

Up the Provos

David Rovics

D G D

He grew up on a farm in a trou-bled I - rish land

Em G A D

Un - der for - eign rule and the Bri - tish crown's com - mand His fa - ther fought for I - re - land

G D Em G A 3

fif - ty years be - fore But the Free State cut their los - ses and the Eng - lish won the war And when in -

G D Em

tern - ment with - out tri - al was the or - der of the day When his bro - ther was ar - rest - ed and his

G A 3 G

friends were blown a - way When he was beat - en near to death he de -

D 3 Em G A

ci - ded come what may He'd throw his lot in with the pro - vos and he joined the I R A

G D A

Up the pro - vos that's what he said Three lit - tle words that filled the

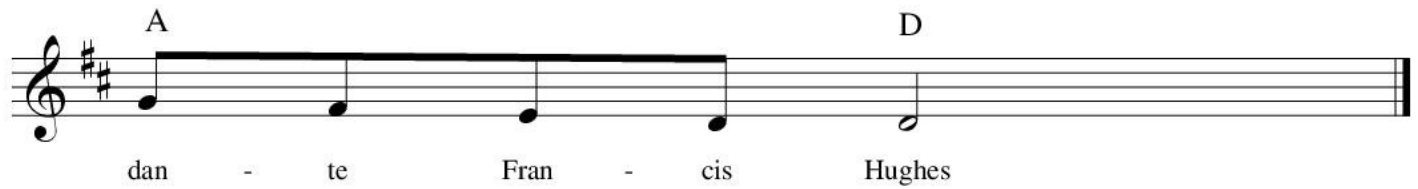
Bm G Em D Bm

Brit - ish crown with dread With a rif - le on his shoul - der a tim - er and a fuse

G D A Bm G D

Long may we re - mem - ber Com - man - dan - te Fran - cis Hughes Long may we re - mem - ber Com - man -

Up the Provos



In the Occupied Six Counties perhaps it never will be known

All the foreign soldiers in Armagh and Tyrone
Who decided to head back across the Irish Sea
So they wouldn't have to meet the man from south of Derry
He never wavered in his battle for Irish liberty
And the Crown would soon regret the day they made him their enemy
The Brits called it "bandit country" and it filled them all with fright
In the border lands, he who walked the hills at night

*"Up the Provos," that's what he said
Three little words that filled the British Crown with dread
With a rifle on his shoulder, a timer and a fuse
Long may we remember Commandante Francis Hughes*

Once he was surrounded by the SAS
How he might escape was anybody's guess
In his boots and camouflage he didn't miss a beat
He walked right past the soldiers and out into the street
Once he came upon a checkpoint, the soldier didn't want to die
He recognized our Francis and the soldier waved him by
He didn't want to find out if he could take what he could give
He knew there'd be a shootout and the soldier chose to live

*"Up the Provos," that's what he said
And from this farmer's son better men had fled
With a rifle on his shoulder, a timer and a fuse
Long may we remember Commandante Francis Hughes*

He was the North's most wanted man with his photo everywhere
But he eluded capture with his wit and dyed blond hair
For six years he was active, three times as long as most
He became a legend, north to south and coast to coast
He came upon two soldiers out one night on patrol

They shot him in the firefight and the bullets took their toll
He crawled off into the bushes but they found him the next day
Put him on a stretcher and they carried him away

*"Up the Provos," that's what he said
With a shattered bone and a body full of lead
With a rifle on his shoulder, a timer and a fuse
Long may we remember Commandante Francis Hughes*

They beat him and they tortured him and they gave him eighty years
When they brought him to the H-Blocks he was greeted there with cheers
He went right onto the blanket and when the hunger strike began
He was the first to volunteer along with Bobby Sands
He was an Irish soldier and that's how he did his time
He knew he was no criminal when occupation was the crime
Bobby Sands had passed beyond us, where Francis soon would be
And although he couldn't stand and he could barely see

*"Up the Provos," that's what he said
As they carried him to hospital to lay in his death bed
With a rifle on his shoulder, a timer and a fuse
Long may we remember Commandante Francis Hughes*