

The following summaries are about two reports that appeared in the *Irish Times* in 1893. The reports describe a brawl that occurred in a synagogue in Dublin involving Avraham Jacob Marcus (b.1869-d.1933) and his brother, Isaac David Marcus (b.1871-d.1936) – and “good whiskey.” Here Avraham is referred to as “Jacob” and he would have been 24 years old, and Isaac would have been 22. As a result of the melee that took place, the brothers Marcus were sentenced to one month at Kilmainham Jail in 1893.

Here is a summary of both reports:

“Disturbance in a Synagogue” *Irish Times*, October 3, 1893

Brothers Jacob and Isaac Marcus (along with Abraham Filwan) were charged with assaulting Leopold Glasser in a synagogue in Dublin (Heytesbury St.). Glasser was proprietor of the house, where the top portion was let as a place of worship, and the bottom portion for tenements. The Marcus brothers and around 60 men present were drinking whiskey that morning and got drunk (with four quarts of whiskey), each congregation member got half a glass. They were taking part of a Jewish ceremony that morning, “Joy of the Lord” [The Jewish festival of Simchat Torah - when it is customary to celebrate with dancing and drinking]. A few of the attendees told them to keep quiet and not to disturb the ceremony. The president of the organization, Glasser grabbed Isaac Marcus by the coat, when Jacob Marcus struck his fist in the eye. Both the Marcuses then dragged him into a room and beat him.

Glasser got many blows and his eye was blackened. All defendants were part of the congregation. The further hearing of the case was adjourned for a week, the defendants out on £5 bail.

“The Row in a Jewish Synagogue” *Irish Times*, October 11, 1893.

The report begins, “It appeared that the day of the assault was a feast day, and there was a little too much drink among them. No solid food was allowed. As a consequence, they were all a little bit under the influence.” Leopold Glasser became annoyed at the preaching, and “the brothers Marcus then got into the scrimmage.” Three witnesses, were called to the stand, claiming they did not speak English, however, the prosecutor stated they had been in business for years, and one of them spoke English better than he did. One of the witnesses said they saw Wolf Joseph, “smack” Isaac March on the face, and then his brother hit Joseph. As a result, “Every two and two were fighting, and he saw Mr. Glasser’s face bleeding.” There were two- and a half gallons of whiskey made available, and the report states, “and it was very good whiskey.” The three defendants (two Marcuses and Filwan) were sentenced each to one-month imprisonment at Kilmainham jail. They would “find bail at the end of that period in £20 and be in “good behavior for twelve months, in default to be further imprisoned for one month.”

Kilmainham Jail held many Irish revolutionaries, including leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising who were also executed there. It was the backdrop in several well-known films for example, *The Italian Job*, 1969, *In the Name of the Father*, 1993, and *Michael Collins*, 1996.