

immediately took it down to the Public Trustee, and he told me to give it to Mr. De Castro. I gave it to Mr. De Castro, and got a receipt for it, and I asked him if he would send up a clerk and take charge of the things, as there might be valuable things, and I did not want to be there alone. Instead of doing that he sent a couple of expresses, without anybody in charge, and took them down to Thomas's rooms—all the effects but the casket which I took to the Public Trust Office.

2737. There are three items in Thomas and Co.'s account sales: "Two bags and contents, 5s.; two bags and contents, 3s.; box and contents, 13s." Is it possible the lace was in either of the bags or in the box?—Yes.

2738. And they were sold without any reference to their containing any lace, and the lace was not exposed separately?—There was no reference to the lace at the time of the sale.

2739. Why do you think the lace was in the bags or in the box?—My wife took it out and examined it, and replaced it when we were going to take the inventory.

Mr. ALFRED JOHN CROSS examined.

2740. *The Chairman.*] What is your position, Mr. Cross?—I am messenger in the Public Trust Office.

2741. Has a careful search been made for a packet of lace in the jewellery-safe?—A careful search has been made in the jewellery-safe, and the lace is not there. It is believed the lace was sold with the jewellery.

2742. Then you were instructed to deliver that message to the Commissioners?—Yes.

2743. By whom?—By the clerk who searched the safe.

2744. What is his name?—Mr. Stanley Hamerton.

2745. He instructed you to take the message which you have just delivered to the Commissioners?—Yes.

Mr. STANLEY HAMERTON examined.

2746. *The Chairman.*] What is your position in the Public Trust Office?—I am acting as Record Clerk at present.

2747. Have you been long in the Public Trust Office?—Now a little over two years.

2748. Did you enter the service of the Public Trust Office after leaving school?—No; I was with the New York Life Insurance Company previous to that.

2749. You sent up the messenger just now with a message to the Commissioners that a certain packet of lace could not be found in the jewellery-safe?—Yes.

2750. Do you know who looked through the safe?—I did myself.

2751. Did you look in all the drawers?—Yes, in all the drawers where the jewellery is kept, and all parcels and effects.

2752. How do you know the lace cannot be in some other part of the safe?—It is not usual to put it anywhere else.

2753. Will you now go down and have another search, and satisfy yourself whether the lace is or is not in the safe? If it is in the safe, kindly bring it up. [Witness thereupon went down to make another search, and returned shortly afterwards, and stated that he had found the parcel which he now produced, marked "Mrs. Dallon, deceased," in the safe amongst the parcels.]

2754. *Mr. Loughrey.*] In searching the safe, is that the only bundle you could find in connection with Mrs. Dallon's estate?—Yes.

2755. No other?—No. [Parcel opened.]

2756. Is there any lace in that parcel?—No.

Mr. EDWARD BOLTON BRISTOW examined.

2757. *The Chairman.*] You are representative of George Thomas and Co.?—I am a partner in the firm.

2758. Have you been long connected with that firm?—Only twelve months.

2759. The Commissioners would like you to produce your book of auction-sales in connection with the estate of Mrs. Dallon, deceased. Will you be able to produce it?—I cannot say that. The message was that I was wanted at once. I came over to Mr. Hamerton to say that at the present time I could not put my hand on it. In shifting over from the old place to the present building I know that a lot of books and old papers were destroyed, against my wish, by one of the clerks, who has since been dismissed. I am afraid the book was lost. I have a copy of the account sales, and the clerk who made it up is still in our employ. His name is Nairn. The name of my partner is Mr. Haybittle, who was also a partner of the late Captain Thomas, and has been associated with him since boyhood. He can give you more information than I can furnish to the Commissioners.

Mr. FREDERICK WILLIAM HAYBITTLE examined.

2760. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Haybittle, the Commissioners, in the course of their investigation of the Public Trust Office, wish to get some information in reference to many sales of personalty that have been conducted by your firm in connection with the Public Trust Office, and they want to know whether you will be good enough to supply them with any information in your power. I believe also that, as you have been long associated with the late Captain Thomas, you will be able to assist the Commissioners by giving information on matters they wish to be satisfied upon?—Quite so. I am prepared to give any information I possibly can to help on your work. I am afraid there will be some difficulty in producing the books of late years, up to pretty near the time of Captain Thomas's death at the beginning of last year.

2761. Then, why will there be a difficulty?—Unfortunately, through some misconception which I can hardly account for, a quantity of our books, including some very valuable ones, were