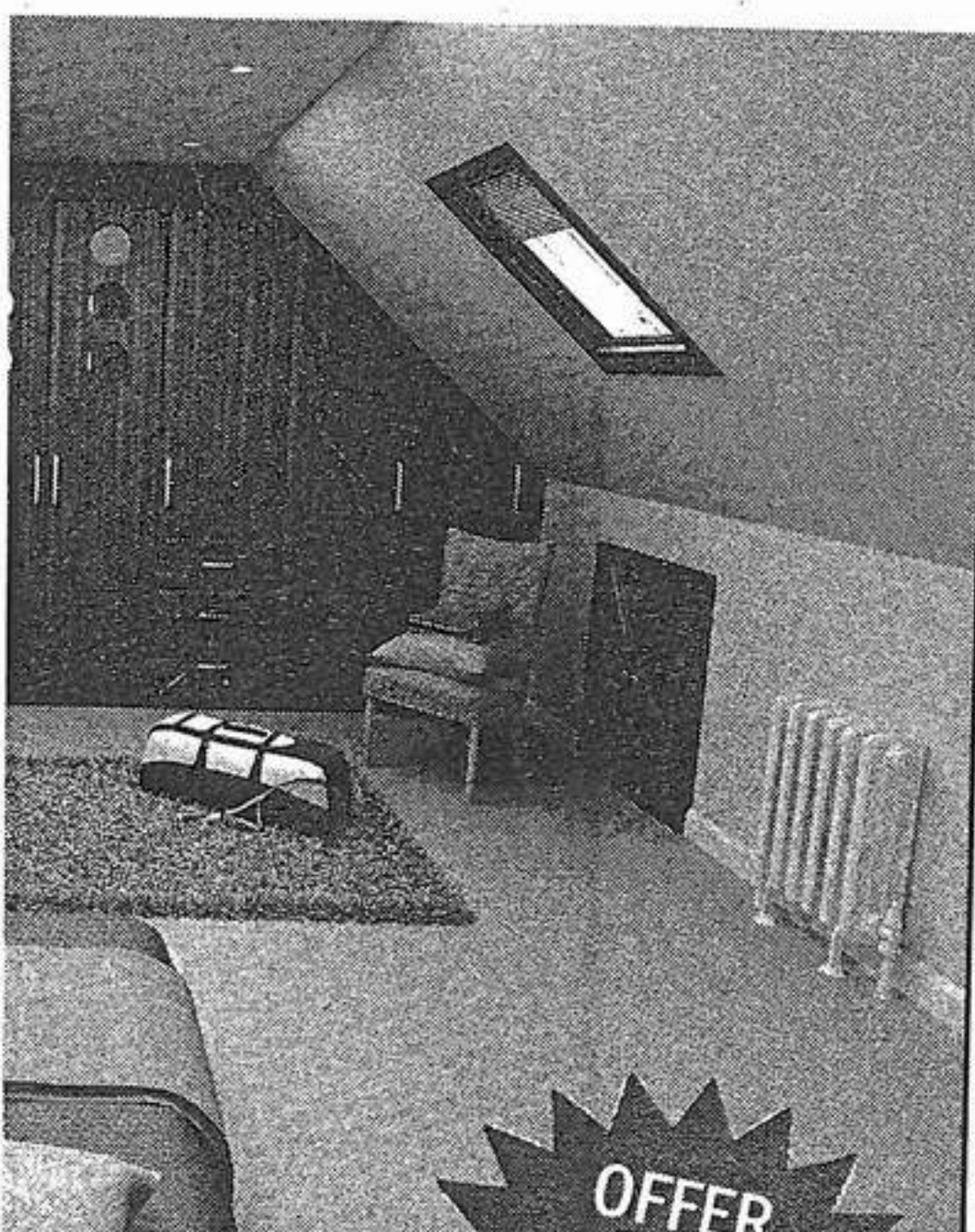


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## News

### HISTORY

# A piece of Limerick history goes to auction

by **Lynda Foley**

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THE writings of a leading Limerick republican figure features in an Irish Civil War diary that will go on auction next week.

Frank Ryan's memoirs form part of the Tom Hales Autograph Book that dates back to when the men were imprisoned in the Curragh in 1923. The 50-plus page diary is signed, written on and contains various poems from Republican prisoners held by the Free State army during the Irish Civil War.

Frank Ryan, who was born in 1902 in Bottomstown, was a prominent member of the Irish Republican Army, editor of An Phoblacht, leftist activist and leader of Irish volunteers on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. He died in Dresden in 1944.

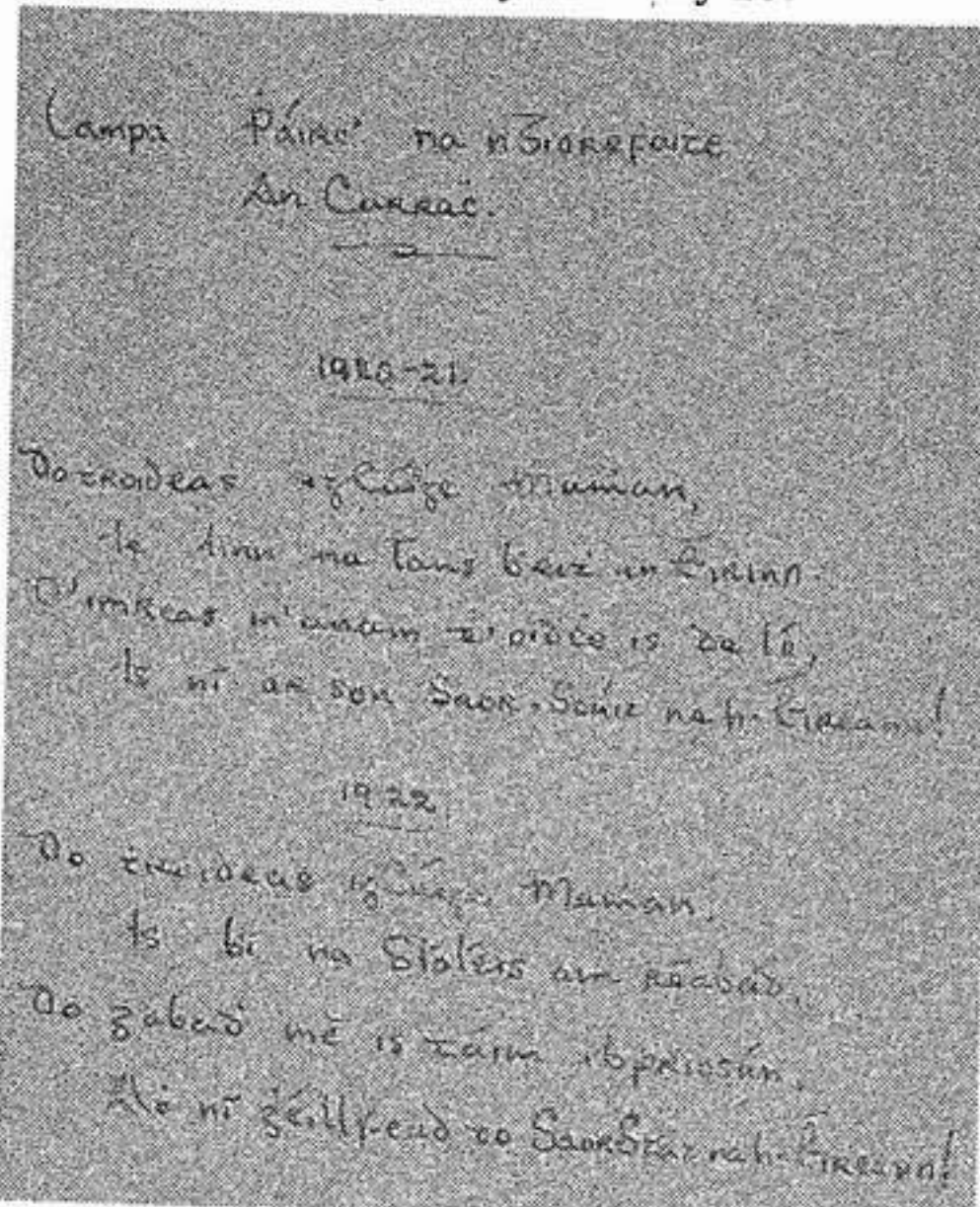
Christy Moore's song 'Viva La Quinta Brigada' is believed to be inspired by Ryan's exploits when the International Brigade took on the might of Franco's Fascists in a bloody forerunner to the Second World War.

According to Thomas Toomey, author of 'The war of Independence 1912 - 1921', the practice of keeping such diaries started after the Easter Rising in 1916 and continued until the last of the Republican prisoners were released by the Free State Government in 1924.

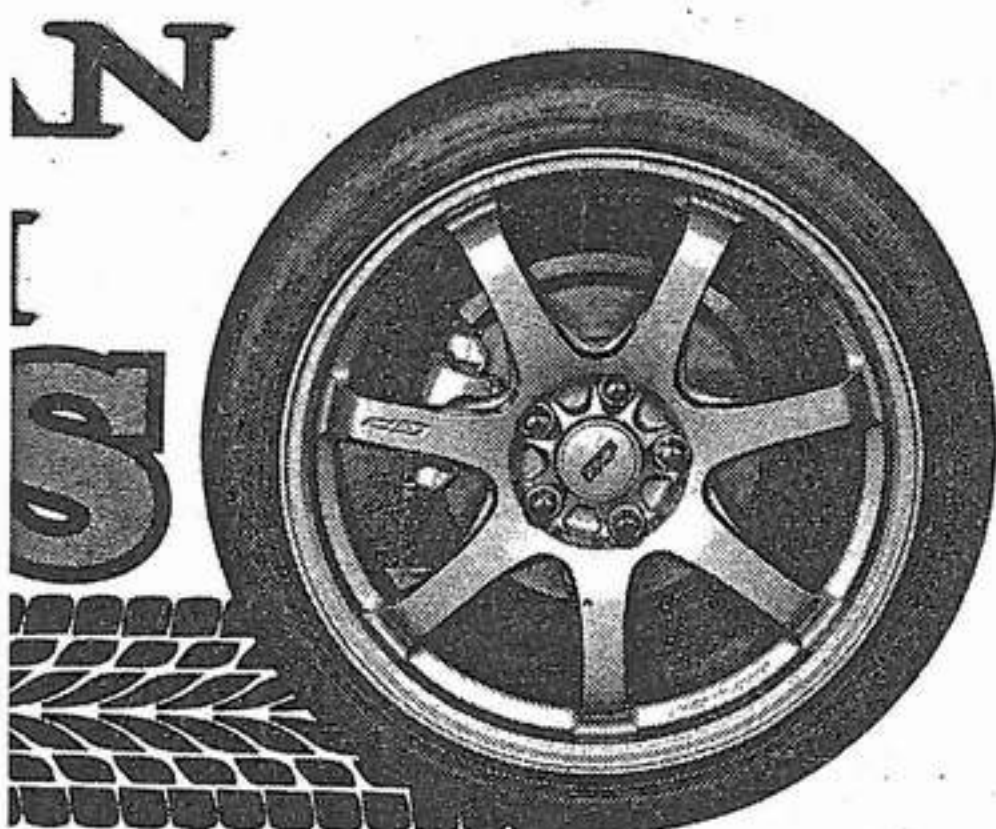
"Entries were made regardless of rank or hierarchy, thus we find that Tom Hales, who was an extremely high-ranking Republican has many

entries by men who were several ranks below him. "In Hales book, there seems to a very strong input from men from Limerick and Cork. The autograph books contain rhymes, political aspirations and especially a yearning for an idealistic Ireland that seems lost in the mists of time," he said.

The diary forms part of the Military, Firearms and Irish War of Independence sale at the Limerick Auction Rooms on Friday, February 15.



Verses dedicated to Ireland's freedom - from Hales' Curragh diary



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