

## The 10:40 to Springtown

Written by Hugo - Last Updated Saturday, 14 May 2011 16:42

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I can remember it well. How could I forget it? It was November 1962. I could hardly eat my dinner, not that that mattered too much as it was a Friday and being good Springtown Catholics it was fish for dinner, no meat allowed on a Friday even if you had the money to buy it!! I was so excited, the day we had been waiting for this past six weeks has arrived. The reason for the excitement was that it was my mate Jim English's fourteenth birthday and to celebrate, Jim, Danny Feeney, Brendy and Stevie Wilkinson and yours truly were heading in to Derry to the pictures and better than that! We were allowed to go on our own, unsupervised!!!? Right so I thought to myself, sure aren't we all in long trousers now. I bolted out the door of our hut running for about 50yds before I realised I had forgotten my coat. Turning back to our hut I could see my mother standing at the front door with my coat in her hand. On handing it to me she warned me to behave myself and to keep quiet in the pictures otherwise we would be thrown out, also telling me to make sure we were on the last bus to the camp. The five of us met at Mc Connell's shop. We were stocking up with penny daintys, lucky dips, bubbly gum, blackjacks, peggy's legs and clove rock. Anything that was good for your teeth we bought it!! We agreed we would get the ice-cream in the pictures. We all agreed to save up 5 bob each for this big night so we had loads of money left. How did we get the money? Well, we gathered brock, sold sticks, ran messages for people, and tried our luck at the toss-pits. Every penny we got became a prisoner until we had saved up 5 bob each. Then we hid it in our huts until the big night came, and we were determined to have a great night at the flicks. We headed for the gate of the camp where we waited for the 10 past 7 bus to arrive. Our faces were aglow as we caught sight of the bus coming past the Aluminium Bungalows on its way to the camp. Life was wonderful that night as five innocent boys were let loose to enjoy themselves without the constraints of their elders. They were their own masters that night, they felt as if they were embracing the wider human race for the very first time as young men going to see this great cowboy film everyone was talking about called "The Gunfight at the OK Corral". Soon we were on the bus and heading in to Derry. We got off at the bus station and when we reached the picture house there was a queue outside. Everyone of all ages was there to see the film. Minutes later the doors opened and we all filed towards the woman in the pay desk. We duly paid one by one and each received our tickets. We handed our tickets to a man standing at the entrance of the picture house itself, who seeing we were on our own warned us to be quiet. The wee picture started and was enjoyed by us all but in truth we were glad to get it over with as the big picture was the main event. At the interval we rushed to the girl with the tray around her neck to buy our ice cream, then back to our seats again stuffing our wee faces with ice cream on a wooden stick. The big picture started and boy we were not disappointed as we sat glued to our seats eyes fixed on the big screen for the entire film. It was fantastic and we barely spoke to each other throughout the film. All that was heard was the noise of us ruffling our wee bag of sweets, chewing sweets to our hearts content with our eyes glued to the big screen. Magic, big, colour screen, no snowy pictures like we got on our televisions in the camp! What a difference. What a brilliant film we all agreed as it ended. If this is what is in store for the grown-ups, then roll on the years I thought to myself. We filed out of the pictures and on to the street more excited than when we arrived and soon we were planning another visit on our own to another film shortly. It was 25mins past 10 so we walked to the bus station on the Strand Road to catch the last bus to the camp. Arriving at the station a lot of familiar faces were already waiting for the bus, some as sober as a judge and others not so sober. We

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laughed as we listened to Jock Brennan doing his usual party piece of "Flowers of Scotland". Sitting beside him on the bench was "Butcher" Carlin reading the Belfast Telegraph. Standing around them was Jimmy Deery, Johnny Hagen, Paddy "Banty" Doherty, Maggie Kelly, Mary B. and Eddie Kelly, the O'Neills. Mc Connellogues from the Springtown Road were there also. We heard singing in the background coming from the Strand Road, and as we looked at the entrance to the bus depot there appeared all the "Big Boys" from the camp, Neil Uncle Mc Laughlin, Brendan, Liam, Seamus Fleming Lornie and John Burke, Joe and Archie Doherty "Jap" Mc Laughlin, John Mc Monegal... all singing loudly and in great form. Big Neil roared at me "what are youse wains doing in here? Where were youes?" "We're no wains now Uncle," I shouted back "Jim is 14 to-day and we were at the flicks. We seen Gunfight at the Ok Corral." "Well young Deery you and your wee mates make sure and sit at the back of the bus behind us, ok, because if you think the Gunfight at the ok Corral was exciting, sit back and watch the 10.40 to Springtown Camp!"



And at that all the big boys laughed their heads off. Out from the office of the U.T.A came a wee conductor and he made his way over to a bus and rolled up the sign in front of the bus. 151a SPRINGTOWN.? As soon as we seen that we ran to the bus and were the first on it and as big Uncle told us, we made our way to the back of the bus to wait in anticipation for the craic to unfold. Boy were we not disappointed!? Soon everyone filed on to the bus and it was jam packed with some people standing as well. As the bus pulled out of the station the singing started. Jimmy Deery was belting out "Mona Lisa". Jock Brennan singing out his forty verses of "Flower of Scotland". The pipe smoking Elkie Clarke just staring at the crowd with a bemused smile on his face. Mary B. was giving her version of "Somewhere over the Rainbow" and Big Uncle was shouting housey numbers at the top of his voice. I can still hear him. "Clickety click 66, legs eleven, number eleven, two wee ducks, 22."? Lornie Burke shouting to Uncle, "Here here", as if he had just won!!? Eddie Tip talking to the back of a seat saying "if you worry you die if you don't worry you still die so why worry?" and all this at the same time!!? The poor wee conductor making his way down the isle of the bus collecting the fares or should I say trying to collect the fares!! I remember he gave up half way down the bus and started talking to "Banty" Paddy Doherty about working down the quay at the docks. It was sheer bedlam. The bus felt as if it was swaying from side to side like a boat which prompted us the youngest on the bus to start singing a verse of "Michael row the boat ashore"? We laughed our heads off at all the commotion, each pointing out to the other the goings on of all the characters of the

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camp on the bus .On thinking back it was unbelievable harmless fun and sheer fun entertainment for us, the innocent lads of Springtown Camp who for the very first time were let loose on our own to celebrate a friends 14th birthday, a never to be forgotten night, the memory which I carry with me to this very day.? We enjoyed the bus trip home so much that in future Friday nights we walked in to the bus station just to catch the 10.40 to Springtown Camp and to savour the pure undiluted excitement and atmosphere that only the characters of Springtown Camp could create.?Afterwards lots more of trips were organised by us to the flicks and cowboy after cowboy films were seen . As I watched my hero's of the big screen ride the plains of the west , as a young boy I made a promise to myself that one day I would visit all the places I was seeing on the screen. I said to my mother, "I will go visit them places some day." Of course you will son but for now just get that homework done or Dickie mc Dermott and your Master will be visiting me in Springtown Camp".? So on a cold January night in the year 2003 I said to myself time you were keeping that promise. There and then I grabbed my laptop and started planning my trip of a lifetime. I promised myself I would do it some day. My family were well aware of the promise I made to myself all those years ago. They encouraged me to fulfil my promise , and so the day came on a sunny July morning in 2003 when I boarded a plane at City of Derry Airport bound for Dublin. There I caught a plane to Chicago where I stayed for two nights before flying on to Rapid City in South Dakota .On arriving in Rapid City I hired an open top car and drove the 30 or so miles to my hotel in Deadwood, home of Wild Bill Hickock and Calamity Jane. I visited their graves and on standing at the foot of their graves and saying a wee prayer my mind slipped back to the camp and the day I went to see the film "Calamity Jane". I also saw the original Deadwood stage that is in Deadwood. I toured the Blackhills of Dakota. What a beautiful Indian country! I thought as I stood on top of the Blackhills and viewed Deadwood . After 5 days there I drove through Sundance in Wyoming and on to Montana and to the Little Bighorn where General Custer met his fate at the hands of the Sioux and Cheyene Indians .?On my way back through Wyoming I stopped at a Sioux Indian reservation where there was a small shopping mall which sold genuine hand made items. I bought my newly born grandson Ethan a pair of hand made soft moccasin shoes. From there I went on to Laramie and visited the place where the stagecoach arrived and left from.?Next stop was Cheyene. I didn't see Cheyene Bodie but still it was a beautiful place and the very name held fond and romantic memories for me. I crossed the Mississippi and Missouri rivers ,took in El Paso, crossed the Rio Grande and over the Mexican Border. Then I flew to Phoenix Arizona on route to my top "dream place" Tombstone Arizona, the place where the Gunfight at the Ok Corral took place, between Wyatt Earp, his brothers and "Doc" Halliday against the Clanton brothers .It took place at 3 pm on Wednesday 26th October 1881.?My promise to myself was fulfilled in totality on that hot August day in 2003. As I stood there on the exact spot where the most famous of all gunfights in American wild west history took place my thoughts slipped back to that cold night in November 1962 when five innocent wee lads from the camp were sitting in the flicks chewing our halpenny chews and daintys, watching this gunfight! ? Great though it was I was thinking it was nothing compared to the excitement and craic of Big Uncle mc Laughlin, wee Banty, Paddy Doherty, Maggie Kelly, Mary B.Kelly, Elkie Clark, Eddie Tip, Jimmy Deery, Jock Brennan, some of the characters of " The 10.40 to Springtown Camp"

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A fulfilled sex being is indispensable for most partnerships. So it is really problematic when this no longer happens at all because of import. Several drugs are far-famed. Other works for racy cases like Hodgkin's lymphoma, anxiety or bronchospasm. The most common sexual disorders in men are ED and inhibited sexual desire. If you are considering Cialis, you apparently want to read about [cheap levitra](#) . In our generation, there are varied options for people who suffer from erectile dysfunction. Very likely "" is a much complicated problem. Of all the matters in the field of healthcare that pique our note most, it's ED, particularly "". A long list of common remedies can lead to erectile dysfunction, including several blood pressure medicines, pain medicaments, and most of antidepressants. Certain patients using this drug as a rule do not have any side effects to Cialis.

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