

together. They were kept separate, and therefore you would know the weight of each envelope, and should the contents be missing you would more easily detect the empty envelope than in the general sorting of letters.

64. The whole of these were put aside and forwarded together?—Yes.

65. Whereas those would be mixed up amongst——?—I am to assume they would be placed among ordinary letters in front of me—I have no idea whether thick or thin letters. The size or weight does not compare with these. Therefore I consider the test was not a genuine test.

66. On the night you are to assume those went through the Post-office how many thousands of letters went through your hands?—Which night?

67. On the morning of the 1st August—at 9.15 a.m. on the 1st August—how many thousand letters would go through your hands on that morning?—Not many at that hour of the morning: the postings had not started.

68. Was it a busy morning?—I have no recollection.

69. Mr. Williamson has produced the Post-office file in which you were asked to explain why the attached envelopes were not endorsed "Posted without contents": those are the four in front of you?—I understand there were only two attached at the time. The pin-holes are proof.

70. Was this your explanation: "The attached envelopes bear the date-stamp impression of the 1st August, 1917, and the request for explanation of my passing same without contents dated 6/8/17, six days after alleged oversight. Unless my case was checked in my presence I refuse to take the responsibility of passing same"?—Yes.

71. Is it usual when a sorter is asked to explain the passing of empty envelopes that they should wait six days?—Not in a test case.

72. Do you know of any such test case having been conducted by the Post Office before, in any connection?—In connection with other matters, yes.

73. *Mr. Gray.*] With regard to the sorting of these letters, you say you had to examine one and satisfy yourself it contained printed matter?—Yes.

74. Having examined one, you assumed all the rest were like it?—Yes. I may have examined two or three.

75. You were satisfied from your examination of two or three that all the letters were of the same character?—Yes.

76. You therefore, I suppose, felt under no obligation or necessity to make any examination of the rest?—No; that is the usual examination.

77. In your reply to the request to explain the passing of these notes you practically decline to admit error on your part?—I do not decline; but it is quite possible in the ordinary course of post, but hardly possible in the case of a number of circulars.

78. Your answer is tantamount to a refusal to admit an error of this sort?—No; I said there was the possibility of one or two, but not one in ten or one in twenty.

79. It is not an unusual thing for tests to be made when occasion arises to see whether matter can go through in that way and the officers are performing their duties? You have known of tests, perhaps not of the same kind?—Yes; but not under the same conditions as mine.

80. Have you any idea how my friend Mr. Ostler came to know that a test had been applied in this case?—I have no idea.

*Mr. Ostler:* I did not know until I asked Mr. Linton, and Mr. Linton told me. It was something I stumbled on in the course of cross-examination.

DOUGLAS SIDNEY ALEXANDER COMRIE, Cadet, Post-office, Auckland, examined.

1. *Mr. Gray.*] What is your full name?—Douglas Sidney Alexander Comrie.

2. You are in the Auckland Post-office?—Yes.

3. What is your position there?—Cadet.

4. How long have you been there?—In this Post-office, about nine months.

5. How long in the Postal service?—Nearly five years.

6. Were you on the night staff assisting Mr. Linton on the nights of the 2nd and 4th July and the early mornings of the 3rd and 5th?—Yes.

7. Do you recollect the chauffeur Hayes bringing in the letters collected on his round?—Yes.

8. And putting them on the sorting-table?—Yes.

9. You heard the evidence of Mr. Linton?—Yes.

10. Did he give a correct description of what was done with the letters after they came in?—Yes.

11. Did you yourself examine any of these letters which bore the superscription "Box 912"?—We both examined them.

12. For what purpose?—To see if the postage was correct.

13. That is, to see if they complied with the regulations?—Yes.

14. Did you observe what the contents were?—I knew it was from a lodge.

15. You saw it was printed matter?—Yes.

16. How many did you examine?—One.

17. Were you satisfied from your examination of one that all the rest with this post-office box mentioned on the front were of the same kind, and that it was not necessary to examine any more?—Yes.

18. Who else does the sorting? How many would he examine?—I could not say how many. Mr. Linton would know of those. I was sorting while he was putting some through the machine.

19. Were you both busily occupied until 5 a.m.?—Yes.

20. I must ask the question, I suppose: did you handle any of the contents of these letters?—No.