

## Petitioner Against Woodford Gives Evidence.

Tells Commission He Signed Petition by Request—Some Sensational Disclosures.

(Daily News Report.)

Mr. Richard Kelly, the petitioner against the election of Mr. Wm. Woodford for the district of Harbor Main, appeared before the Affidavit Commission yesterday morning at 11 o'clock, and gave evidence as follows, being sworn by Hon. Mr. Ryan:—

Hon. Mr. Ryan—What is your name?

Mr. Kelly—Richard Kelly.

Mr. Kelly—Where do you live?

Mr. Kelly—Holyrood, North Arm.

Mr. Kelly—You petitioned early in the year that William Woodford be not declared elected and returned.

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Your petition was filed on the 2nd of January, according to the court records.

Mr. Kelly—Somewhere around there.

Mr. Kelly—Were you in town on that date?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Who got you to come in to make this petition?

Mr. Kelly—Mr. Meaney.

Mr. Kelly—Where did Mr. Meaney first speak to you about this petition?

Mr. Kelly—Down in Mr. Gibbs' office.

Mr. Kelly—About when would that be?

Mr. Kelly—I do not know the date.

Mr. Kelly—Was it before the end of the year, the Court records give the 2nd of January.

Mr. Kelly—I cannot say, sir.

Mr. Kelly—Were you in town more than once about that time with regard to that petition?

Mr. Kelly—That was my first time.

Mr. Kelly—Did Mr. Meaney send for you or did he go out to see you about it?

Mr. Kelly—I came to town.

Mr. Kelly—Did he ask you to come in, or did you come in of your own accord?

Mr. Kelly—I was sent in by Capt. Kennedy.

Mr. Kelly—So that Captain Kennedy would have been acting for Mr. Meaney in the matter of getting you?

Mr. Kelly—Well I could not say whether he did or not.

Mr. Kelly—Did Captain Kennedy tell you what you were wanted for when you were coming in?

Mr. Kelly—Well he asked me if I would sign the petition and I said yes.

Mr. Kelly—Did you know the nature of what you had to sign?

Mr. Kelly—No, I did not.

Mr. Kelly—Did you promise to sign the petition not knowing whether it was correct or otherwise?

Mr. Kelly—Well, I was only asked to sign a petition and I signed it. I thought Mr. Woodford's election was unfair and I signed the petition.

Mr. Kelly—Well, you made certain charges in your petition against Mr. Woodford, indicating that he had been guilty of bribery. Did you know of any of these yourself, personally?

Mr. Kelly—No, I did not. I did not know what was on the petition at all.

Mr. Kelly—Even when you signed it?

Mr. Kelly—No, I did not know anything about it.

Mr. Kelly—Well, in a general way you considered Mr. Woodford may have been guilty of corrupt practices.

Mr. Kelly—In connection with the election and you signed the petition without knowing just what was on it, making accusations against Mr. Woodford's character that you did not know were correct or otherwise?

Mr. Kelly—Well, I did not know what was on the petition. I did not know anything about it.

Mr. Kelly—And if you were asked to make certain statements to hang a man, would you do it?

No answer.

Mr. Kelly—However, you came in at the request of Capt. Kennedy. Did he tell you to go and see Mr. Meaney?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Did he meet you in town?

Mr. Kelly—I went to Mr. Meaney's house.

Mr. Kelly—And then did Mr. Meaney tell you just what he wanted of you?

Mr. Kelly—Well, he asked me if I would sign the petition and I signed it.

Mr. Kelly—You agreed to sign it then?

Mr. Kelly—Yes, of my own free will, I agreed to sign it.

Mr. Kelly—Where did you sign it, at his house?

Mr. Kelly—at Mr. Gibbs' office.

Mr. Kelly—That would be the same day you came in town.

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Was there any explanation given you with regard to the details of this petition by Mr. Gibbs or Mr. Meaney?

Mr. Kelly—Nothing whatever.

Mr. Kelly—Was there anybody else in Mr. Gibbs' office when you signed it, or only the three of you?

Mr. Kelly—Just the three of us, Meaney, Gibbs and myself.

Mr. Kelly—Were you paid for coming in here?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—Travelling expenses came out of your own pocket?

Mr. Kelly—Oh, that was paid.

Mr. Kelly—Who paid that?

Mr. Kelly—Mr. Meaney.

Mr. Kelly—Did you ask for any payment?

Mr. Kelly—No, I never asked for any.

Mr. Kelly—Had you heard from Mr. Gibbs before at all in connection with this petition, before you heard from Captain Kennedy?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—Who drew up this statement, which you say you merely signed without reading it at all?

Mr. Kelly—I do not know.

Mr. Kelly—It was done when you came to Mr. Gibbs' office?

Mr. Kelly—I had nothing to do only sign my name.

Mr. Kelly—You do not know whether the statements made here are true or false?

Mr. Kelly—I do not know.

Mr. Kelly—Have you seen in the papers or elsewhere what you declared in this statement?

Mr. Kelly—I have not read the things at all.

Mr. Kelly—You do not know anything about the paper either at the time or since?

Mr. Kelly—I do not know.

Mr. Kelly—Did you know that you

stated here in this paper that William Woodford himself did bribe or his agents bribed for him. You stated that or signed it. Is that correct, according to your belief or knowledge?

Mr. Kelly made no answer.

Mr. Kelly—You made a further statement that the said William Woodford was guilty of illegal practices, of paying the expenses of travelling of certain electors in going to and from said election and providing means of conveyance for electors. Did you know that with your own knowledge?

Mr. Kelly—I have not heard of that before.

Mr. Kelly—Was not this paper read to you before you signed it?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—Didn't they tell you what you were signing in Mr. Gibbs' office?

Mr. Kelly—No; just a petition against Mr. Woodford's election.

Mr. Kelly—You say here further that the said William Woodford by himself, his agents and by other persons with his knowledge was guilty of the corrupt and illegal practice of influencing the returning officer in the matter pertaining to the duties of said returning officer. Did you know anything of that?

Mr. Kelly—Nothing whatever in connection with what the petition contained.

Mr. Kelly—You merely know that this paper was something that would help Mr. Meaney and the new Government and unseat Mr. Woodford. That is about all you know?

Mr. Kelly—That is all I know.

Mr. Kelly—On the 2nd of January you signed this petition, according to the Court records. Did you come to town afterwards in connection with the petition or how many times did you come to town in connection with it?

Mr. Kelly—I cannot say, I came more than once.

Mr. Kelly—That was your first visit when you signed that petition?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Well you can give us a rough idea as to how often you were in town about it since, one, two, three or four times?

Mr. Kelly—I do not think I was in again until the petition was withdrawn.

Mr. Kelly—That would be on the 18th of March, I think. The Court records state on March the 18th Mr. Gibbs, petitioner, that is for you, asked leave to withdraw the petition. You came in town about that time?

Mr. Kelly—I did not know the petition was to be withdrawn at the time.

Mr. Kelly—But you were in town at the time. Who sent for you?

Mr. Kelly—Mr. Meaney.

Mr. Kelly—Your travelling expenses were again found by Mr. Meaney? He paid you your travelling expenses?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Were you paid for the time you lost coming in about it?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—What payment did you get?

Mr. Kelly—Ten dollars.

Mr. Kelly—Ten dollars besides your travelling expenses?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Who paid you?

Mr. Kelly—Mr. Gibbs.

Mr. Kelly—In his office?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Did he explain why they wanted to have you withdraw the petition. Did he tell you what they wanted you in town for?

Mr. Kelly—To prove that I was the voter of Harbour Main District, that signed the petition.

Mr. Kelly—To prove that you were the voter from Harbour Main district who signed the petition?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Didn't they tell you that they wanted the petition withdrawn?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—Did you sign that petition in the first place and agree to its withdrawal afterwards without using your own mind or judgment at all. The Court records say that Gibbs asked leave to withdraw the petition for the petitioner. Didn't Mr. Gibbs have your authority to do that?

Mr. Kelly—He asked me if I was satisfied to have the petition withdrawn and I said yes.

Mr. Kelly—Why, after making application for judgment against his return did you make application for withdrawal of petition?

Mr. Kelly—When Mr. Gibbs came back he had the petition withdrawn. Mr. Kelly—That is after he came back from court?

Mr. Kelly—Yes. I told him I was satisfied to have the petition withdrawn.

Mr. Kelly—Well had you no mind of your own in connection with this thing? You filed a petition and afterwards you applied to have the petition withdrawn. Were you merely a blind servant of Mr. Meaney and possibly Mr. Gibbs in this matter or did you use your own mind? Did you allow yourself to be led by others?

Mr. Kelly made no answer.

Mr. Kelly—You must have some ideas with regard to that. You simply put yourself altogether in the hands of Mr. Meaney and Mr. Gibbs with regard to this election petition, trusting they would do the right thing by you?

Mr. Kelly made no answer.

Mr. Kelly—What is your answer

to that. Had you put yourself blindly in their hands believing they would do the right thing by you?

Mr. Kelly—I did not understand anything at all about the petition.

Mr. Kelly—Did you understand anything at all about what the withdrawal meant?

Mr. Kelly—No I did not.

Mr. Kelly—Well you did all this to oblige Mr. Meaney or Mr. Gibbs or what was your object in doing it?

Mr. Kelly—Towards the Government and Mr. Meaney.

Mr. Kelly—The new Government that is the Government you were in favor of and supported by your vote in the elections?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—You may have thought that it would be an election for the new Government if you could do anything to disqualify the members of the late Government, that is what actuated you more than wanting to oblige Mr. Meaney?

Mr. Kelly—I was in favor of Mr. Meaney.

Mr. Kelly—Did you see anybody else besides Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Meaney on either of these occasions?

Mr. Kelly—That is all I saw.

Mr. Kelly—Did Captain Kennedy come in with you on either occasion?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—Well that is two visits that you recollect your made here, did you make another?

Mr. Kelly—Not that I remember.

Mr. Kelly—Were you asked to come in later at all; did they ask you to come to town after the 18th of March? Had you any request to come in later?

Mr. Kelly—I do not remember.

Mr. Kelly—On that second visit you made an affidavit. Do you remember the nature of it or did you sign it blindly to oblige Mr. Meaney and possibly Mr. Gibbs like you did the first time? You made a statement to the best of your knowledge and belief that no arrangement or terms of any kind whatsoever had been made, and no undertaking of any kind, entered into in relation to the withdrawal of said petition or any person on my behalf. You made that sworn declaration on the 18th of March on your second visit here?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—You knew when you were about?

Mr. Kelly—Mr. Woodford gave me nothing nor promised me anything to have petition withdrawn.

Mr. Kelly—Were those the grounds on which the said petition was withdrawn, that the respondent, William Woodford had resigned his seat in the House of Assembly?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—While all this was going on in connection with the petition, did you have any talk with William Woodford?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—You know him, do you?

Mr. Kelly—I know him to see him.

Mr. Kelly—What reasons were given you for asking that your petition should be withdrawn? What reasons were given you by Mr. Meaney and Mr. Gibbs? They must have put some reason before you when you came to town the second time as to why you should go back on what you had already stated. They must have given you some kind of explanation?

Mr. Kelly—Mr. Woodford resigned his seat in the House of Assembly I made no hesitation then.

Mr. Kelly—That is all you wanted then, to do your part in getting a further seat for the new Government and you thought this would bring it about. Was that it?

Mr. Kelly made no answer.

Mr. Kelly—When you petitioned for the disqualification of Mr. Woodford and afterwards he resigned, you thought that resignation would answer your purpose just as well as if you had gone on with your case against him. Was that it?

Mr. Kelly made no answer.

Mr. Kelly—I'm going back again. That second visit you must have given some reason why you should withdraw your petition; the only reason put before you was that you were told Mr. Woodford had resigned, that satisfied you?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—You thought that was sufficient so far as you were concerned?

Mr. Kelly—That is all I know about it.

Mr. Kelly—Did you look upon that as a fact of gaining your case when you got him to give up his seat?

Mr. Kelly—That is all I know about it.

Mr. Kelly—Did you arrive on the 18th or the day before, do you remember? Were you in town more than one day?

Mr. Kelly—Just one day.

Mr. Kelly—You went back again as soon as you could to attend to your ordinary work?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Were you satisfied when you got the ten dollars?

Mr. Kelly—Yes.

Mr. Kelly—Were you aware yourself that Mr. Woodford bribed anyone in the district?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—You did not see any money or any other transaction pass between Mr. Woodford and any resident in the district?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—How did you find out that there were corrupt practices used by Mr. Woodford?

Mr. Kelly—The Supreme Court found Mr. Woodford guilty and had points enough to unseat and disqualify him.

Mr. Kelly—That was long after the petition. You do not know yourself that Mr. Woodford bribed any person personally?

Mr. Kelly—No.

Mr. Kelly—And you swore to that petition that you presented against Mr. Woodford. Did you go into a court or swear to it anywhere? Did you swear before a Justice of the Peace or any person of this charge you made against Mr. Woodford?

Mr. Kelly—Not that I know of. I swore to the affidavit.

Mr. Kelly—Without knowing the contents of the affidavit you swore against the man that he was guilty of corrupt practices; you swore that?

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Mr. Kelly—I swore that Mr. Woodford gave me nothing.

Hon. Mr. Ryan—You swore that Mr. Woodford was guilty of corrupt practices in Harbour Main at the last election. You swore to that. You made an affidavit when you petitioned against Mr. Woodford?

Mr. Kelly—When I signed that petition I did not swear to it.

Hon. Mr. Ryan—You swore to the one you withdrew, but the other one was before Mr. Gibbs. But the application that you made did you swear to that before anyone?

Mr. Kelly—No, I did not take any oath to that.

Court adjourned until further notice.

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