

*Witness:* Mr. Harwood.

53. How many letters did you post yourself in connection with this test—we will not call it a trap?—Seven or eight.

54. You posted them all, did you not?—Yes.

55. You first posted four on the 1st August?—Yes.

56. Where?—In the office.

57. Did you post them in the box?—I had them date-stamped.

58. Do you call that posting?—Yes.

59. Who put on them “Posted without contents”?—

*Mr. Gray:* That was later.

60. *Mr. Ostler.*] As a matter of fact, they were not posted—they were just date-stamped by you?—As a matter of fact, they were posted; they were placed on the table and date-stamped.

61. Not put through a posting-aperture?—No.

62. Nevertheless posted?—Yes.

63. Four addressed to genuine people?—Yes.

64. And four of them were posted?—Yes.

65. Therefore four of them are genuine postal packets within the meaning of the Post Office Act?—Yes.

66. I suppose you are aware you are liable to two years’ imprisonment if you touch a postal packet?—You don’t say! I do not know.

67. Who instructed you to tamper with those in the course of post?—

*Mr. Gray:* I do not think my friend is entitled to use the word “tamper” in regard to letters posted with a specific purpose.

68. *Mr. Ostler.*] Who instructed you to take those out of the post when they were in the course of post to genuine people?—The Assistant Postmaster.

69. And you stopped them in the course of post?—Yes.

70. You have taken the statutory oath, I suppose?—Yes.

71. Do you not think that is rather a breach of the oath?—No.

72. You have stated that in your belief when some of those letters passed through the post-marking-machine the flaps were open?—Yes.

73. Does that necessarily prove that the envelopes were empty?—No.

74. They may just as well have been full as empty?—Quite so.

75. How do you happen to know the name of Mr. Howden: is he a pretty well-known man?—That is right; he is a neighbour of mine.

76. Any postman would have no more difficulty in finding Mr. Howden than any other man?—I do not know. Lots of postmen are returned soldiers.

77. But the Post Office rather prides itself on cracking nuts like that—much more difficult ones?—It did before the war.

78. It does not pride itself upon it now, you say?—It does to a certain extent.

79. Having been in the Auckland Post-office so long you would be aware that there are a great many Catholics in the Postal service there?—There are one or two.

80. Do you intend that to be a genuine answer to a fair question—do you mean that to be taken literally?—If you like. I do not know how many.

81. Is it not a fact that they are roughly in the proportion of one-third?—I do not know.

82. Do you deny it?—If you said it I would not deny it.

83. Have you known of friction occurring between Catholics and Protestants in the Post Office?—What do you call “friction”?

84. Surely, Mr. Rudd—you are beginning to make me think you are not answering my questions frankly?—It all depends on what you want.

85. Have you known of any trouble?—How long ago?

86. Say, within the last two years?—No, nothing within the last two years.

87. Without mentioning any names, do you know a man who is Postmaster close to here [name written down]: ever known of trouble between him and the Chief Mail Clerk who preceded you?—No, I cannot say that I do.

88. Do you know that that man who is Postmaster at that place is a Catholic?—Yes.

89. Do you know that man [name written down]? Where is he now?—He is Assistant Postmaster at [place named].

*Mr. Gray:* But that identifies him.

90. *Mr. Ostler.*] Do you not know of trouble between those two?—No.

91. Do you admit that it is possible, between the time letters are posted at a post-office like the Dominion Road post-office for distribution about Auckland and the time they are delivered, for the contents to be abstracted in course of post?—Yes, I suppose so.

*Mr. Gray:* There is time, of course.

92. *Mr. Ostler.*] Who collects the letters from, say, the Dominion Road post-office through the night?—A chauffeur with a motor-car.

93. They are bundled into bags?—Yes, small bags.

94. And necessarily they undergo a certain amount of rough treatment?—Yes, and shuffling.

95. Would it not be the easiest thing in the world for a flap to come out of an envelope in the shuffling?—I should say so.

96. It would be the easiest thing in the world for the flaps to come out and the contents remain there?—That is quite possible.

97. After the night clerks have sorted the letters they go upstairs and there they are re-sorted?—Yes.