**NLI 46064/1**

**The diaries and the Parry family**

From: PETER SINGLETON-GATES. 38 TREGUNTER ROAD. LONDON S.W. 10

The Editor.

THE TIMES.

Printing House Square.

London E.C. 4

19th August. 1967.

Sir,

The revelation by my friend, Ren MacColl of the identity of his informant of the existence of a second batch of erotic diaries written by Roger Casement and held by the late F.J. Biggar [Bigger] will be a heavy blow for Senator Roger MacHugh [McHugh], Dr Herbert O. Mackey and the other Irish defenders who refuse to accept the validity of the Black Diaries, preserved in the Public Record Office since 1959.

The typewritten copies (official ones) that MacColl saw in 1965 before the publication of his admirable book, were those I had in my possession since 1922, and which I had refused to hand over to the then Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, three years later.

It is as well that the antiquarian Biggar burned this second batch of diaries he found in the trunk Casement had left behind in Biggar’s house outside Dublin [in Belfast]. Otherwise there might be endless problems arising today over the ownership of copyright.

That these are complex enough is shown by the fate of another book on Casement. When Mr. Harold Wilson in 1965 returned the purported remains of the traitor from Pentonville yard to the authorities in Dublin of the Irish Republican government and the state funeral was held, I was commissioned by William Kimber, Ltd to write a final book, CASEMENT: A SUMMING UP. This was done in three months and the mss was already marked up for the printers.

It is common knowledge that two retired army officers, Brigadier R.F. Parry and Major J.G. Parry MC, brothers, have established their seemingly unassailable ownership of copyright of the Diaries held by the Crown. If those in Biggar’s house had not been destroyed, the Parry’s could substantiate their claim for actual possession under the will of their aunt, Gertrude Parry, (nee Bannister).

What is not known until now is that in 1959 they raised legal objections to the English edition of my book, THE BLACK DIARIES OF ROGER CASEMENT (Sidgwick and Jackson), but finally compromised on receipt of 50% of any royalty payments, a stunning sacrifice for any author. But by 1965 they had changed their minds, refused any permission, declined participation on a royalty basis and laid down the harsh and impossible conditions that they would only permit extracts from Casement’s diaries and writings which did not reveal any traits of sexual deviation. *Reductio ad absurdum*. Moreover it had taken them over three months to reach so pious a decision. The manuscript was therefore consigned to the W.P.B.

Such are the pitfalls of breach of copyright that lie in the path of any author contemplating another book on Roger Casement.

Yours faithfully

Peter Singleton-Gates

**Related emails**

Many thanks for this Jeff, I knew you were far and away the best person to consult! I'll let you know if I have any luck contacting her.

Best, Jim

On Aug 19 2005, Jeff Dudgeon wrote:

Jim
The first answer is that his writings are over 90 years old and it is over 90 years since Casement's death so if published before a certain date they are surely out of copyright.
I got permission in 1999 from
Mrs Elspeth Parry
1 Church Close,
Mersham,
Ashford,
Kent
TN25 6NR
Tel 01233 502533

She is the widow of Brigadier Parry who was related to Sidney Parry, husband of Gertrude Bannister. The Brigadier had inherited the copyright from Gertrude who was Casement's named legatee and cousin. Gertrude oddly left her estate to the Brigadier.
Tell me if you make contact with Mrs Parry as I realise I neglected to send her a copy of my book.
Best
Jeff

From: Jim <jmm45@cam.ac.uk
To: Jeff Dudgeon <jeffreydudgeon@hotmail.com
CC: jamesmoran@nottingham.ac.uk
Subject: Casement question
Date: 18 Aug 2005 13:20:19 +0100

Dear Jeff,

Sorry to bother you but I just had a quick question that I thought you might be the best person to check with. Do you know who now holds the copyright on Casement's writings? Hope all is well with you.

Best wishes,

Jim