



IBMT Magazine

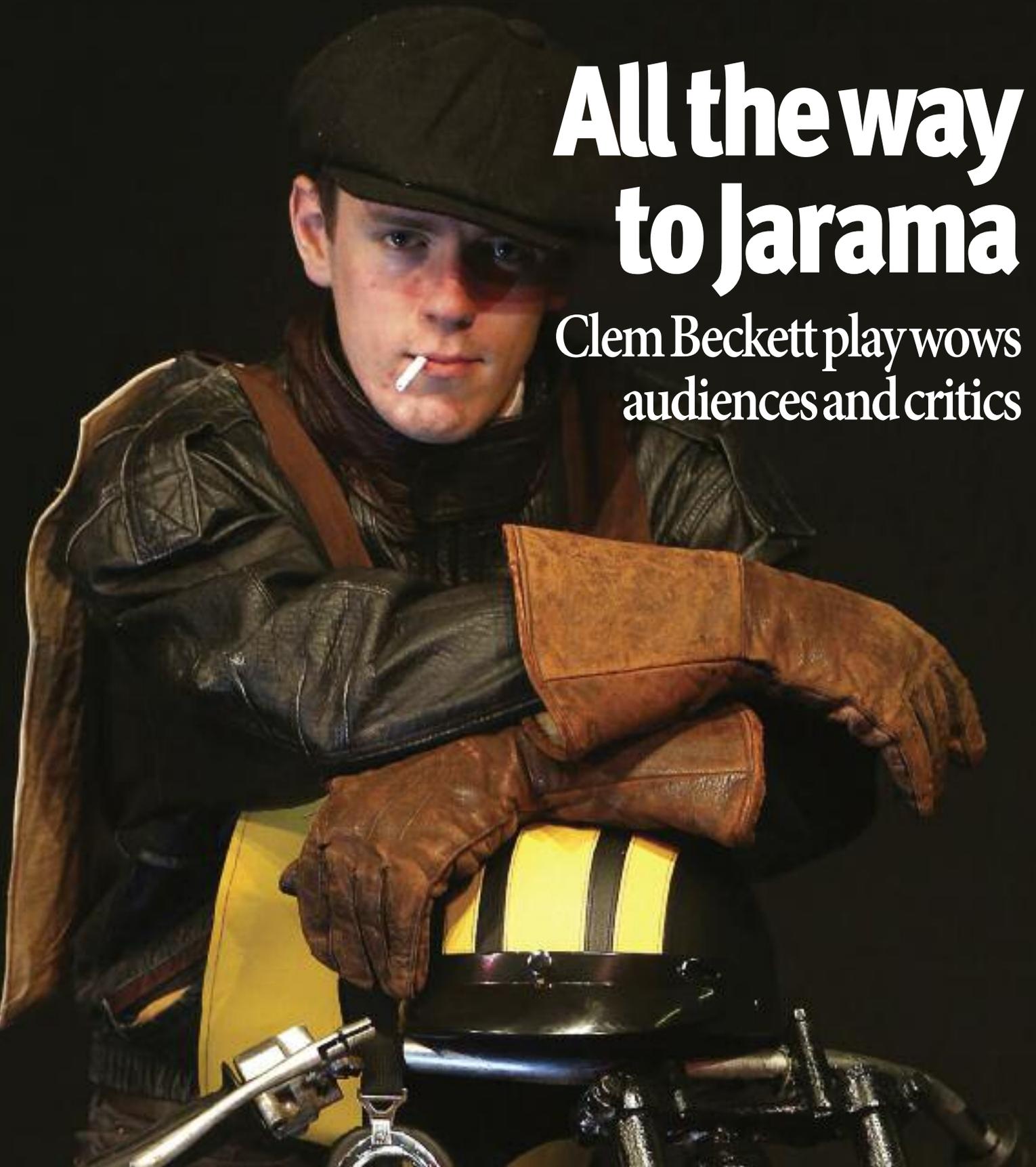
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Issue 44 / 1-2017

INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE MEMORIAL TRUST

All the way to Jarama

Clem Beckett play wows
audiences and critics





LIBERTY'S VOLUNTEERS

THE TIMELESS LEGACY OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Saturday 18 March 2017 at the Manchester Conference Centre, 78 Sackville St, Manchester M1 3BB
www.manchesterconferencecentre.co.uk / 0161 955 8000

10.30am Registration

11am Welcome and introduction:
 Professor Peter Crome

11.15am International volunteers:
 who they were and why they
 fought fascism in Spain – talk by Dr
 Richard Baxell (author of 'Unlikely
 Warriors: The Extraordinary Story

of the Britons who Fought in the
 Spanish Civil War' and IBMT Chair)

12pm Lunch / Exhibitions / Stalls

1.30pm Tribute to David Leach by
 Manus O'Riordan (IBMT Ireland
 Secretary) followed by David's film
 'Voices from the Mountain'

2.30pm The legacy of the Spanish

Civil War: an echo through the
 decades – talk by Giles Tremlett,
 journalist and author of 'Ghosts of
 Spain: Travels through Spain and
 its Silent Past'

3.30pm Songs from the Spanish
 Civil War performed by Mike Wild

4pm Close

**International Brigade
 Memorial Trust 2017**

2017 Len Crome Memorial Conference

www.international-brigades.org.uk



● £15: buffet and entrance (payment
 in advance by 28 February 2017)

● £10: entrance only (payment on
 the day)

● Payment to IBMT by cheque /
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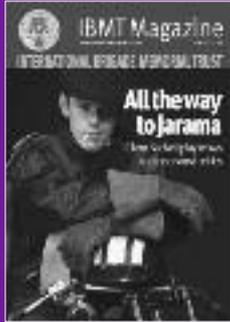
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Cover picture
David Heywood is Clem Beckett in the play 'Dare Devil Rides to Jarama', currently

on tour in Britain. See pages 10-11 for more about the play and check the notice on the back cover for 2017 tour dates.

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The IBMT Magazine (formerly the IBMT Newsletter) is published three times a year and is sent free to all members. Back numbers can be downloaded from the IBMT website on [www.international-brigades.org.uk/newsletter.htm]. All content is the copyright © of the IBMT and credited contributors and cannot be reproduced without written permission.

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NEW HOME FOR PLAQUE: Emily Thornberry MP (centre), the Shadow Foreign Secretary, at the unveiling of the original Battle of the Ebro plaque in its new location in the memorial garden of the Marx Memorial Library in London. Pictured with her are IBMT Secretary Jim Jump (left) and IBMT President Marlene Sidaway.

The plaque, first installed by the IBMT on Hill 705 on the Ebro battlefield, names the 90 members of the British Battalion killed in fighting from July to September 1938. It was unveiled in May 2005 in the presence of International Brigade veterans Bob

Doyle, Jack Jones, Sam Lesser and Alan Menai Williams. Two years later it was cut into three pieces in an act of vandalism perpetrated by Spanish neo-fascists.

The plaque in Spain has since been replaced. But the original was brought to Britain by the IBMT, to be unveiled, for a second time, on 30 October 2016, marking the 80th anniversary of the formation of the International Brigades.

Speaking at the event, Emily Thornberry praised the internationalism of the volunteers who went to Spain. They had shown that British people's concerns did not 'end at the White Cliffs of Dover'.



FLAGGED UP: Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn MP (centre) joins IBMT Ireland Secretary (right) and Tower Hamlets Mayor John Biggs in holding a Spanish Republican flag dedicated to Irish International Brigaders at the 80th anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Cable Street in London's East End on 9 October 2016. Cable Street has been called 'the road to Spain' because many of the protesters who stopped the police from clearing a way for a march by fascist Blackshirts in what was then the heart of London's Jewish community went on to join the International Brigades. This photo of Corbyn with the flag was widely disseminated on social media. Retweeting the image, Pablo Iglesias, leader of Spain's Podemos party, said: 'Thank you Jeremy Corbyn for paying tribute to the heroes and heroines who came from Britain to defend democracy in our country.'



Len Tsou



Barney Green



IN MEXICO: Karl Lewkowicz (above, left), co-writer of the award-winning musical ‘Goodbye Barcelona’, meets Juan Miguel de Mora Vazquerizo, the last Mexican veteran of the Spanish Civil War, on a visit to Mexico City last August. Like most other volunteers from Latin America, Juan, born in Mexico City to a Mexican father and Spanish mother, fought in Spanish units rather than the International Brigades. He abandoned his studies in Paris to go to Spain, taking part in the 1938 Battle of the Ebro as a 16-year-old. After the war he had a distinguished career as a writer and professor of Sanskrit at Mexico City’s main university.

Karl was in Mexico City for a video screening of ‘Goodbye Barcelona’, which is about a group of British International Brigaders. It was shown at the Ateneo Español, where the archives of Spanish Republican exiles who went to Mexico are kept.

PARIS MEMORIAL: French-born Spanish Civil War veteran Vicente Almudéver (above), aged 97, in front of the new memorial to the International Brigades unveiled on 22 October 2016 outside the Gare d’Austerlitz in Paris, the railway station used by most volunteers travelling south to the Spanish border.

IN GLASGOW: Vera Dehle-Thälmann (above, centre), granddaughter of pre-war German communist leader Ernst Thälmann, was one of the speakers at the annual commemoration at the Pasionaria memorial to the International Brigades in Glasgow on 10 September 2016. Thälmann spent the Spanish Civil War in a Nazi concentration camp, but gave his name to the battalion of mainly German volunteers in Spain.



NORTH-EAST VOLUNTEERS: This memorial board outside Newcastle Civic Centre was unveiled on 7 November 2016 by Newcastle Lord Mayor Hazel Stephenson. Part-financed by the IBMT, it names the 35 North-East men who were killed in Spain

while fighting with the International Brigades. The driving force behind the idea of this addition to the existing Spanish Civil War memorial in Newcastle was IBMT member and local historian Don Watson.

Stan Hilton

Farewell to the last known British veteran of the Spanish Civil War

Stan Hilton, the last surviving Briton who fought in the legendary International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War, died on 21 October 2016 in Australia, aged 98.

Stan was a 19-year-old merchant seaman when he jumped ship in the port of Alicante in November 1937. 'The Spanish people needed help,' he later explained. 'It was the right thing to do.'

He made his way to Albacete and enlisted with the British Battalion of the 15th International Brigade. He saw action that winter around Teruel. Then in the spring of 1938 the battalion was routed as General Franco's forces, aided by troops sent by Mussolini and by Hitler's Condor Legion, swept through Aragon and Catalonia.

'It was every man for himself,' said Stan, who eventually reached Barcelona, where he caught a ship home.

Born in Newhaven, Sussex, on 31 December 1917, Stan Hilton went on to serve in the merchant navy throughout the Second World War. In the 1950s he emigrated with his family to Australia, where he worked mostly as a tiler in the building trade. He died in a nursing home in Ocean Grove, near Melbourne.

Some 2,500 volunteers from Britain and Ireland joined the International Brigades during the civil war of 1936-39, and 526 of them died in the bitter war that saw the elected government of the Spanish Republic toppled by a fascist-backed military rebellion.

Stan's death is the end of an era – but not the end of a story. The IBMT will continue to keep alive the memory and spirit of Stan and the other volunteers who fought fascism and defended democracy in Spain.

They shall not pass! ¡No pasarán!



As Stan Hilton's death was announced, Australian freelance journalist DENIS ROGATYUK had just finished preparing a profile of our 'last man standing' for the IBMT Magazine. This is what he wrote...

Although fit and healthy until near the end of his life, Stan Hilton, the 98-year old veteran of the Spanish Civil War and Second World War, could no longer recall his four-month adventure in Spain in late 1937 and early 1938. Thankfully, his son Gordon and grandson Adam still keep alive the stories and recollections he told them over many years.

Stan was born into poverty and hardship. His first memories were of being dumped at a workhouse near Brighton. He was then fostered before ending up in a school where orphans were trained for domestic service.

But things got even worse and, still a teenager, he began sleeping rough in Brighton, until one day a policewoman secured a place for him on a marine training course. This was around 1933. As a ship's steward he served on several merchant navy ships, going to ports around the world.

It was in November 1937, while on the *Oakworth*, when he jumped ship in the Spanish port of Alicante. On the voyage south there had been an altercation with a ship's officer, which ended in fisticuffs. The officer was 'a real swine', and Stan had a short fuse in those days – he was a bit of a fighter.

Ashore, he met a fellow Briton, who said: 'Why don't you come with me, I'm joining the International Brigades?' Stan immediately agreed. 'I saw people parading around and saw all these fellows who had been

Continued overleaf

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injured, and I felt pity,' he told an interviewer in 2010. 'The Spanish people needed help. It was the right thing to do.'

Stan and his companion made their way to the British Battalion base near Albacete. There he remembered the Russian trainers, as the International Brigades used much Soviet equipment, such as the Dikterov submachine-gun.

Unlike most of his comrades, Stan was not overly political. And the reality of going to war really scared him. Despite all this, Stan understood that the Republican side were the 'underdogs' in the civil war and he instinctively felt compelled to fight on their side and against Franco. He was fond too of singing their songs, like 'The Internationale'. At one point, he attended a concert by Paul Robeson, when he was entertaining and visiting the International Brigades.

“He had the luck of the Devil. He'd jump ship in Spain and do alright, he'd return back to England and not get arrested, he'd get captured by Germans and turn out OK. Everything always seemed to work out well for him in the end.

Stan fought at the Battle of Teruel, managing to retreat after Franco's fascist forces finally re-took the city in February 1938.

Then in March that year, with Franco's forces launching a major offensive in Aragon, Stan and the rest of the British Battalion found themselves in full retreat and fighting a rearguard action. The battalion was scattered.

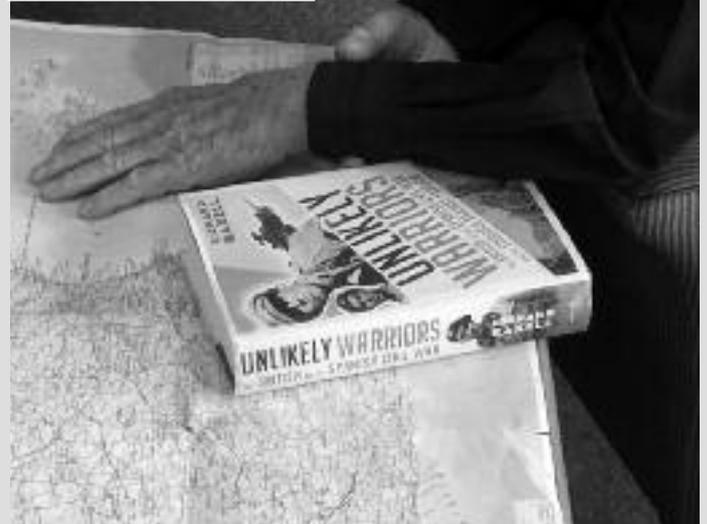
'It was every man for himself,' Stan recalled. Cut off and lost, he took shelter in a hut with two comrades. They were both killed when the hut was attacked, but Stan, who luckily happened to be outside at the time, fled the scene. Being a very good swimmer, he was able to swim across the River Ebro to safety. He finally reached Tortosa, from where he caught a train to Barcelona. He was there during merciless bombing of civilians by Mussolini's airforce. After a few days he boarded a ship bound for England, the *Lake Lugano*, and the crew put him to work.

Stan's Spanish adventure was behind him, though, some weeks after arrival in London, MI5 came knocking on his door to question him about his time with the International Brigades. Thankfully, the threat of a wider war in Europe and the overall mood in Britain allowed Stan to put his skills and knowledge to use. Almost immediately, he enrolled at a naval college and eventually returned to being a ship's steward, serving on oil tankers and tramp steamers.

It was while on the tanker *San Casimiro* in March 1941 that he was captured off the Azores by the German battle cruiser *Gneisenau*. Stan and the rest of the crew were taken off their ship and put on boats. The *San Casimiro* was then rigged with explosive charges and scuttled. However, the British battleship *HMS Renown* soon arrived on the scene, captured the Germans and rescued Stan and his shipmates.

Unfortunately all Stan's possessions, including some from his time in the International Brigades, were lost with the *San Casimiro* and now reside on the bottom of the Atlantic.

Following the end of the Second World War, Stan joined the Royal Marines Reserves, taking the frogman's course. He was also employed



David Leach

LOOKING BACK: Stan Hilton studies a map of Spain at a residential home in Yarrowonga in 2013; inset: Stan pictured in the Royal Marines Reserves in the early 1950s.

by several construction companies tasked with restoring and rebuilding bombed-out towns around the country.

In 1958, Stan moved to Australia. His wife Sylvia and four children had moved there two years earlier, as part of a government scheme that gave whole families subsidised passages to Australia.

Stan and his family initially settled in Perth. But, after separating from Sylvia and seeing few job prospects in Perth, he decided to move to Melbourne. There, he spent the rest of his life, working in the building trade, specialising in floor cutting, layering and tiling.

In his final years, Stan's memories started to fade. He lived for a while at a nursing home in Yarrowonga in upstate Victoria, where a local newspaper reporter wrote about his exploits as an International Brigader – and in doing so alerted the IBMT to his existence – before moving to an intensive care unit in Ocean Grove, near Melbourne.

'He had the luck of the Devil,' says grandson Adam. 'He'd jump ship in Spain and do alright, he'd return back to England and not get arrested, he'd get captured by Germans and turn out OK. Everything always seemed to work out well for him in the end.' ▲

‘Inspiring spirit of humanity’ defined the International Brigades

MICHAEL D HIGGINS, President of Ireland, addressed the IBMT’s 2016 Annual General Meeting held on 15 October at the Liberty Hall, Dublin. This is what he said.

The International Brigades were formally established by a decree of the Spanish Republic on 18 October 1936. Around 40,000 international volunteers from more than 50 countries joined the Brigades. Amongst them were 200 Irish-born volunteers moved by the plight of the working classes of Spain and, deeply concerned by the threat to democracy and the lengthening shadow of fascism that was spreading across Europe, decided to volunteer for the International Brigade. Over 60 of these Irish internationalists would never come home.

The International Brigades were drawn from a wide range of social strata and occupations. Some of their number, like the novelist George Orwell, the poet WH Auden, or the former Church of Ireland minister Robert Hilliard, were intellectuals drawn from the middle classes, but most historical studies now agree that the vast majority of the Irish and British who joined the International Brigades were manual workers, workers with an extraordinary sense of social and political justice and the importance of defending workers’ rights wherever they were at stake. As the research of Angela Jackson, among others, has shown, women – many of whom worked in medical units or relief organisations – for that reason played an important role in the International Brigades.

The carnage of the working class in the trenches of World War One, in what was above all a contest of empires, was for them a fresh memory. The authoritarianism at its source, the culture of absolutist power that was fascism, was already thick in the air.

Not just historians, but all of us, owe a debt of gratitude to the International Brigade Memorial Trust, who continue to keep alive the

memory of the Irish and British men and women who so bravely fought to defend democracy and fight fascism in Spain.

The death in January 2009 of Bob Doyle – whom I had the pleasure of meeting on a number of occasions with Michael O’Riordan and his colleagues – marked the passing of the last veteran of the Connolly Column; reminding us of the role the Trust and all who support it play as important custodians of the history which had such an important influence on the society in which we now live. We must be grateful to the Memorial Trust for their untiring work in ensuring that the task of striving to achieve a full and ethical interpretation of that most controversial of conflicts that was the Spanish Civil War and its place within the history of modern Europe continues. It is appropriate too that we recall how long the consequences would last in Spain, the cruelty of the extra-judicial killings, the incarcerations and the long wait for parliamentary democracy that would ensue.

Engaging with the past may be a difficult and complex process, but it is ethically unavoidable. The *Pacto del Olvido*, imposed by political elites in Spain after the fall of Franco, signifies the fears that so often exist around any deep or honest reflection on a history that, in the case of the abusing elites, has much to hide.

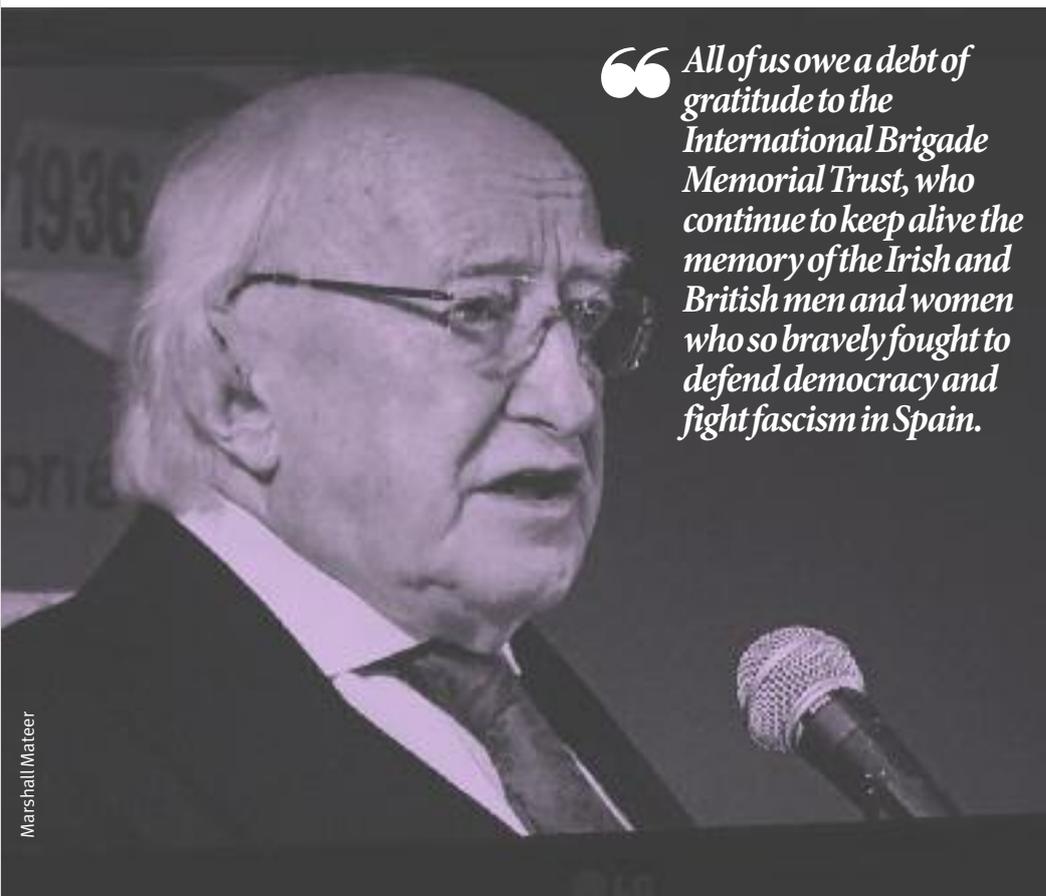
If we are to stand back and take a longer historical perspective of the events leading up to the Spanish Civil War, our gaze might initially fall on the rise of liberalism across Europe during the 19th century and the opposing voices of authoritarianism that emerged and saw, in the demand for democratic participation, a threat from the new voices that were challenging the previous unassailability of Monarchy, Nobility and Church. We can perceive how such growing democratic demands and political agitation and related organisation gave birth by way of response to the curious relationship between monarchy and dictatorship which existed throughout Europe in the 1920s.

We can also observe the strain on fragile democracies across the continent, as they sought to deal with the weight of class confrontation in conditions of change and the conflict between the left and right political forces – and often the differences within each. Those with fascist sympathies offered support in the name of order to dictatorship as it promised strong actions to solve the consequences for their nations of a worldwide economic crisis; a crisis that would claim lives and livelihoods all over the world. The politics of fear meant that an opportunity had emerged for the seizure of powers.

It would be simplistic, however, to claim that the war that broke out in Spain on 17 July 1936 was *ab initio* a straightforward clash between forces calling themselves democratic and fascist. As with all major wars, the Spanish Civil War was the outcome of observable social forces; an impoverished and disenfranchised workforce, landholding patterns of the rich that were almost feudal,

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an elite intent upon maintaining their wealth and privilege, strong regional autonomy movements, a Church newly committed to corporatism, drawing on such documents as *Quadragesimo Anna*, which recalled *Rerum Novarum* of 40 years earlier, which had condemned what it generalised as Marxism and communism.

Hitler's rise to power, which had culminated two years before with his achievement of absolute command of Germany – together with his alliance with Mussolini and his concern to distract Western powers from his Central European Strategy – resulted in Nationalist rebels receiving support from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.

As to the position of other countries, despite the signing by 27 countries, including Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union, of a non-intervention pact in September 1936, it was a war that was soon to take on an international dimension. Stalin, worried by the rise of fascism in Europe and the threat it presented to a Soviet Union, moved to prevent the Nationalists from taking power by providing military assistance to the Republicans.

Ireland's reaction to the civil war was probably unique across Europe. It was a war which provoked a divided response, with volunteers going to Spain to support both Nationalists and Republicans.

It is difficult for some even today, given the high regard in which the Irish International Brigaders are now held in this country, to understand how

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We must remember, however, that support for Franco in Ireland was sourced in the conservative institutional forces dominated by a brand of clericalism far more authoritarian than spiritual and imposed through fear, and many of those who decided to join the International Brigades faced public opprobrium at home.

Rather than being seen as a struggle between democracy and fascism, the Spanish Civil War was widely presented in Ireland as a conflict between Catholicism and communism. Yet both Catholic and non-Catholic clergymen in Northern Ireland would support the Spanish Republic.

The Catholic hierarchy's pastoral warning against the spread of left-wing ideas in Ireland, issued some years before, had clearly stated that the two beliefs, Catholicism and communism, were completely incompatible. Meanwhile the influence of the shirted movement that would come to be known as the Blueshirts continued to spread under the leadership of Eoin O'Duffy, who was an admirer of European fascism and not committed to democratic politics if it included workers entitled to agitate for their rights. Described by Diarmuid Ferriter as 'a mirror to the Ireland of the Twenties and Thirties', O'Duffy's 700-strong Irish Brigade was supported by the Catholic Church, the Dean of Cashel sending them on their way with the blessing of such words as: 'The Irish Brigade have gone to fight the battle of Christianity against communism.'

Throughout the country the church-gate collection for 'ambulances for Franco' was the largest since the time of Daniel O'Connell's

campaign for Catholic Emancipation in the previous century.

Meanwhile, like the tens of thousands of foreigners who had decided to come to the Republic's aid in Spain, many Irish men and women were moved by the distress of the democratically-elected Spanish government and the suffering of civilians. They were courageous and determined. They had to be as, for many of them, getting to Spain involved great difficulty and hardship, as described by the late Michael O'Riordan, who recalls his own illegal and clandestine journey through London and Paris as a 'difficult and long road'.

Most of the volunteers were smuggled in over the Pyrenees, where they received a sadly inadequate training for the war they were about to fight. They had, however, been left under no illusions upon recruitment about the bloody and brutal battle that lay before them. Michael O'Riordan remembers the 'authentic, realistic and honest' description they received of what they were likely to encounter in Spain, which had the effect of some volunteers stepping out and returning home.

Among the ranks of the International Brigades was the brilliant young poet Charles Donnelly, whose final words were to become an almost iconic description of the Spanish Civil War, still remembered and quoted today many years after they were first uttered on the battlefields of Spain.

Described by Eavan Boland as 'a dark star' who can 'haunt a generation', Charles Donnelly was just 22 years of age when he decided to come to the aid of Republican Spain. Donnelly, with hundreds of men from the International Brigades, fought in one of the bloodiest confrontations between Republican and Nationalist forces – that of the Battle of Jarama which took place just seven weeks after his arrival in Spain.

It was here, during a lull in machine-gun fire and just moments before a bullet was shot into his temple, that Charles Donnelly plucked a bunch of olives from the dust and squeezing them spoke the five simple words that still echo poignantly across the decades: 'Even the olives are bleeding'.

At Jarama a battle took place that, in the words of Cathal O'Shannon many years later, was to 'epitomise war in all its horror'.

Here, the Irish and British battalions fought side by side and suffered huge casualties, yet achieving one of their finest hours as they played their brave role in thwarting an attempt by Franco's forces to encircle Madrid.

Ten days after his death, Charles Donnelly's body, 'face fresh, naive looking', was buried beneath one of those olive trees in that foreign land far away from his native Tyrone; his family left unaware of his death for some time, his distressed father unable to talk about him for years. Yet it is important to recall that support for the Spanish Republic drew alliances together between religions in Northern Ireland. The silence of the relatives of the lost is as moving now to recall as it was understandable in its time.

Sadly, such silence was not unusual. Many of those who died so bravely for freedom were marginalised back home in Ireland for many years. Many had their teaching posts taken from them. Communist Party spokesman Eugene McCartan, describing the anguish and despair of those who lost sons to anti-fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War, said: 'To be attached to someone who died was not safe in Ireland. The Catholic Church made a rallying cry for fascists and held collections to support Franco. It was no wonder families kept their heads down.'

However, while O'Duffy's Irish Brigade was comprised wholly of Roman Catholics, we must not forget that many committed Catholics fought with the International Brigade, seeing no conflict between their religious beliefs and the spirit of solidarity which drove them to fight, and in some cases sacrifice their lives, for democracy in Spain.

Frank Ryan, leader of the Irish contingent of the Brigade, wrote when completing a questionnaire on his arrival at the concentration camp of San Pedro de Cardeña that he had come to Spain for two reasons: one to aid a democratic government, and the other because he believed that religion was not at stake in the Spanish war and he wanted to show that O'Duffy did not represent the Irish people.



PRESENTATION: Michael D Higgins (centre), with wife Sabina Higgins, receives an IBMT commemorative plate from IBMT Ireland Secretary Manus O’Riordan, who also gave him a copy of ‘Poems from Spain: British and Irish International Brigaders on the Spanish Civil War’, noting that the President is himself a poet. Pictured right: part of the enthusiastic reception to the President’s speech from IBMT members at the AGM, including (in the foreground) Executive Committee member Dolores Long.



The Ireland of the 1930s that produced these opposing forces was an Ireland that experienced the extremes of authoritarianism imposed on the people, be it in relation to culture, dance, books, moral panics against communism and fear. The character of the Irish International Brigade, with its mix of socialists, idealists, communists, and men of all religions and none, can perhaps be best summed up in the words of the late Paddy O’Daire, a leader of the International Brigade, who said: ‘All causes are worldwide. Freedom is indivisible. If a man fights for freedom in one place, he is fighting for it everywhere.’

The urge to defend the Spanish Republic invoked internationalism and a shared humanism that was construed as a threat to the absolutism and the imposed certainties of the time. The response was vicious. It was to be a brave and bitter fight, culminating in an ungenerous defeat which saw thousands executed, a million people exiled or imprisoned, and a generation denied the right to live, grow and flourish in a democratic nation.

Today, the people of Spain continue to grapple with transacting the legacy of a civil war that was undoubtedly the most important chapter of its 20th century history. It is a chapter which has left a profound legacy, with many citizens still engaged years later in a continuing search for

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contact with their past; a past, and as so often elsewhere, perhaps because of the pain or guilt, not discussed at home, and often left out of the history books studied in their classrooms.

Here in Ireland, as we engage with the ongoing Decade of Commemorations, we have been called to reflect on the challenge of remembering ethically. Such remembrance must always aspire to respect complexity and to seek to understand, as they construed it, the integrity and the motivations of the men and women from the past. That is not an easy task. Such ethical remembering remains a challenge for Spain, as for

us and for many nations around the globe, if just and enduring peace is to be achieved.

As the world continues to face conflict, poverty and abuse of power, we are called upon to continue to show moral courage and be willing in our words and policies to demonstrate a sense of internationalism. If we are to overcome together the forces of greed, intolerance and oppression which deny so many of our fellow global citizens their right to justice and freedom, it can only be with alarm that, 80 years after the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, we see xenophobic, nationalistic and inward-looking movements gaining traction again in mainstream politics right across Europe.

If we are to tackle the growing divisions within the international community it is important that we focus our efforts anew on building social cohesion and solidarity. In the centenary year of the republican uprising of 1916, and the 80th anniversary of fascism’s attack on the Spanish Republic, we should recall the origins and aims of true republicanism, and strive to continue to show the strength of conviction, moral courage and generosity that was shared among those who fought in the International Brigades.

The inspiring spirit of humanity that defined the International Brigades has never, perhaps, been more movingly articulated than in the farewell speech of the great Spanish Republican, Dolores Ibárruri – or La Pasionaria, as she is better known. Addressing them at the final parade in Barcelona in October 1938 she told them that: ‘From all peoples, from all races, you came to us like brothers, like sons of immortal Spain; and in the hardest days of the war, when the capital of the Spanish Republic was threatened, it was you, gallant comrades of the International Brigades, who helped save the city with your fighting enthusiasm, your heroism and your spirit of sacrifice.’

The volunteers who joined the Brigades from across Europe and beyond set an example of international solidarity and global citizenship which today continues to inspire those who bravely march alongside the downtrodden, the excluded and the marginalised; and who battle against inequality in all its forms, fighting for justice and freedom in communities and societies across the globe, those who work to give meaning and greater democracy for all.

As a nation we can be very proud of the brave Irish men and women who joined the International Brigade in 1936. May I commend you, therefore, for the work you do in keeping alive the memory and the values of all those who bravely fought for ‘freedom everywhere’ on the battlefields of Spain almost 80 years ago.

iViva la Quince Brigada! ▲

A full text of the President’s speech, including some passages in Irish, is available at: [www.president.ie/en/media-library/speeches/speech-at-the-opening-of-the-international-brigade-memorial-trust-agm].



David Heywood (above) as Clem Beckett and Neil Gore (right) as Christopher Caudwell; below: 'Dare Devil' Beckett and the 'Wall of Death'.



Journey to the final wall of death

MARLENE SIDAWAY reviews ‘Dare Devil Rides to Jarama’, the play by Neil Gore that is bringing the story of the International Brigades to audiences around the country.

Performed brilliantly by the two actors, David Heywood as Clem ‘Dare Devil’ Beckett and Neil Gore as Christopher Caudwell – his real name was Christopher St John Sprigg, or ‘John Sprigg’ in Spain – ‘Dare Devil Rides to Jarama’ is a must-see play.

The performances have warmth and humour and, with a poetic script, foot-tapping music and enthusiastic audience participation, it all makes for a lively and enjoyable evening.

Louise Townsend’s direction keeps the play whizzing along, shifting easily between humour, agitprop and tragedy. Poems by Caudwell and others are woven into the drama, among them Jack Lindsay’s powerful ‘On Guard for Spain’, and David Kirkpatrick’s songs are guaranteed to stay in the head for many days to come; all this, and at the same time it’s a lesson to those unfamiliar with the story of the anti-fascist war in Spain – a seminal event in the history of the 20th century.

David Heywood captures Beckett’s dash and glamour, while Neil Gore plays not only Caudwell but also wrote the play himself and gives impressive and truthful portraits of many other characters who feature in the story – everyone from Blackshirt leader Sir Oswald Mosley to Communist Party General Secretary Harry Pollitt!

Beckett and Caudwell, so different in background and personality, form a bond of purpose that typified so many of those who volunteered to fight in the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War. They had also been drawn to communism, as many other



UNLIKELY WARRIORS: Speedway rider Clem Beckett (left) and novelist, aeronautics expert, poet and Marxist theoretician Christopher (St John Sprigg) Caudwell died together in the Battle of Jarama.

The second act sees these two ‘unlikely warriors’ in Spain, united in the anti-fascist war and with each using their complementary skills: Beckett the fearless rider, mechanic and leader of men, Caudwell the wordsmith, inventor and technician. Together they go through training – with the frustrations of inappropriate armaments and ammunition – and endure boredom, hunger, exhaustion, triumph – and the ultimate sacrifice at Jarama in February 1937.

The IBMT is proud to have commissioned this dazzling new play as part of our commemorations for the 80th anniversary of the formation of the International Brigades. The production has also been supported by many trade unions and other organisations and will surely bring the story of the International Brigades to new audiences.

It has justly received rave reviews: ‘quite simply the best political theatre produced for a long, long time’, said the *Morning Star*. ‘Dare Devil Rides to Jarama’ will be touring again all over the country early in 2017. Make sure you see it. ▲

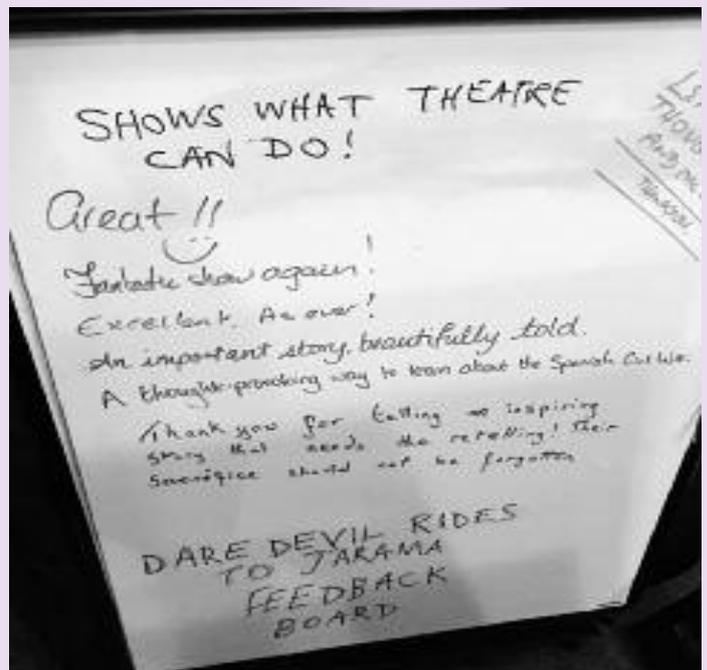
Marlene Sidaway is the IBMT President. For details of the 2017 tour dates for ‘Dare Devil Rides to Jarama’ see our back cover or go to www.townsendproductions.org.uk.

“Beckett and Caudwell, so different in background and personality, form a bond of purpose that typified so many of those who volunteered to fight in the International Brigades.”

such unlikely bedfellows were during the terrible depression years of the 1930s and the social inequality that they produced.

The first act gives us glimpses of that inequality, with conflicts involving privileged bosses and landowners, such as the 1932 mass trespass on Kinder Scout for the right to roam in open countryside, as well as efforts to form a trade union and demand better and safer working conditions.

Clem Beckett’s politics were shaped by these struggles. We follow his personal journey from a blacksmith saved from unemployment by his unique skills to a champion speedway motorcyclist and rider on the ‘Wall of Death’. Angered by the growing exploitation in the sport, including the rising death toll among untrained youngsters entering it, he forms a union for speedway riders. He is blacklisted as a result and takes his skills to the continent, including Germany, where he witnesses the rise of fascism.





The International Brigade Memorial Trust keeps alive the memory and spirit of the men and women who volunteered to defend democracy and fight fascism in Spain from 1936 to 1939

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SECRETARIAL NOTES

EXHIBITION: Our new Executive Council member Nina Londragan with (from left) Aberdeen City Councillor Barney Crockett and Unite Regional Industrial Organiser Tommy Campbell at the opening of an exhibition at Aberdeen Maritime Museum in May last year about a 1936 Spanish seamen's strike in Aberdeen. Nina was the instigator and chief compiler of the exhibition. See 'Welcome to the new Executive Committee'.



Welcome to the new Executive Committee

A new IBMT Executive Committee was voted into office at our Annual General Meeting in Dublin on 15 October 2016.

Three IBMT Officers, Richard Baxell (Chair), Jim Jump (Secretary) and Manuel Moreno (Treasurer) were all re-elected unopposed. Marlene Sidaway (President) does not have to stand for annual re-election. A ballot of the 49 voting members present at the AGM was necessary for the remaining 11 Executive Committee member seats, with 14 candidates nominated to stand.

The result saw Marshall Mateer (IBMT Film Coordinator) and Richard Thorpe (Education

work on the Executive Committee and hope they will continue to be involved in IBMT activities.

Why we have a new name

IBMT members who have given us their email address are now being sent the *IBMT e-Newsletter*. This new fortnightly information service has received lots of positive feedback. If you want to be added to the mailing list contact [admin@international-brigades.org.uk].

The e-newsletter aims to keep members informed about International Brigade and Spanish Civil War-related events, and also contains IBMT announcements and news flashes about activities that have just taken place.

All this means that the *IBMT Newsletter*, or *IBMT Magazine*, as it has now been renamed, as readers may have noticed, can devote more space to longer articles and reviews. It was always difficult bringing out a 'newsletter' every four months – the news and event listings soon went out of date – and there was never enough space to run in-depth features. Hopefully, we have now found the right combination of online and printed publications.

Farewell to the Camel & Artichoke

For the past six years we have organised a social gathering at the Camel & Artichoke pub after our commemoration on London's Southbank on the first Saturday of July. Now we learn that last year's get-together was the last. The pub closed at the end of December and will be redeveloped as flats and a retail space. This is sad news: the Camel & Artichoke staff made us feel very welcome, making it an ideal place to relax with friends; it was also a gem of a pub, tucked away in the backstreets behind Waterloo Station. Pub manager Andy Wilson shares our disappointment. 'There's been a pub on this site for more than 300 years,' he points out. As for the IBMT, the search is now on for another venue for this year's social.

Woody Guthrie songs heard for first time

Philosophy Football's gala evening at London's Rich Mix arts centre on 1 October for the 80th

2017 SUBSCRIPTIONS: IBMT membership and affiliation fees for 2017 are now due. Please pay them as promptly as possible. Rates and payment details are in the membership form on the facing page. Please also consider making a donation. Thank you for your continued support. We depend on it to do our work.

Officer and Facebook Coordinator) elected to the committee. For the previous 12 months they served as co-opted members.

Most members remained unchanged, but we welcome Nina Londragan to the committee for the first time. She is the grand-daughter of Aberdeen International Brigader John Londragan, though based in Cardiff herself. As a 'second generation' family member she is a very welcome addition. Seven of the 15-person committee have a family link to the volunteers.

The committee will serve for 12 months until the next Annual General Meeting, which is provisionally scheduled to be held in Cardiff on 14 October 2017.

The three new members replace Hilary Jones, who did not stand for re-election after 12 years on the committee, and Duncan Longstaff, who failed to be re-elected after serving for the past eight years. There was a third vacancy as a result of Mick Whelan becoming an IBMT Patron earlier last year.

We are grateful to Hilary and Duncan for their

anniversary of the International Brigades and the Battle of Cable Street was a resounding success. A highlight was the first ever public performance of three songs about the Spanish Civil War penned by American folk singer Woody Guthrie. They were recited by Will Kaufmann (www.willkaufman.com), who discovered them in the archives of the Woody Guthrie Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Guthrie family gave permission for the songs to be performed at Rich Mix on the strict condition that no-one should record or transcribe them. A professor of American literature at the University of Central Lancashire, Kaufmann is the author of 'Woody Guthrie, American Radical' (2015) and has a one-man show, Woody Guthrie: 'Hard Times and Hard Travelin'', that brings Guthrie's songs – including his version of 'Jarama Valley' dedicated to the Lincoln Battalion – to new audiences.

Our memorial is a rallying point

Heartening news comes from Reading, where IBMT stalwart Ray Parkes reports that the International Brigade memorial (pictured) is now the meeting place for local demonstrations.



Peter Bloodworth

Created by sculptor Eric Stanford and originally inaugurated in 1990, the memorial was restored and relocated in 2015 to a new site in Forbury Gardens in order to make way for redevelopment at its original site outside Reading's civic centre. Ray tells us that the memorial has since then become the focal point for rallies, including last year a meeting to support Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, a memorial gathering for murdered Labour MP Jo Cox and the May Day demo organised by Reading Trades Union Council.

At least 16 people from or with a strong connection to Reading are known to have gone to Spain to join the International Brigades. Three were killed. It's good to know that their memory will be passed on to younger activists who see our memorial when they congregate there.

Jim Jump

IBMT Secretary

secretary@international-brigades.org.uk

Join the IBMT now and help keep alive the memory and spirit of the volunteers

Complete the form below and send subscriptions and any donations to: IBMT, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU.

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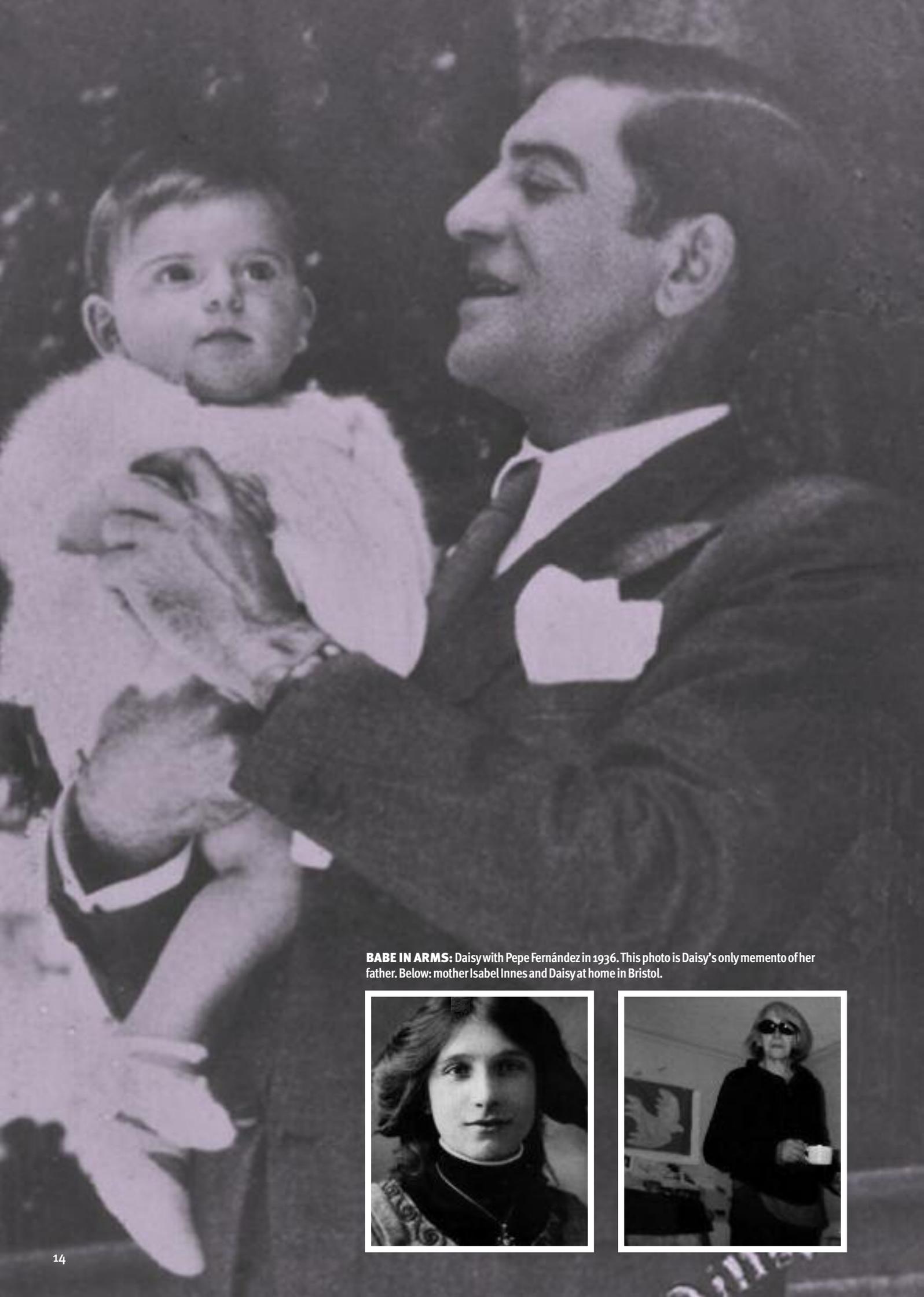
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BABE IN ARMS: Daisy with Pepe Fernández in 1936. This photo is Daisy's only memento of her father. Below: mother Isabel Innes and Daisy at home in Bristol.



Murdered by the fascists: the father I never knew

But 75 years on, Daisy was grateful for confirmation of Pepe Fernández's fate

By Jim Jump

The lives of many thousands of people in Britain have been touched by the Spanish Civil War; few more painfully perhaps than that of IBMT member Daisy Fernández, an artist and former silkscreen printer now living in Bristol.

Here is an extraordinary story, a tragic family tale which meant she grew up without knowing her Spanish father and only receiving confirmation some five years ago from historian and IBMT Founding Chair Paul Preston that he had been executed by the fascist-backed military rebels soon after the start of the Spanish Civil War.

Born in Liverpool in 1934, Daisy spent her early years gradually having to come to terms with the loss of her father. But her life – and that of her Scottish-born mother and younger sister – was indelibly marked, both emotionally and politically, by the loss. Much of her artistic output has had political themes, whether anti-torture posters for Amnesty International or work inspired by the 1973 coup in Chile and the plight of prisoners held at Guantánamo.

Last year she donated her replica of Picasso's 'Guernica' to the IBMT. It measures nearly two metres in length, with captions linking the infamous bombing of the Basque town during the war in Spain to the agony of civilians bombed more recently in Afghanistan, Palestine and Iraq.

When the Spanish Civil War began, Daisy, aged just 20 months, was living in Lugo, in Spain's north-west region of Galicia. Her father, José ('Pepe') Fernández, worked for a local radio station, hosting a programme giving English lessons every Saturday morning. He was also a strong supporter of the Spanish Republic. Her mother was Isabel Innes, originally from Fraserborough, in Aberdeenshire. The couple met in Liverpool in 1929/30 via a mutual friend while Pepe was travelling home from Cuba and the US, where he had spent several years. They fell in love and decided to start a new life in Spain.

Isabel returned briefly to Liverpool in 1934 to give birth to Daisy – in order for her to qualify for a British passport – and then travelled back to Spain with her baby daughter. Soon the new family's lives were to be shattered. Pepe was arrested immediately after the military coup in July 1936. With Daisy, aged 20 months, in her arms and seven months pregnant, Isabel was able to visit him in prison. Fearful for his family's safety, Pepe implored her to leave Spain, which she did, arriving in Liverpool with Daisy in October of that year. Soon afterwards, Daisy's sister Joyce was born, and though they heard reports suggesting that Pepe had been executed, this was never confirmed. Isabel always lived with the hope that he might still be alive.

Daisy's mother died in 1990, sadly many years before Paul Preston, in

2011, was able to relay confirmation of Pepe's fate to the family. Preston had asked his contacts in Galicia to investigate the case, and they told him they were 99 per cent certain that a José María Fernández Rodríguez, arrested in Lugo on 19 or 20 July 1936, was the same person as Daisy's father. Pepe had then been tried by a military court on 23 August and accused of placing bombs in Lugo's cathedral and episcopal palace.

'The accusation was entirely fictitious,' Paul wrote in a letter to Daisy's son John, 'and was used against many of the Republicans put on trial in Lugo at this time. Their real crime was to have remained loyal to the legitimate democratic government and the fantastical accusation was meant simply to smear them within the atmosphere of terror being generated by the military rebels.'

At this same time as he was approached for help by Daisy's family, Preston was working on 'The Spanish Holocaust', his monumental survey, published in 2012, of the violence inflicted on civilians during the Spanish Civil War. According to his book, there were at least 4,265 summary executions of Republican supporters in Lugo province alone that were perpetrated by the military rebels and their fascist allies.

Pepe was executed on 27 August in Lugo. He was referred to as a 43-year-old man born in Ares, a coastal town in La Coruña province, and a resident of Lugo. Before execution he refused the last rites.



ON CANVAS: Daisy's recreation of Picasso's 'Guernica', now with the IBMT.

Three years before the family was told this story, Daisy's sister Joyce, who now lives in Chester, wrote a letter to the *IBMT Newsletter* (issue 2-2008) telling what was then known about the family's story. She described her mother's account of that last time she saw Pepe in jail. Pepe gave Daisy a peseta and said he was in prison so that one day every child in Spain would have a peseta. 'At the time,

this did nothing to calm the distress of a toddler who couldn't understand why her daddy was not able to hold and cuddle her,' Joyce recounted. 'However, when my mum told us about the peseta when we were old enough to understand, it became a very emotional consolation for not having a father. We thought of him – and still do – as the most heroic of men.'

Their mother was heroic too, insists Joyce. 'She was 40 years old, with a baby and a toddler, no money, no pension, but fortunately able to live with my grandmother and as soon as I was weaned she went back to work as a telephonist on full-time shifts at the Anfield exchange. I don't think she ever really accepted that my father was dead and when she went to an International Brigades commemorative meeting in Liverpool in 1938 she must have hoped in some way for a sort of reunion with him.'

Daisy, who these days struggles with eye health problems, says she and Joyce have finally come to terms with the grief suffered by the family. 'One big comfort,' she says, 'has been to know that historians such as Paul Preston and organisations such as the IBMT have done so much to keep alive the memory of those honourable people like my father who supported the Spanish Republic.' ▲

Jim Jump is the IBMT Secretary.

For the Australian volunteers and their memorial's instigators

The main achievement of the Australian Association of Friends of the International Brigades (AAFIB) has been the construction of a memorial to the Australians who joined the International Brigades or served as nurses in Spanish hospitals looking after the Brigaders and others.

The monument [pictured] was dedicated in 1993 and it stands in Lennox Gardens, on the shore of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra. It was unveiled by Lloyd Edmonds, the only survivor at the time of the 70 Australians who joined the Brigades.

The AAFIB has now been discontinued due to lack of interest and support: most of the original members have died or are now unable to continue their membership activity.

On winding up the affairs of the association, the members decided at the last meeting that whatever funds were left in the bank account shall be donated to similar associations. We are therefore transferring these funds to your bank account. Though we are not talking about large sums of money, we must do it officially and as required by law.

The monument in Canberra depicts a map of Spain in bronze, with the



names of the places and battles where the International Brigades fought. It also has a plaque with a short account of the Spanish Civil War and of the Australians who went to assist the Spanish Republic.

The text is both in English and in Spanish (my translation). It now has two additional plaques as a memorial to the two Australian women who conceived the idea of the monument and, together with the other members of the AAFIB, eventually arrived at the main goal, to have a memorial in Canberra, the capital of Australia.

Netta Burns and Amirah Inglis will this way always be remembered as the makers of the monument. Netta died in 1996 and Amirah in 2015. Amirah's uncle served in the International Brigades and in her memoirs she explains how, as a child in Melbourne, she contributed with her pocket money to a

collection for the Spanish children affected by the civil war.

As a Spanish-Australian, I admired these women and was very proud of being their friend. I also send kindest regards to the IBMT.

Carmen Castelo

By email

Farewell and thanks, Jim Carmody

I was very saddened to read (issue 3-2016) of the death of Jim Carmody. When I first began my 1990s study of Jews who served against fascism in the Spanish Civil War, I spent many long Saturdays at the splendid Marx Memorial Library archives. Jim spotted me on almost my first visit and came and introduced himself, expressing, in his delightful Irish accent, his great interest in and admiration of the Jews who went to Spain. He took my contacts and thereafter telephoned and wrote to me regularly with any information he could find on the Jewish volunteers from his extensive private investigations and research, which spanned many years.

He revealed some astonishing facts to me, including the presence of a group of Zionist Blue Shirts from London who went to fight Franco, and encouraged me to raise the profile of the volunteers from Israel (Palestine Mandate), who went in greater numbers than any other nation when calculated as a percentage of populations. I will greatly miss his loyal and friendly chats with me.

I was also inspired by another of your items (issue 2-2016) on Zuza Ziolkowska Hercberg of Poland, who recently led a group (shown in your magnificent cover photo), carrying the Botwin (Polish Jewish) Company banner at a wreath-laying in Warsaw. Her apparent re-discovery of her Jewish roots via her grandfather's service with the Botwins was very moving to read, and fairly common now as many 'Catholic' Poles discover their families were in fact Jews. How

these discoveries happen is a long story!

Readers may be interested to know that an updated list of my study (but only the British and Israeli volunteers) is to be republished in a chapter in a second edition of my book 'Fighting Back' (Valentine Mitchell) this spring.

Strength to your elbows!

Martin Sugarman

Archivist of AJEX: Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women of the UK

By email

I was very sorry to see the sad news of Jim Carmody's death (issue 3-2016). After I retired and joined the IBMT I started to try and find out about my uncle, Samuel Edward Walsh, killed at Brunete in 1937. I think Jim was the first person from whom I asked for help. He answered me very promptly and in the following years he explored all the possible sources of information and kept me in touch.

I only met him a few times, always at the annual memorial event in Jubilee Gardens in London, but he always remembered me and always asked if I had heard any news of 'Samuel' (I and the family knew him as Uncle Eddy). It seemed to me that we had always known each other—he was so friendly and interested.

Jim must have been like this with all the people who asked for his help and I guess as his health deteriorated he was finding it all the more difficult to read information from the Moscow archives, but he still carried on cheerfully to the end.

Brian Walsh

By email

Cubans salute Jimmy Shand's flag

This is a belated response to the article on Jimmy Shand (issue 1-2016). One thing not mentioned in the article is that, as well as rescuing his son and his comrades from Madrid in the hours before Franco's troops entered the city, Jimmy Shand also rescued a large flag that flew on the Telefónica building in Madrid, and that flag now resides at the Working Class Movement Library in Salford. He gave it to Hilda Froom, later Hilda Baruch, for safekeeping in 1939, and she donated it to the library in 1986 on the 50th anniversary of the start of the Spanish Civil War.

On 14 July last year the library was delighted to be visited by two members of the Miami Five,



Rene González, and Gerardo Hernández, with members of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and the Cuban ambassador. The picture above is of Rene and Gerardo holding that flag in the Nalگو Room of the library on the day of their visit.

Stuart Walsh

By email



Rosemary Bailey's 'Love and War in the Pyrenees: A Story of Courage, Fear and Hope, 1939-1944' was published in 2009, since when she and others have pieced together the story of Mary Elmes.

Left: Mary Elmes (on right) in Spain during the civil war.

Mary Elmes

Saving lives and shunning glory

Award-winning writer and novelist **ROSEMARY BAILEY** tells the story of the Irish-born Quaker nurse who cared for refugee children in Spain during the civil war and continued her work in France during the Second World War.

When I wrote about Mary Elmes and the work of the Quakers in southern France in 'Love and War in the Pyrenees' I little knew how the story would unfold. However, as a result of my book, in June 2014 she was awarded Israel's honour of 'Righteous Among the Nations'. This is given to non-Jews – most famously Oskar Schindler – who risked their lives during the Holocaust to save Jews from extermination.

For nearly 10 years between 1937 and 1945, Mary Elmes worked as a relief worker for the British and American Quakers in war-torn Spain and France. She never talked afterwards about what she did, but she

helped save many hundreds of people incarcerated in the concentration camps of southern France, especially children, from death and deportation. Mary died in 2002 and her children received the award on her behalf in the seaside town of Canet-sur-Mer, near Perpignan, on the Mediterranean coast – where once Spanish Republican refugees were huddled in ramshackle camps on the beaches.

One of the children she rescued, Ron Friend, now a psychology professor in the United States, was at the ceremony. He had been rescued as two-year-old René Freund from the camp, given up by his parents. His father ended up in Auschwitz. As a result of reading my book he discovered that Mary Elmes was his rescuer and proposed her for this award.

When researching my book, the references to Mary Elmes were few and it was tantalising to know so little of this heroic woman. Then, listening to a history guide at the camp at Rivesaltes one day, an elderly lady piped up to ask about the work of the Quakers. She told me later that she was the daughter of Mary Elmes, but that her mother had never told her anything of those times – so many people wanted to forget, and some – especially women – felt no desire for recognition. They simply did what had to be done. Perhaps also, when the awful truth about the extermination camps was confirmed when they were liberated in 1945, they felt that what they had done was not enough.

After 'Love and War in the Pyrenees' was published I have heard from so many people, writing letters, sending emails via my website, even turning up at the door.

Researching

With the help of 78-year-old Quaker Bernard Wilson, who had a house in the region, we began researching the Quaker history in southern France. Bernard's research has uncovered a vast cache of material, in particular the records of Quaker activities now held by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in Philadelphia. He and Ron Friend tracked down Mary's daughter, Caroline Danjou, to a small seaside town, St Marie-de-la-Mer, in the Pyrénées-Orientales and he began to piece together the full story of Mary's life. Bernard Wilson has now written a book for children inspired by his research (see <http://campsofshame.webplus.net>).

Continued overleaf



Mary Elmes

“After two years on the front line in Spain she escaped with the last of the Republican refugees to France, where another tragedy was about to unfold.

“She remained incarcerated for nearly six months... Mary refused to accept the salary which had accrued while she was in prison, and likewise the Légion d’Honneur later offered by the French government.

From previous page

Mary Elmes, a young Irishwoman born in Cork in 1908, had left Ireland after studying languages at Trinity College, Dublin, and headed for London with a scholarship to the London School of Economics. She then went to study in Geneva, where she became involved with the Quakers.

She went with them on a five-day mercy mission to Spain, via Gibraltar, in 1937. But Mary was determined to stay on and help and hooked up with Sir George Young and the London University Ambulance Unit. It was the beginning of the rest of her life.

Mary ran a children’s hospital in Alicante, but when the bombing became too heavy she took the children to safety in a small mountain village. Even when her father died in Ireland in 1938 and her mother begged her to return home, she insisted on remaining with the children, unable to find anyone to replace her.

After two years on the front line in Spain she escaped with the last of the Republican refugees to France, where another tragedy was about to unfold. Half a million Spanish men, women and children had struggled across the Pyrenees into France, bombed and machine-gunned by planes, while enduring the hardships of the terrain and freezing winter weather.

Barbed wire

The French response was to section off areas of the Mediterranean beaches with barbed wire, and to enclose the refugees between the wire and the sea. They had to scoop depressions in the sand for shelter. There were no toilets, they had to use the sea. Drinking water was pumped up from underground but rapidly became polluted, bread was tossed over the wire leaving the refugees to fight for food. The French authorities hoped that their unwelcome guests would return to Spain – some did, but most refused knowing what fate might await them there.

Mary realised that, if these camps were to remain for any length of time, there was a need for schooling, for reading matter for children and adults, for the means to occupy their time and provide some kind of purpose to their existence. In July 1939 she was appointed by the AFSC for cultural work in the camps. She saw the need for books in Spanish, and went to Paris to buy books for the libraries she was soon to open. She became a familiar figure in the camps; thousands knew her as ‘Miss Mary’ and turned to her for solutions to their problems. The work with the refugees was supported by the great cellist Pablo Casals, who had also taken refuge in the region – the Spanish fascists said they would break his arms if they ever caught him.

But things were to become worse still. With the outbreak of world war in September of 1939, German refugees who had sought shelter in France were immediately rounded up as enemy aliens, many of them ending up in the already overcrowded camps on the Spanish border. The following year, with the German invasion of the Low Countries and finally France itself, another tide of refugees poured into the region.

Now everyone was short of food. Mary and her colleagues in Perpignan opened canteens, provided meals in schools throughout the region, while still continuing the work in the camps. When France

was occupied by the Germans in 1940, the British Quakers had to leave. Mary, as an Irish neutral, was able to stay on. She ran the Quaker relief operation from Perpignan for the next five years, working in the concentration camps, supplying much needed food and clothing, and struggling for the release of desperate internees.

She paid regular visits to the camps, both those on the beaches and the notorious camp at Rivesaltes near Perpignan, stretched out over a bleak open plain, over-run with rats and lice. Internees suffered from malnutrition, and the bitter wind of winter and the scorching heat of summer made living there intolerable. Mary was particularly concerned with the children in the camps, malnourished babies and pathetic orphans left behind when their parents were deported. (The parents were given the choice of leaving them behind, causing heart-rending scenes which Mary describes in her letters.) Many were rescued, sometimes smuggled out and taken to children’s colonies in remote chateaux in the Pyrenees.

When the deportations of Jews began from the south in 1942 the Quakers were often the only relief organisation permitted to provide food and water for the convoys of wagons. Even the children’s colonies were not safe; children had to be spirited away and hidden in more isolated places. Mary concealed some children in the boot of her car and drove them high into the Pyrenees.

When the Germans invaded the southern zone in 1942, Mary was arrested on suspicion of spying and aiding escapees – though it seems it was her aid to the Jews that really caused the trouble. She hid papers which would have incriminated her in her bathroom, but eventually she was arrested and taken to Toulouse and then imprisoned in the notorious Paris prison of Fresnes. Her mother and her colleagues agitated for her release, appealing to the Irish ambassador in Vichy, sending food parcels – cooked potatoes and well wrapped hard boiled eggs recommended – but Mary remained incarcerated for nearly six months before being released. Then she returned to work, as brisk and spruce as ever. ‘We all suffered inconveniences in those days, didn’t we?’ she said. Mary refused to accept the salary which had accrued while she was in prison, and likewise the Légion d’Honneur later offered by the French government.

Never talked

After the war she married a Frenchman, a local forestry engineer, and stayed in southern France for the rest of her life. She never talked about her experiences and it is only since her death that the extent of her work and sacrifice has begun to be appreciated. She died on 9 March 2002, aged 94.

A journalist wrote of her in 1947: ‘Tirelessly, with courage and simplicity, she brought to the most deprived the food and clothing which prolonged their lives and the hope of survival. Her confident, affectionate and smiling presence kept the memory of happiness and liberty alive.’ ▲

See: [www.rosemarybailey.com].

AICVAS



Above: Carlo Rosselli and Piero Jacchia (on right) at Monte Pelado, near Huesca.

Italians against fascism: the London connection

By Alfio Bernabei

The organised prelude to the Italian partisan resistance against Nazi-fascism that developed within Italy in 1943-44 actually started in Spain in 1936.

It began with the first contingent of Italians joining the International Brigades. It was made up of political exiles who had escaped from fascist persecution and taken refuge abroad, including Britain. These exiles started to arrive in Spain in August 1936, around 150 men, forming the 'Italian Column'. They entered into combat against the Nationalists for the first time later that month in Monte Pelado.

The Italian Column had been formed by three political refugees: Carlo Rosselli, Camillo Berneri and Mario Angeloni. The latter died in that first battle. Rosselli, the socialist leader, took command and launched the slogan 'Spain today, Italy tomorrow' in a rousing speech from Radio Barcelona that reverberates to the present day.

Rosselli was one of the founders of *Giustizia e Libertà*, the anti-fascist Paris-based organisation, and a well-known figure in London, with friends in the Labour Party and among Italian anti-fascists active in and around Soho. These were a motley group that had actively attacked fascism since its inception and had been formed notably by doctor Francesco Galasso, who had a surgery in Frith Street, Emidio Recchioni, who owned the King Bomba shop in Old Compton Street, Vittorio Taborelli, who ran a café in the same street, and Decio Anzani, who had a tailor's workshop near Oxford Street.

But it was Piero Jacchia, a teacher, poet and familiar presence at the British Library, who immediately responded to Rosselli's appeal and joined the Italian Column. We know of him because his letters found their way to the pages of *New Times and Ethiopian News*, the newspaper started in May 1936 by Sylvia Pankhurst and her Italian companion Silvio Corio, initially launched to condemn Mussolini's aggression against Ethiopia but soon to become an important source of information on the Spanish Civil War.

Jacchia's correspondence starts with a letter dated 7 September 1936 upon his arrival in Barcelona. 'We were called for instruction with the machine-gun, which arrived an hour later than the equipment. All is not yet completed, but it seems pretty sure that we are leaving today,' he wrote.

Jacchia describes the morale of his comrades as being excellent, with 'the greatest fellowship and solidarity among us'. He is eager to fight and feeling fit: 'Health fine, aged 20 years!' He is in fact a frail 51 years old, born in Trieste, where he had studied to become a teacher. A fervent fascist at first, he understood his mistake after Mussolini's March on Rome and turned against the regime so forcefully that he had to flee the country to avoid prison.

On 13 September Jacchia enters the combat zone near Huesca. 'In Grañén we had the first salute of the Fascist guns. They fired on the English ambulance, the one whose organisation was decided at the

Continued overleaf



Below: Jacchia's obituary on the front page of *Giustizia e Libertà* (right).



Left: Francesco Galasso (centre) in London with fellow Italian anti-fascists.

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meeting at the Friends House, which I attended. I spoke to the chief in Grañén to where they had retreated. They had some wounded. The place we are at is fired at every morning by the Fascist batteries.'

On 23 September, from the Huesca front, he explains: 'My functions are more or less those of an officer, but without any real title, but under an equalitarian regime the officer has also to do the menial work, digging and cleaning, the same as the others.' On 18 October he writes from a hospital bed in Barcelona, where he is recovering from a wound,

Jacchia remarks: 'The spirit of the International Brigades is simply splendid. We are perfectly and unshakably certain of final victory.'

disgusted at Britain's so-called neutral stance. 'Mr Eden's speech is hopeless. The entire British attitude most deplorable and dangerous. Your politics have never been worse nor less dignified but it is useless to get angry and to complain.'

Still convalescing in Barcelona on 31 October, Jacchia notes: 'Things are going much better now. One is beginning to see the effect of the help from Russia. We are again on the offensive and the spirit is very high.' He returns to the Huesca front and later joins the stronger Italian Garibaldi Battalion, commanded by Randolfo Pacciardi. On 15 December he is in Madrid and five days later at El Pardo, where he remarks: 'The spirit of the International Brigades is simply splendid. We are perfectly and unshakably certain of final victory.' A month later, on 14 January 1937, he is killed in Majadahonda.

The setback of that January is serious, but of course the struggle continues. The number of Italians with the International Brigades keeps rising. It is a kind of civil war between Italians that develops because Mussolini, who has given his support to Franco from day one of the coup, keeps sending men, reaching an estimated 50,000 in total. The dictator also keeps sending planes and submarines, letting the British know that not a single Blackshirt would withdraw before obtaining complete victory.

Recent studies put the number of Italians who joined the International Brigades at between 4,000 and 5,000—a relatively large number considering the particular dilemma they were facing. Unlike the vast majority of those taking part from the other estimated 52 nations, they had no prospect of returning home while fascism lasted. They also knew their decision to go to Spain would put their families and friends under scrutiny and at risk, with likely retaliations. Worse things could happen. To give an example to all, Mussolini had Rosselli assassinated by fascists with his brother, Nello, in France in 1937.

Indeed, after 1938, when the time came to leave Spain, many Italians who had joined the International Brigades remained abroad, including a contingent that arrived in London. They headed for Soho, where they found organised assistance: Galasso provided lodgings and lawyers, Vero Recchioni and Taborelli food, while Anzani helped with papers to enable them to move elsewhere.

Jacchia was never forgotten. His name made it into the 'Italy tomorrow' prefigured by Rosselli. On 30 April 1944 a partisan brigade was formed in Castel San Pietro Terme, near Bologna, in central Italy, and Jacchia's cousin, Mario, gave it a familiar name: '66 Brigata Garibaldi Piero Jacchia'. ▲

Alfio Bernabei is a London-based Italian journalist.

Many exiles joined the Maquis or British and Free French armies, while others ran escape routes for Allied servicemen

By Geoff Cowling

In January 1939 up to 500,000 Spanish Republican refugees fled across the Pyrenees into France in atrocious weather. Many managed to flee further and today they form the Catalan and Spanish diaspora in Mexico and Argentina. Those who stayed in France faced an uncertain future when the conflict in Spain spread to the rest of Europe and France itself was occupied by Hitler's troops—blitzkrieged by the Luftwaffe, whose pilots had honed their tactics against the Spanish Republic.

France established camps for refugees in Rivesaltes and Argelès. Conditions were appalling; 15,000 died. Once France was fully occupied, 2,000 Spanish Jews were taken, many by the Vichy police and handed to the Germans for extermination in Auschwitz. Other Spaniards were used as forced labour in German factories. An unknown number lie in British soil—they died building the extensive coastal fortifications still to be seen in the Channel Islands. Thousands more perished in Mauthausen concentration camp.

But not all were subjugated. Remnants of the Spanish Republican Army infiltrated into the French Pyrenees where they formed the backbone of the Maquis—referred to by Professor Paul Preston as the 'Spanish Republican Army on tour'. Armed by the British SOE, they operated as far north as the Dordogne. They were not always popular with French civilians. The Maquis would attack German troops, for example at the Col de Rille above Saint-Girons in August 1944, but the Germans took savage reprisals, devastating nearby Rimont and slaughtering its inhabitants. The Spanish Maquis led by Commander 'Robert' went on to capture the strategic Pyrenean town of Foix before handing it over to the French Resistance.

Others served further afield. Many were recruited into the French Foreign Legion in 1939. On the collapse of France some made it to the UK where they were incorporated into the Free French and British armies and went on to serve as commandos in Narvik, Crete and North Africa. A substantial proportion of the troops and tank crews of General Leclerc's 2nd Armoured Division which liberated Paris in August 1944 were Spanish Republicans. Their tanks bore the names Ebro, Teruel, Belchite, Madrid and Guadalajara. They went on to take part in the liberation of Strasbourg and the Battle for Germany itself. Few survived.





The Spanish Republicans who kept on fighting

Spanish Republicans contributed to the Allied victory in other ways. The work of double agent Joan Pujol García, known to the British as ‘Garbo’ and to the Germans as ‘Arabel’, was acknowledged by General Eisenhower as decisive to the success of the D-Day landings. Initially ‘handled’ by Tommy Harris of MI6, Garbo persuaded the Germans, via a network of 28 fictitious agents, that Normandy was merely a diversion, that the main Allied force would invade the Pas-de-Calais. As a result, the Germans kept substantial armour in Calais for two months after D-Day. For this key deception Garbo was later awarded the MBE by the Duke of Edinburgh in London’s Special Forces Club. The Germans had previously awarded him the Iron Cross.

Many others helped Allied servicemen to cross the Pyrenees from occupied France to Spain, where they made contact with the British

Left: Allied troops liberating Mauthausen concentration camp in May 1945 are greeted by Spanish Republicans.

Top: Spanish Republicans in the Free French Army being welcomed in Paris in 1944 following the expulsion of the Nazis from the city.

consulates in Bilbao and Barcelona. The Generalitat has marked the end of the symbolic Cami de la Libertat from Saint-Girons in the Ariège across the Pyrenees to Esterrí d’Aneu in Catalonia to commemorate the Pat O’Leary escape line.

Among the many who took the route over the eastern Pyrenees were the two surviving Cockleshell heroes, Blondie Hasler and Bill Sparks. Airey Neave, who escaped from Colditz and went on to be Margaret Thatcher’s right-hand man, was taken over the Pyrenees and onto the British consulate in Barcelona by the Catalan escape network led by Francisco Poznán Vidal. Executed by the Germans in August 1944, Poznán received a posthumous commendation from King George VI in 1948 – not bad for a Republican anarchist.

Similar commemorative work has been done in the Basque Country to mark the Comete Line, which often ended at the seamen’s mission in San Sebastián and was run over the Pyrenees by the redoubtable Florentino Giocoechea, also decorated by George VI. On arrival, evaders were usually handed over to the British consul in Bilbao and passed on to the embassy in Madrid and on to Gibraltar. The escape lines across the Pyrenees were financed by MI9 and coordinated by Donald Darling, operating variously from Madrid, Barcelona, Lisbon and Gibraltar.

While HM Consul General in Barcelona I shall never forget being challenged at a seminar by a student demanding to know: ‘Why did the Allies, who professed to rid Europe from fascism, stop their tanks in the Pyrenees in 1945 and allowed Spain to fester under Franco’s dictatorship for a further 30 years?’

It was an uncomfortable question – and the answer was that Spain was neutral and stayed out of the Second World War. But we should never forget that many unknown Spaniards played their individual part to help the Allied effort and paid the ultimate price – for that we should be grateful. ▲

Geoff Cowling is an exIBMT Trustee and British Consul General in Barcelona from 2002-2005.

Snapshot of the Hungarian volunteers

While living in Hungary in the 1990s, IBMT member JOHN CUNNINGHAM got to know Iván Harsányi, secretary of the Hungarian Spanish Civil War veterans' association. On 3 March 1995 he sat down and interviewed Iván in Budapest and made notes of their conversation. The notes were stowed away and eventually forgotten about – until last year when John rediscovered them inside a book. This is what they reveal...

Nine hundred and sixty-five Hungarians fought in Spain on the Republican side. This figure has been computed from Comintern (Communist International) sources, the French Intelligence Service and from the veterans' own compilation of statistics.

Interestingly only 130-150 claimed Hungary as their home. The majority of the Hungarian volunteers came from the various émigré communities around the world. Exact figures are not available but it is estimated that 33 per cent lived in France at the time they enlisted. A number of these were miners, as were a group from Belgium. The US and Canada were also home to a number of volunteers.

In 1958 the Hungarian Partisan Alliance conducted a survey of International Brigade volunteers with the following results:

- *Political affiliation*
 Communist Party: 55 per cent
 Non-affiliated: 39 per cent
 Social Democrats: 5 per cent
 Other parties: 1 per cent
- *Class make-up*
 Workers: 57 per cent
 Intellectuals: 17 per cent
 Peasants: 15 per cent
- *Administrative ('white collar') workers: 11 per cent*
- *Age profile*
 50+: 2 per cent
 40-50: 10 per cent
 30-40: 37 per cent
 25-30: 27 per cent
 20-25: 20 per cent
 20 (and below): 4 per cent

Much of this diaspora was once called the 'left emigration' caused by the collapse of the Workers' Council Revolution in 1919 and the subsequent persecution of leftists by successive right-wing governments. The deterioration in the economic situation, which hit Hungary very badly, only contributed to this migration.

In Hungary, left social democrats and the communist youth organised an aid movement to help the Spanish Republic and in the first months of its operation this was legal. The Hungarian government later took a harder line, apparently because the Hungarian newspaper *Népszava* (People's Voice) published two congratulatory telegrams on the formation of the Caballero government in 1936.

The paper also published interviews with Spanish communists, social democrats and Catalan nationalists (but not with the POUM or the anarchists). This must have displeased the authorities as they threatened to close the paper down. *Népszava* was a paper generally associated with the social democrats. The Hungarian Communist Party was outlawed and could only operate clandestinely.

It is estimated that more than 100 Hungarians fought on the Franco side; some were pilots and technical experts. The Hungarian

government, officially, played no role in this. Many of them received a pension from Franco's Spanish government and some stayed in Spain.

A small group of Hungarians fought in the Spanish Republican Army.

Initially there was no specifically Hungarian unit until the formation of the Mátyás Rákosi Battalion in 1937. In autumn 1957 the remaining Hungarian veterans dropped the name.

In all, 260 Hungarians died in Spain, many of these at the Battle of Huesca. General Zalka, the highly respected commander of the battalion (pseudonym Lukács, in some literature Lukácz), died at Huesca. His remains were buried in an unmarked grave near Barcelona and returned to Hungary in 1970 on the initiative of his family – the Hungarian government had little or no contact with the Franco regime.

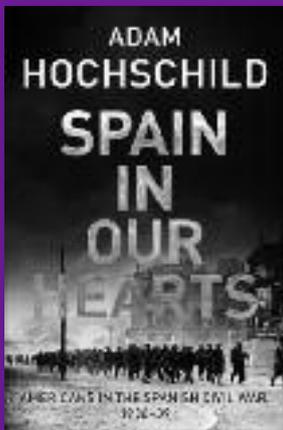
After the civil war was over many of the remaining Hungarians were interned in France and after the fall of France in the Second World War the Vichy government put them in prison camps; some were sent to Germany and North Africa as forced labour. Some of the latter escaped and joined the French Foreign Legion or were liberated by the British and went on to fight in the British Army.

After the war all the veterans tried to get back to Hungary but those who had spent time in the West were under suspicion and 30-35 were imprisoned, while László Rajk and others were executed.

On the 50th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War in 1986, 156 veterans were still alive. ▲



STANDING ON GUARD: Memorial (right) to the International Brigades in Budapest's Memento Park, a space dedicated to monuments and plaques from Hungary's communist period from 1949 to 1989.



Americans at war

RICHARD BAXELL reviews a new book that elegantly retells the story of how the Spanish Civil War agonised and mobilised a generation in the US and beyond.

Above: Members of the infantry company of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion in Spain in 1937. They include Jack Hedley (back row, second from right), from Liverpool, and Frank Tierney (second from left), from Belfast.

'Spain in Our Hearts: Americans in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939' by Adam Hochschild (London: Macmillan, 2016) £25 (hardback); £15.99 (ebook)

It is now 80 years since the failed military coup which marked the beginning of the civil war in Spain. During the bitter conflict some half a million Spaniards were killed, a sombre warning of the greater slaughter to follow. For while the civil war was at its heart a Spanish tragedy, the internationalism of the war conferred on it a lasting significance beyond the Iberian peninsula.

Crucial military support from Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany for Franco's *Nacionales* was countered – to some degree – by that from Stalin's Russia for the Republic. Meanwhile, the Western democracies did their utmost to 'keep out of it', making ineffectual efforts to encourage other regimes to do the same. The 'non-intervention agreement' (as it was called) was therefore not akin to neutrality and decisively helped the *Nacionales*, later acknowledged by the Francoist minister Pedro de Sáinz

The admission... that Franco could not have won the war without US trucks and US oil credits reveals just how significant this contribution really was.

Rodríguez. Britain may have been the main guilty party, but other Western democracies also bear culpability for the Republic's defeat, including the United States. As a new book by the award-winning author Adam Hochschild reminds us, President Franklin D Roosevelt came to much the same conclusion in January 1939, admitting to a cabinet meeting that the embargo on arms for the Spanish Republic had been a 'grave mistake'.

Hochschild's 'Spain in Our Hearts' is subtitled 'Americans in the Spanish Civil War', though the book is not, in fact, about the 2,800 American volunteers in the International Brigades. Instead, his account is told through the experiences of a select number of individuals (not all of whom are American) within the cataclysmic war in Spain. And they are select, for Hochschild's characters are all highly-educated, middle-class writers. The notion of a poets' (or writers') war is clearly still attractive to writers and publishers, which neither time nor the undoubted presence of an overwhelming proportion of manual workers among the volunteers seems to have dispelled.

Admittedly, the author has chosen his stellar cast shrewdly, including the two most famous writers of the civil war (in English at least), Ernest Hemingway and George Orwell. While Hochschild seems to have little new to say about the latter, his account of Hemingway's participation in a guerrilla raid behind enemy lines, which clearly inspired Robert Jordan's mission in 'For Whom the Bell Tolls', may come as a revelation to some readers. Jordan's real-life counterpart, the professor of economics and Abraham Lincoln Battalion commander Robert Hale Merriman, also features, as does society debutante and reporter Virginia Cowles and journalist and International Brigader Louis Fischer.

Accounts of the war's impact on the characters' personal relationships
Continued overleaf

Americans at war

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are a recurring theme; Hemingway and Martha Gellhorn obviously, but also Bob Merriman and his wife Marion, POUM supporters Lois and Charles Orr and the cross-Atlantic war romance between American nurse Toby Jency and English sculptor and International Brigader Jason 'Pat' Gurney, who had suffered a nervous breakdown after the appalling carnage of the Jarama battle of 12-14 February 1937.

Gurney's account of the war, like Hemingway's and Orwell's, has been frequently cited and retold and it's difficult to find much within Hochschild's account that is strikingly original. Certainly the author's debt to earlier studies, particularly those of Paul Preston and Peter Carroll (which he generously acknowledges) is clear. So, why then, should this new book be of interest? Principally, it is because of the sheer quality of the writing and story-telling. 'Spain in Our Hearts' is a rewarding and enjoyable read, for the elegant prose is littered with some of the most telling anecdotes from the literature.

It is also a pretty fair and balanced account. The author is fortunately too sophisticated to fall for the simplistic, binary notion of a war between two equally repugnant totalitarian philosophies, in which Spain is merely a passive bystander.

Nor does he make the mistake of seeing Republican Spain as a satellite state of the Soviet Union, though not denying that the supplies of military materiel and the organisation of the International Brigades gave Stalin great influence. This 'devil's pact' was really the only option left to the Republic, once the Western democracies had refused to come to Spain's aid.

Hochschild will, no doubt, come into some criticism for justifying what has become seen as 'the communist line' regarding the argument over 'war or revolution first' that Orwell discusses in detail in 'Homage to Catalonia'. Yet it is often forgotten that after the war Orwell himself came to the reluctant conclusion that the military necessities of the war should take precedence, though he nevertheless remained furious about the Communist Party's use of the argument as a smokescreen for the suppression of other parties of the left. Like Orwell, Hochschild clearly has great sympathy for the POUMistas and anarchists, yet he is not dewy-eyed, dryly observing that 'the ideal of "from each according to his abilities, to each according to their needs", however splendid in theory, proved hard to enforce, especially when many workers felt that what they needed was more time off'.

Balanced, of course, is not the same as neutral and Hochschild's Republican sympathies are plain to see (and why not?). Perhaps the clearest example is his illuminating account of the role of Torkild Rieber, the pro-Nazi CEO of the American oil company Texaco, in supplying millions of gallons of oil to Franco on credit. To this can be added the 12,000 trucks received by Franco from General Motors, Studebaker and Ford. As Hochschild points out, the admission by the undersecretary of the Spanish foreign ministry that Franco could not have won the war without US trucks and US oil credits reveals just how significant this contribution really was to the Nationalists' cause.

Hochschild's 'Spain in Our Hearts' is much more than just another account of Orwell and Hemingway in Spain. It offers the reader a window into the personal, emotionally searing experiences of those who decided to make the Spanish cause their own. As Albert Camus, from whom the book's title is drawn, wrote just after the end of the war, 'it was in Spain that [my generation] learned that one can be right and yet be beaten'. Hochschild's beautifully crafted book explains why, for them, the Spanish drama was and remained a personal tragedy. ▲

Historian Richard Baxell is one of the two main speakers at this year's IBMT Len Crome Memorial Conference on 18 March (see inside front cover). This review first appeared in the December 2016 issue of *The Volunteer*.



Above: Guernica following its destruction by German and Italian bombers during Franco's offensive against the Basque Country in the spring of 1937.



Left: Jesús Iguarán Aramburu, one of the *niños vascos* (Basque children), who was 'adopted' by the Simmons family while in Britain.

Below: With nearly 4,000 refugee children on board, the *Habana* prepares to leave Bilbao for Southampton in May 1937.



Right: Jessie Simmons (née Branch) with a group of Basque refugee children at an unknown location in 1937.



As we approach the 80th anniversary of the bombing of Guernica on 26 April 1937, **JOHN SIMMONS** explains how his family's involvement with the Basque refugee children who came to Britain inspired him to write a novel with the Spanish Civil War as its backdrop.

A novel inspired by my parents' involvement in the aftermath of the bombing of Guernica



Time marches on even if the members of the International Brigades no longer can. We're losing those with personal memories of living at that time, so it makes anniversaries even more important. Eightieth anniversaries come at us fast: the start of the Spanish Civil War last July, the bombing of Guernica just ahead. And, less well-known but important to me and my family, the 80th anniversary of the arrival of the *Habana* in May 1937, the ship carrying nearly

4,000 children from Bilbao in the Basque region to a refugee camp at Stoneham, near Southampton.

All this has been brought vividly to life for me by the research and writing of a novel called 'Spanish Crossings'. I wrote it by drawing on aspects of my family history. But of course it is fiction, and increasingly we need to keep stories of that time alive by use of the imagination, not just the naturally diminishing memories of those who were there.

'Spanish Crossings' is the story of a young woman, Lorna Starling, who is making her way in London in 1937 at the novel's opening. The law firm where she works in an administrative role supports trade union and left-wing causes, and Lorna is assigned to work with the committee that takes responsibility for the child refugees. She meets Harry James, an International Brigader who has returned briefly from the war. They embark on an affair before Harry has to return to the war. He leaves a letter with an eye-witness account of Guernica.

Lorna waits anxiously for news until the worst news arrives – Harry has been killed in action in Spain. Lorna rededicates herself to the cause of the Basque children, 'adopting' one of them, Pepe. The rest of the novel – its second part in 1943, third part in 1947 – keeps the situation in Spain pivotal to the narrative. The novel's climax is at the French border

town of Hendaye that played a significant role in events during the war.

Digging deeper into my own family history for the novel's background, I discovered what I had always been too vaguely aware of. My parents, Jessie and Frank Simmons, had been fighters against fascism in 1930s Britain – present at Cable Street, campaigning for the Spanish Republican cause and 'adopting' a boy called Jesús, whose existence I knew of only through photographs in an old family album; because, unfortunately, my mum and dad died in the 1960s and, as a teenager then, I had failed to ask all the questions I wanted answered now.

I did eventually track down more details of the Spanish boy Jesús, thanks to the Basque Children of '37 Association UK. They gave me his full name – Jesús Iguarán Aramburu – and the date of his return to Bilbao in January 1938. There the trail ended – I presume, after all these years, that he is now dead.

In my family we still have a precious memento of that time – a child's desk made by Jesús's father to say thank you to my mum and dad.

The desk was used by my brother, then by me when Dave died, then by my son and now by my grandchildren.

The desk is a constant reminder to my family of the extraordinary dedication of ordinary people at that time to resist fascism. The novel 'Spanish Crossings' now provides another way of keeping those memories alive. It comes at a time when we need to be more aware than ever of the historical lessons that should be drawn from that turbulent period. ▲

'Spanish Crossings' (£12.99) is available to order from the Urbane website (<http://urbanepublications.com/books/spanish-crossings>) and bookshops. It will be published in April, the 80th anniversary of the bombing of Guernica.

Revision guide's textbook case of bad history

School textbook publisher Hodder Education has agreed to look again at the description of the Spanish Civil War given in one of its popular GCSE revision guides.

This follows a complaint by the IBMT, which said a passage on the war in Spain in 'OCR GCSE Modern World History', by Ben Walsh, was 'a throw-back to the days of the Franco dictatorship and the Cold War, when the Franco regime cynically misrepresented the civil war as a "crusade against communism" in order both to find favour with the Western democracies and to distance itself from its fascist past'.

In an exchange of emails in September last year, Jim Belben, a consultant publisher with Hodder Education, told the IBMT that the feedback received was 'very helpful'.

He added: 'We endeavour to ensure our books are accurate and that they remain in touch with developments in scholarship. I have shared



your email with the author and we are going to do all we can to make sure that the points you make are reflected in future editions.'

Manchester-based member Stuart Walsh alerted the IBMT to the content of the book, which was published in 2009, saying: 'It seems extraordinary that such a misleading statement has been made.'

In his protest to Hodder Education, IBMT Secretary Jim Jump challenged the notion that a war had 'broken out' and

that it had been between communists and Franco. 'There was a military rebellion against Spain's elected government,' he wrote. 'It was put down in most big cities by forces loyal to the government aided by hastily assembled militias attached to trade unions and left-wing political parties. The Spanish Communist Party was a very small party at the time. Its influence did grow during the civil war because of its commitment to the war effort and the help given to the Republic by the Soviet Union. But at no stage was the party the dominant force in the government of the Spanish Republic, whose last prime minister was a socialist, Juan Negrín.'

Equally, Jump's letter added, it was misleading to say that Hitler saw the rebellion as an opportunity to fight communism. Hitler had decided to give military assistance to the rebels from the outset of their

Spanish Civil War was a conflict between 'communists and right wing rebels'

Under the heading 'Spanish Civil War', the revision textbook 'OCR GCSE Modern World History' states: 'In 1936 a civil war broke out in Spain between Communists, who were supporters of the Republican government, and right wing rebels under General Franco. Hitler saw this as an opportunity to fight against communism and at the same time to try out his new armed forces. In 1937, as the League of Nations looked on helplessly, German aircraft made devastating bombing raids on civilian populations in various Spanish cities. The destruction of Guernica was terrible. The world looked on in horror at the suffering that modern weapons could cause.'

attempted coup – at a time when the Soviet Union did not even have an embassy in Spain and before the Spanish Communist Party emerged as a major political force. Indeed, Stalin did not agree to sell arms to the Republic until after Hitler and Mussolini had intervened in the conflict.

As for Hitler's real motives, Jump's letter went on: 'On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the fascist dictators understood that, with Franco's victory, another fascist state on the borders of France would weaken France and the Western powers.'

Prisoner

Meanwhile, the League of Nations did not 'look on helplessly', but was instead a prisoner of the policy of 'non-intervention' being pursued by Britain and France – which meant that the Spanish government could not purchase arms to defend itself.

'Non-intervention', the IBMT explained, was the practical implementation of the wider British policy of appeasement towards the fascist powers, a policy informed by a desire to stay out of another European war combined with covert sympathies for the fascist dictators and their hostility towards the Soviet Union. ▲

Send the IBMT any examples you find of questionable accounts of the Spanish Civil War in school textbooks.

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3 November 2016

Make sure you see 'Dorn Devil' Ride to Jarama!

The IBMT's newsletter, 'Dorn Devil', is a free, weekly, online newsletter. It is the only newsletter of its kind, covering the history of the International Brigades and the Spanish Civil War. It is available in both English and Spanish.

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11 October 2016

Death of last British volunteer

After 80 years, the last surviving British volunteer in the International Brigade, died on 10 October 2016 in London, aged 94. He was a very old, frail man, but he was still a very brave man. He was the last of a breed, the last of the British volunteers who fought in the Spanish Civil War.

The IBMT is pleased to announce that the last surviving British volunteer in the International Brigade, died on 10 October 2016 in London, aged 94. He was a very old, frail man, but he was still a very brave man. He was the last of a breed, the last of the British volunteers who fought in the Spanish Civil War.

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10 September 2016

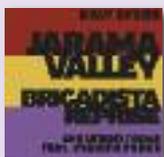
Felicia Brown: artist and fighter

Felicia Brown was an artist and a fighter. She was a member of the International Brigades and fought in the Spanish Civil War. She was a very brave woman and a very talented artist. She was a member of the International Brigades and fought in the Spanish Civil War.

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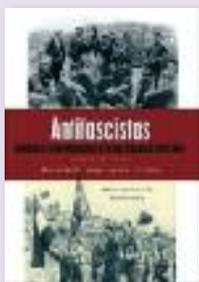
IBMT merchandise

Proceeds help fund the commemorative, educational and publicity work of the trust



CD single

Exclusively for the IBMT, Billy Bragg performs 'Jarama Valley' and Maxine Peake delivers Dolores Ibárruri's (La Pasionaria's) emotional farewell speech to the International Brigades with a dub backing from **The Urban Roots**.
£5 plus £1.99 p&p



Antifascistas

British and Irish Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War
The story of the volunteers in words and pictures, by Richard Baxell, Angela Jackson and Jim Jump (paperback).
£15 plus £2.99 p&p



Poems from Spain

Collection of poems written by British and Irish International Brigaders. Edited by Jim Jump (paperback).
£10 plus £2.99 p&p



Tom Mann Centuria t-shirt

Made for the IBMT by t-shirt specialists Philosophy Football from ethically sourced cotton. Tom Mann Centuria banner on front. 'International Brigade Memorial Trust' on sleeve. Available in S, M, L, XL, XXL and fitted women's size (see next t-shirt for size details).
£13 plus £3.99 p&p



British Battalion t-shirt

In red or grey and made for the IBMT by t-shirt specialists Philosophy Football from ethically sourced cotton. British Battalion banner on front and 'International Brigade Memorial Trust' on sleeve. Available in:
S (36inch/90cms chest)
M (40inch/100cms)
L (44inch/110cms)
XL (48inch/120cms)
XXL (52inch/130cms)
Fitted women's (34-36inch/70-90cms).
£15 plus £3.99 p&p



15th International Brigade t-shirt

In autumn 1937 each of the International Brigades was presented with a flag at the Calderón Theatre in Madrid in a ceremony to celebrate the first anniversary of the formation of the International Brigades. This is a depiction of the flag of the mainly English-speaking 15th International Brigade, which included British, Irish, American, Canadian and Commonwealth volunteers. Produced by Philosophy Football from ethically sourced black cotton for the IBMT. 'International Brigade Memorial Trust' on sleeve. Available in:
S (36inch/90cms chest)
M (40inch/100cms)
L (44inch/110cms)
XL (48inch/120cms)
XXL (52inch/130cms)
Fitted women's (34-36inch/70-90cms).
£15 plus £4.99 p&p



Connolly Column t-shirt

Black cotton t-shirt with design (pictured) in Spanish Republican colours across chest commemorating the volunteers from Ireland. Available in S, M, L, XL.
£10 plus £3.99 p&p



Brigadista ale t-shirt

Advertises the commemorative ale promoting the IBMT for the 80th anniversary of the formation of the International Brigades. Ethically sourced bottle green (pictured) or black cotton shirt produced by Hope Not Hate exclusively for the IBMT. 'International Brigade Memorial Trust' and International Brigade logo on sleeve. Please state colour preference when ordering. Available in:
S (36inch/90cms chest)
M (40inch/100cms)
L (44inch/110cms)
XL (48inch/120cms)
XXL (52inch/130cms)
£15 plus £4.99 p&p



Replica flag

Reproduction of the British Battalion No.1 Company flag named after Labour Party leader Clement Attlee. 150cms x 87cms. Red background with dark gold lettering. Ideal for carrying on marches or simply putting on the wall.
£10 plus £4 p&p



Volunteers for Liberty plate

Highly decorative commemorative plate made in Staffordshire by Heraldic Pottery exclusively for the IBMT. Fine bone china. 10 7/8 inch (265mm) diameter. Re-issue of the much sought after 50th anniversary plate produced by International Brigade veteran Lou Kenton. Includes mount for wall display.
£25 plus £6.99 p&p



IBMT badge

Solid metal badge with International Brigade medal in centre and 'International Brigade Memorial Trust' around the edge.
£3 plus £2.99 p&p



No Pasarán! bag

Ethically sourced jute bag (30cms square, 18cms across). One side printed, other blank. Robust bag, useful for any shopping trip and a great way to show support for anti-fascism and the IBMT.
£4.99 plus £2.99 p&p



Clenched fist sculpture

Life-sized sculpture in specially treated concrete. Based on the clenched fist created by sculptor Betty Rae at the top of the pole for the original British Battalion banner. 23cms high. The clenched fist was the iconic salute of the Popular Front and is still used by anti-fascists around the world.
£29.99 plus £7.99 p&p



IBMT greetings card

Measuring approximately 15cm x 10cm, the IBMT greetings card features a drawing by Rafael Alberti dedicated to the International Brigades in 1996. Blank inside.
£5 for pack of 6 (including envelopes) plus £1.99 p&p

Send orders, including your name and address, a size and colour where appropriate, and a cheque payable to the IBMT to: IBMT Merchandise, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DU.

For multiple orders in the UK up to a value of £30 (excluding p&p) calculate total p&p by taking the highest p&p among items ordered, halving the p&p of the remaining items and adding them together. There is no p&p on orders for goods worth more than £30.

For orders outside the UK or to pay by credit card or PayPal, go to our website: [www.international-brigades.org.uk/merchandise.php] where there are also other items listed for sale.

Townsend Productions in association with IBMT, Harrogate Theatre, The Place Bedford and Unite the Union.

DARE DEVIL RIDES TO JARAMA

by Neil Gore

Townsend Productions present a fascinating and moving production about the daring Speedway star and Wall of Death motorcycle rider Clem 'Dare Devil' Beckett who joined the International brigade to fight with the Spanish people to defend freedom and democracy against Franco's rising fascist armies.

His extraordinary story is told on the 80th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War, the formation of the International Brigade and the Battle of Jarama.

Music by John Kirkpatrick

TOUR DATES

January

26 The Carriage Works, Leeds (Box office: 0113 3760318
<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/carriageworks/Pages/Whats-on.aspx>)

27 Working Class Movement Library (Box office: 07949635910)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dare-devil-rides-to-jarama-a-new-play-by-neil-gore-tickets-29118978649>)

28 Working Class Movement Library (Box office: 07949635910)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dare-devil-rides-to-jarama-a-new-play-by-neil-gore-tickets-29119910436>)

February

1 Lighthouse, Poole (Box office: 01202 280000)

3 Doug's Shed, Buckerell, Devon (Box Office: 07966 439208)

4 Burton Bradstock Village Hall, (Box Office: 01308 897421)

5 Cadeleigh Parish Hall, Devon (Box office: 01884 855311)

7 The Swan Theatre, Worcester (Box office: 01905 611 427)

9 Diss Corn Hall On Tour (Box office: 01379 652241)

10 Pound Arts (Box office: 01249 701628/712618)

12 -15 Belfast

15 Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich (Box office: 01473 295900)

16 Old Fire Station, Oxford (Box office: 01865 263990)

17 Cramphorn Theatre, Chelmsford (Box office: 01245 606505)

20 -21 London TBC

22 Blackwood Miners (Box office: 01495 227206)

23 Kings Community Centre, Wolverton (Box Office: 07949635910)

24 The Hen and Chicken, Bristol (Box office: 01749 870078)

25 Marine Theatre, Lyme Regis (Box Office: 01297 442138)

March

1 Wortley Hall, Sheffield (Box office: 07974531211
PoliticalSecretary@wortleyhall.org.uk)

2 Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough (Box Office: 01723 370541)

3 The Maltings Theatre, Berwick-On-Tweed (Box office: 01289 330 999)

4 Blantyre Miners' Welfare, South Lanarkshire (Box office: 01698 454690)

5 Eden Court, Inverness (Box office: 01463 2334234)

8. Durham Miners Gala (Box office: TBC)

9. The Freedom Centre, Hull (Box office: 01482 710100)

12. MAC, Birmingham (Tel: 0121 446 3232)

16. The Met, Bury (Box office: 0161 761 2216)

17. Theatre Colwyn (Box Office: 01492 872000)

26. The Players Theatre, Thame (Box Office: Tel: 01844 217228)



Reviews

'The play does a remarkable job in explaining why so many men and women from Britain and Ireland chose to leave their homes, families and friends to fight in a foreign civil war.'

by Richard Baxell (Historian, lecturer, author)

'This new play about his life and times, by the celebrated folk theatre company, is brilliantly conceived and superbly performed - a huge, exhilarating rush of energy, with songs and shadow puppets!'

by Helen Graham (H-Spain's Advisory Board / Royal Holloway, University of London)

★★★★★ 'Dare Devil Rides to Jarama is quite simply the best political theatre produced for a long, long time.' MORNING STAR

★★★★★ 'Dare Devil Rides To Jarama is outstanding entertainment' LONDON THEATRE1

★★★★ 'An ingenious production by Louise Townsend' REVIEWS HUB

★★★★ 'Another excellent two hander from Townsend Productions' THE GOOD REVIEW

★★★★ 'Informative and inspiring.' Loved it.' LONDON CITY NIGHTS

★★★★ 'Dare Devil Rides to Jarama wonderful piece of theatre!' THEATRE REVIEWS

www.townsendproductions.org.uk
@townsendprod Tel: 07949635910