

## WHY THE UNKNOWN GALLAGHER SAYS HE WON'T LOOK BACK IN ANGER

# My brothers may be stars, but I'm cleverer than both of them put together

BY CAROLINE PHILLIPS

**T**HERE is something comically sad about Paul Gallagher, the elder brother of Oasis's Liam and Noel, the one who lives with his mum in Manchester.

He walks into the Milestone, a chic London hotel, and looking around, says he remembers staying there once. In a big suite, he adds, with a dramatic flourish. However, the staff have no recollection of ever having seen him, nor is he on their computer record of past guests.

The bluster comes on at force 10 when I ask about his brothers' sexual magnetism and beautiful girlfriends, Patsy Kensit and Meg Matthews. Paul claims he has three "in the North, South and East". But don't they know about one another? "I just don't get photographed with them."

Then there is the matter of his transport. He owns a Jaguar and loves people to know it. He once famously boasted: "My brothers are probably narked that I've got a Jag and they've worked hard for years and only just got flashy cars."

Nevertheless, he is still on the train, miles from London, at 12.45pm, the time we are supposed to be meeting for lunch. He is on the train because his Jaguar seems to have only three wheels. The point is, though, he can't drive — and flashy car notwithstanding, he was on the dole until recently, so I reimburse his fare.

It would be true to say that Paul holidays in style. Last week he was luxuriating in New York. But dig deeper and it emerges that he was there with his mum, Peggy, and only because Noel had paid for it.

"It was her first trip abroad," explains Paul. "We flew Concorde, went to Phantom Of The Opera, stayed in the most expensive hotel."

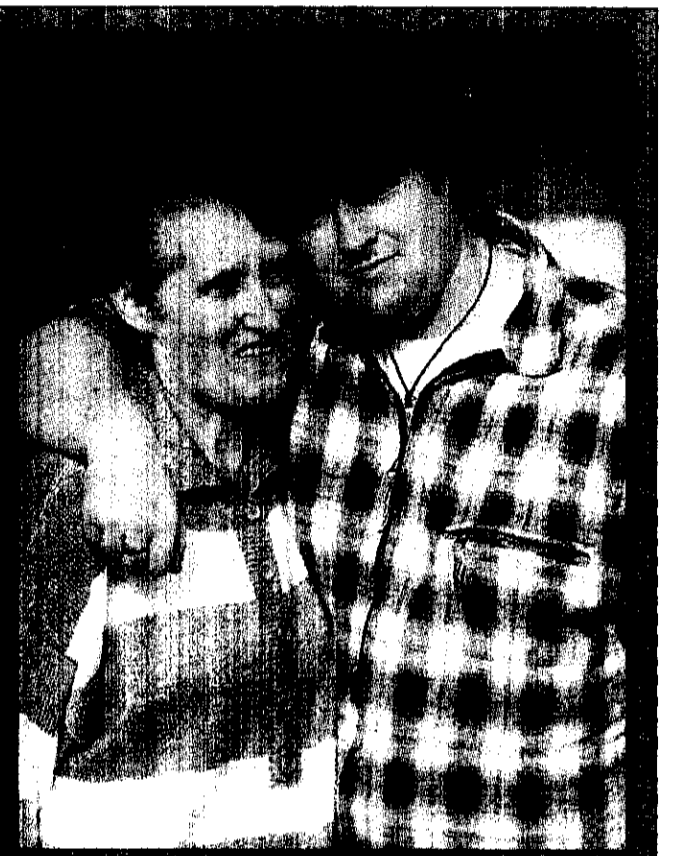
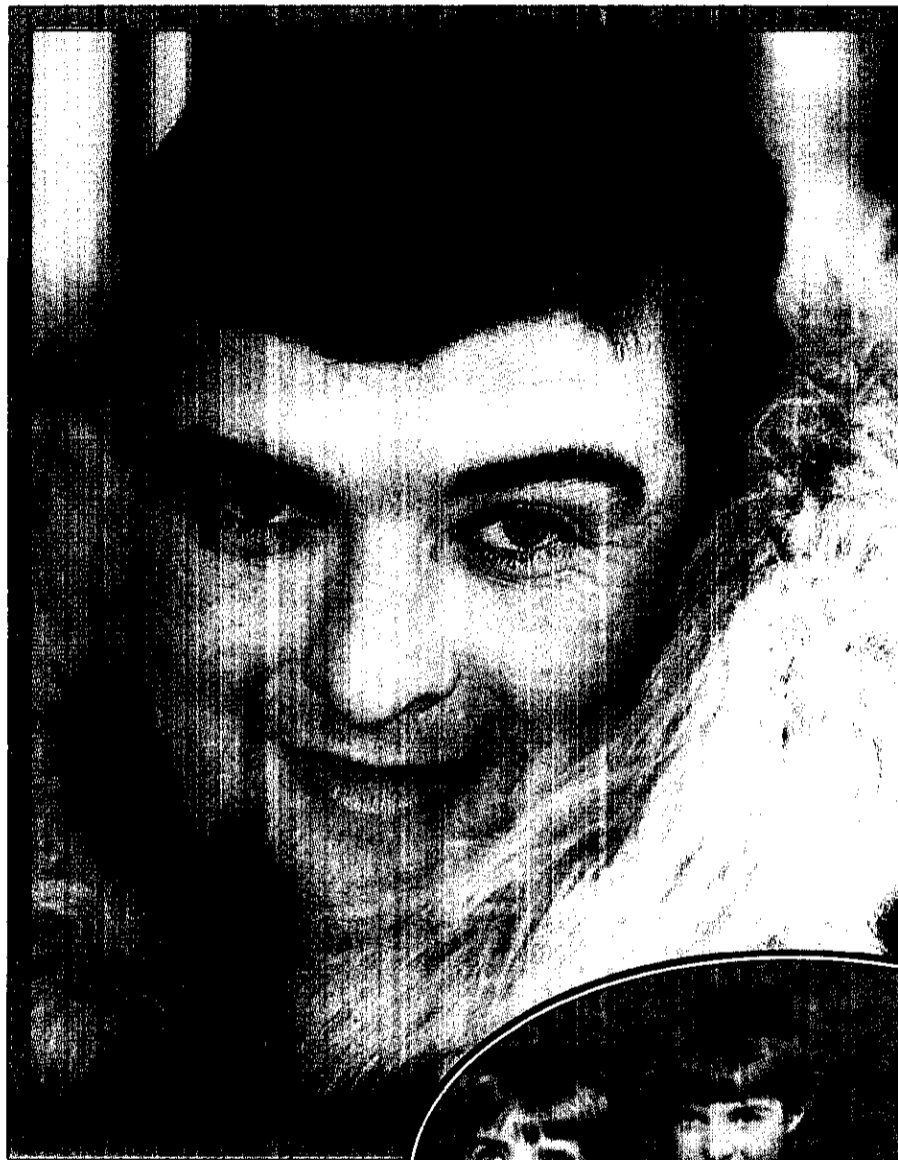
Despite the cost, the trip wasn't all it could have been. "Mum took me because I'd been there before," explains Paul. "But I got flu on the plane, then she got it and had to stay in for my birthday. She didn't like the food, thought it was all too spicy."

**A**T 30, Paul is one year older than Noel and six years older than Liam. He has the trademark Gallagher eyebrows, but the similarities stop there. While Liam and Noel are fashionably slim, Paul looks like the Abominable Snowman in his big brown Parka fishtail. "Yeah, like a Yeti," he says, with a twinkle in his eye.

He is pudgy, with naus bitten to the quick, but it doesn't stop him flirting with the camera. His piercing eyes are, he claims, even bluer than Liam's. "I'm a professional model, done this all before mate," he boasts, somewhat unconvincingly.

He does, however, have the new Gallagher cropped hair. "We all cut our hair short on the same day in different parts of the country. Amazingly, none of us knew the others were doing it." He is charming and humorous in a bumbling way, but as he pulls on yet another cigarette you could be forgiven for thinking he's putting up a smokescreen.

It's easy to see why Paul wants to



**ROCK CLIMBER:** Paul Gallagher, left, the elder brother of Oasis's Liam and Noel still lives at home with his mother, Peggy, above. Below, as boys, from left to right: Noel, Paul, and Liam with Peggy.

Liam picture: GIM CLARKE



hide, though. He is the one who gets spitefully tagged as the brother who failed; the one who didn't play in Oasis, so missed out on millions and is floating around the Northern rock circuit working as a talent scout for Creation, his brothers' London record company, and managing a couple of obscure Mancunian bands.

Paul has worked as a butcher, baker, factory worker, curry chef, building-site labourer then gas-pipe layer. He left his job with the gas company in 1994 to go on the dole, receiving £40 a week, just as fame knocked on his brothers' door.

"It was hard living on that. I'd give my mum £10 a week for rent. You can't buy nice clothes on that."

He is portrayed as the brother who is always desperately trying to have a slice of the action.

As Liam and Noel soared up the charts with hits including Wonderwall and Roll With It, Paul kept a diary of their cuttings, insisted on squeezing into the van to travel to gigs with them and tagged on at tours. "Makes me sound like the unwanted spare part," he says, hurt.

Last year Paul made an effort to

prove he was somebody in his own right by penning the flabby, but snappily titled *Brothers From Childhood To Oasis: The Real Story*, in conjunction with The Word's irritable Terry Christian.

Paul still maintains that he never wanted to join Oasis and that he doesn't resent missing out on the fame and fortune.

"I've got a better life. I don't have the Press following me. If I'd been in the band, I'd probably have ended up killing Liam. He's the younger brother, isn't he? We're the older ones and he wouldn't have got the limelight. We'd have just told him to sit in a corner and look good."

Despite being unfairly attacked for cashing in on his brothers' fame,

Paul's book is out in paperback and a chapter is to be added in April.

"You can read what I think about Liam's caution for possession of cocaine. I put the record straight. I'm not on anybody's side, but he's my brother and the three of us stick together so no one can get to us. Three of us against the world, that's how we view it."

Paul's sad sense of inadequacy is evident in the book. "I always wanted to achieve something in my life," he writes, in the original version, "but generally as you will see from this story, most of my expectations were low."

The book continues: "I shared the same genetic material. I even had the same burning desire to prove myself,

but I felt like a failure." Does he feel inferior to the others? "I'm more intelligent than both of them put together," he says. Is there rivalry between them all? "Nah."

Paul's guard only slips when he is talking about the disparity in the brothers' accommodation arrangements. "Everyone makes a big deal about me living with my mam. Do they want me to live on the streets?" he asks. Paul is currently trying to buy a house. "I just can't afford the deposit."

**C**AN'T he get help from his brothers? "No. I can't be bothered. They'd probably say yes, but Liam doesn't have the money, he just bought his own house. And Noel would probably put some tough clause in the contract. God knows, he'd have some way of lining it up."

It is a sarcastic remark, which is out of character. He is ill at ease with himself, vulnerable, fragile and defensive. "All three of us suffer from low self-esteem. We put on a front. Carry it off pretty well, don't we?"

As he leaves, he waves goodbye to the staff, just as though he'd stayed there before.