

2/39200/41

Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry.
assembled at CORK.
on the 15th & 16th Feb. 1921.
by order of the Colonel Commandant, 17th Infy. Bde.
for the purpose of inquiring into the death of
JAMES
CORR, C. BEALE

President

Major H. Warburton General List.

Members.

Lieut. S. POOLE. R. Sussex Regt. att. S. Staffords
Regt.

Lieut. C. R. P. CURTIS-NUTHALL. 2nd Bn. Hampshire Regt.

GHQ.

The Court having assembled pursuant to order proceed to
on 15th Feb. to view the body and on 16th to hear evidence.

16th Feb

1st witness, James BLEMERS, on oath.

The body which was brought into the South Infirmary yesterday about 13.00 hours and was viewed by this Court was that of my sister's husband, JAMES CHARLES BEALE. He was 36 years of age, married residing at 7 Laurelhurst, Colloge Road, Cork. He was Manager of the Wine Dept. of Woodford, Bourne & Co. Cork. I last saw him alive at 18.00 hours on 14th Feb. at his work at the offices of the firm. He usually went home about 19.00 hours. At 08.00 hours on 15th I found he was missing and had not been home that night. I knew this from my sister. Hearing there was a body at the South Infirmary I went there at 14.00 hours and saw there the dead body of my brother-in-law in the Mortuary. I had reported about 10.00 hours to the Police at Union Quay that he was missing.

When I heard he was missing I was afraid for him because my father and brother disappeared on 28th Nov. 1920 and I have never had any idea since how or where they went or what has become of them.

I do not know of anyone having enmity with my brother-in-law. I know of no possible reason why anyone should do him violence. So far as I know he did not associate with any members of the Police Force, or with Auxiliary Police. I do not know of his making any enquiries personally into the disappearance of my father and brother.

I identify the watch, silver cigarette case, cheque book & note book (before the Court) as being the property of the deceased. He usually carried a small Treasury Note case in his pocket: that may be missing. Except for that I do not know of anything else that may be missing.

James Blemers

2nd witness, Mr Henry HANNON on oath, M.B., B.Ch., Ba.O. HOUSE SURGEON, South Infirmary, Cork.

The body of Mr J.C. BEALE was brought to the Infirmary about 13.00 hours on 15th, and was then seen by this Court. I examined the body, and found on the right cheek at the level of the ear a wound penetrating to the brain. No exit wound. There were two wounds, probably both of entry, in the abdomen on either side of the umbilicus. Death was due to laceration of the brain and was probably instantaneous. I consider that at all the wounds were gunshot wounds. The body appeared to have been dead from 8 to 12 hours, before 14.30 when I examined him.

Henry Hannon MB

3rd witness, Fireman Timothy AHERN, on oath.

I am a member of the Cork Fire Bde. Yesterday at noon a telephone call came and I went with a horse ambulance to Wilton, a suburb of CORK and there found by a hedge at the far side of a roadside field the body of a man about 35 or 40 years old. He was lying on his face and hands. There was a mass of congealed blood on the ground under his ear. I put the body in my ambulance and took it to the South Infirmary, arriving there at 12.55 hours. There were some six persons by the body when I arrived, including a reporter from the Cork Examiner. I did not see any placard or card on or near the body. I was told of such a thing but not seeing it I thought of it no more.

T. Ahern

19th February.

4th witness. Philip Denny, on oath

On. Tues. 15th about 10.15 hours I was coming along the road in Wilton and through the hedge at the side of the road I saw the body of a man in the field. I went into another field & saw the body a few feet from me across a ditch. It had an overcoat on, the face was turned from me. I saw no card or paper. I went to the College Road Police Barrack and reported.

William Denny

5th witness. Joseph Russell, on oath.

I am a reporter on the Cork Examiner. I reached the field in which was the body of Mr Beale about noon. There was nobody in the field then but there were several people in the road looking in. I went up to the body. On the grass near it there was a piece of cardboard about a foot square. I turned it over and on it was printed in ink in rough capital letters "Convicted spy. This is the penalty for all those who associate with the Aux. Cadets, the Black and Tans and the R.I.C." At foot of the card were the letters "I.R.A." underlined. And in one corner was "P.S. Beware" The ambulance came while I was there. I have no idea what happened to the card. Several people had followed me into the field and came close to the body, and some of them picked up the card & looked at it.

Joseph Russell

FINDING.

The Court finds that

- (1) that the deceased was JAMES CHARLES BEALE, male, aged 36, married, residing at 7 Laurelhurst, College Road, Cork, Manager of the Wine Dept. of Woodford, Bourn & Co. Cork.
- (2) that he died at Wilton, a suburb of Cork on the night 14-15th Feb. 1921 from laceration of the brain caused by a gunshot wound.
- (3) that the wound was inflicted by a person unknown against whom and his companions, if any, the Court finds a verdict of wilful murder.

The father-in-law and the brother-in-law of the deceased, named Blomens, disappeared on 29th Nov. 1920 and have not been heard of since. The Court has not been able to discover any reason why any of these persons should have incurred the enmity of anyone.

President. *E. Washington*

Member. *Stanley Poole*
1st Royal Sussex Regt.

Member. *Robert Luthall*
Lieut
1st Hampshire Regt.

Cork.

19th Feb. 1921.