faith. We will drink to you in Kiteedee (ha ha)!

KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). A very happy Christmas and New Year, dad. From Frankie, Alice and wee Michael. KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). Merry Christmas, Brian. I still love and miss you, Victory to the people! From Rick's, xxx. KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). Nollag shona dhuit. Have as good a Christmas as possible. Victory to the revolution! From Jake.

KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). All our very special love to you for Christmas, Brian, and our very best wishes to Brendan, Eddie and all our comrades in English jails. From Martin, Marie and children; and Rita. KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). Thinking of you and all your comrades at Christmas time, mate. From Kevin, Maureen and children, Melbourne, Australia.

KEENAN, Brian. (Leicester). Best wishes for Christmas, Brian. From all your friends in Dublin. KELLY, Damien. (Magilligan). Happy Christmas and happy birthday, Damien. From Louise, UTP, xxx. KELLY, Eddie. (H-Block). Wishing a merry Christmas and happy New Year to you, 'Ned', and all your comrades, your last in there I hope. From Sean, Dave, xxx.

KELLY, J.J. (Portlaoise). A very happy Christmas, Jimmy, to you and yours. You are a family of love, hearts and hearts, especially at this time. All our love. From Ma and Charlie, xxx. KELLY, J.J. (H-Block). All the best for a happy Christmas, J.J. Keep your chin up, for me. All my love from Amanda, xxx.

KELLY, J.J. (Portlaoise). Our prayers are with you at this time, Jimmy. Happy Christmas and all the best in the year to follow. From Joe, Jim, Ray and family; and Adrian, Jason and Angie. KELLY, J.J. (Portlaoise). Wishing you all the best at Christmas. Hope you are enjoying the Christmas spirits. From all your mates in Dublin.

KELLY, Joe. (Portlaoise). Revolutionary Christmas greetings to you, Joe. From Claran, Niamh and baby Clara. KELLY, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas, Martin. Lots of love from Helen, xxx.

KELLY, Paul. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, Paul. Thinking of you and praying for you, love from Kathleen, Harry (H-Block) and family. KELLY, Paul. (Crumlin Road). Merry Christmas, Paul. Love from aunt Cassie and uncle Matthew; and Patricia, Anne and family; Matthew, Anne and family.

KELLY, Tony. (H-Block). Merry Christmas, Tony. Hope your next is spent in freedom. From mother, father and family; John and Vincent; Paddy, Adeline and family; Micky and Mena; Jim and Donna; and Jim and family. KELLY, Tony; QUINN, Brian. (H-Block). Happy Christmas. From Donna and family.

KERR, Robert. Happy Christmas, Robert. Lots of love from mum, dad, Cathy, Patrick and Mary. KERR, Robert. Hope you have a nice Christmas, Robert. Love from aunt Kathleen, uncle Joe and John. KERR, Robert. Merry Christmas and a happy New Year, Robert. Love from Mr and Mrs McGarry and family; and the Hill family, xxx.

KERR, Robert. (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you, Robert, and best wishes for the New Year. Love from Anna Lena and Erik. KIND, Sean. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to you, Sean, and all republican prisoners everywhere. From the Tony Ahearne Sinn Fein Cumann, Carrigaline, County Cork.

KINSELLA, Sean. (Gartree). Christmas greetings to my friend, Sean. Best wishes and take care. From your friend, Marie. KIRBY, Terry. (H-Block). All the best for Christmas, Terry. From Marian and Tony Sloan and family.

KIRKPATRICK, Harry. Happy Christmas, Harry. You're always in our thoughts. Love from the Kerr family and the Hill family. xxx.

THE ADELAIDE SINN FEIN CUMANN AND GREEN CROSS, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, send Christmas and revolutionary greetings to all Irish republican prisoners everywhere and to those families who have lost loved ones in the struggle against British imperialism.

LAVERTY, Sean. (H-Block). Very happy Christmas to you and all your comrades in H-Block, Sean. Always thinking of you at this time. Won't be long now until you have your freedom. God bless. From mum, dad, brothers and sister. LAVERTY, Sean. (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you and all your comrades. From all your friends and comrades around Toome.

LEAHY, Padraig. (Portlaoise). Thinking of you this Christmas, Padraig. Love from mum, dad and thinking of you. LEAHY, Padraig. (Portlaoise). See you in Wexford some time next year, Padraig. Happy Christmas. All my love, Bertie, xxx. LEAHY, Padraig. (Portlaoise). Season's greetings, 'Buzby'. You owe me one book (ha ha). Good luck, son. From Marty and family.

THE TONY AHEARNE SINN FEIN CUMANN, CLONES, extends solidarity greetings and best wishes to all republican POWs, especially those from the South Fermanagh and South Monaghan area, in jails in Ireland and England. The use of your imprisonment is British Imperialism. We will strive to see this cause removed.

COMHAIRLE ATHA CLIATH, SINN FEIN, sends revolutionary greetings to all our imprisoned comrades at home and abroad, particularly to all the prisoners from Dublin.

THE CANNON/MAGUIRE SINN FEIN CUMANN, DONAGH, extends Christmas greetings and best wishes to all republican POWs, especially to Martin Murray, Seamus McEilwain, Eamon McElroy, James Tierney, Gerry Mulligan, Kevin Lynch, Jim Ferguson and Eugene Cosgrove (H-Block); and to Pat Traynor (Portlaoise); and Josie Dowds (Armagh).

THE ROGER CASEMENT SINN FEIN CUMANN, LOUGHGLEIGH, sends Christmas greetings to Malachy Gerry, Sean Boyle, Daniel Clarke and Sean Connolly. CLARE COMHAIRLE CEANTAIR, SINN FEIN, sends Christmas and New Year greetings to all Irish republican POWs in jails in Ireland and England, especially to Harry Duggan, Joe O'Connell, Hugh Doherty, Patrick Hackett, Eddie Butler and Brendan Dowd (England).

LEAHY, Padraig. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year, Pat. Hope Santa brings you a tanker of Smithwicks and a denim jacket. From John H. Dublin.

LEE, William. (H-Block). Thinking of you always, especially at Christmas, son. God bless. From mammy, Marie and Anne. LEE, William. (H-Block). Greetings to you, William, from Ann, Sean, Ann and Moira. Also from Matt, Isabel and family; and Danny, Kathleen and family. LEWIS, William. (H-Block). Thinking of you, especially at Christmas time. All the best. From Sean, Esther and family and from Ambrose, Eileen and family.

LEEN, Matt. (Portlaoise). We all miss you and hope you have a nice Christmas, Matt. Happy Christmas, John and family and all in Chuteah. LEENAGHAN, 'Fid'. (Crumlin Road). Happy Christmas to you, 'Fid', and to all the POWs in English and Irish jails. Hope we can celebrate an 'Irish 32' in 1983. From 'Skin', Catherine and wee Linn.

LEENAGHAN, Mark. (Crumlin Road). A very happy Christmas to you 'Fid'. How's the 'Troiz' team? 'Troiz' from Gerard, Kevin and family. LEENAGHAN, Mark. (Crumlin Road). All the best in the year to follow. From Gerard, Kevin and family. LEWIS, William. (H-Block). Thinking of you, especially at Christmas time. All the best. From Sean, Esther and family and from Ambrose, Eileen and family.

LEWIS, William. (H-Block). Thinking of you, especially at Christmas time. All the best. From Sean, Esther and family and from Ambrose, Eileen and family. LEWISLEY, Brian. (Crumlin Road). Christmas greetings to my darling husband, Brian. Love and best wishes from Ann, xxx.

LEWISLEY, Brian. (Crumlin Road). Love and best wishes from Brian, Eddie, the twins and family. LEWLEY, Brian. (Crumlin Road). Christmas greetings to you, Brian. All the best in the New Year. From LITTS and family.

LITTS and family. (Magilligan). Best wishes to you this Christmas, Paul, and a happy New Year. From Eamonn and Mary T. LUDAN, Anthony. (H-Block). Greetings to 'Tomboy' Tommy Connors, Tommy Gorman and Larry Marley. From your family; Maureen, Eileen, Ann, Colleen, Meath.

LOUGHLIN, Gerard. (Crumlin Road). Thinking of you and all your comrades at Christmas. Hope you and your wife Róisín, daughter Róisín and wee Kevin. Hope next Christmas is a happier one for us all.

LOWE, Stanley. (Crumlin Road). Christmas greetings to you, love. Thinking of you. From our loving wife, Maria, xxx. LOWE, Stanley. (Crumlin Road). Happy Christmas, Stan. Love from the Headley family, Lurgan.

LYNAGH, Jim. (Portlaoise). Thinking of you, Jim. Love from Treasa, Dominic, Feargal, Granir, Con and Micheal. LYNCH, Kevin. (H-Block). Wishing you and your friends the very best this Christmas, Kevin. Keep your spirits up. From mother, father, brothers and sisters, Lisnakea.

LYNCH, Kevin. (H-Block). Greetings at Christmas, Kevin, from across the broad Atlantic. From Tom, Chrissie, Mary and Lucy, America. LYNCH, Kevin; MULLIGAN, Gerry; LYNCH, Mary. (H-Block). Our thoughts are with you and your comrades at Christmas. From Noel, Kate and family, Lisnakea.

LYNCH, Kevin; MULLIGAN, Gerry; TRAYNOR, Pat. (Long Kesh, Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Kevin, Gerry and Pat. From John, Mary and wee Michael. LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Merry Christmas, love. All my love goes out to you today and always. Hope 83 sees all your dreams come true. From your wife Jackie, xxx.

LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Merry Christmas, daddy. I love and miss you and pray you'll be home soon. Kisses and hugs from your wee Number 77 Martin O'g. xxx. LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas. Thinking of you. Keep your chin up. Love from Linda (Armagh) and Gerard.

LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas, Martin. Hope to see you and Duke. Love from Owen, Ann, Owen and David. LYNCH, Martin. Merry Christmas, mate. All the best for '83, Owen.

LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas, Marty, Jackie and Martin O'g. From Tony Sloan (Portlaoise), wife Marian and kids Sorcha and Anthony. LYNCH, Martin. (H-Block). Happy Christmas, Marty. From all the Cunningham family. All the best for 1983.

LYNCH, Peter. (H-Block). Christmas greetings and many happy returns for December 28th. From mum, dad and all the fam. MCALEER, Pearse. (Page 11). Happy Christmas, Pearse. Love from mammy, daddy, brother, sisters and Annie.

MCALEER, Pearse. (Page 11). Greetings for Christmas, Pearse. From Tommy, Carmel, Jackie, Sorcha and Anthony. MCALEER, Pearse. (Page 11). Greetings for Christmas, Pearse. From Margaret and family; Delina and Dominic.

MCALEER, Pearse. (Page 11). Christmas greetings, Pearse. Love from Anne. MCALEER, Pearse. (Page 11). Christmas and New Year greetings to you, John. All the best from Patsy, Selina, Brendan, Sinead and Seamus.

MCALEER, Pearse. (Page 11). Christmas greetings and best wishes for the New Year to John McLaughley. From Philip, Lena, Róisín and Liam. MCOLGAN, Happy Christmas, mammy. With all my love from Junior.

MCOLGAN, Happy Christmas, mammy. With all my love from Junior. MCOLLUM, Seamus. (Portlaoise). Seamus' on's greetings to my good friend 'Warwick' and bless you and son. Not too long now. From Mick.

MCOMB, John. (Brixton). Christmas and New Year greetings to you, John. All the best from Patsy, Selina, Brendan, Sinead and Seamus. MCOMB, John. (Brixton). Christmas greetings to our beloved son and daughter Gerard with our love from mother, father, Bobby, Frankie and Tom.

MCONVILLE, Gerard and Mary. (H-Block). Happy Christmas and happy New Year greetings, Gerard and Mary. With all our love from Anne, Jimmy, Brendan and Siobhán. MCOOY, Anthony. (H-Block). Happy Christmas and a happy New Year. Thinking of you always. From mammy, Maureen, and family. A merry Christmas and a happy New Year. From Carmel, Joe and Clara.

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MCAULHEY, Danny; MCMAONAGLE, Gerry. (Portlaoise, Crumlin Road). Happy Christmas and a great New Year, Danny and Gerry. From Mick. MCAULHEY, Brian. (Armagh). Christmas greetings to you, Brian. Ann, and to all your comrades. May the infant Jesus bless you all. 201 love from mum, dad, Finlouna and Claran.

MCAULHEY, Brian. (Armagh). Best wishes for Christmas, Brian. Ann, and to all your comrades. God bless you all. From Anne and Gerry Adams and family. MCAULHEY, Brian. (Armagh). Merry Christmas, Brian. Ann. Maybe I'll see you soon. Love from Harry Murray (H-Block).

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the jails. Merry Christmas in English Year to you all. From Jim, Annie O'Donnell and family. ... CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to the Landon lads in H-Block: Mickey, Collier, Brian Gillen, Seamus Kearney, Dermot and Seamus. ... CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the lads in Portlaoise. Keep your hearts up. ... CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the lads in Portlaoise. Keep your hearts up. ... CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the lads in Portlaoise. Keep your hearts up. ...

the relatives of all those who have lost their lives in Ireland's struggle for freedom. Victory to the Irish people! 'Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.' ... CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the lads in Portlaoise. Keep your hearts up. ... CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the lads in Portlaoise. Keep your hearts up. ... CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the lads in Portlaoise. Keep your hearts up. ...

BATESON, Johnny. (11th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our dear son and brother Vol John Bateson who was killed on active service on December 18th 1971. ... BATESON, Johnny. (11th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our dear son and brother Vol John Bateson who was killed on active service on December 18th 1971. ... BATESON, Johnny. (11th Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of our dear son and brother Vol John Bateson who was killed on active service on December 18th 1971. ...

DEAR BRIDER VOL GERALD McDADA who was murdered by British forces on December 21st 1971. Always remembered by Thomas, Carmel and family. ... DEAR BRIDER VOL GERALD McDADA who was murdered by British forces on December 21st 1971. Always remembered by Thomas, Carmel and family. ... DEAR BRIDER VOL GERALD McDADA who was murdered by British forces on December 21st 1971. Always remembered by Thomas, Carmel and family. ...

to the family of the late Patrick McPhillips. Paddy was well-known to many Cavan republicans during the '50s campaign and for his work with Drumad. ... to the family of the late Patrick McPhillips. Paddy was well-known to many Cavan republicans during the '50s campaign and for his work with Drumad. ... to the family of the late Patrick McPhillips. Paddy was well-known to many Cavan republicans during the '50s campaign and for his work with Drumad. ...

OUR PATH

CARROLL, GREW. Deepest sympathy is extended to the families of INLA Vols Roddy Carroll and Seamus Grew who were murdered by RUC thugs on December 12th. ... CARROLL, GREW. Deepest sympathy is extended to the families of INLA Vols Roddy Carroll and Seamus Grew who were murdered by RUC thugs on December 12th. ... CARROLL, GREW. Deepest sympathy is extended to the families of INLA Vols Roddy Carroll and Seamus Grew who were murdered by RUC thugs on December 12th. ...

REVISION

TRANSLATE INTO ENGLISH. Tá an slopa beag. Tá madra agus cat ag Seán. Níl an aimsir go breá inniu. ... TRANSLATE INTO ENGLISH. Tá an slopa beag. Tá madra agus cat ag Seán. Níl an aimsir go breá inniu. ... TRANSLATE INTO ENGLISH. Tá an slopa beag. Tá madra agus cat ag Seán. Níl an aimsir go breá inniu. ...

ANSWERS

PRONUNCIATION: The pronunciation given in brackets is as near as possible to the sound. CH is sounded as in LOCH ERNE. D and T before A, O and U are thick, spoken with the tongue pressed against the upper front teeth. ... PRONUNCIATION: The pronunciation given in brackets is as near as possible to the sound. CH is sounded as in LOCH ERNE. D and T before A, O and U are thick, spoken with the tongue pressed against the upper front teeth. ... PRONUNCIATION: The pronunciation given in brackets is as near as possible to the sound. CH is sounded as in LOCH ERNE. D and T before A, O and U are thick, spoken with the tongue pressed against the upper front teeth. ...

10

THE EVENING IS BAD. The car is nice. The boy and the girl are with me. Patrick is not with us but Bridgid is here. Is James inside? Is the horse big? Are you (ye) hungry? IRISH TRANSLATIONS. Tá an speall ag Seán. Níl an gaumtán ag Máire. An bhfuil an t-óg brá? Tá an mhadainn go dona. Tá Áine le Tomás. An bhfuil Bríd le Máire? Cé tús le bhfuil? An bhfuil tó ansin? An bhfuil an páiste anseo inniu? An bhfuil tart ortha? PHRASES TRANSLATED. I don't like it. I don't know. Máire's daughter. Dia inn!

HELP THE PRISONERS' DEPENDANTS SUPPORT. AN CUMANN CABHRACH and GREEN CROSS. Donations, enquiries and offers of help to: The Secretary, The Central Committee, An Cumann Cabhrach, c/o 44 Parnell Square, Dublin. Telephone 747611 or 726932. Donations, enquiries and offers of help to: The Secretary, Green Cross '73, 11a Springfield Road, Belfast. Telephone 229635.

Draw results. Emmet/Connolly/Loughnane Sinn Féin REVOLUTIONARY. £100: No. 37, John Redmond; £30: T5, Gilbert, c/o Dea; £20: 144, 'Marlin' Moran; £5: 37, Aine Moonan; £38, Liz Lynch; 189 & 190: C. Cavey; 96: Linda Murphy. Liberties Sinn Féin Centre, Dublin Christmas card: Tom Lamb, 17 Vavours Square, Sandymount; Whiteley, 20 Conlon, Ryan's, 138, Leath Street, D8; Vodka: Mary Nolan, 39 Pilib D8. Sinn Féin POW Department, Dublin. Portlaoise table: Denis Kelly, Rahan, Letterkenny; Parkhurst caravan: John Joe Coyle, 45 Kieran Doherty Park, Monaghan; Alan Scully, 10, 10, Doyle, 18 Blusall Hill Gardens, Derry.

# A DANCE TO THE MUZAK OF CRIME

WHEN TALKING ABOUT HENRY ECKBERT VERY FEW PEOPLE FOUND THE PHRASE "MENTAL GIANT" SPRINGING SPONTANEOUSLY TO THE LIPS....

EVEN HIS LOVING MOTHER NOTICED HIS RESEMBLANCE TO A PENNY CANDLE...

HIS CLOSEST FRIENDS NOTED A CERTAIN FINANCIAL DEFICIENCY...

A READING-AGE OF FIVE.... IT'S NOT A CRIME, A SIN OR A SHAME.... BUT....

...BUT IT DOES LIMIT THE QUALITY OF THE PAPERS THAT ONE CAN PERUSE....

...AND CERTAIN NEWS-PAPERS CAN INDUCE A VERY PECULIAR VIEW OF THE WORLD....

SO HENRY ECKBERT BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS A FORTUNE TO BE MADE AS A SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFIT CLAIMANT!

AND AS A RESULT HE FOUND HIMSELF HUNGRY AND IN DEBT....

... BUT I DO want to eat!

So I'm turning to a life of CRIME!

AH, POOR HENRY! YEARS OF READING THE GARBAGE THAT CALLS ITSELF JOURNALISM HAS HAD A DISASTROUS EFFECT ON AN ALREADY DULL MIND!

FOR HAD HE NOT LEARN'T FROM THE PRESS THAT "THE PROVOS ARE CRIMINALS"? SO WHAT'S HIS PLAN?

Sean, I've decided to turn to a life of crime. Can you tell me how to join the I.R.A.?

My dear Henry, I don't wish to be offensive.... but it is generally accepted that you are not terribly intelligent.... and now you tell me that you want to be a criminal!?!?

People in your situation usually find the R.U.C. more appropriate!

SEAN'S ADVICE TO HIS FRIEND HENRY WAS ADMIRABLE IN ITS ACCURACY AND ACUMEN. HOWEVER IT MIGHT HAVE HELPED IF HE HAD EXPLAINED IT ALL IN GREATER DETAIL AND SIMPLER LANGUAGE. FOR HENRY DID NOT QUITE GRASP HIS MEANING. HIS SLUGGISH WITS WERE IN DIFFICULTY....

BUT HENRY ECKBERT THOUGHT... Why is crying to....

... BUT THE THOUGHT GOT LOST SOMEWHERE.

SO HE JUST SAT

SOME HOURS (OR WAS IT DAYS?) LATER, A REVELATION...

IT OCCURRED TO HENRY ECKBERT THAT, BEING CRIMINALS, THE 'PROVOS' WERE MAKING LOTS AND LOTS OF MONEY BUT WERE UNWILLING TO LET ANYONE NEW TO JOIN THEIR ORGANISATION AND SHARE ALL THE GOODIES! BUT THERE WAS ONE MORE GOBBET OF "INFORMATION" IN HIS MIND....

The Provos are sectarian murderers!!

AH, YES! "SECTARIAN MURDERERS"! HOW DID SOMEONE SO STEEPED IN THE BRITISH MEDIA MANAGE TO FORGET THAT GEM? AND DID HENRY HAVE A USE FOR IT?

Mike, I've been looking for you all day! Listen, you can help me.... I want to join the...

I know, I know. Sean told me. But, Henry, it's not...

It's okay, Mike. I know what to do. A sectarian murder! Right? Have I got it right?

YOU WHAT!?!?

Henry! Are you a local lunatic? Where did you get the idea that a republican would kill someone because of their religion?!

But that's what it says in ALL the papers!

AND ON THAT BANALITY IT IS TIME TO DRAW A VEIL OVER THE SORRY SCENE.... AND, BECAUSE OF TIME OF YEAR, TO GRANT A FOOL'S PARDON.

**CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL REPUBLICAN PRISONERS**  
CORMAC