

young women, a Miss Smith, to whom Constable Durbridge is engaged to be married; the other her cousin, a Miss Kitching. They were all sitting at the table having some supper. I called Constable Durbridge to my office and informed him that it was very wrong of him or any other constables to take females into the police-station, and that it looked bad, and some persons would put a bad construction on his act. The constable explained that he had been to a social which lasted until late, and the young ladies had to pass the police-station on their way home, and when passing the police-station he, in a joke, asked the young ladies to have a cup of tea, not thinking they would accept his invitation. I admonished the constable for his act of indiscretion, and had I not known the young ladies to be of good character I certainly would have reported the matter at the time. It is the first and only act of the kind that has occurred since I have been here. I may say that Constable Burrell, who was on night duty, had done extra duty during the day—viz., being on duty at reception of returning troops from South Africa, and I had allowed him to go off duty at 2 a.m. This accounted for his being in the station at the time. In view of Constable Williams's evidence, I now desire to add that I did not take Constable Burrell into my office on the night in question. It was Constable Durbridge I took into the office. I did not speak to Constable Williams on the subject either that night after leaving the station or at any subsequent time. Constable Williams did not tender a written report to me on the subject at any time.

*Cross-examined by Inspector Macdonell.*] After speaking to Constable Durbridge on the matter I went straight off to bed. I did not see Constable Williams in front of the station when I left to go to my house. I did not notice any person from the time I left the office until I reached my gate, about 15 yards distant. I then looked round and saw what I believed to be the two females in question and Constable Durbridge passing the police-station lamp. I did not think it necessary to make sure that the females were off the premises before I left. I was under the impression they had left the station while I was in my office. I am unable to state what the time was, as I did not look at the clock. I find on reference to the diary that Constable Burrell was on duty from 9 p.m. 17th till 1 a.m. 18th July, and was required for duty again at 7 a.m. in connection with the return of men from South Africa.

*Questions by Commissioner.*] The statement in my report to the effect that Constable Burrell went off duty at 2 a.m. 18th July is incorrect. He went off at 2 a.m. on 19th July, instead of 18th July, and on the 18th at 1 a.m. E. MACKAY.

FREDERICK HENRY DURBRIDGE, constable, states :—

*Examined by Sergeant Mackay.*] I remember bringing Miss Smith and Miss Kitching on to the police-station at Nelson one night last winter. I took them into the mess-room. Constable Burrell was with us. When we reached the station it was about 1.30 a.m. After we were in the mess-room about ten minutes or a quarter of an hour you came into the mess-room. You called me into your office. You asked me what I brought the women on to the station for, and told me it was a very wrong thing to do. You said that as it was the first time such a thing had happened you would not report the matter, but do not let it occur again. I told you we were coming home from a dance, and had met Constable Burrell, who was coming off duty, and after standing talking a little while at the corner of Collingwood and Hardy Streets one of us (Burrell or myself) suggested the young ladies should come and have some supper, not thinking the invitation would be accepted. The young women, however, accepted the invitation, and we then brought them to the station and gave them some supper. We were all having supper when the sergeant came into the room. After leaving your office I returned to the mess-room and remained a few minutes and then left. We might have remained between five and ten minutes. I do not know when you left the office. I could not say where you went after leaving the office. When leaving the station I saw Constable Williams standing opposite the station, in front of the sergeant's office.

*Cross-examined by Inspector Macdonell.*] I do not recollect the date of the occurrence. I met Constable Burrell coming up Hardy Street, at the corner of Collingwood Street. The two females were with me at the time. We came to the station, I am pretty well sure, by way of Hardy Street and Harley Street. We did not stand outside the station before coming in. I cannot say who came in first; we all followed closely. I have no recollection of Constable Burrell coming into the station and then coming out again before we all entered. I believe Constable Burrell was to come off duty at 2 a.m. The constable told me he was coming off at 2 a.m. I am sure he said he was coming off at 2 a.m. I am not sure which one of us invited the females into the station. I did not see Constable Williams as I came into the station. I did not notice any one walking about the station while we were in the mess-room, until the sergeant came into the mess-room. I did not hear the sergeant leave his office. I did not see anything of the sergeant when we were leaving the station. Constable Burrell did not accompany us from the station, as far as I remember; I would not be positive about it. I did not consider it an improper action to bring the females on to the station. I have never seen anything of the kind at that hour of the night. I had leave from the sergeant to go to a social that evening. No time was mentioned. The social was held in the Catholic school-room, off Collingwood Street. Miss Kitching was living at Jones's boot-shop, Bridge Street—the upper end; and Miss Smith at the Royal Hotel, as housemaid. We should not have had necessarily to pass the police-station to get to the girls' lodgings. Had we gone the nearest possible route it would have taken us within about 100 yards of the station.

ARTHUR BURRELL, constable, states :—

*Called and examined by Commissioner.*] I remember the night Miss Kitching and Miss Smith were brought to the station. The sergeant told me when going on duty to come off about 2 a.m.; and about 1.45 a.m., as near as I can remember, I was proceeding towards the station, and when at the corner of Collingwood and Hardy Streets met Constable Durbridge with the two females. I told Constable Durbridge I was going off duty. I did not remark the time I was to go off duty.