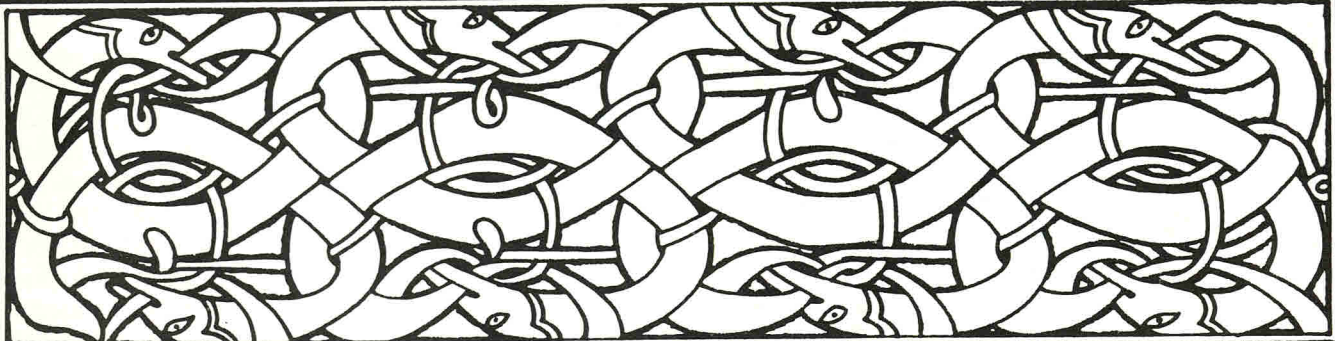


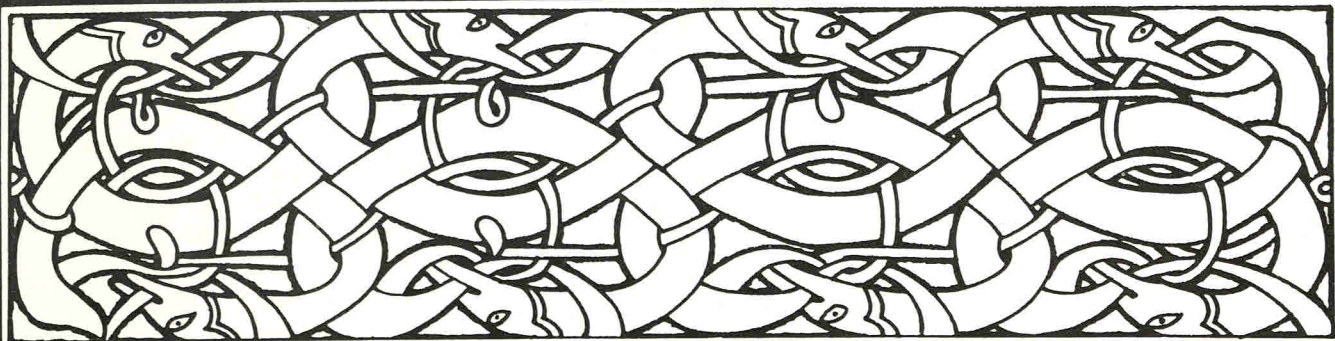
christmas 1986

# IRISH VOICE

Haringey I.B.R.G.'s Community Magazine



nollaig  
shona  
happy  
christmas





## Sinn Fein Councillors Visit Haringey



Council leader Bernie Grant welcomes Sinn Fein delegates

## Second time lucky for Irish liason Unit?

Following months of delay Haringey's Irish Liason Unit has finally got the go-ahead. The 5 Council posts of Irish liason unit officer were originally advertised 7 months ago and it is feared that many good candidates have now withdrawn their applications. There was some controversy over the original advertisement, which many people felt was confusing. However, having reviewed the structure of the unit and discussed the matter with local Irish groups, the Council will shortly be re-advertising the posts. The new-look unit will consist of three workers specialising in the fields of housing, education and social services, plus a co-ordinator. The aim of the unit is to provide policy advice and support to the council on all matters relating to the Irish community in Haringey and to assist in the development of facilities and resources for the benefit of the Irish community.

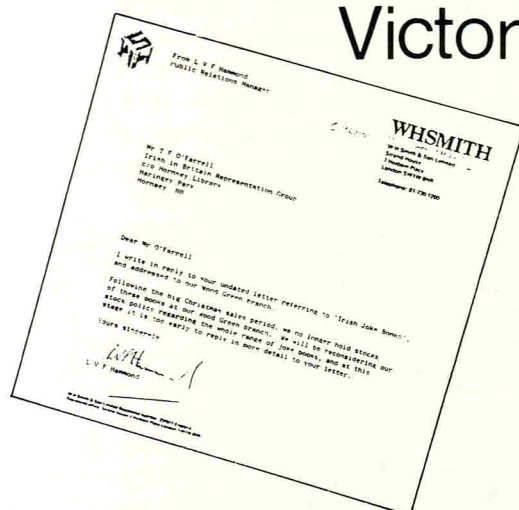
A delegation of elected Sinn Fein councillors from the Six Counties met with Haringey councillors and community representatives in October. On Monday 20 Oct. Councillor Alex Maskey from Belfast addressed a full meeting of the Council. Cllr. Maskey was forced to speak through a megaphone at one stage to make himself heard as chanting Conservative councillors attempted to disrupt the meeting.

On Friday 25 October a civic reception was held for the delegation. This was followed by a well attended public meeting and social at Tottenham Town Hall. Among the speakers on the Friday were Cllr. Tommy Carroll from Armagh, Haringey Council leader Bernie Grant and Pat Reynolds from the IBRG. In his speech Cllr. Carroll described the oppression faced by Nationalists in the North. "Since my election I have been stopped and questioned 88 times" he said, "and my home has been raided on numerous occasions". He went on to explain that the Anglo-Irish deal had been of no benefit to the Irish people and stated that British withdrawal and a United Ireland were the only real solutions.

Sinn Fein in thanking the organising groups described the tour as "A great success".



## Victory over anti-Irish 'jokes'



Some substantial victories have been won by Haringey's Irish in the battle against anti-Irish racism. Following pressure from IBRG and others, including Council leader Bernie Grant, WH Smith's bookshop in Wood Green Shopping City have stopped selling the so called 'Irish joke books'. In a letter to the IBRG they said they were reconsidering their policy. Following other protests from IBRG Walls, the ice-cream people, have said that they will stop putting anti-Irish comments on their products.

## Haringey leads with Labour Irish Section

Irish Labour supporters in Haringey have set up the party's first Irish section. The section aims to campaign and lobby within the Labour Party on Irish issues-including the reunification of Ireland and anti-Irish racism-and to encourage Irish people to join the Labour Party and take positions of responsibility within it. Seamus Carey, the secretary of the Irish Section, believes that an organised Irish group can have a big

impact on politics. "We are convinced that, if Irish Sections are formed throughout the Labour Party, the Irish community can have a great influence, not just within Labour but on politics at large in this country" he said. "Women and the black communities also have their sections within the party pursuing their specific interests and policies. If we organise within Labour and ally with other groups with whom we have much in common, then we can be truly effective".



Labour councillors appeal for order as Tories try to stop the elected Sinn Fein councillor from speaking.

If you want to join the Irish Section of the Labour Party in Haringey contact Seamus at 72 Winchelsea Road N17 for further details.



# comment

## Green Sheep - A Red Herring ?

Certain national newspapers not famous for their sympathy for the Irish-namely the Sun and the Mail - have been printing strange stories about "Green sheep" replacing the black sheep of the traditional rhyme in Haringey schools. The rumours have caused hilarity but also ridicule. In a discussion on racism on Radio 4 the story was given as an example of the absurdity of Haringey Council's policy on racism. From all this confusion of fact and fiction, let's set the record straight.

These stories about black sheep changing colour are just not true. The headteacher at Downhills Park junior (the school named in a Hornsey Journal article as the offender) stresses that the nursery rhymes are still sung in the traditional way in her school, as in all Haringey schools. It seems that a nearby playgroup has added a verse about white sheep giving wool for jumpers and socks to the first verse, due to the popularity of the song.

The rumours arose when Pat Head and Betty Sheridan of the Parents' Rights Group in Haringey took up the issue on behalf of the Irish Community in Haringey and asked "Is Bernie Grant going to paint all our sheep green?" Having made this absurd suggestion they then get very hot under the collar about it. It is "an insult to the Irish" because "green is the colour of the Irish". What are they really getting so upset about? Their



accompanying comments make this clearer: "Bernie Grant has labelled us an ethnic minority in Haringey. We are being stuck with a label. We are individuals not a group. We don't see ourselves as a minority in Haringey".

At this point we take issue with Pat Head and the Parents' Rights Group. Bernie Grant didn't label the Irish as an ethnic minority, the Irish organisations in Haringey demand that right for themselves. Why? Because ethnic minority status involves a recognition that the group of people is not British, that they have their own history, culture and language. Most importantly it involves recognition that the Irish have for centuries been discriminated against in employment, housing, law, education and many other areas. Recognition as an ethnic minority is important precisely because British society does not treat the Irish as individuals as they claim, certainly not as individuals with their own culture which is worthy of respect. The Irish are



treated as a group which is the butt of widespread jokes about their stupidity and ignorance. An oppressive law, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, was created specifically to control the Irish, and thousands of innocent Irish people have been questioned under it merely for the purpose of gaining low-level intelligence about the movements of Irish people in this country.

Why then this fear of being labelled an ethnic minority? Can it be that certain Irish people do not wish to be associated with other ethnic minorities? Do they forget that the reason we, like other ethnic groups, are in this country in the first place is because Britain colonised and impoverished our country? That the discrimination and racism that black people experience has much in common with the experience of the Irish in Britain for centuries and is based on our similar positions as ex-colonial (and colonial!) subjects? If this is the basis for their objections, then the age-old British tradition of divide and rule has triumphed again.

The Parents' Rights Group are great at making statements on behalf of the Irish in Haringey. They also spoke for us at the council debate on that rather boring but innocuous book about a little girl who lives with her dad and another man while mum lives round the corner. No porn, just love. It would seem from the Parents' Rights Group reaction that teaching our children tolerance towards alternative households would corrupt their morals.

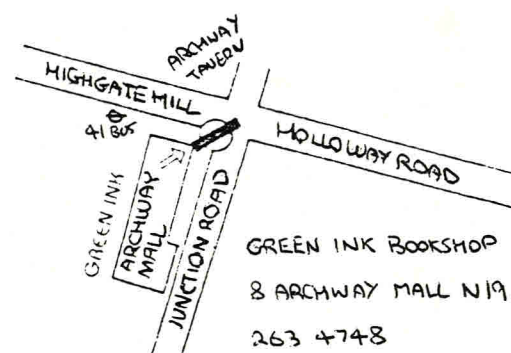
The trivialising of the serious issue of anti-Irish racism with the 'Green sheep' episode has done us no good. It is too easy to get the popular press on your side with any issue that allows them to bash 'barmy Bernie'. Any support we can get from Haringey Council in opening up the question of racism against the Irish and challenging it is to be welcomed, not scorned. Let's sort out the green sheep from the goats.

## But Green Ink does exist !

Stories about Green sheep may be complete fiction, but the Green Ink bookshop is a fact!

Opened by Ken Livingstone in August, the bookshop has grown out of the Green Ink writers' Group. At the opening ceremony Haringey IBRG's Pat Reynolds, a leading figure in the writers' Group, praised the late GLC for their support for the bookshop. "Ken Livingstone to the Irish Community is a very special person" he told the assembled crowd. "This little effort here - the bookshop - is a living memorial to the work the GLC did for the Irish Community in London".

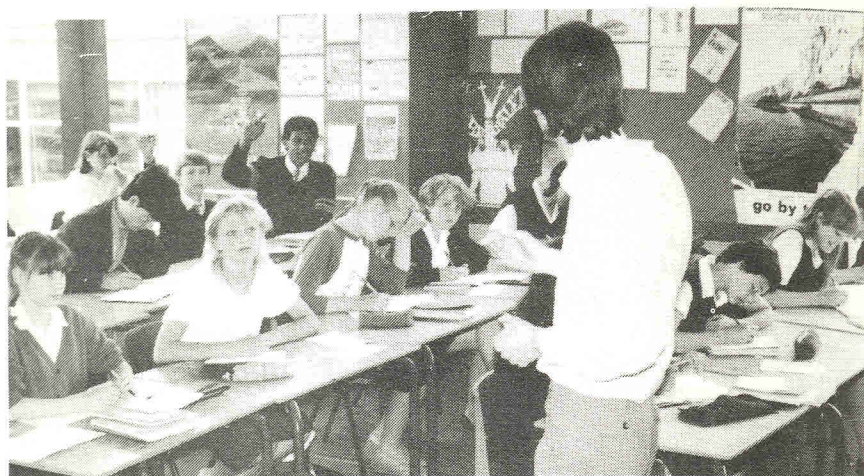
Situated in Archway Mall N19, the bookshop is open from 10.00 to 6.00 Monday to Saturday and stocks a wide variety of books on everything from and about Ireland and the Irish. It is well worth a visit. Who knows, you might even find a book about green sheep - in the fiction section of course!





# Irish studies

## Haringey's Irish Children deprived of their heritage



As far as Irish history is concerned, "Silence appeared to be the safest option." This is just one of the conclusions contained in the recently published 'Survey into the Promotion of Irish Culture within the Haringey School Curriculum' Produced by Haringey I.B.R.G., the survey is the first of its kind in Britain. It details the areas in which the teaching of Irish Culture is in general ignored in Haringey's schools:

▲History- most teachers did not seem to recognise the need to teach Irish history from an Irish point of view. Irish history only cropped up as a so called 'problem' for the British authorities. Teachers said that few suitable books on Irish history were available, and those that were available were biased. Many teachers themselves knew little about the history of Ireland.

▲Literature-despite the fact that Ireland has produced a wealth of brilliant novelists and playwrights, schools in Haringey in general did not see the need to highlight the Irish dimension in literature. Worse still, Irish writers are sometimes included under the title 'British', giving Irish

children the impression that Irish writers have to become British before they become acceptable.

▲Language- In 1981 a survey concluded that at least 55 pupils in Haringey schools spoke Gaelic. Yet no encouragement was given to children to develop their Irish and no provision was made to promote the Irish language in schools.

▲Sport-There was no evidence of any Irish sport being played in Haringey schools at all. This was despite the fact that many pupils participated in local Gaelic Football teams.

The Survey concluded that the borough's Irish children were not being given a fair opportunity to learn about their own culture. The Survey recommended

- ◆ BETTER training for teachers in Irish Studies
- ◆ MORE books and teaching material on Irish studies to be written
- ◆ PROVISION to be made for the teaching of the Irish Language and Gaelic games in schools
- ◆ LINKS to be established with Irish educational establishments

The Report will be put to a future meeting of Haringey's Education Committee.

# Haringey Conference Demands Equal Rights for Irish Children

Delegates from IBRG branches throughout Britain met on Sat. September 30 to discuss the IBRG's Education Policy. The conference was hosted by the Haringey branch of the IBRG and held at the new Irish Cultural and Community Centre in Pretoria Road N17. The conference agreed on a policy statement which sets forth the basic demands of the Irish community for the education of its children within the British educational system.

"We ask no more, no less than what is available to every other child within the educational system - the right of access to one's own culture and heritage" said Pat Reynolds, the Group's national P.R.O. and Haringey branch member.

The policy statement sets out a 10 point plan for the improvement of the education service for the Irish in Britain:

1. Ethnic minority status for the Irish in Britain.
2. Equal opportunities for all Irish staff in schools.
3. checks on the performance and achievements of Irish students.
4. Procedures to combat anti-Irish racism.
5. An Irish perspective in all subject areas especially History.

6. The introduction of Irish Studies classes.

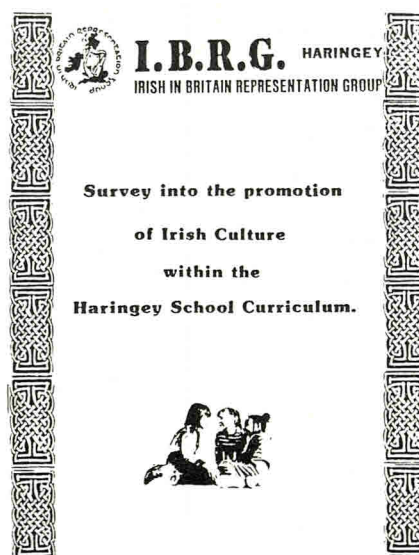
7. Better training for teachers in Irish affairs.

8. The production of better teaching materials to deal with Irish issues.

9. Funding for adult education classes for Irish people.

10. The appointment of Officers in local authority education departments with responsibility for Irish studies and students.

"The IBRG will pursue this policy with vigour", said Pat Reynolds "Our children are our future. We owe it to them to pass on our rich culture."



The  
IBRG  
Survey  
-out  
now.



## The Irish in Britain Representation Group

The IBRG was formed after the 1981 Hunger Strikes in response to a widespread feeling among the Irish in Britain that there was no effective representation of our interests in social, cultural or political matters. Since its formation the IBRG has grown rapidly to become an effective organisation pursuing the interests of the Irish Community through democratic and legitimate methods.

The IBRG's main concern is the representation of the Irish in Britain with regard to affairs in Britain, but we are also naturally concerned about events in Ireland. The IBRG is non-party political - it is not committed to any particular political philosophy whether socialist or conservative.

### Haringey IBRG

Established in 1983, the IBRG's Haringey branch has maintained an active role in the community campaigning for a fair share of resources for the Irish in the borough. Our work has included:

- Organising public meetings
- Successful social events
- Actively campaigning against anti-Irish racism e.g. the dispute with WH Smith over their sale of anti-Irish books
- Working for the abolition of the Prevention of Terrorism Act being instrumental in Haringey's own PTA conference
- Successfully campaigning for an Irish Centre in the borough

► Liaising with local libraries on the purchase of Irish books and tapes.

► Participating in London's first Irish film festival

► Working with Travellers as a member of the Haringey Travellers Support Group

► Campaigning for the rights of Irish prisoners in Britain

Members of the branch have also participated in local and GLC conferences on a wide range of subjects-homelessness, Prisoners Welfare, Unemployment and Irish Youth. Haringey IBRG employs one full - time and 2 part - time workers who research into provision for the Irish in Haringey

### How to join

Fill in this form and return it to the address below:

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone Number: .....

Return to: Haringey IBRG, Hornsey Library, Haringey Park, Hornsey N8.





# action

Haringey IBRG meet every 2 weeks on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 p.m. in the Tottenham Community Project, 628 Tottenham High Rd N17. Next meeting is on 9 December-all welcome! For further details phone Haringey IBRG on 348 3351 extension 3.

Islington IBRG meet on the first Tuesday of each month in Caxton House community centre, St. John's Way N19 at 8.00.p.m. For more details phone the Irish in Islington Project on 281 3225.

Haringey Labour Party Irish Section meet regularly and exist to promote Irish interests within the Labour Party. For more details phone Seamus Carey on 801 8726.

The Irish in Islington Project is on 11 Dec. holding a social at the Red Rose Club, Seven Sisters Rd. N7. Tickets are £1. Phone the Project on 281 3225 for more details. All welcome!

The Guildford 4 Campaign for the release of four innocent people wrongly imprisoned since 1974 held a successful benefit in late November which raised over £700. Watch out for future events! The campaign is now receiving massive support. Cardinal Hume and Lord Scarman have recently added their voices to the growing demand for the prisoners' release. You can contact the campaign at BM Box 6944, London WC1N 3XX

The Labour Committee on Ireland meets monthly in Haringey. All Irish Labour Party members should be involved.

The London-Armagh Womens Group are working on a book about Ireland and British feminism. More details in future editions.

The Stop Strip Searches Campaign meets every 2 months on Monday evenings at 7.00 at the Womens Centre, Cromer st. Kings Cross. For further details contact Liz Tully c/o 52-54 Featherstone St. EC1.

The London Birmingham 6 Campaign meet regularly at the Camden Irish Centre. A meeting on the Birmingham 6 will be held in Haringey in the new year. Watch out for details!

The Irish Pensioners Action Group hold tea dances at the Camden Irish Centre, Murray St. NW1 on the first Wednesday of each month at 2.00. The group is sending a delegation to Ireland on 2 February to lobby Irish politicians to provide free travel for Irish pensioners when they are home in Ireland. Ryanair have kindly provided the delegation with free tickets. For more information about the pensioners action group ring John Foley on 533 1547

The Irish in Britain History Group hold meetings in the Camden Irish Centre on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30. For up to date information on speakers etc. phone the Irish in Britain History Centre on 624 7438.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*To list your event or meeting \*  
\*free ring us on 348 3351 ext. 3 \*  
\*\*\*\*\*



## Chris Hughton: Spurs' London-born Irish international

Irish footballers with English accents. That's the characteristic running through the present Republic of Ireland squad as they continue their European Championship quest. It is a good example of how second-generation Irish people are asserting their Irishness. And London-born Tottenham full back Chris Hughton is proud to be among them.

Chris qualified for Ireland by virtue of his Irish mother but had only visited Ireland once as a child prior to his international call. Yet when he travelled to Dublin for his debut in the friendly against the USA he was quick to settle in. Not just because of the hospitality he received in Ireland, but because he found that he knew half the team already. Now he feels a great sense of pride every time he pulls on the green shirt before a game. And he's doing that regularly these days.

"There certainly are a lot of English accents in the squad" said Chris, "especially among the newcomers. Obviously some of the older players have real Dublin accents but it's about half and half in the first team now." The familiar faces were a great help to Chris. "I felt part of the set up in no time" he said. "But it all depends on the individual. If you are a fairly outgoing



type of person, which I class myself as, then you can settle in anywhere."

Chris was a late arrival into professional football. He completed a 4 year apprenticeship as a lift engineer before finally signing full-time for Spurs in 1979. His brother Henry had signed earlier but switched to Orient and now plays for Brentford.

Some English commentators have complained that Ireland has been 'poaching' English-born Irish players for the international side. But the trickle of Irish internationals back across the water only partly compensates the Irish F.A. for the flood of quality Irish-born players to England. Chris Hughton certainly hopes to continue playing his part in the London-Irish contribution to the Republic's international side.



# christmas

---



## CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND LONG AGO

Denis A. McCarthy

At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago,  
The blazing log upon the hearth gave out a cheery glow,  
And lit the kindly faces that I used to love and know,  
At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago!

At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago,  
The holly on the dresser crowned the dishes in a row,  
The Christmas candle beaming threw the light across the snow,  
At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago!

At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago,  
Without the wind might bluster, and without the wind might blow,  
Within was peace among us and the kind word to and fro,  
At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago.

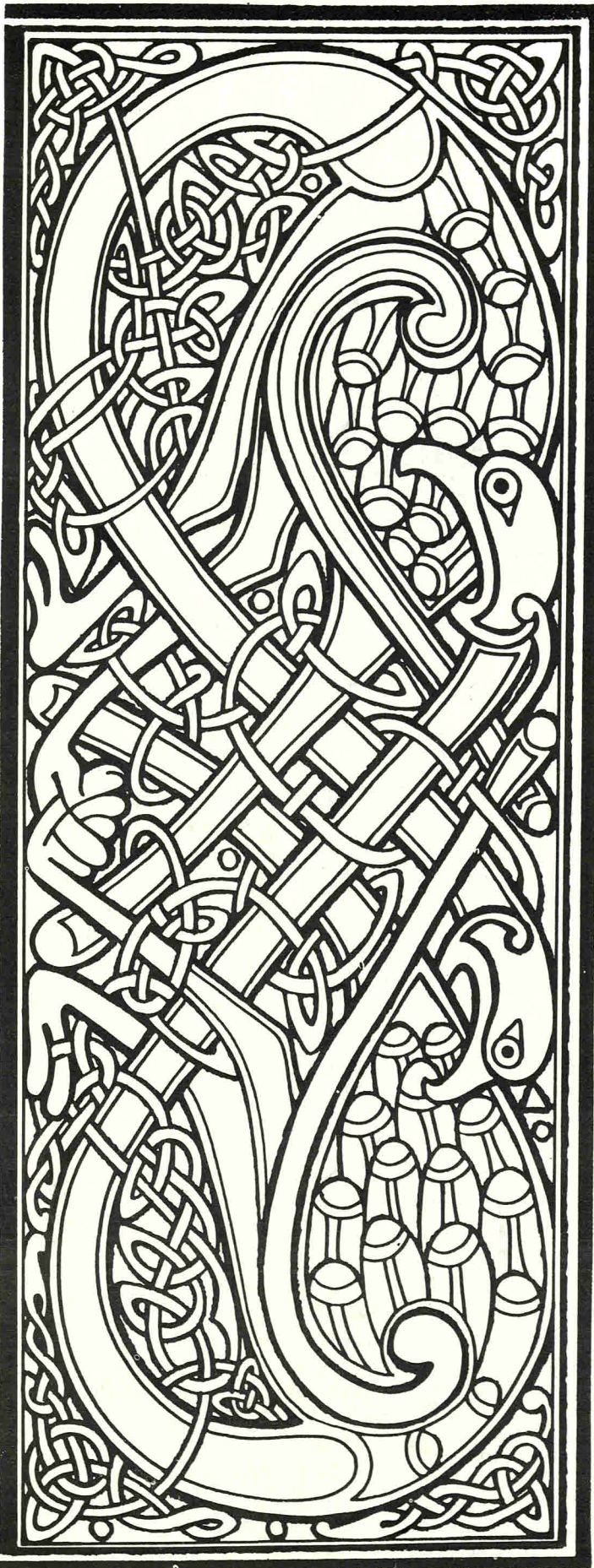
At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago,  
I mind the merry music of the fiddle and the bow,  
I mind a song we used to sing together soft and slow,  
At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago.

At Christmas, Christmas in Ireland long ago,  
I mind a hand that led me through the darkness and the snow,  
To see Our Saviour lying in a manger, rude and low,  
At Christmas, Christmas, in Ireland long ago!

Ah, Christmas, Christmas, in Ireland long ago! –  
Your memories are dearer still the older that I grow,  
And harder 'tis to keep them back – the tears so fain to flow  
For Christmas, Christmas, in Ireland long ago!

*Green and Gold, 1920*





In the next issue of

## íRish voice

read 'why we're not laughing' at anti-Irish 'jokes' plus news about the new Irish centre plus a photo-report on the Irish evening at Hornsey library plus news, views and lots more. Be sure you get a copy!

'Irish Voice' is produced by Haringey Irish in Britain Representation Group & printed by Spiders web Ltd. Sussex Way N7.

The views expressed in 'Irish Voice' are not necessarily those of the IBRG.

If you would like an article or item considered for publication in the next issue contact IBRG at Hornsey Library, Haringey Park N8 or phone 348 3351 ext.3

Haringey branch of the IBRG is funded by Haringey Council.