

him at Northfield, which had been reforwarded to East Wellington, where Mr. Badcock resides, although carrying on business at the former place.

That is a matter which might easily take place in the best regulated post offices. Here is a man who resides in the vicinity of this post office and does business in another place, and his letters during his absence were forwarded to him to the place he was carrying on his business.

The evidence of Mrs. Margaret Patterson deals chiefly with an instance of the delivery to her daughter Lizzie of a letter concerning which the postmaster had some doubt as to whether it was intended for the addressee or not, and to the delivery in March last of a letter to John Patterson intended for her husband, John T. Patterson, as well as to the disposal of certain newspapers delivered to her in error.

Mrs. Isabella Rose McManus, postmaster at Northfield, testified, in connection with the statement of Thos. Weby, that an insufficiently pre-paid newspaper, addressed to him, was tendered to Mrs. Weby, with a request for the deficient postage, which she refused to pay.

With regard to Mr. Badcock's evidence, the postmaster states she knew him to be engaged in business at Northfield, although residing in East Wellington, and that, in re-directing his letters to the latter place, she claims to have acted strictly within the meaning of the regulations, and that, as regards Badcock's supposition that she must have opened the East Wellington mail-bag in which to inclose his letters, the postmaster states that a separate bag is made up at Northfield for East Wellington, in which these letters were inclosed; and this is really the case, but the postmaster at East Wellington should have been present to corroborate this.

She explains also—and in my opinion satisfactorily—the circumstances of the delivery of the letter to Lizzie Patterson, and also of the letter for John T. Patterson delivered in mistake to John Patterson.

The "paper with the rules of the post office," referred to by Mrs. Patterson, is a statement that this letter was intended for John T. Patterson, and is signed by him as an acknowledgment of its receipt, and the same is inclosed herewith.

The misdelivery of the paper for Mr. Morgan to Mrs. Patterson is explained from the fact that it was inclosed with hers in the same package, which was not opened by the postmaster, as it should have been, in the first place and the contents distributed, as the postmaster was not aware that the outside wrapper should have been removed.

That is a mistake which might occur in the best regulated post office. The report continues:

There hardly seems to be sufficient ground in the evidence of the petitioners to support the charges of "mismanagement of the office."

And this report is underlined by some person with a pencil, to show that it must have been brought to the attention of the Postmaster General.

That there has been considerable ill-feeling.

Do you see, Mr. Speaker, all that is in one paragraph, and the Postmaster General, in replying to my hon. friend (Mr. Davin), left

Mr. FOSTER.

out the first sentence of the paragraph. The whole paragraph reads as follows:—

There hardly seems to be sufficient grounds in the evidence of the petitioners to support the charges of mismanagement of the office. That there has been considerable ill-feeling between those of the petitioners who gave evidence and the postmaster is, on the other hand, quite apparent, and I would state that from inquiries I have made among the people of the place generally, there is a feeling that the postmaster and her assistant, Mr. McManus, her husband, are somewhat overbearing in their conduct towards many visiting the office, and several instances were brought to my notice, trivial in themselves, where a more judicious treatment might have avoided more or less unpleasantness.

That same remark applies to my hon. friend the Postmaster General. Sometimes he is inclined to be a little overbearing, but we would not dispossess him of his office and his salary just because two or three instances of that kind were cited.

Mr. LISTER. Oh yes, you would.

Mr. FOSTER. Where would all of us be, if that were done? Where would my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce be sometimes if we dispossessed him of all his emoluments because he was a little overbearing at times? Most high-mettled people are inclined sometimes to lose their basis of self-control, and to be perhaps a little overbearing. The report continues:

This gave rise to a feeling amongst many of the residents of Northfield that a change is desirable. On the other hand, the duties of the office are satisfactorily carried out, and more attention is given to detail than is generally found in a country office. I beg, therefore, to submit the result of my investigation for your consideration.

That report of the Postmaster General's inspector is in favour of the postmaster rather than against her, and under that report I think the most that ought to have been done would have been to have cautioned the postmaster as to this fault of character in being overbearing, and to have given this woman the chance to retain the office, more especially under the circumstances. Her husband lost his life in the service, from injuries actually received in the service. That is a mitigating circumstance; but, more than that, the fact that this man took his life in his hands and fought for the flag of his country against rebellion makes at least a prima facie case for some sort of consideration for his widow who is left to earn her own living, partly by carrying on a post office which the inspector says has been satisfactorily carried on, and in which more attention is given to detail than is generally found in a country office. Now, having animadverted, a little harshly perhaps, but still I think justly, upon my hon. friend's conduct, may I now appeal to his good nature, and ask him to reconsider, in the light of this report of his inspector,