

21. Are those copies of the four letters?—Yes, they are copies.
22. [Letter produced, exhibit M.] Was that delivered?—Yes, that one was delivered.
23. [Letter produced, exhibit N.] Was that delivered?—No.
24. [Letter produced, exhibit O.] Was that delivered?—No.
25. [Letter produced, exhibit P.] Was that delivered?—No.
26. Only one of those four was delivered?—Yes.
27. Did you make any protest to the Government about the censoring of your letters to that box?—We made protest to the Postmaster-General, who answered, replying that the censorship was not under the control of the Postmaster-General.
28. *Mr. Gray.*] Have you got the letters?—Yes, we have the letters.
29. *Mr. Ostler.*] Perhaps we will have an opportunity of getting those letters and putting them in later, Mr. Gray. (To witness): The reply of the Postmaster-General was that it was not under his jurisdiction: whom did he ask you to apply to?—The military authorities.
30. The military authorities or the Minister of Defence?—The Minister of Defence.
31. Was any letter written to the Minister of Defence?—A letter was written.
32. Did he reply?—He replied that citizens must of necessity suffer some inconvenience at such times.
33. In addition to the letters which you posted yourself, do you know of any other letters which were posted to the Vigilance Committee and not received?—Yes; there was a letter from Mr. C. R. N. Mackie, who stated he posted one in June last.
- Mr. Gray:* How does this witness know they were posted?
- Mr. Ostler:* Mr. Mackie is down in Greymouth; you do not expect—
- Mr. Gray:* Yes; I am not going to submit to that kind of evidence.
- Mr. Ostler:* I am going to ask that either Mr. Mackie's letters be admitted, or else he be called. I will show them to my friend; that is the first of them.
- Mr. Gray:* I do not object to this, sir. It is a letter from Mr. Mackie saying that he wrote to this box and did not receive a reply.
- Mr. Ostler:* There is another letter from a man of the same name—spelt James McKay—to the same effect.
- Mr. Gray:* Yes.
- Mr. Ostler:* There is another from Waihi to the same effect. There is another from Christchurch to the same effect. What I propose, with my friend's consent, is to put those letters in. If my friend thinks it of sufficient importance—it is hardly feasible to get these men up here from all over the colony—one at Greymouth, one at Christchurch.
- Mr. Gray:* I cannot object to the witness saying he received these four complaints.
- Mr. Ostler:* Very well, I will read them.
- Mr. Gray:* I only said I consented to the letters being produced to show he received complaints. I admit four letters of complaint were received.
- Mr. Ostler* read letter from C. R. N. Mackie, Christchurch.
34. *Mr. Ostler.*] You received that. Did you receive any former letter from him asking for copies?—No.
35. Did you receive this letter from Mr. E. Perreau, Christchurch?—Yes; it was handed to me by Mr. Bilby.
36. Did you receive any letter prior to that from Mr. Perreau?—No.
37. Did you receive a letter from Mr. G. Hall, Waihi [read]?—I received that letter.
38. Did you receive any former letter with six stamps?—No.
39. Did you receive this letter, dated the 20th March, 1917, to box 912, Auckland, from James McKay, Greymouth [read]?—That letter was handed to me by Mr. Seabrook.
40. Did you receive any prior letter enclosing a 5s. postal note and requesting some literature on the advancement of the R.C. movement?—No.
41. Did you receive a letter from John A. Merson, Kaikokopu Road, Aramoho, to this effect [read]?—No, I did not receive that letter. I received that copy.
42. How did this copy come to you?—The copy came to the care of Mr. Bilby at his private house. This was a letter put in to test the fealty of the Post Office in receiving letters.
43. Where was it addressed to?—Box 912, Post-office, Auckland.
44. Did it come through?—No.
45. Have you recently posted any further letters?—Yes.
46. When did you last post letters addressed to the box?—Posted four letters on Sunday night.
47. On Sunday night, the 11th August?—Yes.
48. Are those copies of the letters you posted?—Yes, these are copies.
49. Did they all come to hand?—All came.
50. These letters—one of the first says, "Dear sir, Can you inform me whether Father O'Doherty—"
- Mr. Gray:* Is it necessary to read them aloud? These letters are admittedly bogus letters, prepared by this gentleman as a sort of trap.
- Mr. Ostler:* I want to show that not one of these letters deals with military matters.
- His Worship,* after reading the letters, said he did not think it was desirable that they should be read aloud.
- Mr. Ostler:* I bow to your ruling. I want the public, however, to know that not one of these letters contained one word referring to the war.
- Mr. Gray:* I cannot understand your complaint. I thought the witness said those letters came through.
- Mr. Ostler:* If these came through it was wrong to stop the others.