

42. When a cheque is issued by the Paymaster-General, is there any duplicate or record of the issue of that cheque?—The number of the cheque, the amount of it, and the branch of the Bank of New Zealand on which it is drawn are entered in a bank ledger. Then, the number of the cheque, the payee's name and address are entered in the address register, and then all particulars of the voucher are entered in the abstract-book at the Treasury.

43. Is it possible—assuming that a voucher was lost—to ascertain from the Treasury books to whom the cheque was issued, and for what services?—Yes, I think so. I should say those books would indicate it.

44. *Mr. Fisher.*] I think I understood you to say that you have omitted no evidence?—Yes.

45. Did you from amongst the documents get a specimen copy of the voucher?—No.

46. Were you not shown one?—Willis after giving evidence and after his search on one occasion came to me with a blue voucher, but I did not look at it.

47. Did Willis not show you a voucher and say, "This is the voucher we saw"?—He said something like that.

48. Did you not record that in evidence?—No.

49. Did not Willis describe to you the difference between the "Sneddon" voucher and the blue voucher?—No.

50. Was it not described to you by me?—I dare say it may have been in your evidence. If it is not there it was not.

51. As the Premier signs vouchers "R. J. Seddon," and Captain Seddon also signs "R. J. Seddon," how is it possible for the Audit Department to distinguish between the two vouchers—what mode of distinction is there between them?—I do not think there can be any doubt as to the distinction, because there would first of all be the salary of the officer, the travelling-expenses of the officer, and the particular services of the officer. It seems to me that this would be obvious.

52. If Captain Seddon travelled and drew £1 10s. a day expenses, you would assume it was the Premier's voucher because it was for £1 10s. a day travelling-allowance?—I do not think I would assume it would be the Premier's voucher. We would check the Premier's movements. The Premier's claims for travelling-allowance are checked.

53. As a matter of fact, you have no means of checking or distinguishing between vouchers of R. J. Seddon, senior, and R. J. Seddon, junior, except the different signatures?—The officers would be described in the voucher, although sometimes the description might be left out.

54. In which case you would not be able to distinguish?—I dare say the description might occasionally be left out, but I do not think there could be any mistake on that account.

55. Mr. Willis went through the vouchers once, and then asked to go through them a second time?—No; not to my recollection.

56. Did he ask you for permission to publish the names?—It is in the evidence. He did not ask me in so many words; he put it this way: "I believe that if the whole of the vouchers are checked and the names and amounts published we may possibly discover a fraud." That is all he said on that point.

57. What did you say?—To that suggestion I followed it up with these words: "The voucher has been exhibited to you for every payment made at Christchurch during the period that could, if the voucher were genuine, be the voucher in question—that is, every such voucher as shown by the Chief Postmaster's record; and the Audit Office has proved from its own books that there has been no voucher for the amount omitted. So that all the other payments made at Christchurch within the period during which you say the payment must have been made cannot possibly, in my judgment, include the voucher." That is the only notice I took of that.

58. I think you stated that there were two signatures on each voucher from the Audit Department?—Yes; initials.

59. Are they signatures or initials?—Initials generally, but signatures sometimes; but I think they are more often initials than signatures.

60. There are initials on the "Sneddon" voucher?—Yes.

61. Whose initials?—Either my own or Mr. Gavin's.

62. But not both?—No; and the clerk's who checks the vouchers.

63. *Mr. Davey.*] Mr. Fisher asked you whether Mr. Willis showed you a voucher, and you said, "Yes, he did," but it was not taken down in your evidence. Was that done during the course of the evidence?—No, it was not. He came in and took it out of his pocket while he was waiting in the office after the vouchers had been produced to him by the Audit Office.

64. After the inquiry had been closed?—No; after the examination on that day of the vouchers and the failure of that examination to prove the existence of the alleged voucher. Then, passing through the office he pulled out this voucher. I cannot describe it, as I did not particularly look at it. I presume if he wanted to put it in evidence he would have done so.

65. *Mr. Fisher.*] I understood you to say the other day that the name appeared on the voucher of the Audit official?—I said "signature," I think, or "initials."

66. *Mr. Taylor.*] I want to ask you, Mr. Warburton, did you not know when conducting the recent inquiry that there were no butts to the Treasury cheque-books?—No. When I spoke the other day I said I believed there were.

67. In reply to a question just now you said the entries in the Treasury books could only have been the entries made from the original vouchers which he had seen?—Yes.

68. Supposing that a fraudulent voucher had taken the place of the original voucher that these four men say they saw in the Christchurch Post-office, would it not be vastly important that a comparison should be made from the book record of the original voucher and the voucher at present on the file?—If there was any ground whatever for a suspicion of that kind.

69. Do you deny the possibility of fraud?—I do not deny the possibility of fraud. I deny that there has been fraud in this case.