Our wasted canal asset

The city canal

The Brendan Halligan column is on holidays

I also know for facts that Fr. Humphries collected the guns in Lackelly after the ambush in spite of the Black and Tans.

I think when a story is being told it demands the full picture for future generations. If the full story was related the miracles escape of the boys will go down in history.

I would be grateful if you published above in your letter column of the Limerick Leader.

JOHN C. LONERGAN
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Banger buses?

❑ **I WONDER** if some of the buses CIE put on the routes in Limerick City are meant to be part of the City's ancient history? In the past few days I travelled on a bus to Raheen. the bus was to say the least falling apart. Some of the seats were so damaged to the point of being a danger to the passengers. The bus was rattling along with a full load, thankfully the wheels never left the chassis. I got on a bus at the Treaty Stone on another occasion and that bus was even in a worse condi-

pair."

Alas, there is no mention of the old Grand Canal and the two locks and lack of clear water up to the Guinness bridge (in memory of the late Kevin Hannan) and which should flow out into the vast expanse of the Shannon, heading towards the Black Bridge and Plassey. What an amenity going a begging! It would not take an A plus in engineering to know that with new Lock gates, the dredging of the canal and the right level of water, you have a viable waterway for fishing, boating, swimming and a ferry to the University.

Canal harbour as it joins the Abbey river, could also serve as a dock for yachts and launches coming down from Killaloe. In this age of the Celtic Tiger, surely an entrepreneur could examine the feasibility of Canal barges once again on this waterway. Modern barges would be far more economical than trucks and would relieve the heavy traffic on our roads.

Similar waterways in Europe are constantly used by all kinds of water traffic.

Back in 1995 fellow Limerickman David Hanley

al views, almost as if they wished to have the Mother of God as witness to what they had to say. Unfortunately not all of these proclamations have been in accordance with Catholic Faith.

The most recent of these was from the Catholic Bishop of Killaloe and President of Accord, the Catholic Marriage Care Services. Most seriously, he implicated Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity made Man, in a homily that gave a confused and confusing definition of the family. He is quoted in the press as saying:

"The reality of life, however, is that families come in all shapes and sizes. There is the family of two parents united in love; there is the one parent family — one parent because of death or separation. Because of this variety of strains of family, there is a temptation to focus on the ideal of the family that comes nearest to the ideal of the Church, to wail against differences, to lament the ever increasing percentage of births outside marriage."

It is evident that the bishop is leading up to something, and of course it follows that "Christ did not condemn those who failed to meet the ideals of

ents and children, the love of the unmarried mother and unmarried father, and their children and the struggle that being an unmarried mother and father can be in our society."

Taken as a whole the bishop seems to be putting the love of sacramentally married spouses on the same plane as pagan unions. This is not Catholic teaching and is extremely unfortunate at this particular time, when politicians and leaders are insisting that they be held unaccountable to the people for 'what goes on in their private lives.' Not alone this, but these same leaders and their civil servants have already redefined 'family.'

For a Catholic bishop to preach like this in the Name of the Holy Spirit, without reference to Catholic Confession, true repentance and absolution and the necessity for regularisation of adulterous unions and/or cessation of such unions is to completely misrepresent Christ. A Christ that tolerates habitual sin without repentance never existed.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LIMERICK LEADER, 54 O'CONNELL ST., LIMERICK

What job shortage?

❑ **I WONDER** if anyone can tell me where the workforce shortage in Ireland is, particularly the Mid-west? I am offering a free lunch as a reward if anyone comes forward with information that will secure employment or, indeed, provide any evidence that this is not a fictitious rumour started by an anonymous reprobate with a wicked sense of humour!

Deciding to return home, I attended the job fair in London and submitted my cv to several companies and have also applied independently. For several of these posts I was, in fact, over-qualified.

One is constantly reading in the press in both England and Ireland of these shortages of manpower, yet I can get nowhere in my endeavours. There is, reportedly, a desperate shortage in my particular field! Even in the Limerick Leader of June 10, 2000, I see before me an article stating that firms are desirous of hiring "all-rounders" rather than graduates. One would, therefore, imagine that a combination of these two factors should bring a satisfactory conclusion to both parties.

I would be very pleased to hear if anybody has any theories on the subject, so e-mail me at Jamlamont@yahoo.co.uk.

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Open letter

The Minister for Health
Dail Eireann
Dublin

Dear Minister,

❑ **THANK** you for visiting our hospital!!!! It was amazing to see the transformation that took place in this hospital in the space of two weeks. No expense was spared with paint or plant. Places that never dreamed of seeing flowers, overnight were transformed Edenic-style. Walls that had begged for paint for years were "attacked" with gallons of the stuff. Areas that were badly in need of sign-posting, received, as by magic, big, beautiful signs. Tradesmen of every discipline, in a "Desert-Storm" attack overcame what had been for many years a tough nut to crack.

What I want to hear from your lips are the immortal words of General MacArthur: "I shall return"!!!!

Lourdes over the years and the knowledge both historical and religious was astounding, as portrayed by the personnal named hereunder. This was hot very evident in any of my previous pilgrimages.

Firstly that wonderful courier, Frank McGree, was a hive of information on all religious matters pertaining to each location we visited, and equally son on historical date relative to the French nation. A worthy title for Frank would be "the memory man" not only that, but his kindness and consideration for the pilgrims in his charge were his first priority. "Pilgrimages Abroad" can be very proud of Frank, and rightly so.

Next to claim attention and with as much gusto is that "master of the roadways," Michael Kennedy. I'm thinking that he would put the native Frenchman to shame with his specialised knowledge of the French terrain — another worthy treasure.

Now to the third and lovely Mary Barrett. The calm demeanour, the efficiency, the rapport with hoteliers and pilgrims alike was a joy to watch.

Sean the wonderful spiritual director, was a model among the religious groups, so let it be said we were doubly blessed. This beautiful memory of my trip to Lourdes, Nevers and Parish will haunt my dreams forever.

Now to use a beautiful phrase that comes to mind time and time again: "Limerick You're A Lady" in every sense of the word. From a grateful pilgrim.

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K'long rescue

❑ **I ENJOYED** reading Deirdre McGrath's article about the commemoration of the 1919 rescue of Sean Hogan at Knocklong railway station, and I would like to add some more details to this account.

My maternal grandparents David and Ellen O'Byrne also had a significant part to play in the rescue. The butcher shop in Knocklong which Sean Hogan ran into belonged to the O'Byrnes. David O'Byrne, ably assisted by Ellen, cut the handcuffs free with one deft blow of a cleaver. Hogan was guided through to the back of the house and made good his escape into the fields.

I, and my family are proud of the O'Byrnes part in this daring escape. For any of your readers