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## Killing of two teenagers had deep impact on future MP

([Irish News](#))



The Willie Carson picture of Martin McGuinness in military uniform was taken at the funeral of two Derry teenagers shot dead by the British army on March 14 1972.

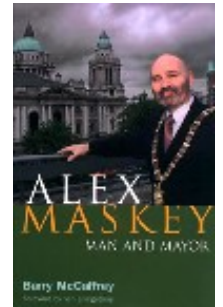
Colm Keenan (19) and Eugene McGillan (18) were shot close to Dove Gardens in Derry's Bogside on the night that the first Widgery Inquiry into Bloody Sunday ended.

Colm Keenan was a particularly close friend of the young Martin McGuinness.

The future Sinn Féin MP was in the Bogside at the time and has talked in the past about the deep impact the double shooting had on him.

He helped lift Mr McGillan into an ambulance and then saw his close friend Mr Keenan lying with a bullet wound to the head.

While the teenagers were members of the IRA, mystery still surrounds the exact circumstances of their deaths. They were shot during an IRA gun battle but both the IRA and the dead men's families have always insisted that they were not involved in the shooting.



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In September 2002 former British army information officer Colin Wallace gave details of the gun battle to the Saville Inquiry sitting in London.

He claimed that on the last day of the inquiry a number of lawyers and military who had been representing British interests at the tribunal decided to go to the Bogside.

While it was denied by the witnesses, there were claims that the group decided to go into the Bogside while at a dinner marking the end of the inquiry.

On entering the Bogside they came under machine gun fire close to Stanley's Walk.

In the ensuing gun battle one of the party was shot in the arm and subsequently had the limb amputated.

A month after the Wallace evidence, Soldier 1872 told Saville he was the officer who was shot during the gun battle.

While he was based in London at the time, the soldier said he was sent to Coleraine for the Widgery Inquiry as part of the British army's legal team. The major said he went on foot patrol with the Royal Green Jackets.

"The patrol I accompanied went to Stanley's Walk where we were ambushed and fired upon by a machine gun. The corporal with us was badly wounded," he told the Saville Inquiry.

"The patrol commander bashed down the door to a house and took him inside. I recall the lady of the house being initially upset at the intrusion but then tried to help."

The former major said they took the injured corporal out of the house to open ground where they again came under fire.

"I returned fire but was shot myself in my right arm."

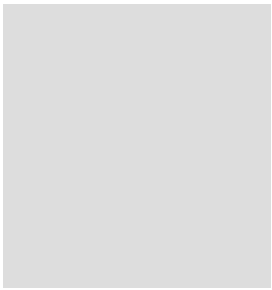
He said he was taken to Altnagelvin Hospital and on to Mill Bank military hospital where efforts were made to save his hand but it was amputated in November that year.

Soldier 1872 denied a claim by Colin Wallace that Mr McGuinness was present during the gun battle. He said he only saw "gun flashes and dim shadows".

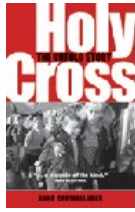
November 14, 2006

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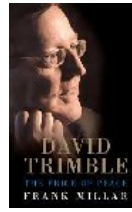
This article appeared first in the November 13, 2006 edition of the [Irish News](#).



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