**The Wood Road: Contextuals**

The **Ulster Special Constabulary** (**USC**; commonly called the "**B-Specials**" or "**B Men'**") was a quasi-military[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulster_Special_Constabulary" \l "cite_note-1) reserve police force in [Northern Ireland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Ireland" \o "Northern Ireland). It was set up in October 1920, shortly before the founding of Northern Ireland. It was an armed corps, organised partially on military lines and called out in times of emergency, such as war or insurgency.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulster_Special_Constabulary" \l "cite_note-2) It performed this role in 1920–22 during the [Irish War of Independence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_War_of_Independence" \o "Irish War of Independence) and in the 1950s, during the [IRA Border Campaign](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Border_Campaign_(IRA)" \o "Border Campaign (IRA)). The force became almost exclusively Protestant[*[when?](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Dates_and_numbers" \l "Chronological_items" \o "Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Dates and numbers)*] and as a result was viewed with great mistrust by [Catholics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholics" \o "Catholics). During the 1920s, it is alleged[*[who?](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Avoid_weasel_words" \o "Wikipedia:Avoid weasel words)*] to have carried out several revenge killings and [reprisals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reprisal" \o "Reprisal) against Catholic civilians in the 1920–22 conflict.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulster_Special_Constabulary" \l "cite_note-3) Unionists generally supported the USC as contributing to the defence of the Northern Ireland polity from [subversion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subversion) and outside aggression.[4]The Special Constabulary was disbanded in May 1970, after the [Hunt Report](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hunt_Report), which advised re-shaping Northern Ireland's security forces to attract more Catholic recruits[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulster_Special_Constabulary#cite_note-autogenerated1-5) and disarming the police. Its functions and membership were largely taken over by the [Ulster Defence Regiment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulster_Defence_Regiment) (UDR) and the [Royal Ulster Constabulary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Ulster_Constabulary) Reserve.

## IRA Hunger strikes The [1981 Irish hunger strike](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1981_Irish_hunger_strike) started with Sands refusing food on 1 March 1981. Sands decided that other prisoners should join the strike at staggered intervals in order to maximise publicity with prisoners steadily deteriorating successively over several months.

The hunger strike centred on five demands:

1. the right not to wear a prison uniform;
2. the right not to do prison work;
3. the right of free association with other prisoners, and to organise educational and recreational pursuits;
4. the right to one visit, one letter and one parcel per week;
5. full restoration of remission lost through the protest.[[26]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bobby_Sands" \l "cite_note-pt-26)

The significance of the hunger strike was the (IRA) prisoners' aim of being declared political prisoners (or prisoners of war) as opposed to criminals. The *Washington Post* reported that the primary aim of the hunger strike was to generate international publicity.[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bobby_Sands#cite_note-27)

**Drip painting** is a form of [abstract art](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abstract_art) in which paint is dripped or poured onto the canvas. This style of [action painting](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_painting) was experimented with in the first half of the twentieth century by such artists as [Francis Picabia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Picabia), [André Masson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andr%C3%A9_Masson)[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drip_painting#cite_note-1) and [Max Ernst](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Ernst)…

Drip painting was however to find particular expression in the work of the mid-twentieth-century artists [Janet Sobel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janet_Sobel) and [Jackson Pollock](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackson_Pollock).[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drip_painting#cite_note-Emmerling-2) Pollock found drip painting to his liking; later using the technique almost exclusively, he would make use of such unconventional tools as sticks, hardened brushes and even [basting syringes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basting_(cooking)) to create large and energetic abstract works. Pollock used house paint to create his signature drips. House paint was less viscous than traditional tubes of [oil paint](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_paint), and Pollock thus created his large compositions horizontally to prevent his paint from running. His gestural lines create a unified overall pattern…

[Sepia tones](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sepia_tone) are used in [photography](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photography); the hue resembles the effect of aging in old photographs, and of older photographs chemically treated either for visual effect or for archival purposes. Most photo [graphics software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graphics_software) programs and many [digital cameras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_camera) include a sepia tone option.

(trĭg) pronunciation  
*adj.*

1. Smart and trim, as in appearance; neat.
2. Being in good condition.

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Waiting_for_the_milk_train_-_geograph.org.uk_-_93290.jpg)

Milk churns on a railway platform

A **milk churn** is a tall, conical or cylindrical container for the transportation of [milk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk" \o "Milk).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk_churn" \l "cite_note-1) It is sometimes referred to as a **milk can**. Milk was originally distributed in '[pails](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pail_(container)" \o "Pail (container))', a lidded bucket with a handle. Often two pails would be carried on either end of a wooden yoke. Once the railways started carrying milk the pail proved less than ideal as it was top-heavy and tended to spill. Dairy farmers used a tall conical wooden container - a [butter churn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butter_churn) - to '[churn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Churning_(butter))' the milk to make butter, and this proved to be preferable for the railways to transport. It held a lot more milk (about seventeen gallons) and its conical shape made it less likely to spill or topple over. These wooden churns were intrinsically heavy however and from the 1850s a steel version was introduced and soon became the standard. The name churn was retained for these containers although they were not themselves used for 'churning' butter.

As with [British Railway Milk Tank Wagons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Railway_Milk_Tank_Wagon" \o "British Railway Milk Tank Wagon). the milk churn was a standard size, the older galvanised iron conical type held 17 gallons, whilst the cylindrical type with the mushroom shaped lid introduced in the 1930s held ten gallons. Each churn carried a brass plate near the top to identify the owning company and when full it would have a white paper label (tied to the handle on the lid of the conical type and to the side handle of the cylindrical type), which was used for accounting purposes by the [creamery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creamery) or [dairy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dairy).[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk_churn#cite_note-2)

Wake A **wake** ([Irish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_language" \o "Irish language): *faire*) is a [ceremony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceremony" \o "Ceremony) associated with death. Traditionally, a wake takes place in the house of the deceased with the body present; however, modern wakes are often performed at a [funeral home](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Funeral_home). In the [United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) and [Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada) it is synonymous with a [viewing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viewing_(funeral)). It is often a social rite which highlights the idea that the loss is one of a social group and affects that group as a whole.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wake_(ceremony)#cite_note-1)The word "wake" originated from [Middle English](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_English) *wakien, waken*, from [Old English](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_English) *wacan*, to wake up and *wacian*, to be awake, keep watch. The term originally referred to a late-night prayer [vigil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vigil) but is now mostly used for the social interactions accompanying a funeral. While the modern usage of the verb "wake" is "become or stay alert", a "wake" for the dead harks back to the antiquated "watch" or "guard" sense. This is contrary to the urban legend that people at a wake are waiting in case the deceased should "wake up."[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wake_(ceremony)#cite_note-Brunetti-2)

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It used to be the custom in most Celtic countries in Europe for mourners to keep watch or vigil over their dead until they were buried — this was called a "Wake".

With the change to the more recent practice of holding the wake at a funeral home rather than the home, the custom of providing refreshment to the mourners is often held directly after the funeral at the house or another convenient location.

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