

**Adams Sale** Auction Name: 800 Years Irish Political, Literary & Military History

**30 April 2013**

**Timothy Quinlisk, Irish Brigade**

**Lot: 133** THE SCOUNDREL MICHAEL COLLINS HAS TREATED ME SCURVILY'

H. QUINLISK & MICHAEL COLLINS

An autograph manuscript letter signed H. Quinlisk, late Cpl. the Royal Irish Regt., from an address in Gardiner Place, Dublin, dated 11th Nov. [19]19, to The Under Sec. / Dublin Castle, marked 'Secret' and 'Very Urgent', offering information and saying his life would be in danger if seen entering the Castle. 'I was the man who assisted Casement in Germany, and in coming home I have been connected with Sinn Fein. I have decided to tell all I know of that organisation and my information would be of use to the authorities. The scoundrel Michael Collins has treated me scurvily and I now am going to wash my hands of the whole business. If you accept my offer, please send a man, one who can be trusted, to the above address ..' The facts were that Quinlisk had indeed been involved with Casement's attempt to recruit an Irish brigade among British Army prisoners in Germany. On his return when the war ended, he approached Sinn Fein for money, and was given some. Eventually, Collins gave him £100 and told him not to come back. He went to the Galway Races and lost the lot. When he came back looking for more cash, he was shown the door - hence 'Collins has treated me scurvily'. On foot of the present letter, he was interviewed by a Dublin Castle detective, whose report was given for typing to none other than Col. Eamonn Broy - a Collins agent who of course sent a copy to him. That alone would have been enough to condemn Quinlisk, but Collins decided to run a test. When Quinlisk appeared again, looking for Collins, he was told the 'Big Fellow' was away in Cork, where he would be staying at Wren's Hotel. A coded message went to the Cork RIC from the Castle, instructing them to surround the hotel and arrest Collins. When Quinlisk turned up to see the fun and collect his reward, he was picked up by the Cork IRA, taken away and shot. Quinlisk's original letter is all that remains of him. It is a remarkable survival. It apparently was seen by Piaras Beaslai, who quotes a short passage, and the same passage is requoted from Beaslai's account by Coogan and Hart. The full letter has never been published. It appears to have turned up in the papers of an old lady at one time associated with Cumann na mBan. A unique, curious and interesting document.

Estimate EUR: €2,000.00 - €3,000.00