

# "The Phantom's" Last Stand—In His Shirt!

*"Sunday Independent" Special*

**I**F the sentence of five years penal servitude passed last Friday on 30-year-old John Broe, stated to be a native of Templeogue, Co. Dublin, has put an end to the career of "The Phantom," as he was popularly known, the credit is mainly due to three Roscommon-born Gardai. A detective officer and two uniformed men, they were responsible for his capture in the early hours of July 15.



**G**ARDA WALTER DOWD was the man who, with Garda J. Egan, helped to catch "The Phantom," the Dublin burglar and housebreaker whose Raffles-like escapades had set the police wondering for some months. "The Phantom"—a man named John Broe—was captured by the two Guards after a fight in the Poddle River at Rathfarnham.

As a result of a "999" call on the preceding night, a team of squad cars set out to search the Rathfarnham-Templeogue district. In one of them was D.-O. Christopher Lang, a native of Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon. The search extended through the fields where D.-O. Lang, by this time alone, spotted a man lying under a haycock in the Wellington Lane-Rathfarnham area.

When the man saw the officer he ran; Lang gave chase and finally brought his quarry to bay in the River Poddle.

Broe resisted strongly and it was about 20 minutes before Lang succeeded in subduing him.

The bank of the river at this point is high and having captured his man, Lang was now faced with the problem of getting him out in order to "bring him in."

There was only one narrow opening, wide enough for one person at a time, through the river bank to the field above. Lang finally solved the problem by forcing Broe to undress to his shirt and then making him climb the bank.

The officer's troubles were not over, however. As Broe climbed up through the opening he thrust backwards with his bare foot, tumbling the detective back into the river. When D/O. Lang finally climbed up to the field Broe had made his escape in his shirt.

## GOT REINFORCEMENTS

Making his way to Templeogue House D./O. Lang got in touch, through headquarters with one of the squad cars, manned by Garda John Egan, of Sundrive Road Station, and Walter Dowd, of Rathmines Station, both also Roscommon-born.

On Lang's directions as to where he had last seen the wanted man and after a search of about half an hour, they discovered Broe lying in a ditch a short distance from where he had made his escape.

It was the "end of the line" for "The Phantom."