

# Shannon Meat

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# GAZETTE



## E.E.C. PROPOSALS AND U TURNS

By Maurice F. Cowhey  
Chairman, Shannon Meat plc.

The proposals of the E.E.C. Commission to reorganise the Farm Support System have been the subject of criticism from a number of quarters. On the other side of the coin it would be said that generally they have gone down reasonably well. I suppose one cannot please all of the people all of the time.

However, when one looks at the present huge surpluses stored all over Europe one sees the necessity of major surgery if the Common Agricultural Policy is to survive. In this day and age it is most unlikely that we can continue to produce food irrespective of cost and marketability.

The administration in Brussels is being hoisted with its own petard. It turned down the well tried and brilliantly executed British system of Farm support on the grounds of excessive cost and the difficulty of administration. The cost of its own intervention storage of surpluses and export refund schemes are astronomical. A deficiency payment should be easier to supervise. It ought to be possible to oversee any malpractices within a Community context. With the extremely rapid progress in technology, the continuation of present support systems could lead to rather frightening results. The recent additions to membership of the Community enhance such a probability as indeed do membership approach sounds being made by Turkey and other countries. A looming Trade War with the U.S.A. also makes change essential.

There is little if any merit in maintaining 3 or 4 weeks Intervention in the late Autumn. There is nothing constructive in such an infill suggestion. This type of operation has encouraged seasonality on the land, and the holding back and crowding of supplies to factories. In the future

technical and allied demands and progress will insist on supplies being scheduled to the levels of consumer demand and market necessity.

The commission's proposals on support for up to 50 beef units have much attention for our country. It would encourage beginners in beef farming and ensure a much better quality beef animal from these herds. It is my opinion that any Irish Beef Policy should work towards -

1. A reduction of at least 35% in their price of calves.
2. Some support to encourage endeavour to reach the same percentage levels of seasonality as pertains in the other member states of the Community.
3. Eliminating policies which drive the price of 2 year old stores thro' the roof thus giving the the beef feeder some hope of a reasonable margin and encouraging him to spread out his supplies.
4. Encouraging reduction in the Store Period of Animals and in the number of times animals change hands.
5. The policies pursued by the E.E.C. Commission and the Irish agri. establishment during the past 5 or 6 years have been diametrically opposite.

Finally a plug for Shannon. If some type of Intervention is retained for the suggested few weeks in the Autumn, the U.K. will insist on the same facilities for the North of Ireland. In no way should our authorities countenance Open Intervention for the North during this period. Plants in the deep South including Shannon which have no connection with any Six County operation were very much in a **Second Rate** position when the North got this concession in 1984.



At the Retired Staff Party at Woodlands Hotel on 28th. February were Donie McEnergy, Ger Hennessy, Seamus Kennedy, Mick Shiels, Jack Bustin and Dan Neville.

## LIVESTOCK TOPICS WHAT 1986 HOLDS FOR US

By Donie Donovan Livestock Procurement Manager

The one question which producers of beef constantly ask is what are the prospects for cattle prices for 1986? We do not have the answer. It lies with whatever direction the Common Agricultural Policy will take, on how restricted intervention of beef will be and whether the third county refunds will increase. Store cattle realised £70 per cwt. live weight last Spring with up to £80 per cwt. seen in some cases. It is highly unlikely that 1986 will see a repeat of these prices.

### Weather

One very good point I heard recently made about the bad weather of August last was that it put a large amount of cattle on the market early in the season, thus avoiding a big glut of cattle in later months. It proves that the elements always play a very important part in the price and the supply of food.

According to the Central Statistics Office we have roughly 2 million cows in Ireland. This figure includes dairying and suckling cows. This figure is down slightly from what it was in the mid-seventies. While cow numbers remain at this figure there will never be more than 1.25 million other cattle over two years in the country. With cattle being finished at a younger age, numbers of older cattle are reducing yearly.

There is no doubt that the over capacity in the beef industry is influencing beef prices. In the mid-sixties the plant killing capacity in this country was 25,000 head per week. Throughout the seventies, this capacity has increased to a point

in the mid-eighties, when it has reached over 50,000 per week. Breeding stock numbers however have remained static. The number of animals finishing annually has dropped by 10% from the levels of the late seventies. All these trends suggests that there will be no possibility whatsoever of a glut of cattle in 1986.

### Less Finished

With less cattle being finished over the Winter months, the trade looks to be getting more and more seasonal. Any change in intervention prices on beef will put pressure on beef prices next Autumn. At present there is 690,000 tonnes of beef surplus in the EEC. This represents 3.1 million steers (boneless beef) or 2.2 million steers (bone in). What effect will these stocks have on the current market in 1986. The present intervention stocks in Europe are equivalent to what this country would produce in steer beef over a four year period.

### Kill

Total prime kill in Ireland in 1986 was up 150,000, 50% of this was due to a reduction in live exports. The balance of the increase which is equal to three weeks killing would have come from the 1986 reserves.

If prices slip this Autumn, it is likely that numbers will build up on the land to gain weight. This will cause a big carry-over of stock into 1987. This trend is similar to the trading patterns of the fifties and sixties.



The Social Club childrens Christmas party was a great success. The above shows a section of the crowd.



**IT TAKES  
MORE THAN THIS  
EVERY DAY**

**TRY SAFETY, TOO**

## SHANNON MEAT CHAT

- \* Congratulations to John Stack who got engaged to Mary Sheehy, recently. (Now John you will have to face the music).
- \* Best wishes to James Dalton and Michael Shiels who retired from Shannon Meat recently, after many years of service.
- \* Shannon Meat's answer to Joan Collins at The Retired Staff Social, was Jean Ryan. (Looking very well indeed).
- \* Swopping Jerseys lately was Donie Ahern and it was not in the Squash Court.
- \* Congratulations to Patricia Cregan who gave birth to a baby boy (David) on March 2nd.
- \* Congratulations to Miriam Collins who gave birth to a baby boy recently.
- \* John Stack went to a soccer match recently with Con Houlihan of the Irish Press. I am sure Con learned a lot.
- \* Shannon Meat's T.V. star Michael Kelly and family did us proud on Murphys Micro Quis-M.

## COOKS CORNER



by Anna Hayes.

### Tournedos en Croute

This dish, which is ideally suited for a dinner party, is a version of beef wellington. These are individual steaks coated in pate and cooked in pastry cases. They are very simple and quick to make, yet very special.

#### Ingredients—

Fat for frying  
4 fillet steaks  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
4 oz. Liver Pate  
2 tablespoons brandy or dry wine  
1 X 7½oz packet Frozen Puff Pastry  
1 beaten egg, to glaze.

#### Method—

Heat fat in large frying pan, until foaming.  
Add steaks to pan and saute for about 1 min. on each side. Remove from pan, season to taste and set aside to cool. Soften the pate with the brandy and spread over the steaks.  
Roll out the thawed pastry into four squares, large enough to encase the steaks. Wrap the squares around the steaks sealing the edges with a little water. Use the pastry trimmings to decorate. Brush with beaten egg. Place on a baking sheet and put into a fairly hot oven 200°C/400°F Gas 6. Bake 15 to 20 mins. until pastry is golden. Serve immediately with a green salad or a vegetable dish.



To see Santa Claus at the Community Centre were Pat Costelloe, Paddy Sheehan, Michael Kelly and Michael O'Donnell.

## WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR RIVER DEEL

In June 1984 Limerick County Council approved of the preparation of a Water Quality Management Plan for the River Deel and the following is a report on progress made to date.

1. All data on Water Quality prepared by relevant bodies such as the I.I.R.S., An Foras Forbartha and data already prepared by Limerick County Council since 1981 has been accumulated and charted. All processed flow measurements for the river Deel have also been obtained and charted.

2. A detailed Water Quality Survey of the river in conjunction with Aughinish Aluminium Ltd. and University College Dublin was carried out in September and October 1985. A further dry weather survey is scheduled for Summer 1986.

3. Both banks of the main channel of the river from Askeaton to Milford, Co. Cork were walked and inspected and all pollution discharges noted. The sources of these discharges were subsequently traced and work on tracing these discharges effectively involved visits to approx. 90% of farms situated within a mile of the main channel of the river Deel. As pollution sources are detected during the preparation of the plan immediate action is being taken to have them rectified and in general it can be said that a high level of co-operation has been forthcoming from the farming community and this has resulted in a considerable number of problems being quickly solved.

4. The poultry industry is one of the chief industries of the Deel catchment area and an intensive survey of this industry has been completed. A cross section of poultry breeding units were examined and it has been established that poultry breeding farms are not a major cause of pollution to the river Deel. The problems arising from the two major poultry processing plants in the area are being dealt with separately on an on-going basis.

5. A detailed survey of all abstraction and discharge points is presently 80% complete. All abstraction points, be it borehole (private or public) or river are being

surveyed.

6. The Water Quality Criteria Standards and Guidelines issued by various agencies have been studied and a draft set of standards will be prepared when all investigations and surveys are complete.

Since the preparation of the Water Quality Management Plan for the Deel was initiated it is evident that the quality of the water in the river has improved considerably. The joint survey of September/October 1985 provides evidence of this improvement, and a further indication will be obtained after the dry weather flow survey is carried out in Summer 1986.

Improvements being carried out by the Council itself are also relevant, particularly those related to Sewage Treatment Works. The construction of a new Sewage Treatment Works for Newcastle West is at an advanced stage and the project will be completed in 1986. In addition amended Contract Documents for a Sewage Treatment Works for Rathkeale are in the course of preparation.

There is still quite an amount of work to be done in the preparation of the plan and in addition to the above it is proposed to have consultations with the various users and interested parties. These will include industrialists, statutory bodies such as Bord of Works, I.I.R.S., An Foras Forbartha etc., and fishery interests, including Fisheries Board and Angling clubs.

The County Council officials are to be congratulated in their work to date. "Shannon Meat Gazette" will keep you informed of future developments.

## PROCEDURES AGREED

On February 14th. of this year Shannon Meat plc. signed a procedural agreement with the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs. This Union is now recognised by the Company as representing its Clerical Workers. The general purpose of the agreement is to set forth terms and conditions of employment and to promote orderly and peaceful labour relations for the mutual interest of Shannon Meat plc. its, employees and the Union. The parties of the agreements recognise that the success of the company and the job security of the employees depends upon the companys success in producing high quality goods and it's ability to sell such goods in a competitive export and domestic market. The clauses in the agreement covers agreement on union membership, appointment of staff, rights of the company to determine methods of production work scheduls, installation of new equipment and so on. The company acknowledges the Unions right to process the grievance in the way agreed. The agreement also covers agreement on interchangeability of staff, election of shop stewards annual leave, absences and has a procedure in the event of lay-off or redundancy.

The agreement incorporates a 5 point procedure for the process of grievances and asserts that "It is the intention of the parties that the procedures shall serve as a means of peaceful settlement for all disputes that may arise and regardless of whether an unfair practice, or breach of contract is alleged, the company or the union and its individual members agree that no strike, work to rule, lock-out, or any other form of unofficial industrial action, shall be engaged in by either party during the lifetime of the agreement.

The Agreement took effect on 14th. February and will remain in force on an on-going basis.

The Chairman of the Shannon Meat section of the A.S.T.M.S is Michael O'Neill, Vice-Chairman: Gerard Geaney, Secretary Mary McAuliffe and the Shop Stewards are Jim O'Connor and Marueen Curtin.



Michael O'Neill, chairman ASTMS.



'A happy group' photographed at the Social for the Retired Staff of Shannon Meat.

# PROFILE - MICHAEL SHIELS



Michael Shiels.

Michael Shiels joined Shannon Meat plc. in September 1963. During his time with us he has completed his work in a quiet and unobtrusive fashion. Michael enjoyed his time with the company and was one of the most popular people with always a smile and a friendly comment for everybody. He retired on 12th. January this year, having completed a very full contribution to the company.

## Born

Mick Shiels was born in Dunganville, Ardagh. His father, Patrick, was a native of Daarsbridge and his mother was Bridget Cleary from Carrickerry. The Cleary family emigrated to the United States shortly after Bridget's marriage to Patrick. Mick remembers his childhood as a very happy one. Much of his time was spent at the handball alley at The Old Mill. This was a three wall alley and the young people of the area spent 'morning, noon and night' there. Mick recalls the young lads who played with him, Paddy and Jim Kennedy, Mick Byrnes, Jerry O'Sullivan, Jim, Bill and Tossie Upton. Tossie died at twelve years of age. Mick recalls that he was a nice quiet boy and his death at the time was a big shock to the locality.

Mick has pleasant memories of schooling in Ardagh. Many changes of teachers took place during his sojourn there. Those he recalls are Mr. O'Hehir, Mr. Hanley, Mr. Ahern, Mr. John O'Connell and Mr. Musgrave. Mr. Musgrave has a special place in Mick's memory. He was highly thought of by his pupils. He was a beautiful singer. Unfortunately he died suddenly at his home in Newcastle West while still a relatively young man. Mick Shiels took in inevitable belt of the stick in his stride and was not unknown to split the stick with a knife thereby causing it to break at the next 'belt'.

## Working

When Mick finished with school in Ardagh he went working for Bob Ambrose at The Old Mill. Wages were the princely sum of £13 for eleven months work. In todays money that was 27p per week with a full month of the year without any work or pay. After twelve months he went to Paddy Doolan of Cooleybrown and was in receipt of £17 for 11 months work.

In the early days Mick recalls going to the creamery twice daily morning and evening. He recalls with mirth his four years spent with the Misses Griffin. It wasn't so funny at the time. His life and that of Paddy and Mick Duggan was governed by "rules and

regulations" Mick recalls "we were called at 4.45 a.m. sharp. We had to be up by 5.00 a.m. Tea was made but one could not touch it until cows were milked and calves fed several hours later. Creamery was at 7 o'clock and one worked right through the day until 6.00 p.m." The Griffin ladies had a strict rule that each was addressed as "Miss". The penalty for not doing this was to be dismissed. Tea was served with milk and sugar already applied and taken in the back kitchen. A strict rule was that the door was locked each night at 10 o'clock. Mick used like the dancing at the time and used cycle to places like Tournafulla, Rahenagh, Newcastle West and so on. "They were good times", he says. "You wouldn't wear much of the bed clothes."

After Griffin's Mick went working to John Corbett. He enjoyed working here. "Work was hard", he says. "It was the time of the compulsory tillage. John and I tilled thirty-two acres with horses. Sean Curtin used milk the cows and we hit the garden at 7.00a.m. and finished at 6.00p.m."

## Great Nights

"Woemen were ten a penny that time", he recalls with a glint in his eye. "As well as far away places like Raheenagh, we had some great nights at Jim Hough's hall in Ardagh or Johnney Reidy's hall in Kilcoleman.

Mick often thought of emigrating to England. "There were severe restrictions at that time", he says. "Where the land was arable it was difficult to get going. The Authorities wanted to maintain the people working on arable land. One would have to forge their name at the labour exchange. There were no problems however for people from places like Carrickerry. For this reason I never got going. It was a chancy job", he recalls.

Mick met his future wife, Mary O'Connor from the Commons, Ardagh, at a dance in Ardagh. They were married in Ardagh church in 1943. He worked in Ardagh, Kilcoleman, Strand, at Johnsons, Rathkeale and O'Grady's Duxtown, Coolcappa, and so on. His family consists of two boys, Mick and Paddy and five girls, Helen, Mary, Bridget, Cathleen and Anne.

Michael Shiels spent two years with the Board of Works before joining Shannon Meat. He speaks highly of his colleagues "They are a great group of people. I enjoyed every minute of it." He feels, however, that young people nowadays should work a little harder and keep more fit. "I can't figure out people going training for hurling", he says, "in my day when work was hard we were as fit as fiddles."

Mick's hobby is gardening. He intends spending many of his retirement days as a tiller of the soil. He finds great relaxation and contentment in this.

To Mick we wish many days of relaxation and contentment. We miss you "Casey" at the work place. You have made a great contribution to our company and we look forward to seeing you regularly.

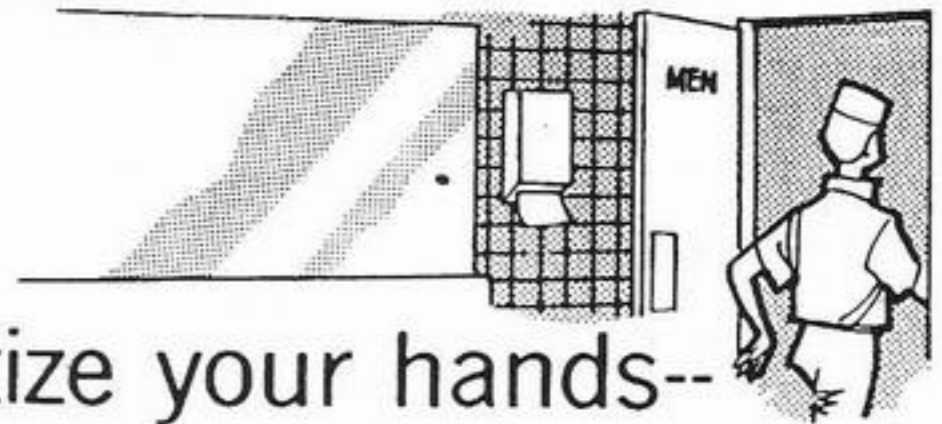
## PERSONAL HYGIENE IS VERY IMPORTANT

wash your hands the right way--

- use warm water and soap.
- work between the fingers.
- scrub your wrists and the backs of your hands.
- clean under your fingernails.
- wash as often as required--  
--and don't miss!



- **WASH EVERY TIME YOU USE THE TOILET!**



- sanitize your hands--  
when required.

## MICROPROCESSORS AND ROBOTS IN THE MEAT INDUSTRY

By Paul Treacy  
Chief Chemist

Over the last decade we have been subjected to the constant fear that it was only a matter of time before microchip technology and robots supplanted the human worker in industry. Indeed in many industries, such as the car industry, hundreds of thousands have lost their jobs due to the introduction of microprocessor-controlled robots on the factory floor.

The advantages available to management through the introduction of this technology are obvious. Robots don't go on strike, they do not need tea breaks, lunch breaks, 8-hour days, sick leave or annual holidays. And just to add insult to injury, they are usually much faster and more accurate than their human counterparts. So why isn't all this 'Star Wars' technology evident in the meat processing industry? The answer is to be found when the raw material for the industry is considered. The carcass, as any meat worker knows, is a highly variable object. This inherent variability and complexity of the slaughter house and boning hall operations is the major obstacle to the introduction of technology. There is a great deal of dexterity and judgement required by the individual workers in the preparation and boning of the carcass. It is those human attributes that the machine has difficulty in duplicating accurately.

However, experimental robotic applications have included research into carcass grading using video scanning to evaluate yield-grade, high pressure water or laser carcass splitting systems, automatic head removal and evisceration of swine carcasses, and a Swedish carcass cutter. Several relatively uncomplicated tasks, such as removal of legs, horns, tails, or heads in beef plants appear to be within the scope of present sensory and controller systems. Automated evisceration using specialized equipment is in an advanced state of development in New Zealand's sheep industry.

In conclusion, it may be many years before the fruits of computer and robotic technology filters through to the factory floor. In general the commercialization of mechanical dressing technology has not proceeded as quickly as first envisaged and we may have to await the development of new machines linking robots and fine-sensing technology to the processing technology currently being developed. Hopefully there will be a considerable delay before the meat industry witnesses the kind of mass redundancies experienced by many other labour intensive industries in the last decade.



# ABOUT GOING TO NEWCASTLE

## From Michaeleen

by Patrick J. Carroll C.Sc.

Roger O'Rourke was to drive five heifers to the fair of Newcastle. Blooded animals, registered stock, he told us. Mickeen the Hump had to go before the blooded Beauties so they would not walk themselves into a lather. Roger would go behind to urge them with gentle speech. Michaeleen was told by Mr. Enright to drive along in the trap and to take me with him. The fresh air and the drive and the change would rest my nerves.

We were on the verge of starting at the early hour of five, because Roger said if we left later, the Durhams would have to travel so fast they would be worn out with sweat by the time we reached the fair.

"I should think the sweating heifer would weigh more," Michaeleen said. "A heifer is sweating, or a cow, or a bullock, or any animal is sweating is not a prime value. A sweating animal is never as marketable as a dry animal," Roger told me. And then Kate Conway called us from the kitchen: "Roger, if you should meet my nephew, James Patrick of Castletown, will you tell him I will visit his parents the first Sunday in September?"

"All right, Kate. And now let us be starting, for 'tis a long road to Newcastle and the stock must be kept at a low temperature," Roger said.

So we started. Mickeen first; then the blood Beauties; then Roger; then Michaeleen and myself in the trap.

I don't think there is any joy anywhere will stand beside the joy of a summer morning journey. First of all there's the youth of the day. The quiet before the stir of life commences; the coolness before the warmth. There is not a breath of wind. The trees held their heads out over the road ditch and let their broad tongues hang down like the tongues of tired dogs. In the second place, the Beauties were plump and well formed and their hair smoothed down as if they were going to the chapel of a Sunday morning.

The beauties had silken flanks but they had no garlands. Roger had combed them down so their backs and necks and flanks were soft and smooth and oily, but they had no garlands. The more I looked at them the more I wondered why Roger hadn't put garlands upon the Beauties. "The Beauties should be dressed-up with garlands," I said out loud, "like they were in the stave of the poem I recited out of my head for old Burke." And I said the verses for them.

And didn't Michaeleen the very next minute say most of the poem out of his head, and didn't he say it without a single hem or haw, and with great feeling in his voice! I was sorry I had showed off. "Could you, Master Michaeleen," Roger called up the very next minute, "could you say the grand stave about Rory of the Hill for us?" "I could. But I don't want to be speaking all the pieces. Let the Craggs speak that piece." "My voice isn't so good to-day. I'd rather you'd say it, Michaeleen." I was only pretending, because I didn't know that ballad at all. I didn't

know a single word of it. But I pretended my voice wasn't good. Although my voice was great. "Roger, come up with us. You can watch the Beauties from the back of the trap." Wasn't it powerful how Michaeleen thought of everything! And Roger did. Stood on the back step and held on to the seat rails with either hand.

Farther on, south of Ardagh, where my uncle Ned lived, the country was rich in green meadows which had been shorn of their hay in June. And wonderful cattle were plucking the after-grass with large, rough, moist tongues. "This,"

Roger said, "belongs in that portion of the country they call the 'Golden Vale'." "I wonder," I inquired, "if the Craggs is in the 'Golden Vale'?" "The Craggs out of where you come?" Roger asked. "Yes, my Craggs. Bounded on the south by Cappa, on the north by Askeaton, on the east by Penders' woods, on the west by Newbridge." "Sure, there's nothing but rocks and flint and bogs and stone ditches and blackthorn bushes and limestone where you come from!" Roger said with terrible contempt. "There's potatoes," Michaeleen said. "And fine turf," I added. "And Johnny Sheehy," said Michaeleen. "And Mary and Dick," I said. "And the fife and drum band they're going to start playing upon again next spring." I knew now for sure that Michaeleen was making game of the Craggs. So I took a fling at Ballingarry. "Everybody knows that Ballingarry is famous for buttermilk. Every man from the Ballingarry country is a buttermilk man." "Wait a minute," said Roger. I was sure he was going to say some more about the Craggs so as to make it worse than it was. But he didn't. He said something else entirely. "Mickeen, come up here and get a little rest. I'll walk a dhras now." And they changed places. By that time we had forgotten all about the Craggs. Then, as if it was by a miracle, we came suddenly upon a spring well which lay like a bird's nest under a bush which grew alongside the road. "Wheel!" I said to the pony, but he kept on going.

"Who!" Michaeleen called, and the pony stopped. "Why didn't he 'wheel' when I 'wheed'?" I asked. "You must say 'wo' to ponies. You say 'whee' to asses." I never knew that before, although I had a power of knowledge about many things. For example, why you mix lime with the wheat before you scatter it all over the garden; and how to tie a rope around a cow's neck without choking her. But I never knew before that you had to say "wo" to stop a pony. And I wasn't sure of it yet. So I said to Michaeleen: "One day last year when I was taking Toomey's wheat back to Newbridge, I met Doctor Morlan and his daughter Pat. And when the doctor said "wo" to the pony, the ass stopped too." "Of course. Because an ass will stop for any excuse." I couldn't answer that. So I let it go, and got down from the trap with the others to get a drink of spring water. And here is the order in which we drank. First the Beauties; from the little stream that flowed out from the well and ran along for a bit until it stole under the ditch into the meadow. They served themselves. Bent down their heads

and let their wide, moist lips skim above noiseless stream. They seemed full of content as they drew the water up between their teeth with a prolonged sucking noise. Michaeleen served Roger first. Roger drank one cup; two cups; three cups. Then he exclaimed: "Water is the best drink, after all!" Michaeleen served Mickeen the Hump next. Mickeen drank one cup and then declared: "Water is the best drink after all the other drinks." While Michaeleen was giving me mine, Roger observed: "For a drouth, there's nothing like water." "Not for my drouth, Roger," Mickeen said. "What about your drouth?" "My drouth," Mickeen answered, "devil's own drouth! It runs the whole range of me. Down to my boots, and up under my had." "But you only drank one cup," Michaeleen said, as he reached down into the well to serve himself finally, according to the rules of the etiquette. "Because," said Mickeen, "if I took three cups I would only be quenching my thirst with poor stuff; and maybe I wouldn't have enough room for Roger's fine treat when we get to Newcastle." "Mickeen, Roger O'Rourke has always lived an even, sober, regular life. No late hours, no coming home in the dark with a surging head and a thick tongue. Roger O'Rourke has always held himself in high respect. Don't forget that." "At the same time, Roger, there's a power of comfort in having something stirring inside of you at the close of a long, hard, dry day. A man like myself, who is threatened with the decline, is in need of nourishment and stimulation at the end of a long, hard, dry day."

It was time to renew the journey, so the blooded heifers would remain at the right temperature. I forget all the places we passed. But I remember seeing the train of the Waterford and Limerick Railway coming out of Kerry, which would pass Ballingrane Junction by and by. There was a power of people going to the fair, driving cattle and sheep; and there was loud talk about going slow or going fast or turning to the right or turning to the left. The people were different from the Craggs people, it seemed to me. More bulky and more soft. But I didn't say anything; because we were nearing Newcastle, and I had to keep my eyes open for fear I would miss any of the sights. Then Roger gave his instructions at the edge of the town, which we heard in spite of all the noise made by every kind of animal that grows in Ireland. "We will take our place," Roger said, as if he were directing a battle, "in the square, near the edge of the south side, so as to be in view of all the buyers." "And the price?" Mickeen the Hump asked. "The price will be a total of fifty-six pounds, five shillings and no pence for the five blooded Durhams." "Or eleven pounds, five shillings and no pence for each Beauty," Michaeleen said, and his head full of short division. "Exactly," Roger agreed. "But there will be no separate sale." "All or none," Michaeleen said. "Exactly." And Roger urged the heifers for the final stretch. "Is there any danger," Mickeen the Hump asked, "they would get out of our sight, or be stolen, or go

astray in the great cursh? Is there any danger of that, Roger?" "I have been," Roger answered solemnly, "fourteen years in my employment. I have travelled to a hundred and forty markets and to a hundred and seventy-three fairs. I have sold and bought cows, heifers, sheep, bullocks and young lambs. I have paid money for bought stock and received money for sold stock. And never once in all my time, from the first day in my employment to this resent day, have I ever lost, or allowed to stray or to be mislaid, a single cow, heifer, bullock, fat sheep or young lamb. Never once! As my employer will give me a perfect character for." "Never at all?" Michaeleen asked.

We were at the square by now. Ten minutes after eight by the courthouse clock of the three faces. Mickeen the Hump in a ranging thirst; myself terribly hungry; Roger O'Rourke puffed out on account of his great character; Michaeleen about to lead the pony across the square to Kellys' stables for feed and rest; the Beauties huddled together, too frightened to chew their cud. "Roger", Michaeleen said, "I'm putting the pony in at Kellys." "Ay, and stable him. And close the door. So he won't be lost, stolen or strayed. That's where you must be careful, Master Michaeleen. That's my great point. That's why I'll get my perfect character from the master." "Roger, it looks like they'll be putting your statue upon the altar beside St. Brigid, the way you'r puffed out," Mickeen the Hump said. "No, Mickeen, I wouldn't go so far as to say that." "I would, Roger! By gor, I would! Why not? 'This is to certify that O'Rourke has shown himself a most powerful man; honest, reliable, thrifty, sober, loyal; praying morning, noon and night; careful of his trusts; making his Easter duty in the middle of Lent, and never getting too drunk. Besides being a distant cousin of Canon O'Rourke.'" "You're telling a lie, Mickeen the Hump! I only said I was a namesake of Canon O'Rourke. And I never said a word at all about St. Brigid. Did I, Master Michaeleen?" "No, Roger, you didn't. But all the same I think you would have made a first-class man for taking care of St. Brigid's stock when she had the monastery at Kildare. So they wouldn't be lost, stolen or strayed." "I would - I would. O I would have been prime for that!" "Or", Mickeen the Hump said, "to watch the sheep in the Crib at Christmas. To be the fellow with the cloak and the soft hat and the stick with the crook on it." "Shut up now! That's enough!" Roger said. But Mickeen wouldn't. He wouldn't ever shut up at all. "And bye and bye, when Christmas would be over, you could come back again to us and boss the cows as usual." Roger was terribly mad at the way Mickeen the Hump was making game of him. But all the same, Michaeleen and myself couldn't stop laughing.

And then we saw a buyer coming. Short and bulky, walking from the north across the square. He wanted the Beauties. You could see that. He was short and bulky and wore leater leggings. "How much?" the bulky man asked Roger. "'Tis a matter of fifty-six

[continued Page 5]

pounds, five and no pence", Roger told him. "Where do you come from?" the bulky buyer asked. "I come from Ballingarry. I'm the man in charge of my master's stock. My master, Mr. Michael Enright," "In full charge?" Roger stuck out his chest a little bit more than was necessary and nodded. "Do you expect to make a sale at that price before you go back to Ballingarry?" the bulky fellow asked. "Tis my intention." "Well, in that case", he said to Roger, "tell Mike Enright's cook not to keep any hard boiled potatoes waiting for you when you get back; because your teeth will be all out by then. And send word to the parish priest to pray for you from the altar. Your mind is going." Then he walked off. And Roger was terribly disappointed at how the bulky buyer got away with the last word. And I think he was mad at the way Mickeen the Hump and myself were laughing at what the fellow said. Because Roger suspected it was at him we were laughing. And he was right in a way.

## INTER FIRM G.A.A.

The start of the Inter Firm G.A.A. season is once again just over the horizon. All county conventions and central council conventions have been held. The major change this year is the introduction of a new insurance scheme. At the Limerick County Convention the following officers were elected:

- Chairman: Henry Cooney.**
- St. Josephs Hospital**
- Vice-Chairman: John Cahill, Form**
- Grinders**
- Secretary/P.R.O.: Ml. O'Neill**
- Shannon Meat PLC**
- Asst. Secretary: John Ryan**
- Southern Chemicals**
- Treasurer: John Shaw, Co. Council**
- Asst. Treas.: Henry Cooney.**
- St. Josephs**
- Delegates to Munster Council: J. Shaw, J. Cahill.**

Twenty clubs have affiliated to take part in the competitions this season. This is two less than last year. We here at Shannon Meat PLC will not be participating this season. This is due mainly to lay-offs and short time work, also some of our players have decided to call it a day. On behalf of the club. I would like to sincerely thank these players for their loyal and dedicated service down through the years, since the early 1970's. It has been a pleasure to play with you all.

### A.G.M.

There was a very poor attendance at our A.G.M. held recently. Hopefully we will, however, take part in the handball competitions. As regards handball we have been invited to participate in a competition sponsored by Howmedica, Raheen. I sincerely hope our handballers can keep the Shannon Meat flag flying in the Inter Firm ranks.

M. O'Neill

# SOCCER SCENE

## SHANNON UTD.

Unfortunately just as the Club's results were showing improvement prior to Christmas, the loss of key players was to take a severe toll on the team's performance. Without the services of Denis O'Dea, Pat Sheahan, John Coleman & Denis Harnett the teams that lined up over the Christmas was effectively a team of under 21 players. Against teams of vastly more experience, such teams regardless of how well they played were always short on that vital ingredient of experience.

### Results

**Shannon Utd. 2**                      **Killeaney 0**  
Reidy, Piggott.

An exciting game which saw Shannon take a 2 goal lead within 15 minutes through a penalty from Pat Reidy and an absolutely brilliant goal by Donal Piggott.

**Shannon Utd. 4**                      **Newcastle West 1**

Newcastle West struggled against a vastly superior Shannon Utd. team, who could have won by a far greater margin if they took all their chances. Goals from Pat Reidy (2), Pat Sheahan & John Fitzgibbon decided the issue.

**Bally Rovers 2**                      **Shannon Utd. 0**

A game Shannon didn't deserve to loose but the ability of the Bally Rovers forwards to take their chances decided the issue.

**Kilfinny 4**                              **Shannon Utd. 0**

Without one experienced player on the team, the Shannon team fought gamely but were hopelessly outgamed by Kilfinny.

**Shannon Utd. 1**                      **Villa Rovers 1**  
O'Connor

A game which an understrength Shannon should have won. The game was significant on two fronts. The display of Vincent Hogan at centre forward was most impressive while Seamus O'Connor scored his first ever goal.

**Kilcolman 6**                          **Shannon Utd. 1**  
Keogh

Kilcolman grabbed 2 goals in the first 5 minutes. After that even though Shannon battled gamely they were to be exposed on four more occasions before substitute Pat Keogh grabbed a late consolation goal.

**Glantine 5**                            **Shannon Utd. 1**  
Piggott

Despite the return of Denis O'Dea and Pat Sheehan, Glantine were always in control and on the day proved too strong for Shannon.

**Shannon Utd. 3**                      **Pallaskenry 2**  
Keogh (2), O'Dea

An amazing display from Shannon who managed to beat the top team in the Division and the only team in the League thus far unbeaten. Indeed Shannon Utd. lead 3-0 until the last quarter, when Pallas got their 1st goal, however, it wasn't until the last couple of minutes that Pallas grabbed their second goal and put Shannon under real pressure.

**Kilfinny 0**                              **Shannon Utd. 0**

The better chances on the day fell to Shannon but a draw was a fair result.

**Shannon Utd. 3**                      **Killeaney 1**  
Keogh (2), O'Connor

A disputed early goal put Shannon under some early pressure but excellent performances from Robie Zoncado, Eamon Kennedy and Pat Keogh always had Killeaney in trouble.

**Goals to date:** Reidy 7, Seahan (P), Keogh 5, Conmy 4, Hogan, Kennedy (L), 3, O'Rourke, Sheahan (J), Piggott, O'Connor 2, Kennedy (N), Hayes, Hough (5), Colman, Dillon, Fitzgibbon and O'Dea 1 each.

### Minors

It can hardly be disputed, but the current Shannon Utd. Minor team, must rank as the best ever team in this grade of the Desmond League. This year they completed the Grand Slam of Desmond League and Cup (Minors), Munster Youth and F.A.I. Youth Area finals. Those lads have to be saluted for their love of the game, frequently training three times a week. In passing I would like to mention the 3 players who come from outside the town: **Donal Piggott, Pat Keogh and John Sheahan.** This is John's third season with Shannon and he has been making the junior team for two of those seasons. John is an extremely talented soccer player and indeed hurler. He has also represented Limerick Minor Hurling team at Inter-County level, a distinction he shares with local player Edward Geaney. In mentioning Donal Piggott and Pat Keogh, I feel that compliments are due to their former club Kilfinny. Both these excellent players are natives of that parish and I have no doubt they would be making the Kilfinny team. However, the club did not stand in their way in achieving honours this season. Both players are now making the Shannon Utd. Junior team in which they have distinguished themselves.

### Results

**F.A.I. Youth Cup:**  
**Semi-Final-**  
**Shannon Utd. 2**                      **Newcastle Utd. 1**

Our first game this season against Newcastle and it proved a very hard match. However, goals from Diarmuid Hough and Billy Tierney decided the matter in our favour.

**Final-**  
**Shannon Utd 2**                      **Breska Rovers 0**  
Sheahan, O'Rourke

Even though Shannon dominated this game, it was not until late in the game they scored, when defender John Seahan came forward & curled the ball around the Breska goalie from 30 yards. Kevin O'Rourke scored Shannons second goal after a brilliant run by Diarmuid Hough.

**Munster Youth Cup:**  
**Semi-Final -**

**Shannon Utd. 3**                      **Newcastle Utd. 2**  
Geaney, Piggott,  
O'Connor

Again a close-fought match. However, Shannon managed to come out on top in this five goal thriller.

**Final-**  
**Shannon Utd. 4**                      **Villa Rovers 1**  
O'Connor (2) Keogh (2)

A game that was somewhat closer than the result suggests. However a game Shannon deserved to win and in Peter O'Connor and Pat Keogh have two strikers who have the capacity to take their chances.

**Scorers to Date:** Hough, O'Connor 9, O'Rourke 7, Daly, Meehan 5, Tierney, Geaney 4, Piggott, Keogh 2, Sheahan 1.

One further point in passing: 7 of our Minor players have, at this stage, played in the junior team.

### DEEL UNITED

At the time of going to press, Deel 'A' are in the top half of the premier Division, though out of contention for the League Title. They are in the semi-final of the F.A.I. Junior (Local).

With two cups still to start, the season could yet bring success to a side, who it must be said, are one of the best in the league. But, at the moment, Deel 'B' deserve top billing. In Division Three, they are currently in second place, chasing overwhelming favourites, Ballingarry, all the way. Promotion would be a just regard for a side that is evenly balanced with experience and youth.

### Deel United 'A'

- 24-11-85 Deel Utd 3 Iverus Rovers 1  
F.A.I. Sean Harnett (2)  
Junior Mike King
- 8 -12-85 Pallas 0 Deel Utd A 0  
Munster Palas won 9-8 on penalties.  
Junior
- 15-12-85 Adare 3 Deel Utd A 1  
Sean Harnett
- 5 -1 -86 Park 2 Deel Utd A 2  
John Comny  
Ml. Molyneaux
- 12-1 -86 Deel Utd 0 Killarney Celtic  
F.A.I. 2  
Junior
- 19-1 -86 Iverus Rovers 2 Deel Utd A 2  
Sean Harnett  
John Comny
- 16- 2-86 Deel Utd A 3 Adare 0  
Pat Reidy  
Mick Molyneaux  
Sean Harnett
- Deel United 'B'**
- 1 -12-85 Deel Utd. B 6 Broadford B 3  
Anthony Flaherty 2  
Liam Kennedy 2  
Mike King
- 8 -12-85 Deel Utd B 4 Broadford A 1  
Anthony Flaherty (3)  
Mike King
- 15-12-85 Deel Utd B 2 Abbey Utd B  
Liam Kennedy  
Own Goal
- 5 -1 -86 Ballingarry 0 Deel Utd B 1  
Tom White
- 19-1 -86 Deel Utd B 1 Devon Utd B  
Dermot Barry 0
- 26-1 -86 Athea 0 Deel Utd. B 2  
Liam Kennedy 2
- 2 -2 -86 Broadford B 0 Deel Utd B 1  
League Cup P.J. Wall  
1st. Leg
- 9 -2 -86 Deel Utd B 2 Broadford B 1  
League Cup John O'Connor  
2nd. Leg Charlie Hogan
- Aggregate Deel Utd B 3 Broadford B1
- 16- 2-86 Abbey Rovers B 1 Deel Utd B 1  
Anthony Flaherty
- 23- 2-86 Creeves 1 Deel Utd B 3  
Laim Kennedy  
Mike Delee  
Anthony Flaherty

# MEAT INDUSTRY REVIEW 1985

C.B.F. Report

A sharp increase in the volume of beef exports were the outstanding features of the livestock and meat sector's export performance in 1985. This was led by a significant recovery in exports to Continental EEC markets and a further marked rise in beef exports to Third Countries. The increase in exports to the EEC markets which are now at their highest level since 1980, is particularly significant and reverses the continuing shift in market share away from these markets which has been evident over the past five-year period.

The most marked developments took place within the meat export sector. Cattle throughput at meat plants, partly due to a further shift away from live exports, were 11% higher in 1985, whereas sheep throughput increased by a spectacular 37%. The cattle trade, however, continued to be marked by a degree of both price and supply instability, especially in the Spring, and while some steadiness returned in the second half of the year, returns to producers even before inflation was taken into account were below those in 1984.

The total value of exports of livestock, meat and their by-products amounted to an estimated IR£1,025 million. This was more than 10% above the 1984 value and largely reflected an increased volume. In 1985 the sector is estimated to have accounted for more than 10% of the total National exports, underlining the continuing and significant contribution of the livestock and meat sector in maintaining Ireland's foreign trade growth and to the national economy in turn.

# OUTLOOK FOR BEEF IN 1986

C.B.F. Report

Given the likelihood that de-stocking has occurred in Ireland during 1985, supplies of prime cattle for marketing during 1986 are likely to be below year earlier levels. Cow culling rates are also expected to fall below those in 1985. Based on these supply factors cattle prices should improve and display normal seasonal patterns, but, as always, much will depend on weather conditions and on the nature and timing of EEC supports.

Some improvement in EEC demand is likely during 1986, based on a forecast decline of 3% in beef production. The decline is likely to be particularly marked in the U.K., especially in the first half of the year. Apart from the UK, the extent of the recovery in beef prices will be moderate, because Continental EEC production will still be high and there is a significant volume of intervention stocks overhanging the market. Similarly, market demand for beef is still weak and will be further moderated by a significant increase in EEC pigmeat supplies during the year.

Little improvement in Third Country demand can be foreseen in 1986, as declining oil revenues reduce buying power in many markets in North Africa and the Middle East in particular. Competition from South American supplies could also increase somewhat. While much has been achieved to secure Third Country markets for Irish beef exports, as through the Egyptian Protocol Agreement, any improvement in market returns will be largely

dependent on whether EEC exports refunds will be increased.

In the sheep sector, a further increase in disposals is possible during 1986, but is likely to be very moderate. The outlook is for a relatively steady trade with the main emphasis continuing to rest on the need for quality production in order to improve market returns.

## Medium-Term Outlook

Current discussions within the EEC commission, yet to emerge in the form of proposals, but reported to include the possible phasing out of public intervention and the introduction of a new single premium system, would, if adopted, have major implications for the cattle and beef trade. A special article at the end of this review, which considers the implications of milk quotas and the proposed EEC 'Outgoers' Scheme on EEC Beef Production. It concludes that the structural surplus in beef production will have been eliminated, and that a return to self-sufficiency can be contemplated for the first time since 1979. As seasonal surpluses will continue, however, there will be a continued need for intervention arrangements in order to support and regulate the market.

In the light of these conclusions, the medium-term prospect for beef producers would appear to be positive. However, major changes in market support arrangements, would appear to be unnecessary, if designed to rectify the current market imbalance.

# I.T.G.W.U. NEWS

On 16th. December last the A.G.M. of the I.T.&G.W.U. took place in Shannon Meat. Willie Crowley was elected Chairman, Patsy O'Donnell was elected Vice-Chairman, and Jack Daly was re-elected Secretary.

Willie Crowley, the new Chairman, was Vice-Chairman last year. He hails from Knockfinish, Carrickerry. He has worked in Shannon Meat since 23rd. of September 1974, and has mainly worked in the Boning Hall and Slaughter Hall.

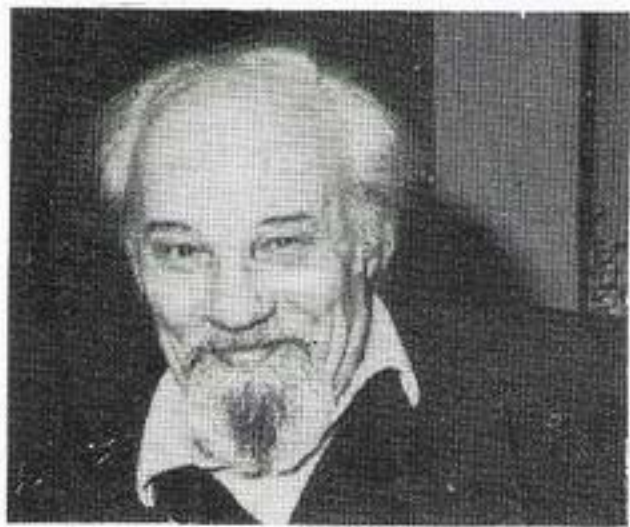
Willie is very grateful to all the members for making him Chairman, and seeks their support and co-operation throughout the year.

The Committee for 1986 are as follows:

**Slaughter Line: Gerald Enright**  
**Offals: Tom Grey**  
**Boning Hall: Patsy O'Donnell**  
**Freezers: Dick Sheehy**  
**Cannery: Liam Hanley**  
**Maintenance: Tom O'Keeffe**  
**Loading: Patsy Madigan.**

Out-going Chairman, Pat Madigan, would like to pay a special thanks to the Committee members that worked with him during the year. He would also like to thank the members for their support and co-operation. Pat would also like to pay a very special thanks to Branch Official, Mr. Gerry McMahon for his help during the year. Finally, he would like to wish the new Chairman, Willie Crowley, the very best of luck in 1986.

## PICTURE PARADE



"Good Luck Mario". Mario Zoncada who has been with the company since 1966 having first arrived in Shannon Meat in 1952 has decided to return to his native Italy.



David Dalton and Pauline Hanley photographed at the Christmas party.



At the Retired Staff party also were Michael and Peggy Moroney.



Mr. and Mrs. Bill Meade at the Woodlands Hotel on 28th. February.



"Getting up to antics" at the Shannon Meat Social Club Christmas Party at the Community Centre, Rathkeale.



Pa Guinane provided the music for the Retired Staff party at The Woodlands Hotel.



Michael and Josie McNamara photographed at The Woodlands Hotel Adare on 28th February.



Mr. and Mrs. Paddy Cawley at the Retired Staff Party organised by the social Club.



Willie and Catherine Crowley brought their daughter, Anne Marie, for her first trip to Santa Claus at the Social Clubs Childrens Party.