

749. Had you any inkling or idea that it was?—Not beyond what the *Evening Post* stated, a little before the receipt of the letter, that they were going to make some revelation. I believe that was stated in one of the issues of the *Post*.

750. Did you ever see the original letters?—Never.

751. Or a copy of them?—No.

752. Did you on the 4th, or immediately prior to the 4th April, speak to any reporter of any newspaper on the subject?—None. I can swear that distinctly.

753. I gather from your evidence that you know nothing about it, except from what you saw in the papers. On or about the 4th of April, do you remember having received a letter from Sir Patrick Buckley for delivery to the Hon. Mr. Ward?—No; positively not.

754. Or for Mr. McKenzie or Mr. Cadman?—No.

755. Did you see any reporters about the office that morning?—I would not like to say. In fact, I could not say.

HENRY MASON sworn and examined.

756. *The Commissioner.*] What are you?—A Government messenger.

757. What is this book?—That is our book, in which are entered the letters we take out as messengers.

758. Do you notice amongst the entries under date 4th April, a letter to the *Evening Post*, and one to W. H. Attack?—Yes.

759. What does an examination of those entries show?—It shows that I took those letters out at 10.10 a.m. on 4th April, and delivered them.

760. And did you deliver them?—I did.

761. Do you recollect delivering the letter to the *Evening Post*?—Not specially.

762. How do you usually deliver a letter to the *Evening Post*?—I always give it to the one at the counter in the office, if he is there. If he is away I give it to one of the others.

763. What is the name of the man at the counter?—I could not say.

764. Did you deliver this letter to Mr. Gillon, or to Mr. Blundell?—No; it was to one of the others.

765. Do you remember delivering Mr. Attack's letter?—Yes. I took it in to Mr. Humphries in the office, and said, "Mr. Attack," and I left it on the table.

766. Was Mr. Attack there?—I do not know Mr. Attack.

767. Do you know who was the person in the office with Mr. Humphries when you delivered the letter?—No.

768. Are you quite sure you delivered the letter to the *Evening Post*?—I do not remember that letter particularly.

769. Do you frequently deliver letters to the *Evening Post*?—Yes.

770. Where did you get the letter addressed to Mr. Attack?—From the messengers' room.

771. Where did you get the letter for the *Evening Post*?—In the same place—they were together.

772. Who gave them to you?—Mr. West, no doubt. He always enters them, and gives them to us. Of course, it might have been Mr. Huett. I cannot tell for certain now.

773. Did you recognise the writing on the letter for the *Evening Post*, or for Mr. Attack?—No; I cannot call it to mind. There were thirteen letters given to me.

774. Where were you on duty for the week from the 2nd April to 6th April?—I was outside the whole week.

ROBERT ROE KIRKER sworn and examined.

775. *The Commissioner.*] What are you?—Clerk in the *Evening Post* office.

776. I want you to look at this book [produced]. It is kept in the messengers' room, and is a record of all letters sent out into the town for delivery by Government messengers. I have conclusive evidence to show that on the morning of the 4th April, 1894, at 10.10 a.m., a letter was sent to the *Evening Post*. It was taken out of the Buildings at 10.10 a.m. by Messenger Mason, who swears he delivered it in the front office, and he thinks—though he is not quite positive—that he gave it to you. Have you any recollection of having received such a letter?—No.

777. If you had received such a letter, what would you do with it?—That depends on how it was addressed.

778. It was addressed "*Evening Post*."—It would be opened and the contents noted. It would then be forwarded on to the proper department or person to deal with it.

779. The letters which form the subject-matter of this inquiry were contained in an envelope, which was not opened, I may tell you, by the person to whom it was addressed, until after 10.10 a.m. on 4th April—the hour set down in this book. Still there is an impression abroad amongst a certain class of people that the letter may have been opened surreptitiously and wrongfully, before it was opened by the person to whom it was addressed. I do not presume for one moment to say that there is any truth in that. I express no opinion on the point at all, except so far as to say that I consider Mr. Gillon's letter to me is evidence to the contrary. Still it is necessary for me to ask you if you remember opening a letter about that date containing the Fox correspondence, or anything purporting to be a copy or draft of the same?—No.

780. You are prepared to state that you did not open any letter containing information about the Fox correspondence?—Yes.

781. I would explain to you, as I have explained to Mr. Georgeson, that the probability is the letter was a perfectly innocent and proper communication. I have gone through the file of the *Post* for the 3rd and 4th April very carefully, and I find that the envelope in question might have contained an advertisement on almost any subject. For instance, of a birth or marriage, house to let, servant wanted, or a thousand other things. The fact that it was despatched from the Buildings