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**1967-1998: The paramilitary archive of UVF leader Augustus Andrew (Gusty) Spence (1933-2011) including secret talks with both wings of the IRA in 1974**

The nationally important collection of archival material gathered by 'Gusty' Spence during his life as one of the most important paramilitary leaders during The Troubles and later as a politician and supporter of the peace process. These documents cover a period of over 30 years and relate to his paramilitary career, organisation and discipline within the UVF, agreements with other loyalist paramilitary groups, his imprisonment and later moves to peaceful methods including an unpublished account of discussions with the Provisional I.R.A. in 1974.

2 letters from the Court of Criminal Appeal in Northern Ireland relating to the dismissal of Spence's appeal against his conviction. 4pp forming part of a petition on behalf of Spence with 93 names and addresses of those supporting his appeal. Documents relating to the appeal made by Louisa Spence against the reduction of her military pension benefits during the period that her husband was incarcerated. Letter sent to 'Gusty' in prison signed "...long live the spirit of Carson, long live our war..." by 25 family members on 12 July 1967 wishing him well on 'The Twelfth'. Another presentation letter sent to Spence on 'The Twelfth' 1968, described as the "278th Anniversary of the victory of William III over the forces of Popery and tyranny..." signed by 63 individuals many of whom are members of Spence's family. Contemporaneous copy of a letter from the Ministry of Home Affairs relating to pre-release parole. Letter from Lord Chief Justice Goddard relating to prisoner's television rights. "The Orange Cross" handbill dated January 1972 relating to fundraising for Loyalist prisoners.

Mother's Day card sent by Spence in 1972 from Belfast Jail with long manuscript note stating in part "... on this 'Mothering Sunday' I send you my sincere love and devotion... have no fear as we shall emerge victorious, triumphant and unconquered. No Surrender..." Official 2pp typescript copy of the UVF copy of the Ulster Volunteer Force, Red Hand Commando agreement made in July 1972 at Belfast in an attempt to align the two groups. Signed by Gusty Spence on behalf of the UVF and John McKeague of the RHC. Single page letter from the Bishop of Connor relating to prison conditions.

7pp account from the UVF on discussions held with the Provisional IRA in 1974. The memo claims that first contact was made in January of that year after a vote was made by the organisation's hierarchy to open talks. Journalists Kevin Myers and Vincent Browne were approached and the first encounter took place in a lodge at Lough Sheelin in Co Cavan which was guarded by IRA men with submachine guns. Ruairi Ó Brádaigh was notably absent from this meeting as he "could not elude his Special Branch 'tail'". The meeting was remarkably frank and both sides put forward their opinions with the UVF stating that the loyalist population would not accept a united Ireland, a consensus which they were obligated to respect. While Dáithí Ó Conaill explained the idea of the Éire Nua political strategy and raised the possibility of discussing a "peaceful co-existence" in Ulster in follow-up meetings. The account goes on to describe that next meeting which took place in McCabes Hotel, Mountnugent, County Cavan. The main emphasis of this meeting was on what could or could not be deemed as acceptable and legitimate targets in armed conflict. The UVF asked the IRA that "they should direct their bombs and bullets against the armed British forces, British civil servants and other agents of the Crown, and not against the Ulster businessman and worker." while Loyalists should "only direct their war materials against those who are determined to sell them out". Martin McGuinness who was present at the meeting is described as "o/c Derry Provisional IRA" and was challenged by the UVF who asked "what objectives he had in mind when he ordered the bombings of shops, bakeries and other small businesses in Derry". Opinions and remarks were exchanged on each point that was raised and remarkably the discussions went on to cover the possibility of joint paramilitary checkpoints to prevent sectarian assassinations on innocent individuals, joint intelligence liaison to combat the SAS and joint policy relating to attacks on public areas. Some agreements were made but further talks were prevented after the news of the meetings were leaked and the agreements were rejected by other members of the UVF. The document concludes with a poignant note that the talks "could have led to a better

understanding and to a permanent ceasefire. There need not have been any loss of principle. But the super-Pros would not wear it..." There would be over 20 more years of bloodshed and violence before the Good Friday Agreement.

12 typescript orders and official UVF correspondence issued and signed by 'Gusty Spence' in Long Kesh to the members of the UVF. Official UDA letter from "to be read out to all UDA personnel; Long Kesh" announcing the appointment of William Sloan as camp Commanding Officer. Letter signed by Spence dated 20 September 1976 tendering his resignation as commanding officer of the UVF/RHC in Long Kesh "because I am tired of the in-fighting that goes on within the Loyalist ranks and because I am not prepared to be all things to all men...". Letter signed by Spence from Long Kesh to Alan Whitsitt reporter with the Belfast Newsletter "this communication is purely illegal of course and comes to you by a very unorthodox route.

UVF night guard report for Compound 21 at Long Kesh for the night of 9 and 10 October 1976. Typescript copy of the UVF and UDA personnel non-aggression pact in Long Kesh 2 information memos from the UVF to 'Gusty' Spence. Typescript copy of the lyrics to the song 'Fernando' by ABBA with manuscript not by Spence. Despair-To-Dignity, a 19pp booklet produced by the Prisoners Rights Union, made up of both Republican and UVF prisoners, in 1979. Letter signed by Frankie Curry recommending the court martial and dismissal of a prisoner from the RHC due to having "defected to the Prison Authorities". Letters from other leading politicians and personalities including Charlie Haughey, Sammy Wilson on behalf of Peter Robinson, Lord Blease and Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich. Official licence from the British Government releasing Spence from prison dated 13 December 1984 and signed by both Spence and the governor of the prison. Invites to the 1997 St. Patrick's Day reception at the Anglo-Irish Secretariat Maryfield for Gusty Spence and 1998 dinner at the State Apartments in Dublin Castle for Andrew Spence. British (Cyprus) passport issued to 'Gusty' Spence whilst a soldier.

€5,000-€7,000 (£4,167-£5,833 approx)

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**1957-61: Documents relating to Spence's military career including pay book**

Soldier's Record and Pay Book of Augustus Andrew Spence whilst a member of the Royal Ulster Rifles detailing promotions, training, service details, next of kin, will etc. Also with Spence's Soldier's Employment Association registration card, third class Army certificate of education issued in 1958, R.U.R. Association Club Card, letter from 39 Infantry Brigade Group and postcard sent home while on service.

€200-€300 (£167-£250 approx)

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**1960-2010: Collection of documents and ephemera including Trade Union membership cards**

Collection of items relating to the life of 'Gusty' Spence including Union of Post Office Workers membership card, Transport and General Worker's Union card, army resettlement grant form, medical card, rent books, historical society membership cards, letter etc. Many items with Spence's signature. (16 items)

€100-€150 (£83-£125 approx)

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**1914-53: Military certificates and paybooks of Robert and William Spence**

WW1 Soldier's Pay and Service Book of 5522 Driver William Edward Spence Royal Garrison Artillery, father of Gusty Spence. Royal Navy certificate of service of Robert Spence, recording service on a number of ships from 1947 to 1954 with associated Korea Medal and United Nation Service Medal miniatures, brother of Gusty Spence. Also with another blank British Army paybook. (4 items)

€100-€150 (£83-£125 approx)