

{COVER SHEET

Courts of Enquiry in lieu of Inquests

- Civilians Richard H Pearson & Abraham P Pearson, Cadamstown, Kings Co.

7.7.21

}

PROCEEDINGS of a Court of Enquiry held in lieu of inquest at CRINKLE Barracks BIRR on the 2nd July 1921 by order of Lt. Col. T.A. Andrus C.M.G. For the purpose of investigating and reporting upon the circumstances in which Richard Henry Pearson civilian came by his death.

President: Major G.W. Browne I/R. Sc.Fus.

Members: Capt. D.M.W. Beake V.C.,D.S.O.,M.C. I/R. Sc.Fus.

Lieut. J.J. Kingston DEPOT The Leinster Regt.

In Attendance:

The Court having assembled pursuant to order, proceed to view the body and take evidence.

1st Witness: Frederick William Woods civilian medical Practitioner of Kinnity Kings County having been duly sworn in states:-

At Kinnitty on the 30th June 1921 I was leaving the dispensary in the village at about 18.55 hours. A civilian informed me that he was sent in to ask me to go out to attend to two of the PEARSON boys who had been shot. I at once proceeded to COOLACREASE house where the PEARSONS live, arriving there about 1930 hours and found RICHARD H PEARSON lying on a mattress in a field at the back of the house. I examined him and found a superficial wound in the left shoulder, a deep wound in the right groin and right buttock, the entrance (?) of the latter being in front. In addition there were wounds in the left lower leg of a superficial nature and about six in the back which were glancing (?) wounds. In my opinion these wounds were all caused by either revolver or rifle bullets, and were fired at close quarters. I dressed the wounds anti-septically and after attending to his brother ABRAHAM PEARSON I returned to KINNITTY at about 20.45 hours. At about 22.40 hours the Police came to my house and asked me to come to COOLACREASE House I found RICHARD H PEARSON dead. In my opinion the cause of death was shock and sudden haemorrhage as a result of gunshot wounds. The fatal wound in my opinion was that on the groin.

Cross-examining by the Court

Q No. 1 Do you not consider a groin wound to be a serious one?

A 1 I do if such a wound implicates the blood vessels.

Q2 Did the groin wound of the deceased implicate the principal blood vessels?

A2 It did not

Q3 Did any of the other wounds implicate any of the principal blood vessels?

A3 None that I saw.

Q4 When you first saw the deceased was he losing much blood?

A4 He had apparently lost a considerable amount of blood.

Q5 In view of this loss of blood was the deceased's condition precarious?

A5 It was.

Q6 On being called by the Police to examine the deceased for the second time did you find any wounds which you had not previously discovered?

A6 I did find one.

Q7 Was this wound a dangerous one?

A7 It was.

Fredk Wm Woods LRCP+SI

2nd witness:- ETHEL MAY PEARSON having been duly sworn states:-
I am the sister of the deceased. About 4 p.m. on the 30th June 1921 I came into the hall at COOLACREASE house and found it full of armed men, some of them in masks. My mother, my two sisters and my two girl cousins were with me in the hall and we were all ordered into the dining room. My mother fainted and we asked for water but we were not given any for twenty minutes and then we were given dirty water. During this time some of the raiders were searching the house, and I heard them breaking things up, while others were bringing in petrol and hay. We were then ordered outside and went out by the back door where I saw my two brothers surrounded by the raiders. The deceased was one of the two. I saw the flames burst out. I heard a raider say to another, "Am I much burnt". My mother who was in a fainting condition was carried by my two brothers into a little wood we call the Grove and we all went with her by the order of the raiders. Six of the raiders, two or three of whom were masked, ordered my brothers down into the yard. I saw the raiders search my brothers and place them against the wall of the barn and shoot them. There were about six or eight who shot and they used rifles and shotguns. At this moment there were ~~about~~ 35 raiders in the yard. Within two or three minutes after the shooting the raiders all disappeared. I got on a horse and proceeded to CADAMSTOWN to fetch a Doctor. On the way I saw the raiders proceeding over the bog land towards FRANKFORD. I have seen the deceased in the Military Barracks Mortuary at CRINKLE and I identify the body as that of my brother Richard. He was 24 years old last birthday. He was not a member of any political organisation. I could identify the man who appeared to be the leader, and some of the others. (Signed)

3rd witness Susan Matilda Pearson, having been duly sworn in states:-
I am the sister of the deceased. At about 4 p.m. on the 30.6.21 I was lying on the sofa in the kitchen at Coolacrease Ho. when armed and masked men came to our house. Some had service rifles, others shotguns and revolvers. They pointed rifles at us and ordered us into the dining room where we were kept for about an hour. During this time the raiders searched the house and took away five bicycles, my brothers' suits and the girls' clothes. Then they scattered hay about the house and sprinkled petrol over it, ordering us out of the house before setting fire to it. They placed my brothers, shortly afterwards, against the wall of the barn and shot them. When they fell they shot them again. The raiders almost immediately started off in the direction of FRANKFORD. I could identify some of the raiders as I have seen them in KINNITTY. I identify the body which I have seen in the Mortuary of the Barracks at CRINKLE as that of the deceased. Susan M. Pearson.

FINDING:

The Court finds that the deceased RICHARD HENRY PEARSON, male 24 years of age farmer of COOLACREASE House Kings County died on 30.6.1921 of shock and

haemorrhage as a result of gunshot wounds inflicted at COOLACREASE House by armed persons unknown and that these persons are guilty of wilful murder.
Given under our hand this 2nd day of July at BIRR, Kings County.
(Signatures) ...President ... Beak...Kingston members

I am of the opinion that deceased was murdered by Members, unknown, of the I.R.A.
Curragh 16.7.21
(S.d) P.C.E. SKINNER Colonel Commandant, Commanding 14th Infantry Brigade,
C.M.A.

For the remarks by the G.O.C.

Curragh

PROCEEDINGS of a Court of Enquiry held in lieu of inquest at CRINKLE Barracks BIRR on the 2nd July 1921 by order of Lt. Col. T.A. Andrus C.M.G. For the purpose of investigating and reporting upon the circumstances in which Abraham Pratt Pearson civilian came by his death.

President: Major G.W. Browne I/R. Sc.Fus.

Members: Capt. D.M.W. Beake V.C.,D.S.O.,M.C. I/R. Sc.Fus.

Lieut. J.J. Kingston DEPOT The Leinster Regt.

In Attendance:

The Court having assembled pursuant to order, proceed to view the body and take evidence.

1st Witness. Lt. Colonel C.R. Woods R.A.M.C. (retired) in medical charge of CRINKLE BARRACKS, BIRR, having been duly sworn states:-
At 0200 hrs on 1 July 1921 I was called to the MILITARY HOSPITAL, BIRR. I found the deceased lying there suffering from gunshot wounds. His wounds were dressed by me. I examined his wounds and found extensive wounds on left cheek, left shoulder, left thigh and lower third of left leg. In addition there was a wound through the abdomen. The latter wound had an entrance at the front and appeared to have its exit at the lower part of the back, fracturing the lower part of the spinal column. In my opinion death resulted from shock due to gunshot wounds.
(Signed) C.R.Woods Lt. Col. RAMC Retired.

2nd witness:- ETHEL MAY PEARSON having been duly sworn states:-
I am the sister of the deceased. About 4 p.m. on the 30th June 1921 I came into the hall at COOLACREASE house and found it full of armed men, some of them in masks. My mother, my two sisters and my two girl cousins were with me in the hall and we were all ordered into the dining room. My mother fainted and we asked for water but we were not given any for twenty minutes and then we were given dirty water. During this time some of the raiders were searching the house, and I heard them breaking things up, while others were bringing in petrol and hay. We were then

ordered outside and went out by the back door where I saw my two brothers surrounded by the raiders. The deceased was one of the two. I saw the flames burst out. I heard a raider say to another, "Am I much burnt". My mother who was in a fainting condition was carried by my two brothers into a little wood we call the Grove and we all went with her by the order of the raiders. Six of the raiders, two or three of whom were masked, ordered my brothers down into the yard. I saw the raiders search my brothers and place them against the wall of the barn and shoot them. There were about six or eight who shot and they used rifles and shotguns. At this moment there were ~~about~~ 35 raiders in the yard. Within two or three minutes after the shooting the raiders all disappeared. I got on a horse and proceeded to CADAMSTOWN to fetch a Doctor. On the way I saw the raiders proceeding over the bog land towards FRANKFORD. I have seen the deceased in the Military Barracks Mortuary at CRINKLE and I identify the body as that of my brother Abraham. He was nineteen years old last birthday. He was not a member of any political organisation. I could identify the man who appeared to be the leader, and some of the others. (Signed)

3rd witness Susan Matilda Pearson, having been duly sworn in states:-
I am the sister of the deceased. At about 4 p.m. on the 30.6.21 I was lying on the sofa in the kitchen at Coolacree Ho. when armed and masked men came to our house. Some had service rifles, others shotguns and revolvers. They pointed rifles at us and ordered us into the dining room where we were kept for about an hour. During this time the raiders searched the house and took away five bicycles, my brothers' suits and the girls' clothes. Then they scattered hay about the house and sprinkled petrol over it, ordering us out of the house before setting fire to it. They placed my brothers, shortly afterwards, against the wall of the barn and shot them. When they fell they shot them again. The raiders almost immediately started off in the direction of FRANKFORD. I could identify some of the raiders as I have seen them in KINNITTY. I identify the body which I have seen in the Mortuary of the Barracks at CRINKLE as that of the deceased. Susan M. Pearson.

FINDING:

The Court finds that the deceased RICHARD HENRY PEARSON, male 24 years of age farmer of COOLACREESE House Kings County died on 30.6.1921 of shock and haemorrhage as a result of gunshot wounds inflicted at COOLACREESE House by armed persons unknown and that these persons are guilty of wilful murder.

Given under our hand this 2nd day of July at BIRR, Kings County.

(Signatures) ...President ... Beak...Kingston members

I am of the opinion that deceased was murdered by Members, unknown, of the I.R.A. (S.d) P.C.E. SKINNER Colonel Commandant, Commanding 14th Infantry Brigade, C.M.A.
Curragh 16.7.21

SUBJECT:-

Court of Inquiry in lieu of Inquest on death of R.H. Pearson, Civilian

SECRET

S.9/287.

Headquarters, 5th Division.
Forwarded.

The Curragh (Signature)
19th July 1921 Colonel Commandant
Commanding 14th Infantry Brigade.

Subject C. of I. in lieu of inquest R.H. Pearson

Forwarded. No remarks
however a possible solution two murders

(signature) Brig.-General Commanding 5th Division
Curragh Camp, Co.Kildare 24/7/1921.

The COOLACREASE Murders – 30.6.21.

Possible motives.-

1. The acquisition of Pearson's land which is very rich. In support of this, Pearson was driving through KINNITY in a Police lorry on the morning after his sons murder when Father Houlahan, a local Priest, asked him what he was going to do with his farm now.
2. Revenge by Sinn Fein. It is said by the C.I. Queens County that the two Pearson boys a few days previously had seen two men felling a tree on their land adjoining the road. Had told the men concerned to go away, and when they refused had fetched two guns and fired and wounded two Sinn Feiners, one of whom it is believed died. It is further rumoured when the Farm house was burning, two guns fell out of the roof.

Para. 1 above is the substance of a story told by Miss Pearson the daughter to Major Browne, Royal Scots Fus. Stationed at BIRR.

25/7/21