

## RUSSIANS CHARGED WITH PERJURY

"PETER THE PAINTER" ALLEGATION.

CASE UNFINISHED.

LIGHT BAIL ALLOWED.

Perth, Aug. 30.

Mr. Roe, P.M., continued the case in the City Court this morning in which August Maren and Frederick Johnson were charged with having, on or about April 20, at Doodlakine, conspired together to cause the said Frederick Johnson, in the course of a hearing against Ernest Dreger, at Kellerberrin, charged with stealing a gun, to wilfully swear that he (Dreger) went to Kellerberrin for the special purpose of obtaining a gun.

Detective-Sergeant Mann conducted the prosecution. Both the accused were undefended.

Sarah Ligum said she was 19 years of age, and was at present living in the Salvation Army Home in Lincoln-street. She knew the two accused, who had lived at her mother's place in London, at No. 6 Charles Court, and at No. 13 Ellen-street, off the Commercial-road. She knew Maren in London by the name of Yahnet Jansen, and the accused Johnson by the name of George Rosenberg. Both the accused had worked together for some time in a rubber factory in London. She had attended a club in Jubilee-street with Maren more than once. Sometimes she went there by herself. Johnson also went there. She remembered attending a meeting at another place with Maren. At that meeting a Frenchman made an address in Lettish, and Maren also spoke. She knew Ernest Dreger, and remembered him coming to her mother's place in Charles Court, London, for the purpose of seeing Maren. Afterwards, when they

Maren. Afterwards, when they lived in Ellen-street, the witness became friendly with Dreger. Dreger went away, but returned after a few weeks and lived at her mother's place from Saturday until Monday, when he went back to Liverpool. After a few days he again returned to her mother's house, where he remained until he went to Australia. It was arranged that she would come out to Australia and get married to Dreger. Johnson had been working in a factory for a few weeks. Witness and Maren asked Dreger to take Johnson to Australia, and they went together. After the departure of Maren witness remained at her mother's place, but about a fortnight before Christmas, 1910, Maren left to live with a man named Muller, in the East End of London. She knew a Jew named Louis Ersberg, who was also called Leide, who told her mother that he would tell the police that Maren paid money.

Detective-Sergeant Mann: Did you hear him say this yourself?

Witness: No.

Mr. Roe: We can't take that.

Maren asked a question concerning what Ersberg had said.

Witness said Ersberg was going to tell the detectives that Maren was helping anarchists.

Continuing, the witness said that it was after the Houndsditch murder that Maren shifted to Muller's place. He had been living with her mother prior to that. When she and her family came to West Australia, they were met by Dreger and taken to Kellerberrin, where they met Johnson and Peter Rolder. She told Johnson that she thought his name was Rosenberg, but he did not answer. Before she left London Maren told her his right name was August Maren. When they got to Kellerberrin Maren camped with Peter Older and Johnson, and they worked together. Witness went to live

ed together. Witness went to live with Dreger, who told her she shouldn't speak to Maren and Johnson, but she did speak to them. Dreger had a single-barrelled gun at Kellerberrin, and subsequently they all went to Doodlakine to Prowse's farm, Dreger taking the gun with him. Johnson and Maren were not so friendly there with Dreger as they had been in London. There was bad feeling between the accused and Dreger over her. After Dreger had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment, he communicated with her, asking her to keep his brothers away from Maren, Johnson and Older. Maren had told the witness that Dreger was going to gaol because he threatened to shoot Johnson.

Maren cross-examined the witness at length, and in the course of it remarked that at the meeting he attended in London the addresses were in reference to rich and poor. The meeting was in connection with

a social democratic branch in London.

Mr. Roe: You needn't bother about that. You are not charged with being an anarchist.

Maren: I hear people think I am "Peter the Painter."

Witness (further cross-examined by Maren) said he was staying with Muller when the Sidney-street affair took place. She couldn't recollect Dreger saying at Doodlakine that he would kill Maren and Johnson. She could not recollect telling Dreger that it would not be good for him to threaten Maren and Johnson.

Adolph Dreger said he went to London on February 1, 1911, from Riga, and went to the house of Mrs. Ligum with his brother Wilhelm, and told Mrs. Ligum that they were brothers to Ernest Dreger. He left London on February 3 for Australia, having stayed with Maren, who told him that the police were looking

him that the police were looking for him (Maren), but that the police didn't have a proper description of him and couldn't find him. Maren had told him when they were in the Otway after leaving Port Said that some of their Russian friends in London had made up their minds to rob the gold magazines to support their friends in Russia.

When the court resumed this afternoon the witness further stated that Maren said to him, after they had left Port Said, that he was a leader, and that he took a leading part in the clubs in London.

Detective-Sergeant Mann: How were they going to break into the gold magazine?

Witness: They were picked men. Maren did not say who the leader was.

Mr. Roe: Did Maren tell you he was going to take any part in robbing the gold magazine.

Witness: He did not say he was going to take any part in robbing the gold magazine, but only his friends.

Witness then gave evidence as to the doings of the party after their arrival in West Australia. The statements were mostly corroborative of the evidence of previous witnesses. When his brother had a row with Johnson and Maren, his brother called them Russian anarchists and brutes. Later Johnson told witness that his brother, Ernest Dreger, had got three months' imprisonment, and that if he (Johnson) had liked he could have got Dreger four years. The accused Maren had told him that if his brother, Ernest Dreger, would like to prosecute Johnson for giving false evidence that he (Maren) and Older would give evidence against Johnson.

Witness was cross-examined by the accused Maren, who endeavoured to show that bad feeling had existed between him and Johnson on

between him and Johnson on Prowse's farm. Witness stated that no bad feeling was evidenced until after the arrest of Ernest Dreger.

Michael Lavelle, proprietor of a coffee palace at Northam, said he was satisfied he had seen Ernest Dreger, and had a conversation with him some months ago at his place.

Samuel Finlay, storekeeper, Kellerberrin, and a justice of the peace for the Northam magisterial district, gave evidence of having, with Dr. Hodge, J.P., sat on the bench at the Kellerberrin Police Court on April 21. Ernest Dreger was that day charged with having (1) stolen and (2) received a gun, the property of William Clothier. The accused Johnson, on oath, had said, amongst other things, that he had seen the gun in Dreger's possession at Doodlekine, and that the last-named had purchased it for 12/ from a gardener at Kellerberrin, and that he (Dreger) had gone to Kellerberrin on two occasions for the special purpose of obtaining a gun. Witness related Dreger's account to the court of how he became possessed of the gun. Dreger was convicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Dr. William Theodore Hodge, practising at Kellerberrin, and justice of the peace, gave corroborative evidence.

Detective-Sergeant Mann stated that four more witnesses were to be called by him.

During the hearing the magistrate informed the accused they would not, if at all, come before the Supreme Court until the first Tuesday in October, as the case in his court would not be finished in time for the September sessions.

Maren complained of the delay in reaching finality in the case. He said he was an honest man. If he was in Russia he could understand it, but he could not see any reason for it in Australia.

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Detective-Sergeant Mann said he

would not oppose the granting of substantial bail. The Russian Consul had had an interview with the accused, and was watching the case on their behalf.

Maren: The Consul is only a servant of his Government. I have no friends here.

Mr. Roe: You can have bail in one surety of £50, to be approved of by me.

Maren made another voluble outburst, and said he considered that a distinction was being made between him and the other suspected persons.

The magistrate assured him that every person on remand, no matter of what nationality, or the nature of the alleged offence, was treated alike.

Finally Maren exclaimed: "Right! I am going to die in this cell!"

The further hearing of the case was adjourned for seven days.