

4. What number of letters would you be accustomed to handle on a trip?—On a round trip, about five hundred thousand or six hundred thousand.

5. In your opinion is it possible that a man sorting a large number of letters quickly can detect readily whether the envelopes he is sorting are full or empty?—No.

6. Why do you say so?—At the speed he cannot detect it. A good sorter sorts at the rate of five hundred letters in eight or ten minutes.

7. Are Comrie and Linton good sorters?—Linton sorts about five hundred in twelve minutes. Comrie is not so good.

8. Do you think it would be possible for Mr. Linton, sorting at that speed, to detect merely by the pressure of his finger and thumb whether the envelopes were full or empty?—No.

9. *Mr. Ostler.*] If that was the case, Mr. Rudd, what was the value of this beautiful test you took part in—this test by which you slipped a few odd letters through?—Mr. Linton passed them.

10. Mr. Linton was told he passed them seven days afterwards, you mean. Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Rudd, that a letter-sorter of a number of years' experience taking a bundle like that could not tell whether one was empty?—At the speed he was sorting—five hundred in eight or ten minutes—

11. Did you not discover one empty in that lot?—I will start again. [Bundle sorted.] No.

*Mr. Ostler:* So much for your skill as a letter-sorter. There was one I emptied on purpose.

*Mr. Gray:* He was not looking for it.

*Mr. Ostler:* You found it after you knew.

*Witness:* I found it the second time.

12. *Mr. Gray.*] Your practical demonstration has showed that you, an expert letter-sorter, missed one letter in the packet?—Yes.

13. So it is reasonable to suppose any other expert letter-sorter might do the same thing?—Yes.

14. In regard to the test applied to Mr. Linton, was not that test applied because it was alleged he had passed empty envelopes and he repudiated the idea?—Yes.

HUGH GAMBLE MCCREA, Head of Mail Staff, Chief Post-office, Auckland, examined.

1. *Mr. Gray.*] Your name?—Hugh Gamble McCrea.

2. You are head of the mail staff?—Yes.

3. How long have you been in the office?—Thirty years, speaking from memory.

4. In Auckland all the time?—Yes.

5. How long have you been head of the mail staff?—Eight or ten years.

6. Do you recollect coming on duty on the morning of the 3rd July?—I do not recollect unless I see the time-book.

7. Or the morning of the 5th?—I cannot tell. [After consulting time-book witness said he came on duty at 7.10 a.m. on the 3rd and 4.50 a.m. on the 5th July.]

8. In regard to the 5th: would that be before the night staff left?—Yes.

9. Was anything special done to any of the letters in the mail-room after you arrived?—Nothing special.

10. Just the ordinary course followed?—Yes.

11. Have you any reason to suppose that after you came on duty at ten minutes to 5 any officer tampered with any letters in the mail-room?—No.

12. *Mr. Ostler.*] After you came on duty the letters went upstairs, I suppose?—The letter-carriers' sorters would take the carriers' letters upstairs or send them up on a lift.

13. And there they would be handled by other officers?—Yes.

14. You do not know what happened to them there?—No.

15. Do you happen to know where the Postal Censor works?—In the Chief Postmaster's Chief Clerk's room.

16. Are there any other persons in that room where he is working?—Yes.

17. Is he ever in the course of his duties called away from his work?—Yes, I think so. I am only speaking from memory.

18. It would be natural he would have to go a short time away for various things. Does he work at a table by himself?—Yes.

19. How many years' experience have you had in the Post Office?—Over thirty-seven years.

20. Does it ever happen that the contents of an envelope are found after sorting in the mail-room?—On very rare occasions it does.

21. What then is the duty of Postal officers with regard to those contents?—They send the contents to the Dead Letter Office.

22. And the Dead Letter Office, I suppose, returns them to the sender if they find out who the sender is?—That is so.

23. Did you on the morning of either the 3rd or 5th July observe any contents of envelopes on the floor?—No.

24. Would you have observed them if they had been there?—I would have.

25. Have you been most of your time in the Auckland Post-office?—Yes.

26. How many years in the Auckland Post-office?—About thirty-two, I think.

27. Can you tell me whether there are a considerable number of Roman Catholics in the Postal service in Auckland?—No, I cannot.

28. I suppose you know there are some?—Yes.

29. Have you ever known of trouble between the Protestants and the Catholics, or between a Protestant and a Catholic, in the Post-office?—What do you mean by "trouble"?