

Military Archives

**MILITARY SERVICE PENSIONS
COLLECTION**

MA/MSPC/RO/606

**NEW YORK
GUN RUNNING
PARTICIPANTS
ETC.**

**MILITARY ARCHIVES
IRELAND**

**Military Service
Pensions Collection**

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Τὰ ἄνθρωπο, λειρ

An Snō

An Uimh 45 Roinn
Eile.

New York Gun Running
Participants etc.

[illegible]

Mr. Clegg

Mr. Buckley

10/6

I gave you a list
of ^{recently} names of men, who were
concerned in the attempt to
run a cargo of Thompson Guns
from U.S.A. during the B.D. period,
and instructed that ~~the~~ the
list be kept for reference
purposes. ~~Attach these papers~~
~~to the same file, which can~~
If it has not already been
done open a file under title
"U. S. A. Gun Running Crews"
+ attach the list & these papers
thereto.

10
11/6/37



SAORSTÁT ÉIREANN

Confidential.

ROINN TAILTE
(DEPARTMENT OF LANDS)
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
(DUBLIN)

ladh Meitheamh, 1937.

M.L. 3048/37.

A Chara,

I am desired by Mr. Boland to inform you that Mr. Patk. Keegan, Wafer Street, Enniscorthy, has called on him in connection with the applications under the Military Service Pensions Act of members of the crew of the S.S. "East Side," who were engaged in the shipment of machine guns in the year 1921. Mr. Keegan handed Mr. Boland the enclosed letters and statements and I am to request that same be considered when the applications in question are being dealt with.

Mise, le meas,

Rúnaí Aire.

Eamon Burke, Esq.,
Secretary,
Military Service Pensions Board,
Griffith Barracks,
DUBLIN.

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will
try and
call to see
you & out the
week end
and in the mean
time do not let
the grass grow
under your feet

I

Drumderry

Buncloody

Co Wexford

1st May 1937

Dear Paddy

Just a few lines. hoping you are getting
as well as ever. and that the Mrs and family
are all well as it leaves me O.K.

I was speaking to Ned Murphy and was sorry to
hear that you had been laid up for a long time
with pains. I am looking up an old seaman's prescription
I got some years ago for pains and will send it to you
in due course it fixed me up O.K.

With regards ~~my~~ ~~claims~~ for a pension. I was up before
the board on the 24 June 1936 and got no word
since, so naturally I was getting uneasy over the
delay. however I was speaking to Tommy Curran
recently and he also has been before the pensions
board and had got no reply. Curran told me that
Jem Magee of New York has said that we were
not on the East Side and had nothing to do with
the Thompson guns. now I can understand the delay
about my claims. I could not expect anything
else from Magee the dirty skunk. and if he

II

thinks he can get away his latest stunt he is
shit out of luck, the yellow S.O.B. was responsible
for the loss of those guns. he bull shitted poor Harry
R.I.P. into this East side deal, when he could not
get him to buy that old heap of junk the SS Theresa
You know the offer of Gene O'Beirne to buy the
schooner at the Fulton Market, and when Garland
offered to buy one of those wooden steamers, were turned
down by Harry on Magees advise. Now this big
grafter comes along to tell Sean Nunan that we
fellows had nothing to do with the East side, when
we ~~for~~ risked our lives to save those guns after his
blundering. You remember how he told us fellows not to
be seen talking to him after the failure, the dirty rat was
afraid he would be pinched, I for one had enough of the
park benches. Hunger and cold and Horse trucks, and I
am prepared to say your present illness is a result
of the afterclaps of the East side and mainly due
to Magees influence with Harry. so now his influence
with Nunan is coming to the surface again to block
our claims for pensions and blacken us in the eyes
of the board after spending the Tan war running

III

stuff to Dublin. when speaking to Collins^{RIP} on one of the trips, he was delighted with our work and he said that for the one that he could get ~~to~~ suitable to go on the ships he could get a hundred for the fighting as we had to deal with the U.S. and British governments it meant 20 years in U.S. and death in Ireland if caught I have not to tell you these things as you have been through that end yourself.

If Magee had got what was coming to him he would have been bumped off that time. however he will have to be exposed through the press, if some influence cannot be worked up here to show the board the truth. I hate like hell to rattle the bones of the dead through exposure in the press. as you are fixed up OK with your pension. I think it is up to you to stand by us fellows for the sake of the days ~~we~~ ~~we~~ roamed around New York together with the sky as a roof and a copy of the New York American as our blanket to cover us at night in the Park. if you have a bit of a drag use it and dont let Magee prevent us from getting our reward for god knows we were whole heartedly in the movement

your old pal
Larry Byrne

Fire Station
Dorset St
Dublin
April 26th

Well Paddy

I was up before the Pensions Board over five weeks ago and I got no word as yet, so I was talking to Larry Byrne and a few of the crew of the S.S. Eastside, and I am told that Mr. Jee in New-York is Black mailing us to Sean Noonan, he is trying to make out that he knows all the crew of the Eastside, when you know yourself that he only knows three of them as you picked all the crew yourself on South St and you also know that I helped to Pack all the guns and went across town on the Lorry with them, and put them on Board to Curley, and got the Passes from Curley to get us on Board the next morning, and myself and you were driven back at the point of the gun, and when we went over that night to try and get them off on the Lug, and done everything that we could do, we even went Hungry over it untill I got back to London. Well Paddy we want you to stand by us, and get in touch with some Minister in the Dail, and make him write to Noonan in New York and stop him from taking any statements from that big Bluff Mr. Jee. That can tell nothing only lies, and if he doesnt get him stopped, we will Publish all the facts in the Newspapers here, and we will put the blame on the guilty people, as you know yourself as well as we do, who were responsible for the stuff getting caught, so I hope you will

Military Archives

(2)

stand by us and put a stop to that fellow McEly and his falsehoods because if it is not stopped we will publish the whole facts of the case, and expose those people, why the only Men he got for the Eastside was three, and the other fellow that dumped the stuff over the side at Sandyhook, and then 16 years after this crew comes along to black mail me and my other comrades, that done everything in our power, to bring all the guns we could to keep the Lads going at home here. So again Paddy I ask you to put a stop to that fellow and his Bluff, as I am getting a statement from all the crew who are alive if he is not stopped, as you know he is telling nothing only lies, as you have statements yourself from the crew, shortly after the guns were taken, so you know I am speaking facts. So Good Bye for the present, and I hope you will do as I ask and I also want a statement from yourself, just put the whole facts on paper what you know about me, and don't forget to write soon, and if you are in Dublin call around

I remain

Your Old Comrade

Tom Curran

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Names of the Crew of the S.S. Eastside

	address
Patrick Hughes: chief engineer	New York
Patrick McGeer 1 st Engineer	New Jersey.
James Corley 2 nd Engineer	california
Harry Simpson 3 rd Engineer	New York
M ^c Carthy Deck Engineer	New York.
Patrick Keegan ^{crew}	Emmascodthy
Lawrence Ryan R.P.	Manchester
Joseph M ^c Evoy.	Dublin
James Regan R.P.	Australia
Charles Twomey.	Cork
Patrick O'Connor	Cork
John Gallagher	Dublin
John M ^c Knight	Dublin
James M ^c Knight	Dublin
James Keane	Galway
Michael De Loughrey	Cork
Lawrence Byrne	Wesford.
Thomas Curran	Dublin
James Duffy	U.S.A
Dick O'Hare	U.S.A
Patrick Keenan	U.S.A
Red Garland	do Dublin
Connolly	I.F.S. Customs
John Hanlon	U.S.A

(COPY)

STATEMENT OF CHIEF ENGINEER S.S. "EAST SIDE"

To Whom It May Concern :

The following is a true statement of the facts concerning the shipment of machine guns on the S.S. "East Side" on Monday June 4th 1921, when lying at her pier at Hoboken, N.J.

We, the undersigned, were engaged with the understanding that the crew would be in full sympathy with our mission and that no obstacles would be placed in our way. The facts are that on arriving on board we found the ship in complete charge of an unsympathetic scab crew, engineers' strike being on at this time.

~~Saturday~~ // June / 3rd

On Sunday forenoon, when the consignment came on board, it was utterly impossible to conceal it from the eyes of this crew. However doing our best under these adverse circumstances we succeeded that afternoon in stowing it safely away. About 7 p.m. we found out a suspicion among this crew, especially the chief steward and 3rd Asst. Engineer, both who were total strangers to us. We therefore decided that it would be better to have the consignment removed from the ship, and right away reported the circumstances to Mr. J. McGee, also calling on him in person at his house, and explained the seriousness of the situation to him. It was then between 9 and 10 p.m. The position he took and his attitude towards us was that we were afraid of continuing the adventure, and he failed to be moved by any action in this respect of trying to save the arms and said he had done his part, and seemed to have totally forgotten his pledge towards us, that all members of the crew would be his own choice, of men who solemnly pledged us would be on board before the consignment reached the ship. However we stood by until warned by the captain to leave the ship at once. The bearer of this message can testify to these facts, as he with us was concerned in all our endeavours to get the guns away.

We also state that in our opinion as sea-faring men a ship of this class was not suitable for such a purpose at this time.

Respt. Yrs.

P. Hughes C.O.

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COPY OF SECOND ASST. ENGINEER'S STATEMENT

Saturday at noon Gleeson and McGee, told Simpson and myself to get ready to go aboard the S.S. "East Side". At six or seven o'clock Simpson went for his clothes and then came to McGee's to meet me. Gleeson and Hughes went aboard to see how everything was. They came across to McGee's and told us every thing was alright, that there was nobody there only one engineer, a scab 3rd Assistant. I asked Gleeson how the mates were and he said they were alright. Harry then came in. He wanted Lynch; so I went out and got him. Lynch came in and gave me a pass for the pickets as the strike was on. Harry gave me some orders and Simpson and myself got a taxi and went aboard. We looked the ship over and found all the deck department and stewards' dept. on board. In our own dept. we had a full crew, only chief 1st and 2nd Asst. Engineers. In their rooms at the time there were three oilers, three firemen, and one storekeeper. I fired the oilers and storekeeper and kept the firemen till our own fellows should get on board.

We then looked around for a place to put our stores and decided to put it in my room until we put to sea. Hughes and McCarthy came on board about 11 o'clock on Sunday. He agreed with us about my room. The stores came about 1-30 and were stored in the chill room by Simpson, McCarthy, 4 stevedores and myself. Curran was on the launch and I gave him a book of passes for the crew. When the stuff was coming ~~on board~~ ON BOARD, Barnett, the military Supt. of Docks was on top of the pier. The officers of the S.S. "McKee's Port" were watching us off the gangway. Our own crew were watching us, about ten men.

We shut the chill room door to the deck, to work it through the engine room to my room. Two watchmen then came on board to see what came on board from the launch. One of them opened the chill room door. I slipped the other one ten dollars and they both went away. Gleeson then came on board, and I showed him where the stuff was, and he said to move it as soon as our crew came on board. Gleeson then got talking to the 3rd Asst. Engineer, and took him for the 1st Officer. He told him he had a good Union crew below and not to be afraid. Hughes stopped him and Gleeson and myself went ashore to see Harry and let him know how things were. After seeing him I went on board with O'Hare. When I got to my room, Hughes and Simpson told me the second cook had taken the watchman down to the chill room, and showed him the stuff. They opened three sacks to see what was in them. Simpson sewed them up again. Hughes and I went ashore to see Harry. When we got to McGee's he was gone. McGee and Peter Fearon went out to get Harry and Meade, to see what they would say. McGee came back about an hour later, and said he could not get

Pensions Collection

(2)

could not get Harry. Fearon never came back. Hughes and I went aboard again. There were four of our men there then.

We started to get the stuff moved just when two watchmen came on board. We decided to call Gleeson up. I got Gleeson on the phone, and he said: "What the hell are you calling me out of bed at this hour for". I told him to get the gang together and see about getting the stuff off. He said: "How can I get the bunch together?". I then told him about the two watchmen and he said: "Give them fifty dollars each". I told him that I had only 35 dollars, and said: "Tell them you will give it to them to-morrow". I went on board and told Hughes and Simpson. Hughes got talking to the watchman and gave him ten dollars. The other one had gone ashore.

We got all the stuff moved into NO. 4 Hold about 5 o'clock Monday morning, and we gave the watchman another ten dollars. I went to bed and got up at 7-30. There were then on board ten scab firemen, who had been off from noon Saturday. I told them they were fired and I had a new crew coming on board. About 10-30 the Captain told Hughes and myself that the ship was going to be searched, and that he could not trust the chief officer. Hughes got Gleeson on the wire and he said he would be over in an hour. I asked the Captain could Dempsey not stop the search, and he told me that Dempsey was only Asst. Paymaster.

Gleeson came on board and the Super cargo asked him if he could do anything for him. He said "No", and walked ashore. I sent Hughes after him. He came back about half an hour later, and said Gleeson asked him if he could throw the stuff over the side, or put it anywhere the detectives could not find it. There was about 40 men working around the deck and it was impossible to move it. He then said we were to get off the ship, and I told Simpson, McGee and O'Hare to get off. Hughes then talked to the Supt. Engr. and he said he would get us a relief. The relief came about two o'clock. Simpson, McCarthy, Hughes and myself got off. I told the four firemen to sign on, as we might get the stuff off that night. When we got to New York Hughes told me that Gleeson said I was to claim it. We then went to McGee's and he said to split up and not be seen together.

(Signed)

James Curley.

Dempsey was supposed to be Vice-President of the Company. The watchmen were all supposed to be fixed and O.K. There was supposed to be no crew on board. We found 48 scabs on board

James Corley.

(Second Asst Engineer)

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(COPY)

STATEMENT OF H.J. SIMPSON 3rd ENGINEER S.S. "EAST SIDE"

I went on board the S.S. "East Side" on Saturday evening as instructed by McGee and Gleeson. I was accompanied by J. Corley 2nd Engr. We found several scabs on board. As the marine workers' strike was then on (including a 3rd Asst. Engr.). On Sunday morning the Chief came and at 1 o'clock the stuff arrived in a boat. It was placed on the deck and I helped to carry it inside off the deck to get it out of sight as quickly as possible, as the mates were also on board and not suppose to know anything. We placed it away temporarily in the best place we could locate under the circumstances. We all engineers knew very shortly afterwards that some of those said scabs were wise to the stuff, and as a matter of fact we had to keep watch over it in order to prevent any of them from finding out the contents of the bags. We then reached the conclusion that the best thing to do to save it would be to have it transferred to a boat, as there was really no place safe enough to hide it due to so many aboard. We thought we could have this done late Sunday night or early Monday morning. The 2nd left to try and explain the situation and have this done but without success he returned. I stopped the watchman from opening one of the bags, who was shown to the place by one of the cooks (while the second was ashore). Then the chief and second went ashore again but also returned without any encouragement. We had to transfer it that Monday morning at 4 o'clock to down between decks as all the scabs and mates were then asleep. Next morning the Captain told the chief the ship was going to be searched, as he had been called to the office and told that some mysterious cargo had been put on board the day before. The captain called the chief a little later (as I am informed) and told him to be on the alert, that the Customs were coming to make the search, as he was unable to satisfy the office with any explanation. We were being called on in the meantime to sign on and the best and only thing to try and save the situation, then the Captain told the chief was to clear off immediately, which we did as soon as possible, in order not to be caught and held for evidence. I may say the case was hopeless then. I remained aboard all the time and did all I possibly could to carry out success and only felt too sorry not to be able to carry out this sacred mission. I make this statement to the best of my ability, with all truth and sincerity, and am quite willing to go before the highest investigating committee either at this side or home at the earliest opportunity and I only trust that condemnation for the failure will not be placed on me nor my comrades who did their best under the trying circumstances. I have so far proven true to the cause and would not like at the last to be wrongly accused of falseness to it

I remain most sincerely

A Brother in the Cause

H.J. SIMPSON

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STATEMENT OF CREW OF S.S. "EAST SIDE"

We, the undersigned members of the crew of S.S. "East Side", having been informed of a written statement being sent to H.Q. from N.Y. concerning arms on above ship make this statement to assist any enquiry which may be held and to give any assistance possible.

On Friday, June 10th James McGee told Pat Bready to have a crew in readiness. At this time the marine strike was on and Bready had a hard time to gather up a crew dependable for the job. On the following day (Saturday), sailors, firemen, oilers and coal-passers got orders to assemble on the following morning (Sunday) at 23rd Street, for further orders to go aboard. It was then decided to go aboard at nine o'clock Monday morning 13th June.

In the meantime members of the crew had packed the stuff ready and sent it away to the water-front aboard a truck, where it was put aboard ship by using a launch.

On the same night four of our men who had their clothes in readiness, went aboard to help out the engineers.

At the appointed time the men appeared preprepared to sign on for the trip, but were told the ship was not ready, and furthermore a bunch of scabs had been engaged by the company operating the ship. Bready next met McGee, Gleeson and Boland. He was told to go to Hoboken Army piers and go aboard taking the crew with him. He presented one pass for twelve men at the gate; On presenting the pass to the watchman, he was told he and his men could not enter. An argument followed and the watchman called out the military guard. This made any more effort futile. Some of our men that evening on special duty at Hoboken, were met by Mr. Boland and told they were nice soldiers. This statement was not very pleasing to the men, who were hungry and sleepy, and who were willing to make any sacrifice either to save the stuff or get it across. That Monday night at 10-30, ten men were picked to go along side the "East Side" and get the stuff off. But this plan failed as the Custom men were searching the ship that night, and left an armed guard aboard. When the tug came alongside we found the ladder missing from over the side, and so were unable to board her. We waited in Hoboken for two days after this, to see if we could be of any assistance in getting back the stuff. The police took the stuff from the Customs. Then acting on orders we carried it on the truck to the police station, so as it would not be damaged.

ensions Collection

(2)

The reason for this is we were told we were getting it back from them. After this we waited two more days. We learned then it had been handed back to the Customs. The H.Q. here were working to get it back even now, and told us expected to succeed, and for us to be on hand. Some of the boys had a job to go away to sea but stayed on although in need, only to be told they were not needed any more, after sleeping on benches in the park for several weeks

We, members of the crew, were sworn to secrecy at the meetings referred to earlier in this statement, only to find that the whole business was public knowledge, and people unconcerned in the affair, could tell us more detail than others who were fixing everything. In our opinion all members of the crew played their part, including engineers, and we are willing to answer all questions for equity either here or at home

(Signed)

Patrick Keegan,
Laurence Ryan,
Joseph McEvoy,
James Regan,
Charles Twomey,
James J. Duffy,
John Gallagher,
John O'Hanlon,
James McKnight,
James Keane.

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NAMES. OF THE CREW OF THE S. S. EAST SIDE.

	address
Patrick Hughes Chief Engineer	New York
Patrick McFee 1 st Asst "	New Jersey
James Corley 2 nd " "	California
Harry Simpson 3 rd " "	New York
D. McBarthy Deck Engineer	New York
Deck Crew. Engine room & fireman Dept.	
Patrick Kegan	Emiscothy
Joseph McEvoy	Dublin City
James Regan	Australia
Charles Twomey	Cork City
Patrick O'Connor	Cork City
John Gallagher	Dublin City
John McKnight	Dublin City
James Keane	Galway
Michael De Loughrey	Cork City
Lawrence Byrne	Collesford
Thomas Barran	Dublin City
James Duffy	U.S.A
Dick O'Hare	U.S.A
Patrick Kenan	U.S.A
Red Garland	Dublin
James McKnight	Dublin City
John O'Hanlon	U.S.A
Lawrence Ryan	Manchester
Connolly	I.F.S Customs

There may be a few more names but I cant remember them all after 16 years.