

as the post-office was concerned, the letter was to be given to Mr. Rose in care for Miss Prince.

598. If you had known that the letter and savings-bank book would be received and opened by Mrs. Rose—that the effect of it would be that Mrs. Rose would get possession of the post-office bank-book and the letter, and would open the packet and read the letter—would you have sent that telegram?—Yes; it would have made no difference, because I intended it should go in care of Mrs. Rose.

599. Who had authority to open it—herself?—I did not say so.

600. Would you have sent that telegram if you had known that the effect of it would be that Mrs. Rose would get possession of the packet and letter, and open them?—As an official, if a letter is—

601. Answer yes or no, and explain afterwards. If you had known the letter and post-office book would be received by Mrs. Rose, and opened by her, would you have sent the telegram?—I would, so far as receiving it, but not so far as opening it is concerned.

602. Would you have sent the telegram if you had known the consequence would be that the person receiving the packet would open it?—I may answer first in the negative, and afterwards explain. That it to say, as a post-office clerk, in the change of a mode of delivery, if a letter is addressed to the care of a certain person, so far as the post-office is concerned all responsibility is ended when delivery is made to the person in whose care it is addressed; but, apart from the official nature of it, I would have no objection to Mrs. Rose knowing the contents. I did not expect her to open the letter; not without Miss Ida Prince's approval. I gave her full liberty to read the contents.

603. At the time you sent the telegram you knew she was going to get this packet?—Yes.

604. Why did you know that? You sent an official telegram to your official head to do an official act: what reason had you to believe that the effect of that would be to put this packet into the hands of Mrs. Rose?—I knew that Mrs. Rose had been acting as agent for Miss Ida Prince; that Miss Ida Prince was not at the address put upon the letter. By giving it to the care of Mr. Rose, I was certain it would be delivered, through Mrs. Rose, to Miss Ida Prince.

605. But Mrs. Rose was at Blenheim?—She was going back the same evening.

606. You expected it to be detained until Mrs. Rose's return?—Yes.

607. Was that by arrangement with Mrs. Rose?—I cannot say whether it was by arrangement. It was by the knowledge I had of Mrs. Rose's movements.

608. Did the mail go by the same steamer as Mrs. Rose?—What mail?

609. The mail from Blenheim to Wellington?—No.

610. Seeing that your telegram was official, and merely requested the detention of the letter, not its delivery to Miss Ida Prince, you must have expected that Mr. Rose would have gone to the officials and claimed the letter?—I did.

611. Did Mrs. Rose tell you so?—I could not say whether she told me or whether I told her.

612. Either she told you she would go or you told her to go and get the letter?—Yes.

613. The reason you sent the telegram was that Mr. Rose might get the letter? You say it was on Mrs. Rose's strong recommendation that the packet was detained?—It was.

614. What reason did she give why she should get possession of the packet?—Because of the girl's delicate state of health, and that it would have been unwise for the girl to get it without in some manner being prepared for it.

615. What?—For the news it contained.

616. But you had already informed her of the death of Mr. Livingston?—No; I had sent it (the telegram) to Mr. Kirkcaldie's, but I was informed afterwards that it never reached her.

617. Had you not sent her a newspaper with the announcement of the death in it?—I did not know that she had got delivery of it.

618. Was that the sole reason for her strong recommendation?—I believe so.

619. Was not Mrs. Livingston named?—No.

620. Nor Miss Combs?—No.

621. Then, her sole reason for getting possession of that letter was that Ida Prince was in too delicate health to receive it?—Yes.

622. Did any of these certificates pass through your hands: you were in charge?—Mr. Gudgeon would be in charge.

623. Do you know anything about the transfer of accounts?—I do.

624. Do they pass through your hands?—They do pass through my hands.

625. I believe that an account cannot be transferred from one office to another without the consent of the depositor?—That is so.

626. Can you show the consent of the depositor on this account?—Yes.

627. In an official sense, divesting yourself of all personal knowledge, is it regular to transfer an account in a joint name on the authority of one without the consent of the other?—Not if both parties are alive.

628. But if one be dead, then on the authority of the survivor?—Yes; first getting permission to do so from the Head Office.

629. Did you get permission from the Head Office to transfer this?—I got instructions from the Head Office to transfer it to one name—to transfer it to Ida Prince.

630. Am I right in saying that it would not be regular to allow that to be transferred to Wellington without authority from the Head Office, or your superiors in Wellington?—No; not unless both parties' signature were there.

631. In this case you have an account in two names: one depositor is dead: you transfer the account to Wellington on the authority of the survivor, without any reference to the claim of the other depositor. I understand you to say that such a course would not be regular without authority from your superior officers?—It would not.