

# THE IRISH TIMES

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## **£500 DAMAGES FOR LIBEL. AWARDED TO MR. TOM CASEMENT.**

**(BEFORE MR. JUSTICE HANNA AND A JURY.)**

The hearing was concluded of the case in which Thomas Casement, chief inspector and organiser of the Coast Life-Saving Service of the Free State Department of Industry and Commerce, sought damages for alleged libel from the London Express Newspapers, Ltd. The plaintiff is a brother of the late Sir Roger Casement. The publication complained of was in the issue of the paper of October 22, 1932, and was written by Mr. Noel Hall. It made reference to plaintiff's personal appearance, and especially to the hat which he wore, and which was stated to be "a wonderful hat, battered, weather-beaten, grey-green with age; still an intensely individual hat, although punched or stamped on at least seven times a week."

It also was stated that on an occasion mentioned "Tom Casement leaned on the polished marble top of a Dublin bar and critically examined his hat." Further, plaintiff was alleged to have said, while "patting" the hat "affectionately": "Jeers, sneers and ridicule do not move me. There is not another like it. I've refused handsome offers from museums. It has been mistaken for a pin cushion or a bird-bath. Once I was chatting to Tom, when it was whisked off his head and sent below on the hotel kitchen lift."

The article also stated in reference to plaintiff: "He is the brother of Sir Roger Casement, executed for his part in the Irish rebellion of 1916, when Tom was serving with the British forces in West Africa."

The trial concluded on Wednesday, 22nd February.

Mr. Justice Hanna, in his address to the jury, dealt with the nature of libel, and said that they would have to ask themselves whether the article went beyond what a fair-minded man would say of Mr. Casement. He had never heard of Mr. Casement before, but on the evidence Mr. Casement appeared to be a "character" among those with whom he associated. Mr. Casement seemed to him to be a man who did not dislike publicity, but he was quite entitled to put the view that he did not like publicity of this sort.

The jury found that the article was a libel, and that it was not fair comment, and they assessed damages at £500

Mr. Wood asked for a stay of execution, pending consideration of an appeal.

Mr. Justice Hanna refused to give a stay, and entered judgment for the plaintiff.