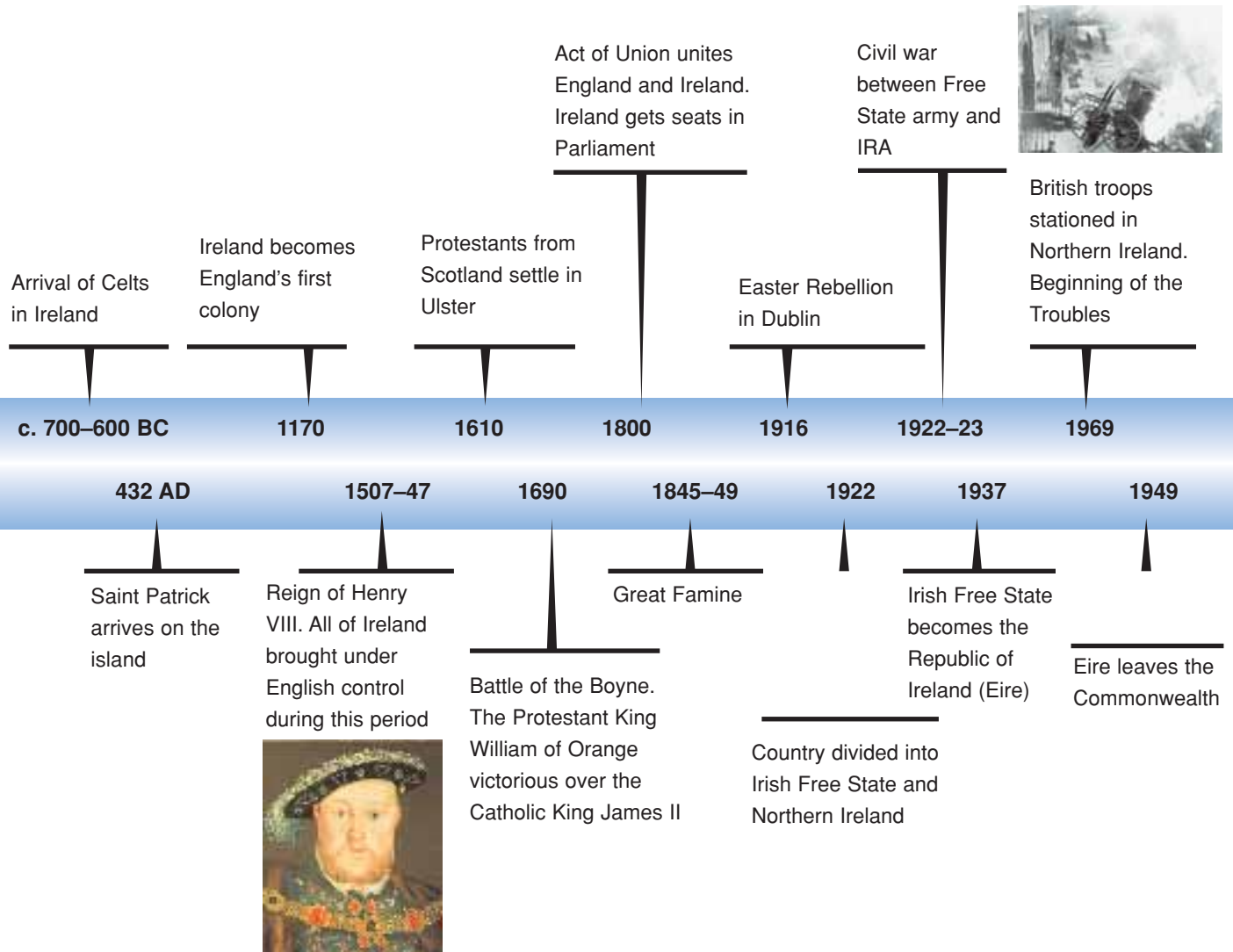


Irish Timeline

The struggle for civil rights in Northern Ireland has also been one of the dominant movements of the 20th century. Unfortunately, all too often the road to freedom has been a bloody affair with countless innocent victims on both sides of the conflict. In July of 2005, however, new hope for lasting peace was kindled when the IRA agreed to put an end to all violence. If this is achieved, this will put an end to more than thirty years of armed confrontation in the region. What are the reasons for these confrontations?

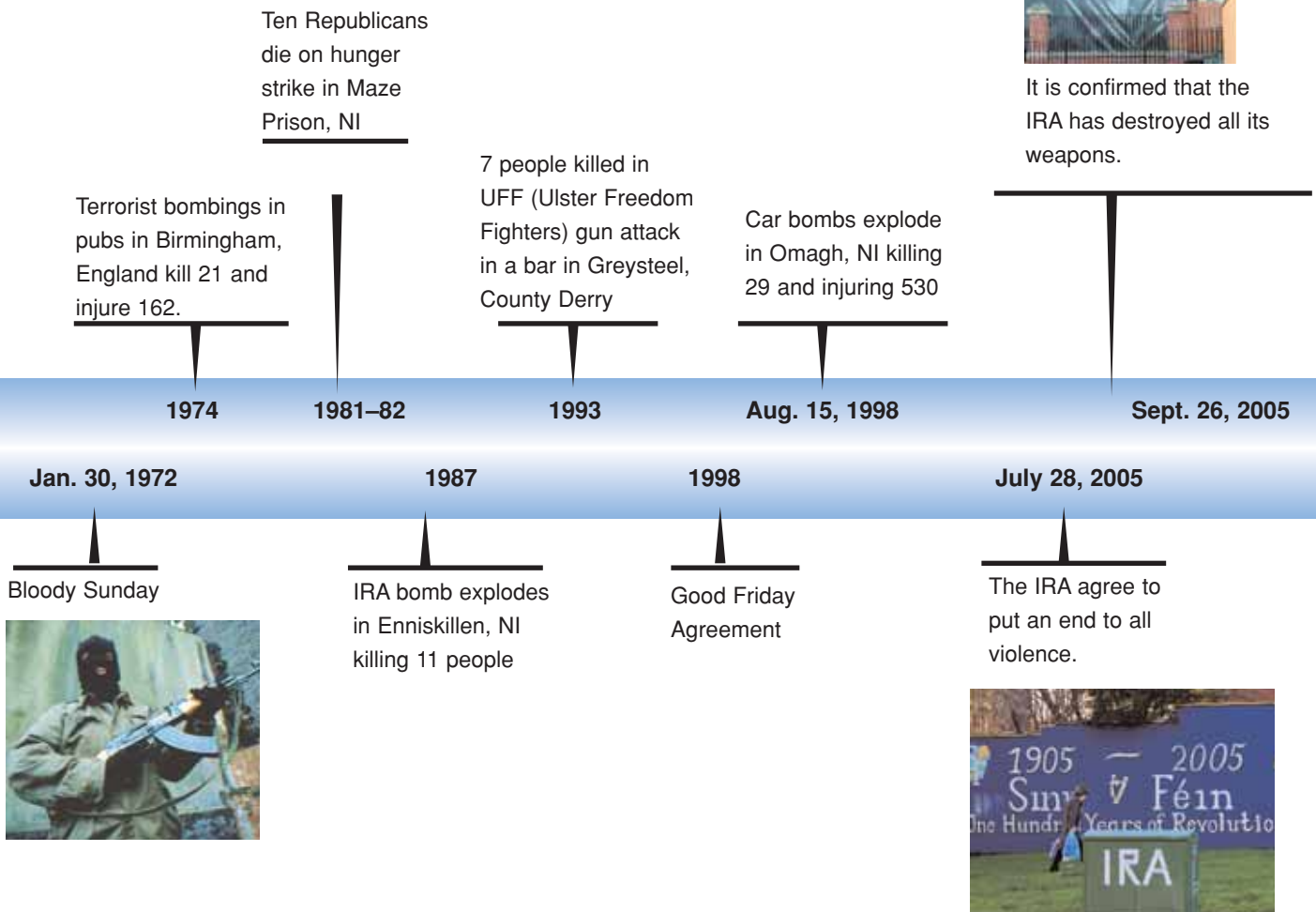
kindled /'kɪndlɪ/ tent



The conflict in Northern Ireland has historical roots as a quick glance at the timeline of Irish history will show you. Even today Northern Ireland remains a country divided along religious lines with Catholics living in their own areas of town and Protestants living in others. Catholics still constitute a minority in Northern Ireland, although the Catholic population is growing at a faster rate than the Protestant majority. For more information on the conflict in Northern Ireland, consult the *Passage* website (passage.cappelen.no) and read the text *FAQs about Northern Ireland*.



It is confirmed that the IRA has destroyed all its weapons.





This IS a Rebel Song

I love you my hard English man
Your rage is like a fist in my womb
Can't you forgive what you think I've done
And love me, I'm your woman

And I desire you my hard English man
And there is no more natural thing
So why should I not get loving
Don't be cold English man

How come you've never said you love me
In all the time you've known me
How come you never say you're sorry
And I do

Ah, please talk to me English man
What good will shutting me out get done
Meanwhile crazies are killing our sons
Oh listen, English man

I've honoured you, hard English man
Now I am calling your heart to my own
Ooh, let glorious love be done
Be truthful, English man

How come you've never said you love me
In all the time you've known me
How come you never say you're sorry
And I do
I do

Sinéad O'Connor

POINTS OF DEPARTURE

When U2 sing *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, Bono always introduces it by saying, "This is NOT a rebel song!" to make it clear that it wasn't a call for armed resistance. In the following song, which is often written *This IS a Rebel Song*, Sinéad O'Connor seems to be making a direct reference to this in her title – and calling attention to the political content of her song.

rage raseri
fist knyttneve
womb /wu:m/ livmor, skjød / livmor, fang



ACTIVITIES

1 Talk about it

- a If we are meant to consider the political content of this song, what do you think the song is really about?
- b In what other way can the song be interpreted if we just consider the song on a surface level?
- c How is the English man portrayed? What qualities does he represent?
- d How is the woman portrayed? What qualities does she represent?
- e How is England's role in Ireland portrayed?
- f Who do you think the woman is referring to when she says "crazies are killing our sons"?
- g What is the woman in the song asking for? What might be some of the things the English man could say he's sorry for?
- h What is the effect of the double level of meaning in this song?
- i Is this a love song in your opinion? Why or why not?

In June 1997, Prime Minister Tony Blair addressed the failure of the British to help the Irish people during the Great Famine of the 1840s by issuing a statement which was read by the Irish actor Gabriel Byrne in front of 15,000 people at the Great Irish Famine Event in Millstreet, Co Cork. Blair stated, "Those who governed in London at the time failed their people through standing by while a crop failure turned into a massive human tragedy. That 1 million people should have died in what was then part of the richest and most powerful nation in the world is something that still causes pain as we reflect on it today."

How do you react to this statement? Is it "too little, too late" in your opinion or is it never too late to try to make amends?

2 Writing

Imagine that you have a Northern Irish pen-pal with whom you have corresponded the past year. Although you have never touched upon political issues in your correspondence, you feel compelled to ask questions and express your opinions about what you know about the conflict in Northern Ireland after listening to this song. Using the song as a point of departure, write a letter to your friend. Address your letter to Séan O'Neil.

3 Research

In groups, find information about the topics below. You can make wall posters where you present your findings or you can give a talk to the rest of the class. Go to the *Passage Website*: passage.cappelen.no

The geography of Northern Ireland: cities, countryside, nature / scenery
St. Patrick
Battle of the Boyne
The Orange Order
The Potato Famine
Easter of 1916
Michael Collins
Eamon de Valera
The Civil War
Bloody Sunday
Bobby Sands
The Good Friday Peace agreement
The current situation in Northern Ireland

"The Hunger Strike". The painting depicts one of the 1981 Republican hunger strikers, Raymond McCartney and is based on a photograph of him smuggled out of the Maze Prison (Belfast) during the hunger strike in which ten men died. The Bogside artists mural project, 2004.

POINTS OF DEPARTURE

What do you think goes through the mind of a sniper as he lies still on a roof top with his weapon ready to shoot? Is he filled with hatred or fear or is this just a job like everything else?

In 1922, Ireland gained freedom from Britain. This did not apply to the northern area called Ulster, which was still to be part of the United Kingdom. Many Irish did not accept this treaty and the country was thrown into a civil war between those who accepted the deal with Britain (Irish Free Staters) and those who did not (Republicans). This story is set in Ireland's capital Dublin. The conflict is very much alive in Northern Ireland today, more than 80 years later.

sniper snikskytter/snikskyttar
field-glasses (felt)kikkert
sacrifice /'sækrɪfajs/ offer
parapet brystning
chimney skorstein
rear /rɪə(r)/ bakside, langt bak
level with på høyde med / på høgd med
outline omriss, kontur
armoured pansret/pansra
advance bevege seg framover / flytte seg framover

The Sniper

by Liam O'Flaherty

The long June evening faded into night. Dublin lay in darkness; only the faint light of a pale moon shone through thin clouds, over the streets and the dark waters of the River Liffey. Around the Four Courts, where fighting was constant, the heavy guns roared. Here and there, through the city, machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, like dogs barking on lonely farms. Irishmen were fighting Irishmen: civil war.

On a roof-top near O'Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper lay watching. Beside him lay his rifle and over his shoulders hung a pair of field-glasses. His face was the face of a student – thin and prepared for sacrifice, but his eyes shone with the cold light of the fanatic. They were dead and thoughtful, the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death.

He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich and, taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he had a quick drink. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash might be seen in the darkness and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk. Placing a cigarette between his lips, he struck a match, drew some smoke into his lungs quickly and put out the light.

Almost immediately a bullet flattened itself against the parapet of the roof. The sniper drew again quickly on his cigarette and put it out; then he swore softly and crawled away to the left.

Cautiously he raised himself and looked over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet shot over his head. He dropped immediately. He had seen the flash. It came from the opposite side of the street.

He rolled across the roof to a chimney in the rear and slowly pulled himself up on his feet behind it until his eyes were level with the top of the parapet. There was nothing to be seen – just the faint outline of the opposite housetop against the blue sky. His enemy was under cover.

Just then an armoured car came across the bridge and advanced slowly up the street. It stopped on the opposite side of the street fifty yards ahead. The sniper could hear the dull noise of the motor, like an animal breathing. His heart beat faster. It was an enemy car. He wanted to shoot but he knew it was useless. His bullets would never cut through the steel that covered the grey metal beast.

Then round the corner of a side street came an old woman, her head covered



by an old shawl. She began to talk to the man in the turret of the car. She was pointing to the roof where the sniper lay. An informer.

The turret opened. A man's head and shoulders appeared, looking towards the sniper. The sniper raised his rifle and shot. The head fell heavily on the turret wall. The woman made a run towards the side street. The sniper shot again. The woman twisted rapidly round and fell with a long sharp cry into the gutter.

Suddenly from the opposite roof a shot sounded sharply and the sniper swore and dropped his rifle. The rifle fell noisily to the roof. The sniper thought the noise would wake the dead. He bent down to pick the rifle up. He couldn't lift it. His forearm was dead. "Christ," he said in a low voice. "I'm hit."

Dropping flat on the roof, he crawled back to the parapet. With his left hand he felt the wounded right forearm. Blood was beginning to appear through the sleeve of his coat. There was no pain – just a deadened feeling as if the arm had been cut off.

Quickly he drew his knife from his pocket, opened it on the stonework of the parapet and tore open the sleeve. There was a small hole where the bullet had entered. On the other side there was no hole. The bullet had stuck in the bone. It must have broken it. He bent the arm below the wound. The arm bent back easily. He ground his teeth to overcome the pain. Then, taking out his field-dressing, he tore open the packet with his knife. He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter liquid fall drop by drop into the wound. His whole body shook with the sharp pain of it. He placed the cotton wool over the wound and wrapped a bandage over it. He tied the end with his teeth.

Then he lay still against the parapet and, closing his eyes, he made an effort of will to overcome the pain.

In the street beneath, all was still. The armoured car had retired speedily over the bridge, with the machine gunner's head hanging lifeless over the turret. The dead body of the woman lay still in the gutter.

The sniper lay for a long time nursing his wounded arm and planning escape. When morning came, he must not be found wounded on the roof. The enemy on the opposite roof was covering his escape. He must kill that enemy and he could not use his rifle. He had only a revolver to kill him with. Then he thought of a plan.

Taking off his cap, he placed it over the end of his rifle. Then he pushed the rifle slowly upwards over the parapet until the cap could be seen from the opposite side of the street. Almost immediately a shot sounded and a bullet went right through the centre of the cap. The sniper then let the rifle hang forward and downward. The cap slipped down into the street. Then catching the rifle in the middle, the sniper dropped his left hand over the roof and let it hang, lifelessly.

shawl /ʃɔ:l/ sjal

turret kanontårn

informer angiver/angivar

gutter rennestein

grind – *ground* – *ground* her: skjære/skjere

field-dressing pakke med bandasjer, desin-

fiserende væske o.l. / pakke med

bandasjar, desinfiserande væske o.l.

iodine jod

liquid væske

After a few moments he let the rifle drop to the street. Then he sank to the roof, dragging his hand with him.

Crawling quickly to the left, he looked up at the corner of the opposite roof. His trick had succeeded. The other sniper, seeing the cap and rifle fall, thought that he had killed his man. He was now standing in front of chimneys looking across, with his head clearly outlined against the western sky.

The Republican sniper smiled and lifted his revolver above the edge of the parapet. The distance was about fifty yards – a hard shot in the poor light – and the pain in his right arm was hurting him like a thousand devils. He took a steady aim. His hand was almost shaking with eagerness. Pressing his lips together, he breathed in deeply through his nose and shot. He was almost deafened with the noise and his arm shook with the recoil.

Then, when the smoke cleared, he looked carefully across and gave out a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit. He was rolling from side to side over the parapet in his death agony. He struggled to stay on his feet but he was slowly falling forward as if in a dream. The rifle fell from his hand, hit the parapet, fell over, bounded off the pole of a barber's shop beneath and then dropped noisily on to the road.

Then the dying man on the roof bent double and fell forward. The body turned over and over in space and hit the ground with a dull thud. Then it lay still.

The sniper looked at his enemy falling and his body shook once. The fierce love of battle died in him. He became filled with sadness at what he had done. The sweat stood out in small round drops on his forehead. Weakened by his wound and the long summer day of going without food and watching on the roof, he felt sickened at the sight of the torn and broken mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered. He began to talk rubbish to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.

He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand and with a curse he threw it hard to the roof, at his feet. The force of the fall made the revolver go off and the bullet shot close past the sniper's head. He was frightened back to his senses by the shock. His nerves steadied. The cloud of fear lifted from his mind and he laughed.

Drawing the whiskey flask from his pocket, he took one long drink and emptied it. He felt less cautious under the influence of the drink. He decided to leave the roof and look for his company commander so that he could report what had happened. Everywhere around was quiet. There was not much danger in going through the streets. He picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket. Then he crawled down through the sky-light to the house underneath.

When the sniper reached street level, he felt a sudden curiosity as to the identity of the enemy sniper whom he had killed. He decided that he could shoot

edge kant
recoil /rɪ'kɔɪl/ rekyl
bound sprette
thud dunk
fierce heftig, voldsom / heftig, veldig
tear – tore – torn rive, ødelegg / rive,
øydeleggje
chatter hakke (tenner), klapre
curse forbanne

well, whoever he was. He wondered if he knew him. Perhaps he had been in his own company before the army had split into two. He decided to take a chance and go over to have a look at him. He looked carefully around the corner into O'Connell Street. In the upper part of the street was heavy gunfire, but around here all was quiet.

The sniper ran across the street. A machine gun tore up the ground around him with a shower of bullets, but he escaped. He threw himself face downwards beside the dead body. The machine gun stopped.

Then the sniper turned over the body and looked into his brother's face.

ACTIVITIES

1 Understanding the story

- a What is the setting of this short story?
- b Who are the characters?
- c Retell the plot step by step.

2 Writing

Pick out relevant nouns and adjectives from the text and write a portrait/characterization of the main character. In what way does he change throughout the story?

3 Talk about it

- a It's been said that civil wars are worse than other wars. Discuss how this is reflected in "The Sniper".
- b In recent years there have been several civil wars around the globe. How much do you know about any of these?
- c Are wars ever justified? Discuss.

4 Improve your language

Fill in the missing forms (either noun, adjective or adverb) of these words taken from "The Sniper".

<i>Noun</i>	<i>Adjective</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
fanatic		
		openly
	dangerous	
		hungrily
	alone	
	curious	
		faintly
depth		
	silent	
immediacy		

There Were Roses

by Tommy Sands

So my song for you this evening, it's not to make you sad
Nor for adding to the sorrows of our troubled northern land
But lately I've been thinking and it just won't leave my mind
I'll tell you of two friends in time who were both good friends of mine

Isaac Scott from Banagh, he lived just across the fields
A great man for the music and the dancing and the reels
McDonald came from South Armagh to court young Agnes fair
And we often met on the Ryan Road and laughter filled the air

-Chorus-

There were roses, roses
There were roses
And the tears of a people ran together



POINTS OF DEPARTURE

In recent years Northern Ireland has often been in the media due to civil disturbances and terrorist attacks. Since The Troubles began in 1969, more than 3000 people have lost their lives. But behind the statistics are the fates of real people. This song is about two of them – one Protestant, the other a Catholic.

add legge til, tilføye / leggje til, tilføye
reel en dans / ein dans
court gjøre kur til / gjere kur til
fair vakker

Now Isaac he was Protestant and Séan was Catholic born
But it never made a difference, for the friendship it was strong
And sometimes in the evening when we heard the sound of drums
We said it won't divide us, we always will be one

For the ground our fathers plowed in, the soil it is the same
And the places where we say our prayers have just got different names
We talked about the friends who'd died we hoped there'd be no more
It was little then we realized the tragedy in store

-Chorus-

It was on a Sunday morning when the awful news came round
Another killing had been done just outside Camagh Town
We knew that Isaac danced up there, we knew he liked the band
But when we heard that he was dead we just could not understand

We gathered at the graveside on a cold and rainy day
The minister he closed his eyes and for no revenge he prayed
And all of us who knew him from along the Ryan Road
We bowed our heads and said a prayer for the resting of his soul

-Chorus-

Now fear it filled the countryside there was fear in every home
When late at night a car came prowling round the Ryan Road
A Catholic would be killed tonight to even up the score
Oh Christ it's young McDonald they've taken from the door

Isaac was my friend! he cried, he begged them with his tears
But centuries of hatred have ears that do not hear
An eye for an eye, it was all that filled their minds
And another eye for another eye till everyone is blind

-Chorus-

'plow pløye
in store i vente
prowl /*praol*/ streife rundt, patruljere
even up oppveie, utligne / vege opp,
utlikne



So my song for you this evening, it's not to make you sad
Nor for adding to the sorrows of our troubled northern land
But lately I've been thinking and it just won't leave my mind
I'll tell you of two friends in time who were both good friends of mine

Now I don't know where the moral is or where this song should end
But I wonder just how many wars are fought between good friends
And those who give the orders they are not the ones to die
It's Scott and McDonald and the likes of you and I

There were roses, roses
There were roses
And the tears of a people ran together
There were roses, roses
There were roses ...

ACTIVITIES

1 Understanding the song

Form groups of three or four and discuss the following questions. Write short answers to the questions.

- a What do we know about Isaac Scott and Séan McDonald?
- b What is the significance of the drums do you think, and how do the friends react to the sound?
- c How does everyone learn that Isaac has been killed?
- d Why was the countryside filled with fear after the killing?
- e What happened to Séan? Why didn't it matter that he was Isaac's friend?
- f Is there a moral to this song? If so, what is it?
- g The title of this song is "There Were Roses". What do you think this refers to?

2 Writing

This song was written in 1986 and relates a true story in music. Imagine that the songwriter, Tommy Sands, has been contacted by a London radio station which is interested in interviewing him about his tragic friendship with Séan and Isaac. Write the interview. Some things for you to consider are how long they have known each other, personal characteristics, whether the ongoing conflict affected their friendship etc. Feel free to invent details to give depth to the interview. Begin your interview with the following lines.

"We have with us here today Tommy Sands, who was Isaac Scott's and Séan McDonald's best friend. Tommy, what can you tell us about ...?"