

I have ever read a stronger summing up in favour of an acquittal. Every point relied on by Mr. Bell was considered by His Honour and discussed in his charge to the jury. In conclusion, I submit that you are really called upon to consider whether a huge mistake has not been made, and whether, in consequence, there has not been in this case a miscarriage of justice. It would be a piece of presumption on my part to attempt to dictate to you your functions, but if you are satisfied that this man is innocent I venture to say, whatever the result may be, you will not hesitate to openly and without fear express your opinion. My learned friend, Mr. Gully, says that the Committee ought to be careful in the exercise of its functions. I agree with him. This is an exceptional case. Public opinion has demanded that it shall be exceptionally treated, and demands that right shall be done to the prisoner, especially as it is admitted, even by those who support the prosecution, that a serious blunder was made on the part of the police and on the part of the doctor.

TUESDAY, 4TH OCTOBER.

LOUIS CHEMIS, examined at Wellington (Terrace) Gaol.

*The Chairman:* Prisoner: The Committee have attended here this morning as an investigation is being held into the petition which has been sent in by Mrs. Chemis on your behalf. We have thought it desirable to take your evidence, as you are in a position to give it, and with that object to ask you any questions which the Committee may think necessary. But first we should like you to make a short statement to the Committee, narrating, as concisely as you possibly can, the events of that day on which the murder was committed, from the time you left off work, and covering the time embracing the whole of that evening?—Just so. I would not be able to go right through the whole of the evidence at once. I never thought of having to give evidence any more, but I might give you many points. I do not know exactly the date it happened; but I remember the day the murder was committed. I knocked off work about half-past four o'clock. I was working that day in front of the hotel. After helping the boy to put some stuff in his cart I went home. It must have been a few minutes to five o'clock when I reached home. I purchased a few pounds' of beef-steak from Gardiner, the butcher, before I started. I went home then. When I got home I gave it to my missus. I put the leg-rope on: my missus used to milk a cow. Then I went for my horse on the farm before the house. I was away about two minutes. I put him in the stable. Then my missus came up into the house and we had our tea. After tea I went into the cowshed again. I then cut some mangolds. Some of the children were with me. After that I went in and had a look at the paper, the *Evening Post*. I put it on the mantelpiece after reading it. I then went to bed—that was about eight o'clock. Generally I used to get to bed early, for I used to get up very early in the morning—about four o'clock—to my work. The next morning I went down, as usual, to Kaiwarra to serve my milk. The first man that told me about Hawkings being killed was a man of the name of Mack, whom I used to serve with milk. I went home again as usual, but I met one of McCallum's little boys, and he also told me that Hawkings was killed. That was the second news [of it] that I had. I went home as usual and had my breakfast. I went down to work—down to the same spot in Kaiwarra. Through the day I heard different rumours about Hawkings being killed. One rumour was that he was killed by a cow; another was that he was killed by his trap; the last rumour I heard was that he was killed by somebody—that he was murdered. The next day, on the Saturday, the detectives came up. I was chopping firewood myself. I did not know who they were, in fact. They told me that they had a search-warrant and that they came to search the place—my house. I laughed, and said "All right." They did search all the place, the stable and all. They told me that they wanted a pocket-book which the man lost that was killed. While they were looking they found an old pocket-book belonging to myself. I remember Benjamin smiled when he opened it. Then he put it away again. He picked up some letters that I had, and some bills in one of the drawers; and a shot-pouch that was there; and a little dagger that was there. They made some remark about a sheath. The dagger was rusty and dirty, and so forth; at any rate they were all put into a bundle.

1. *The Chairman.*] As to the dagger: you mean the stiletto?—Yes, the little thing. I could not say anything as to whether Benjamin brought it in himself from the room to the kitchen. They went into the front room and brought out everything. The last time I said about this I made a mistake. I followed their own evidence when I said that Benjamin brought them out himself. I believe I took them out from the bedroom before they went into the parlour. I could not swear it, but I fancy I made a mistake. After that they took everything out of the room, and we went down to the stable. There is a shed there where I used to cut up mangolds. I used to put hay in it as well. They got down a box. In this box was one of my leggings. There must have been two or three pounds of blasting-powder in it, also some fuse. I believe there were a few cartridges of dynamite as well. There was a piece sticking out from the parcel. I remember Benjamin saying, "You have more fuse." He had a candle in his other hand. He said "You better not light it or we should all go smash," or be in danger of our life. This came into my mind while I was in Auckland. My wife sent me a letter which she received from Mr. Coulter, of Petone, in reference to this. It all came into my mind then. I did not know whether she knew anything about it, and I felt that if I did not tell she would be blowing herself up some of these nights. I wrote her a letter to this effect, telling her to take care. I want you, gentlemen, to look how stupid I am that I never mentioned this before. They said I had no powder in the house. After looking all over the place we went up to the house. The Inspector was in the kitchen all the time speaking to my missus. After going into the kitchen again, I remember the Inspector picking up the stiletto, and he said, "These things look rusty; never mind, we will see better in the daylight," and he put the things away. The revolver was loaded; there were three bullets in it; it was rusty as well, as it had not been used for a long time. After that the men went away; but before they went one of the detectives, I do not know which it was, pulled down a coat which I had hanging up. I saw