

- Mr. Jones.* 491. Did you have anything at all to say against his character?—No; I always found him honest, straightforward, and steady.
- 25th Sept., 1878. 492. Did you ever say anything to the Inspector of Police about the matter?—I could not be certain whether I did or not. I have had several conversations with the police.
493. About this matter?—I do not know. I think I said once it was a pity they locked him up. They said he must have given some “cheek” or something; but he said he never did.

THURSDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 1878.

ALFRED BOARDMAN, being duly sworn, was examined.

- Mr. Boardman.* 494. *The Chairman.*] You are Agent for the South British Insurance Company at Wellington?—Yes.
- 26th Sept., 1878. 495. You remember the railway refreshment-room, Wellington, being burned down?—Yes; the Railway Hotel, opposite the station.
496. There was an insurance on it in your office?—No; not in my office. There was an insurance on it in the National and the New Zealand Offices.
497. The owner's name was Pestrige?—Yes.
498. I think you have informed Mr. Barton of something that had passed between you, as Agent for an Insurance Company, and the Inspector of Police with regard to this matter?—Of something which another Insurance Agent had told me had passed between him and the Inspector of Police.
499. Who was the Agent?—Mr. Bruce Wallace.
500. What did he tell you?—That he was standing near the fire almost immediately after it broke out, and Mr. Atchison came to him and said something. I am not sure of the exact words, but it was as much as to ask what the Insurance Companies would stand if the police authorities hunted the matter up.
501. Do you recollect the case of one Heggarty, who was charged with arson?—Yes.
502. He was convicted?—Yes.
503. Did you make any payment on account of that conviction?—Yes.
504. What did you pay?—The three insurance companies interested—the National, the Standard, and the South British—paid a sum of £40, of which our share came to £15.
505. To whom did you pay that money?—I paid my share, £15, to the Agent for the National, Mr. Wallace, and he paid the whole sum over to Mr. Atchison. I may say one thing, Inspector Atchison has admitted to me that he has received the money.
506. The £40?—Yes.
507. What was the money paid for?—My payment was intended to be a stimulus to the whole of the police to work up such cases as that against Heggarty.
508. Was the money paid before or after the conviction?—It was promised before the conviction, and payment followed as a matter of course.
509. Do you know how the money was distributed?—I have tried to get Inspector Atchison to distribute it, but I have not been able to do so.
510. What has become of the money?—I suppose Atchison has kept it himself. In last February he had not distributed it; at least he told me he had not. I tried to get him to pay it over to the police, whom I consider he is depriving of it, and he has never told me has paid it. The only reason I could get why it was not divided amongst the police was that he was making inquiries to see who was the most deserving, but that was four months after Heggarty had been convicted.
511. Who asked you to make a payment on account of a conviction?—I think we promised the money of our own free will.
512. You were never asked for it?—No, I was not. I think Mr. Wallace can give you some evidence on that point.
513. Do you recollect the case of Morton Quin, charged with arson?—Yes.
514. Will you just state what you know about it?—A house at the corner of Quin and Dixon Streets, belonging to Quin's father, was insured in my office for £400. One morning I saw by the papers that there had been a fire there, and I went to the police. In consequence of what I heard, I bought a padlock and key and locked the place up, so that no one could get at it. Detective Farrell made a lot of inquiries and submitted a report to the Inspector of Police, and from the nature of that report I certainly thought there was quite enough evidence to show good cause for further inquiry. The Inspector was at Wanganui at the time, but in two or three days' time returned. After that I asked him at least half a dozen times what steps he was going to take. One day he said he had not had time to look into the matter, but he would take the report home on Sunday and see what it stated; so he put me off for another week. But since then nothing whatever has been done. If you have that report before you, you will see that there was quite sufficient evidence to justify further inquiry, especially as Quin bore a bad character, and had been charged with embezzlement before. I am sure we should have got a conviction if the matter had only been followed up.
515. Were no steps taken?—None, except the inquiries which were made and submitted to the Inspector in the shape of a report.
516. Have you seen the report?—Yes.
517. *The Chairman* (to Inspector Atchison).] Where is that report?—I do not know. I cannot find a copy of it. It must have been taken out of the office. I fancy Mr. Boardman must have it.
518. *The Chairman* (to witness).] Have you the report?—Not the original.
519. Have you a copy of it?—There is a copy at the head office in Auckland, and the Government have a copy of it. I submitted it to Mr. Sheehan in a letter, which has never been acknowledged.
520. That is to the Minister of Justice?—Yes; on 18th February last. The fire happened at the end of last October.
521. Will you state what you remember of the report?—The report stated that Detective Farrell was walking down the street about half-past 7 at night, when he saw a sudden blaze in the house. He