

# The night the Police beat up the wrong man

MICHAEL FITZGERALD was badly beaten up by five policemen late on Friday evening, September 3. He was later charged with being drunk and disorderly, but the name on the charge sheet was not his own, but that of his brother, Eddie.

A month previously Eddie Fitzgerald was harassed by three policemen in the early hours of the morning as he was returning from walking his dog.

They couldn't find an excuse to charge him then, but threatened to "do" him sometime.

23-year-old Michael and his brother, Eddie, are about the same height and build. From behind on a dark night — the circumstances of Michael's ordeal with the police — it would be difficult to distinguish them.

The police haven't "done" Eddie — yet, it seems they got his brother instead, and probably still don't realise it.

Obviously the police didn't look very closely at Michael Fitzgerald's face, and he didn't get a chance to look at theirs either.

It was about 11.30 p.m. He'd had a few pints of lager in a pub, and he was crossing the waste ground only 50 yards from his

home.

"Suddenly I was pushed from behind on to my face," he said.

"Then I felt something held down on the back of my neck. I shouted: Who is it? I tried to push myself up and someone stood on my hands. Then I heard the walkie talkie and realised it was the police. One of them said 'Get up' but as I tried I was hit with a baton or something on the side of my head.

"Then my hands were pulled up behind my back. I was dragged around. It was then I realised there must have been four or five of them. They punched me in the back — I've been in hospital for TB of the spine so it really hurt."

Michael Fitzgerald was handcuffed and taken to the cells of Tuebrook police station, but the police never let him see their faces. He wasn't charged at the station, but was refused medical attention and a phone call.

Early next morning Mr Edward Fitzgerald (Michael's father) was visited by a constable who informed him that his son Eddie was in Tuebrook station, charged with being drunk and disorderly.

Michael Fitzgerald was released that morning and arrived home



Michael Fitzgerald on the waste ground where he was attacked.

about 8 o'clock. When his father came down he was horrified to see his son.

Mr Fitzgerald explained: "He was cut and scraped and bruised. His pullover all torn. 'Oh not you as well,' I said. 'Our Eddie's been done for drunk and disorderly as well.'"

But it turned out Eddie had stayed the night at a friend's. The police had charged Michael in his brother's name.

That day Michael Fitzgerald visited a hospital for treatment and made an official complaint against the police.

When he appeared in the magistrates' court on the Monday he pleaded Not Guilty to being drunk and disorderly. The case will be heard in November.

## Building Consultant extends his villa . . .

MR L.A. IYANDA is a building consultant. But when he decided to transform his own small semi into what he proudly describes as a 'villa', he apparently forgot to consult himself.

He went ahead and built a large two-storey extension to his 'villa' in Herondale Road, Mossley Hill, without planning permission.

Now a council committee have told him to knock it down.

Mr Iyanda should have known better. He worked for several years in Liverpool's Planning Department. And since he started his own business he's been a frequent — and tiresome — visitor there discussing plans for his clients.

Still, the department did put in a good word for him when he belatedly applied for permission to extend

his home. They urged a council sub-committee to give permission, on condition that work on the alterations started within five years. (An odd condition, seeing that the work was almost finished.)

But the sub-committee disagreed. They decided that the appearance of the development was 'unsatisfactory' and 'prejudicial to the amenities' of the house next door. They gave him three months to knock it down.

Next the application came before the Planning and Land committee. Mr Iyanda turned up and spoke to the meeting. Councillors were not impressed, and by ten votes to one, they backed the sub-committee's decision.

However, at the full city council, the matter was 'withdrawn for further consideration'.

## and rents out his slum at £20 a week

PETER and Catherine Obinyan and their four children had just got back to Liverpool after three years in Nigeria and were looking for a house.

Then they met Mr L.A. Iyanda, building consultant... and landlord.

He was in the process of throwing his tenants out of a house in High Park Street. He offered to sell it to Mr and Mrs Obinyan for £4,200.

He showed them round late at night and it looked reasonable. He told them there had recently been an improvement grant and that he had designed the improvements himself.

The Obinyans signed a form and gave him their savings — £700 — as a deposit.

When they'd been there two days a health inspector called and told them it was against the law to live there — there was a Closing Order on the house.

So the Obinyans told Mr Iyanda they didn't want to buy, but offered to rent the house.

Mr Iyanda said the rent was £20 a week and he wanted it three

months in advance. So he deducted this from the deposit and agreed to return the remaining £460.

Soon after, he changed his mind and said he wanted the rent a year in advance — so they now owed him £300 on top of the £700 already paid.

Mr Obinyan said the £700 was the only money he had. Mr Iyanda replied "It's chicken feed."

Chicken feed or not, the Obinyans are now threatening legal action to get it back.

### Unpublished works by Dovedale

MOST flat agencies have found loopholes in the Accommodation Agencies Act which stops them from charging for simply putting people on their waiting lists.

But the best one yet comes from Dovedale Estates in Penny Lane.

Those unfortunate enough to register with this outfit are obliged to part with £4 for a photostat copy of a little booklet entitled... "Tenants' Rights".

## Houses in Wavertree get short reprieve

THE PEOPLE of Wellington Avenue, Wavertree, were relieved to hear, in May, that a reprieve had been granted on the demolition of four houses in the street.

The City Planning Officer informed them that all the letters both for and against the proposal — to make way for a school playground extension — would be sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment for his ruling.

The four houses were listed as of special architectural interest. And, with the falling school population causing doubt over the need for the new playground, there seemed a good chance that the houses could be saved.

But three days after the letter from the City Planning Officer extolling the virtues of our democratic process, another bureaucrat instructed the demolition contractors to begin their work.

Today, four months later, the rubble still remains.

## New Zealand Government refuse entry to Lecturer

MR DAVID EVANS, a lecturer at Liverpool University, has been refused an entry permit into New Zealand because of anti-apartheid activities in South Africa over ten years ago.

Mr Evans successfully applied for the post of lecturer in social studies at Massey University in Palmerston, New Zealand, in January this year. But because of a 5-year prison sentence, served in Pretoria Prison from 1964 to 1969, for possession of explosives under the 'Criminal Law Amendment Act', the New Zealand authorities refused him an entry permit.

Although the New Zealand Immigration Act prohibits entry to anyone convicted of a criminal offence and detained for a year or more, certificates of exemption can be granted.

Staff at Massey University, who were aware of his South African activities before he was offered the job, appealed on Mr Evans' behalf, but were told that an exemption certificate would not be granted in this case.

His present job, as lecturer in literature and journalism, has come to an end because of the cuts in university spending.

Mr Evans has sent a letter to Mr Muldoon, the New Zealand Prime Minister, in which he states: "If, as it is widely claimed, New Zealand is a democracy, no one in the country is likely to find my opposition to the South African regime any more reprehensible than was opposition to Hitler's regime, an opposition which your countrymen of the time shared."

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