

419. It was sent to you officially?—Yes; officially.

420. If so, will you explain, or how do you explain, this: this is a letter from the head of your department to Mr. Warburton?

“And with regard to the other accusation, I am directed to say that what took place is really outside official cognisance, but for your information to state that Mr. Livingston's private letters, &c., were shortly after his death removed by Mr. Salmon from the safe in the Post Office to his private house at the request of the executrix. Mrs. Rose went through such of the papers as were submitted to her by Mr. Salmon—at his home—and in his presence. The contents of a cash-box left in the Post Office safe, and which had previously been in the hands of the police, were also examined by Mrs. Rose. This examination, which took place in the presence of the Acting-Chief Postmaster and Mr. Salmon, was also made at the instance of Miss Combs. The Acting-Postmaster-General is clearly of opinion that there has been no official impropriety whatever in either the one or the other; and he is astonished that so serious accusations have been made, or even implied, without your having first satisfied yourself of the absolute correctness of your information.”

How do you explain that?—I cannot explain that; it is not in my power to explain it.

421. You still say you received it officially?—That was my opinion.

422. If you received it officially, why did you take it home to luncheon?—It was sent to me by the chief clerk, a post-office official; but when I saw the contents and the address I knew all the circumstances.

423. What circumstances?—That the letter was addressed to Ida Prince; that Mrs. Rose was practically in charge of Miss Prince; that the envelope was an official one, marked on savings-bank business. I only assumed that the intention was that the letter should be placed in my care, and that it should be placed in the hands of Ida Prince as quickly as possible; that was the position.

424. You took it home to luncheon?—I took it home that Mrs. Rose might convey it to Ida Prince.

425. What I want to know is where your official capacity ends and where your private capacity begins: did your private capacity begin when you put it in your pocket and took it home to luncheon?—Practically, that was so. I assumed that the sole intention of the sender was that it should come to my care in order that it might be delivered to the person to whom it was addressed. That is the whole gist of the post-office business—that every care shall be taken that a letter is delivered to the right person.

426. Was that your sole ground for so concluding—the telegram he sent you?—No.

427. Was Mr. Salmon's telegram your sole reason for believing that in sending it he desired to deliver the packet to Ida Prince?—The position is one that is difficult to explain.

428. Yes or no?—The telegram conveyed to my mind the wish on the part of Salmon that the letter should come to my care, in order that I might see that it was put in possession of the addressee.

429. You say that is the meaning you took out of the telegram. I will read the telegram, and then ask you to repeat your answer [telegram read. *Vide* question No. 372]: you took that to mean that you were to get that letter and give it to the person to whom it was addressed?—That was obviously the intention of the telegram.

430. How did you get that meaning out of it? Would it not rather suggest to your mind that there was something wrong, and that it should be stopped altogether?—If that meaning had been intended it would have been qualified in some way; some reason would have been given. As to whatever else might be done, the intention was obviously that the letter might be delivered to the person to whom it was addressed.

431. You had no other reason for concluding that to be the meaning?—None whatever.

432. When did Mrs. Rose get back from Blenheim?—The morning of the 27th, I think.

433. On the morning of the day that you got the packet?—Yes.

434. You had seen her before you went to the office?—Yes.

435. Had any conversation passed between you about what had transpired at Blenheim?—Yes.

436. What was the nature of the conversation? Were you aware that the telegram was sent at her request?—No.

437. She had gone to Blenheim; she had a conversation with you about what happened at Blenheim, but she mentioned neither the telegram nor the letter?—That is so.

438. You had no notion that the telegram had passed? What did she tell you as to the position of Mr. Livingston's affairs generally? Did she say anything about money left to Ida Prince?—I think she said there was £500 for Ida Prince.

439. Did she say that it was in the savings-bank?—I do not recollect.

440. Did she say that she had gone through the papers with Salmon?—She told me she had been to Salmon's house.

441. Did she say she had gone through the papers?—She said she had looked through some old letters at Salmon's house, and that they destroyed some together.

442. But she never mentioned the money that was in the savings-bank?—Not that I am aware of.

443. Never that Salmon had telegraphed?—No.

444. Are you quite sure?—I have no recollection.

445. You did not know it?—No; it was not mentioned.

446. What was your intention in taking the letter home to luncheon?—That it might be given to Ida Prince. Mrs. Rose was going to Ida Prince.

447. You knew she was going to Ida Prince that afternoon?—I did not know positively that she would go that afternoon. I knew that she was the fittest person to whom the letter could be trusted for delivery.