



WHISPERS AND LIES PART 2

An Inappropriate Response
Figtree Anglican church v the Dobbs family

In Part 1 I looked at the ways in which the clergy, staff, lay leadership and parishioners of Figtree Anglican Church dealt with a complaint brought to them on behalf of a 20-year-old woman Emma Nicholls that was provoked without cause by three women – her mother Lee Nicholls, the Senior minister's wife Helen Irvine and the Children's Minister Yvonne Gunning – resulting in shunning and unlawful 'excommunication' of a whole family from that church. In Part 2 we look at what happened after parishioner Dr. Clarrie Pratt had written a letter to Figtree's Senior Minister Rod Irvine, Executive Minister Bruce Clarke and the PSU's director Phillip Gerber complaining of the abuse of process and denial of natural justice inflicted by them on the whole family. These men, among other people of the parish, the diocesan hierarchy and the diocesan PSU say they acted 'in good faith'. I think not.

Louise Greentree 2018-2019

Whispers and Lies – An Inappropriate Response Part 2

By Louise Greentree¹

'And as always when someone has given a lead, there were gratuitous followers. (If someone invented a story and wrote to the press that they had seen a green lion in the sky at 5.30 the previous evening, at least six people would have seen it retrospectively.)'
Josephine Tey 'Miss Pym Disposes'.

In sociology and psychology, *mass hysteria* (also known as *collective hysteria*, *group hysteria*, or *collective obsessional behavior*) is a phenomenon that transmits collective illusions of threats, whether real or imaginary, through a population in society as a result of rumors and fear (memory acknowledgment). (Wikipedia 10/12/2017)

*"For this is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: ... this is what you must do:
Tell the truth to each other. Render verdicts in your courts that are just and that lead to peace.
Don't scheme against each other.
Stop your love of telling lies that you swear are the truth.
I hate all these things, says the LORD."* Zechariah 8:14-17 (NLT)

Where we got up to at the end of Part 1².

On 17th April 2007: Dr. Clarrie Pratt wrote to Rod Irvine and Bruce Clarke (respectively Senior Minister and Executive Minister of Figtree Anglican church - FAC) and Phillip Gerber (Director Professional Standards Unit of the Anglican church, Sydney diocese – the PSU) complaining about the terrible injustice done to the Dobbs family. Dr. Pratt was a long-standing and highly esteemed member of the congregation of FAC, a medical doctor, former missionary and one-time candidate of the Christian Democratic Party who stood for election in 2007, unsuccessfully. Consequently, his opinion could not be ignored.

What he said was this:

Firstly, that Emma Nicholls suffered from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and therefore her interpretations and recollections could be delusional. He sent them a copy of a letter she had sent to a 'health professional' Garry. A copy of this letter is Document 1 at the end of Part 1. He and the contents of this email both reinforced what Mabelle Dobbs had been trying to get the leadership and others to know and acknowledge: that they could not rely on Emma's reports because of her OCD, among other problems.

¹ Louise Greentree BA LLB LLM(Hons) ProfCertArb. Other articles on the Discipline procedures of the Anglican Church in Australia can be found on Louise's website: www.churchdispute.com and she can be contacted on louise@greentreeaustralis.com Other books and articles concerning the conduct of this case by Figtree Anglican church and the PSU and PSC of the Anglican church of Australia Sydney diocese are listed at the end of this article.

² It is assumed that the Reader will have read Part 1 so that important information and the identities of people involved in the case along with short details of their involvement which are contained there are not necessarily repeated in this Part.

Secondly, he went through her statutory declaration and pointed out the inconsistencies, which should have been a red alert to those men and women that her grasp on reality was insubstantial and therefore that their behaviour in response had fallen far short of competence and Christian diligence.

Thirdly, he listed examples of their abuse of process and denial of natural justice to Dr. Dobbs by their actions.³

Fourthly, he told them this:

‘Having carefully read what Miss Nicholls has written and what Scott has written in reply, it is my professional opinion that what Emma has written most likely represents delusion with no basis in reality.’

He goes on to say, quite appropriately:

‘I consider it negligent of FAC to have accepted this statement from Miss Nicholls without seeking an opinion from her treating psychiatrist as to the believability of what she has written.’

Fifthly, he wrote that even in a ‘straight-laced, conservative evangelical church such as FAC there is an awful lot of hugging and kissing going on!!’ and even more ‘at less conservative churches’ such as the local Wollongong Lighthouse charismatic church. After giving examples of hugging and kissing among parishioners he goes on to say, ‘*The Dobbs family just happens to be very “huggy” – all of them, not just Scott. As Emma herself says (Para. 3 ...) “I didn’t think it was inappropriate as all the family hugged like that.”*’

Probably unbeknownst to Dr. Pratt, the PSU Director Phillip Gerber, after reading Emma’s statutory declaration signed on 23rd January 2007 and Dr. Dobbs’ detailed Response signed on 11th March 2007 denying both the accusations and Mr. Gerber’s jurisdiction to deal with the matter⁴, had written to the parish leadership on **22nd March 2007** saying that they did not have enough evidence (in reality they had none) that Dr. Dobbs was a serial child sex abuser. In an earlier email, this to Yvonne Gunning, he had also acknowledged that there could be a problem with his jurisdiction, and he also acknowledged that Emma’s consent as an adult to whatever she said had occurred was another problem with the case. As we have seen in Part 1, Emma and her mother Lee Nicholls labored over two little letters that Emma and her mother hand-delivered to Dr. Dobbs’ letter box on **26th January 2007**. In one she apologised to Mabelle Dobbs for inappropriately going into the elder son’s bedroom late at night after everyone had gone to bed when she was staying the night late in 2006 - he was then aged 20 as she was, and he had not invited her in nor had he any interest in her as a partner. In the other letter she apologised to Dr. Dobbs for something – the phraseology is rather strange, talking about taking responsibility for not setting boundaries. Whatever it was, she apologised for this and said that she did not want to lose the friendship of the whole family, and that she loved them all.

It is abundantly clear that these letters were written on advice from someone overseeing the case. As at this stage, just a matter of days before the complaint was made by Lee Nicholls (not Emma Nicholls) on 1st February 2007, (which was followed by some additional details on 4th February,

³ The reader can read about these in ‘A Cautionary Tale’ and ‘The Evolution of a Lie’ among other articles about this case on www.churchdispute.com

⁴ Mr. Gerber’s power and authority to intervene in the case is defined by sections of church law in the Discipline Ordinance 2007 (and earlier forms) as applicable to, and ONLY to, clergy and other ‘church workers’. Who is a ‘church worker’ is very clearly set out, and none of the definitions applied to Dr. Dobbs. See ‘Leadership, Ministry and a Coffee Machine’ on www.churchdispute.com

2007), these letters were written and delivered, it is also clear that the matter of Emma's consent was a problem foremost in the mind of that person.

That this person could not have been the FAC Child Protection Officer and Children's minister Yvonne Gunning is made clear by her incompetence in dealing with the complaint at parish level and her ignorance of the provisions of the Discipline Ordinance 2007 and its' predecessor, the Church Discipline Ordinance 2002.

It had to be someone with purported expertise in the operation of the Discipline Ordinance 2007 who was anticipating having to carry forward, even as far as a Disciplinary Tribunal hearing, the prosecution of the complaint at diocesan level. Who else, indeed, than the then Director PSU Phillip Gerber, even at this early stage?

What this indicates is that there was a conspiracy between Lee Nicholls and Yvonne Gunning to keep sending Emma to the Dobbs' home, inviting herself to meals (even though she was no longer allowed to stay the night because after she invaded the son's bedroom Mabelle prohibited her from being invited to do so and she was always driven home by Dr. Dobbs with one or more of his daughters with him to protect him from her increasingly marked attentions, which derived from her delusion that he loved her), and ringing up to be taken to church by them and tagging along with them. Clearly the 'results' of these incursions into the Dobbs' family life were keenly examined to see whether Phillip Gerber had the 'evidence' he needed to prosecute a case. Such evidence was never available, as he acknowledged after reading Emma's statutory declaration and Dr. Dobbs reply.

What did the Figtree leadership do about this? Strangely enough, when Rod Irvine and Bruce Clarke, Senior minister and Executive Minister respectively of Figtree Anglican church met Clarrie Pratt shortly after this letter, they acknowledged to him that the case was falling apart.

Why, then, didn't they wind things back and stop?

Instead open season was declared by the FAC leadership and parishioners on Dr. Dobbs and his wife Mabelle and their six children, aged from 10 to 20. Mabelle was the victim of especially virulent and violent behaviour against her in public places, and once even within the Figtree church worship space and some of the children suffered physical confrontations to remove them from church services and, in one case, from the private home of one of their friends simply because the FAC youth group was having a social gathering there.

One other thing, just to make it abundantly clear: Dr. Dobbs never behaved inappropriately towards Emma Nicholls. The allegations of a hug, one when she was aged 14 and one when she was aged 16, were both dismissed as unsustainable in the pre-tribunal processes.

*With these disposed of, putting the lie to the widespread smear of Dr. Dobbs' reputation by the rev. Bruce Clarke and Yvonne Gunning calling him a child sex abuser, the first allegation was an episode between Emma and Dr. Dobbs when she was aged 20. Inviting herself back to the Dobbs' home after church one Sunday evening for dinner by the simple expedient of tagging along with the family and their guest, she took it on herself to go, unasked and unwelcome, downstairs and through the master bedroom to find him in his adjoining study **with the purpose of engaging him in a sexual episode**, according to the evidence of the FAC Children's minister Yvonne Gunning and even her own evidence. Even so, this did not occur.*

And even the investigator on behalf of the diocese, Mr. Keith Taylor, said of this that Emma had herself brought this about, when, taking a part of her evidence (which was contradicted many ways in later statements) that she went to find Dr. Dobbs in his study to call him for dinner, she had not needed to go through the master bedroom and into the study at all to achieve this: all she needed to do was to call out from the doorway of the master bedroom. And even then, as soon as Dr. Dobbs became aware that it was Emma Nicholls leaning over him while he worked on his computer,

he ran from the room, upstairs to where his wife, children, a guest and a homestay student were all talking while dinner of purchased BBQ chicken and previously-prepared salads was being put out on the table.

Notwithstanding the sexual slant that Lee Nicholls and Yvonne Gunning put on this episode, Lee Nicholls continued to allow Emma to keep going back to the Dobbs' home and failed to follow the good advice from Emma's internet friend Lance Wearmouth that she should speak to Mabelle about it to put a stop to what she, Lee, was alleging.

Now read on.

Over Easter 2007, Friday 6th to Monday 9th April:

Helen Irvine intervened in the matter. She had been the prime mover in bringing 'Anika Rose's' complaint into the parish by telling Yvonne Gunning no later than 17th December 2006 (and probably much earlier) that Dr. Dobbs was a serial sex abuser of young women at UOW. This laid the foundations for the manipulation of Emma Nicholls' pathetic delusion that not only was she in love with Dr. Dobbs but that he was in love with her into a complaint that the parish and the PSU could deal with.

And it also laid the foundation for Lee Nicholls to get her troubled daughter out of the family home at no expense to herself, and into the responsibility of the parish. Helen Irvine spoke again to 'Anika Rose' and, she tells Ken Taylor, the diocesan investigator who was later appointed, she telephoned Dr. Dobbs to tell him she had evidence that he had sexually harassed *a number* of female students when he was working there. Dr. Dobbs says that he thought this phone call was later than that date; however he agrees that she contacted him with these allegations and said to him that unless he dropped his defense to Emma Nicholls' complaint to the parish she would publicise the UOW complaints in the parish.

He would not do this, and so she did what she threatened.

On 22nd May 2007 Dr. Dobbs wrote to Phillip Gerber again disputing that Gerber had jurisdiction and setting his arguments out in detailed submissions. *Phillip Gerber never did address these submissions but, as will be seen, just barged ahead all the way up to the first day of a tribunal hearing set to make a decision on this very question. Then he was forced to concede that he had no jurisdiction. It followed from that that his appointment of an investigator was outside his authority and power and neither the Professional Standards Committee nor the Tribunal were lawfully convened.*

On 1st May 2007 Helen Irvine had a busy day.

She again canvassed 'Anika Rose'⁵ and also contacted Corinne Cortese⁶ for details of their complaints against Dr. Dobbs.

⁵ 'Anika Rose' (Lee Tran): This was a student in the Business Faculty over 2003-2005 who had offered to have an affair with Dr. Dobbs, which he refused. Helen Irvine said she had spoken to Anika Rose in early 2005 when this woman pulled a face at the mention of Dr. Dobbs' name and, when pressed by Helen, said that some 2 or 3 years before, he had asked her to have an affair with her, neatly reversing the situation. She had not made a complaint at the time of the alleged proposition nor then, telling Helen Irvine that it was too late for her to make a complaint to UOW.

⁶ Readers of Part 1 will remember that Corinne Cortese signed a brief Record of Interview in front of her PhD supervisor and senior academic in the UOW Faculty of Business Mary Kaidonis and Robyn Weekes the Director of the UOW Equal Employment and Diversity Unit (EEDU) accusing Dr. Dobbs of sexual misconduct where none

'Anika Rose' refused to make a complaint now, telling Helen that Dr. Dobbs would kill her if he knew she was speaking to her. But, according to Helen's interview with Ken Taylor, she certainly put the boot in, telling Helen all sorts of scurrilous and untrue gossip but not giving her any details of actual sexual harassment. Helen's account at her interview seems to boil down to this: that 'Anika Rose' thought Dr. Dobbs was going to kiss her but, apparently, he did not do so(!). She would not agree to her being identified in any way and would only speak anonymously to the investigator if at all. This did not happen. Ultimately all we now about 'Anika Rose' is what Helen Irvine said that she said to her.

Helen Irvine had coffee with Corinne Cortese and obtained her consent to pass the details on to the parish and the PSU under her name, because the PSU would not accept an anonymous complaint.

It has to be borne in mind that even if the parish and the PSU had had any power to discipline Dr. Dobbs neither of them had any authority to deal with complaints made by persons totally unconnected with the parish or the Anglican church in respect of alleged behaviour in another institution, namely UOW, unconnected with the parish or the Anglican Church.

Next, Helen again telephoned Dr. Dobbs and insisted that he get Mabelle to the phone and put the phone on speaker so Mabelle could hear what Helen said. She then repeated her allegations of the complaints against Dr. Dobbs at UOW.

Then she telephoned Bruce Clarke and gave him all the details, telling him that there were four female students who had made complaints. According to the notes that Bruce Clarke made of that conversation, there were sexual harassment complaints from Corinne Cortese, then "Girls X, Y and Z (Anna Marie)". In my examination of these complaints and Bruce Clarke's notes it is clear that Corinne Cortese and Girl X are one and the same, Girl Y is 'Anika Rose' and Girl Z ('Anna Marie') is a PhD student who was going to be allocated to a desk in a room for PhD students at UOW where Dr. Dobbs also had a desk (along with 2-3 other PhD students). When he asked that she not be allocated to that room, she quickly lodged a complaint of sexual discrimination which she just as quickly withdrew. She made never made any complaint of anything of the nature of sexual harassment or abuse.

It is instructive that Helen Irvine says to investigator Ken Taylor that her husband, FAC Senior Minister Rod Irvine had begged her not to bring the UOW complaints into FAC, but, she said, she felt she had to.

On 2nd May 2007 the so-called Conciliation meeting postponed from March was held at FAC, called by Phillip Gerber. In attendance with Phillip Gerber (supposedly to chair the meeting) was the rev Bruce Clarke (FAC Executive Minister), Dr. and Mrs. Dobbs, and Helen Irvine. Emma Nicholls, her mother Lee Nicholls or anyone representing the Nicholls family were not present. Helen Irvine took over the meeting from Phillip Gerber and flung the accusations at Dr. Dobbs, who tried to defend himself.

In the absence of Emma Nicholls the meeting (which would have been of dubious authority even had she been there given that Phillip Gerber had no power or authority over an ordinary

existed – see 'The First Stone Revisited' on www.churchdispute.com It was used behind Dr. Dobbs' back in his interview for a permanent position as a Lecturer, in denial of principles of natural justice and UOW procedures.

I postulated in my writings about this that Corinne Cortese 'stood in' for Anika Rose who would not make a complaint. There are some parallels with the main part of each 'complaint'. Corinne Cortese is aware of my conclusion and she has never denied it.

parishioner, only a 'church worker') now became a shambles in which no-one present had any authority at all over Dr. Dobbs.

At the end of the Meeting Dr. Dobbs was told that he was 'excommunicated' from FAC.

None of the FAC clergy or staff nor Phillip Gerber had any power to excommunicate a person from an Anglican Church. There is a proper procedure for excommunication, which requires that the person has to be found guilty of heresy after a properly conducted hearing at which the person has the opportunity to be legally represented and to defend themselves against the 'charge'. It has been admitted by the advisors to the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney (2017) Dr. Glenn Davies that this purported excommunication was illegal under church law.

On 3rd May 2007 Bruce Clarke telephoned Mabelle Dobbs and insisted that she call their eldest daughter to hear the phone on speaker. Reading from prepared notes (a copy of which was provided with other documents to Dr. Dobbs) he told Mabelle that she and all her children were also excommunicated from FAC.

Not only was this also an illegal excommunication, it was diabolically motivated against a wife and mother and her 6 children who had been enthusiastic members of FAC for up to 12 years (the 2 youngest were aged 12 and 10), and who had done no wrong – there were no complaints against them.

All of the Dobbs family were cut off from their friends in the church community by this purported excommunication imposed on them which was reinforced by organized shunning, which started well before then, and which took place at the church, in the streets of Wollongong, on its' beaches and its' surrounds, and even, disgracefully, in their local Anglican school.

Nothing happened after this in terms of action by the PSU and/or FCA to pursue the complaints other than that **at the end of May 2007** Dr. Dobbs and Mabelle received a letter from Rod Irvine approving the excommunication and commending Bruce Clarke for his handling of the case until -

20 June 2007 Phillip Gerber wrote to Lee Kelly & Associates, private investigators, with instructions to carry out an investigation of the complaint concerning Emma Nicholls, with additional instructions to interview not only Rebecca Clarke about her allegations which were intended to represent that the Dobbs' home was one where there was inappropriate nudity and sexual abuse, but also Corinne Cortese concerning her 'informal' complaint to UOW because, said Mr. Gerber, this would be evidence of a course of conduct (which was a misrepresentation of the law).

Mr. Taylor wrote to Dr. Dobbs advising that he would contact him to arrange interviews with him and any witnesses he wanted. Dr. Dobbs wrote back, eventually, that he would not cooperate with the investigation until the issue of the lack of jurisdiction – that is, that Dr. Dobbs was not a church worker as defined in the Discipline Ordinance 2007 (nor as defined in the previous one of 2002) and therefore the investigation was unlawful under church law – had been resolved. Mr. Taylor lost credibility because in his letter he threatened Dr. Dobbs (on page 1) that he was required by the Discipline Ordinance to cooperate, on pain of being guilty of a church 'crime' in itself but modified this on page 2 by admitting that this did not apply other than to parish clergy.

When Mr. Taylor contacted the mother of the teenager who, with her boyfriend, had been threatened with rape and murderous intent by a man at the FAC SummerFest 07, she decided not to give an interview on the same basis. She had written to the Archbishop of Sydney in support of the Dobbs' family in the early stages of the FAC handling of the complaint confirming her observations of Emma Nicholls' 'strange behaviour' over a period of time through the home-schooling community

but she had not received any response. (This was a common situation when anyone communicated with the then Archbishop Dr. Peter Jenson, the diocesan Registrar Dr. Philip Selden or Mr. Phillip Gerber when attempting to draw their attention to an abuse of the principles of natural justice or complain about the abusive process).

August to October 2007 Mr. Taylor conducted interviews as instructed. Despite the fact that Dr. Clarrie Pratt had written to the FAC leadership and Phillip Gerber that they should have first consulted Emma Nicholls' medical practitioner before taking any steps to investigate the complaint promoted by her mother, the investigator's first interviews were with people who had nothing to say that was direct evidence (that is, about things they had perceived directly with their eyes or ears or other senses), but only hearsay (that is, things they had been told by other people) and sometimes double hearsay (that is things that they had been told by other people that yet other people had told those people), namely FAC clergy and staff. The order of interviews was this:

21st August: Yvonne Gunning, the rev. Bruce Clarke and the rev. Rod Irvine.

24th August: Lee Nicholls, Emma Nicholls (in that order) and Des Brampton (more about him below).

28th August: Helen Irvine and Corinne Cortese.

24th September: Dr. Richard Schloeffel, Emma Nicholls' treating medical practitioner, a GP specializing in anxiety disorders such as OCD.

19th October: Clarrie Pratt and Mrs. Pam Goodhew.

During this time Mr. Taylor interviewed Rebecca Clarke, who was insistent that she would not be involved any further (more about what she told Mr. Taylor later), and the rev. Bill Clarke, retired Minister of Sylvania Uniting Church (more about him later), neither of whom gave formal statements.⁷ The Associate Minister with FAC, the rev. Leigh Roberts gave a statement to Mr. Taylor but it appears that he was not interviewed nor challenged in any way on the statement.

Of all these people –

Firstly, ONLY Emma Nicholls was a direct witness of any of the allegations; no-body else saw anything when there would have been some or many witnesses or the alleged misconduct took place in private. In both of these 'private' episodes Emma herself had taken the initiative to place herself in Dr. Dobbs' way, which was understandable in the light of her writings about how she had loved Dr. Dobbs since she was aged 14, when they first met via his daughters and the home-schooling movement, and that she believed, delusionally in the absence of ANY evidence, that he loved her. Thus she was intent on breaking up his marriage and causing her friends, his daughters, the pain and grief of enduring the separation and divorce of their much-loved and loving parents.

Secondly, ONLY Yvonne Gunning and Lee Nicholls could say what Emma Nicholls had told them, because neither of them had been present at any of the alleged incidents (with the exception, in Lee Nicholls' case, to say that on Sunday 28th January 2007 when she watched her daughter and Dr. Dobbs very closely for about an hour after the church service she SAW NOTHING).

Thirdly, neither Helen Irvine (who said she did not know Emma Nicholls) and Corinne Cortese (who certainly did not know Emma Nicholls) could give any evidence in relation to Emma Nicholls' complaints, which were the ONLY matters that the PSU could deal with according to the church legislation, the Discipline Ordinance 2007.

⁷ Rebecca Clarke withdrew damaging accusations and the Rev. Bill Clarke said that not only had there never been any complaint in his church about sex abuse or sexual harassment, the Dobbs had never been members of his church. These interviews both arose from 'tales', embellished in the case of his daughter and created out of thin air in the case of the rev. Bill Clarke, by the rev. Bruce Clarke.

Fourthly, *Dr. Schloeffel should have been interviewed first so that an assessment could be made as to whether her evidence had to be discounted because of the delusional nature of her OCD (and other mental problems). Clearly Dr. Pratt's comments about the desirability of interviewing Emma's medical practitioner first were resolutely ignored. When he was finally interviewed he confirmed that Emma's medical problems made her an unreliable witness and he was trenchant in his criticism of the PSU process to deal with something that would at most have warranted counselling.*

Fifthly, *FAC leadership already held a statement signed by Mrs. Pam Goodhew in MARCH 2007 which contained information about Mrs. Goodhew's one conversation with Emma Nicholls when Emma confided her fear that she had 'committed the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit'. This conversation and Mrs. Goodhew's clear-sighted and unbiased assessment of Emma Nicholls as very mixed-up should in themselves have raised red flags about Emma Nicholls' mental state and her reliability as the ONLY witness of fact. Then a month later Dr. Pratt was raising the same concerns, among others, about how FAC leadership were dealing with the case and the fundamental flaws in the case itself.*

September to November 2007 the statements prepared by Mr. Taylor from the interviews were signed –

11th September: Yvonne Gunning (demonstrating just a little caution about the vast amount of defamatory material she had disclosed in her interview, but what she said was still irrelevant to establishing the facts of the complaint).

18th September: Helen Irvine (who says that she does not know Emma Nicholls, and all hearsay, full of irrelevant and malicious comment, especially mounting a vicious attack on Mrs. Mabelle Dobbs and her daughters).

24th September: Rod Irvine (who knew nothing about Emma Nicholls and her complaint nor even when Dr. Dobbs had started operating the coffee machine and when he ceased doing so), and Des Brampton (whose interview had completely undermined the report that Yvonne Gunning had made of her conversation with Des' wife Faye Brampton, and therefore rendered his evidence irrelevant and her evidence deceitful).

26th September: Bruce Clarke (very much abbreviated from the wealth of malicious comment contained in his interview, and especially excluding his daughter Rebecca's statements that he had 'reported' to the investigator).

27th September: Corinne Cortese (who knew nothing of relevance but embroidered to farcical extremes her original 'informal' and secret complaint to UOW which had been manufactured to ensure that Dr. Dobbs' application for a tenured position was rejected).

7th October: the rev. Leigh Roberts.

15th October: Dr. Richard Schloeffel.

13th November: Emma Nicholls (at last!).

This was so full of contradictions - internally, with her previous statement, with her other writings and with what others said that she had told them - that it is a very poor reflection on all parish, PSU and investigative personnel involved in the case that none of them could see this. These signed statements provide a clear example of the collective hysteria that had infected the while parish from well before this time due to the exertions of Helen Irvine, Yvonne Gunning and the rev. Bruce Clarke who had all seen the (metaphorical) 'green lion in the sky' reported by Lee Nicholls.

14 November 2007 Ken Taylor wrote to Scott Dobbs: *'I am now instructed to draw to your attention to clause 23 of the Discipline Ordinance 2006 authorising the investigator to require the person against whom the complaint is made to respond to the investigation. ... I am instructed to require your response no later than 30 November 2007.'* (Note that this is misleading and deceptive. Clause 23 only applies to clergy and employed staff, per the provisions of clause 24, neither of which

description applied to Dr. Dobbs.)

6 December 2007 Ken Taylor received a telephone message from Dr. Dobbs that he had strict legal advice not to speak to the investigator.

December 2007 Mr. Taylor completed his report and delivered it and the signed statements to Phillip Gerber.

January 2008 Mr. Gerber delivered to Dr. Dobbs a copy of the report and signed statements together with a bundle of other documents, copies of correspondence, file notes and memoranda, some with several copies, in a disorganized mass. Even then documents were omitted which were much later 'discovered' and copies sent. In all there were over 130 pages of documents.

Mr. Gerber then sent the whole mass (mess) of documents along with Mr. Taylor's report to the Professional Standards Committee (the PSC).

The 'proceedings' in the Professional Standards Committee

Dr. Dobbs kept maintaining that he would not cooperate with the PSU processes because the director PSU did not have jurisdiction: he had failed to produce evidence of any appointment of Dr. Dobbs by the rector of the parish, the rev. Dr. Rod Irvine, to any position at all, let alone a position that was within the terms of the Discipline Ordinance 2006 (Sydney diocese). Consequently, the processes, were outside the authority conferred by the Discipline Ordinance 2006 because Dr. Dobbs was not a church worker.

On **22 February 2008** Archdeacon Deryck Howell, Chair of the PSC, wrote to Dr. Dobbs seeking his agreement to accept a determination by a senior lawyer in NSW nominated by the President of the Bar Council of NSW as to whether the Discipline Ordinance 2006 Sydney Diocese conferred jurisdiction in respect of Dr. Dobbs.

Receipt of this letter was formally acknowledged but no such agreement was indicated.

On **1 April 2008** Archdeacon Howell wrote again, now proposing that he and the other members of the PSC deal with this question in conjunction with an overall consideration of the case under clauses 33-37 of the Discipline Ordinance 2006.

Dr. Dobbs declined the offer because until someone was prepared to, and had the power to, order the rev. Rod Irvine (Rector of the parish of Figtree at the relevant time) to make a declaration on oath about what steps he had or had not taken to appoint Dr. Dobbs to a position that would cause him to be a 'church worker' in the terms of the Discipline Ordinance 2006 (Sydney diocese), there was no point. Just like Acting Judge Peter Grogan, it would be impossible to make a finding of fact that was necessary before any finding of jurisdiction could be made: that the Rev. Rod Irvine HAD appointed Dr. Dobbs to such a position or that he had delegated this power of appointment to someone else, duly named. In the latter case, a declaration on oath by that person that they had appointed Dr. Dobbs to such a position would be required.

Without Dr. Dobbs' consent or cooperation, the PSC came up with their own flawed attempt to make a finding that Dr. Dobbs was a 'church worker' within the terms of the Discipline Ordinance 2006 (Sydney diocese). The reasoning was just nonsense, and the members of the PSC should be ashamed to have signed their names to it, and, indeed to the whole report. For a full discussion of the convolutions of flawed 'reasoning' undertaken by the members of the PSC in the absence of such evidence, see my article 'Leadership, Ministry and a Coffee Machine'. For an examination of the

flaws in the PSC process, see my article 'An Open Letter to Archdeacon Deryck Howell and the members of the PSC (revised 2018)'.

The Committee met in secret – Dr. Dobbs was not invited to attend whether to address the committee or just observe that justice was being done. However, Phillip Gerber not only had the right to attend but also the right to address the committee, without fear of contradiction. This is a breach of the principles of natural justice. For a full discussion of the failures of the PSC process to observe the principles of natural justice, see my article '*Trial by Committee*'.

After a while it produced a report. For a full discussion of the foolishness of this report see my article '*A Cautionary Tale - the Cover-up Begins (revised 2018)*'.

We distributed a flyer to parishioners entitled 'Sex, Lies and a Videotape' summarizing the flawed process and foolishness of the report, which is also published on the website churchdispute.com. Essentially, the report dismissed the second of the two allegations of underage child sex abuse. It replaced the potential charge of sex abuse with one of their own: low-level sexual harassment of an adult. The problem with this was, because the allegations were of hugs (Emma described them as 'all the family hugs like that'), the 'touching' complained of needed to be unwelcome. In Emma's writings she demonstrated in ecstatic prose that the hugs were extremely welcome and meant that Dr. Dobbs returned her 'love'. Of course, this was all delusion on her part, a product of her severe OCD and other psychiatric problems. None-the-less on the face of the complaint and the evidence she gave in her interview and which was repeated in her signed statement, she was the initiator of every instance of contact, infrequent as it was, between her and Dr. Dobbs when she was visiting the house and his daughters. (For a discussion of her deluded claims, which were largely fabricated by her mother to get the parish to take over responsibility for Emma's welfare and get her out of the family home where she was the focus of many arguments and much anger, see my article 'A Cautionary Tale' revised 2018).

On Sunday 29th June 2008 at every service at Figtree Anglican Church a video was screened. In this video presentation Bishop Al Stewart read out the Committee's letter to Dr. Dobbs in which they gave him an opportunity to plead guilty to the charge they had only just formulated. But Bishop Al did not tell the congregation that Dr. Dobbs had **not** pleaded guilty. In fact, the time allowed by the Discipline Ordinance 2006 for him to accept the recommendations had not even expired.

It is difficult not to conclude that the whole announcement was an exercise in attempted self-justification of parish and diocesan people in the face of a rising tide of criticism, not least through our presentation of the facts of the case in executive summaries of my articles that were distributed through the parish.

What happened next?

Dr. Dobbs allowed the time prescribed for him to notify that he accepted the recommendations of the PSC lapse. The Discipline Ordinance 2006 provided that when this happened, the Archbishop was required to appoint a person to prepare charges against the respondent. Time passed and yet the Archbishop Jensen did not appoint anyone.

Dr. Dobbs wrote to Archbishop Jensen reminding him of his obligations under the terms of the Discipline Ordinance 2006. Eventually, Archbishop Jensen wrote to say that he had appointed PSU Director Phillip Gerber to prepare the charges.

Phillip Gerber tried to withdraw or otherwise settle the matter:

Philip Gerber now had four problems with the case: in addition to these -

1. *There was the unresolved issue that Dr. Dobbs was not a church worker, and this would now come before the Tribunal before it could even start hearing the charges. Despite the nonsense argued by Acting Judge Peter Grogan and the PSC without any evidence of an appointment of Dr. Dobbs to a position of leadership by the rector (Rod Irvine) or a deputy, this issue would have to be decided and that evidence would have to be sought by Phillip Gerber and obtained before the case could proceed. This evidence did not exist, as Dr. Dobbs had warned him.*
2. *Emma Nicholls was the only witness of fact. Without her evidence and because there was no one who had seen anything untoward in Dr. Dobbs' behaviour towards her, not even her mother, the case could not proceed.*
3. *There were so many contradictions in her statements that even the gentlest cross-examination would expose her evidence as, at best, the product of a disordered mind or, at worst, straight out fabrication.*

he now had a fourth -

4. *That Emma was not going to agree to give evidence. There are two strands to this. In the interview of Emma's treating doctor, Dr. Richard Schloeffel, he said that Emma was very fearful of going to court, of being interrogated by 'men in suits'. **Ken Taylor, the interviewer assured Dr. Schloeffel that she would not have to do anything more, in other words, that she was not going to be required to give evidence.** And then, Emma was counselled by her friend and online prayer partner Lance Wearmouth in the strongest terms not to give evidence because as he put it, she was just pawn in the game being played out on the various agendas of unnamed people – meaning her mother, Yvonne Gunning the Figtree Child Protection Officer and Children's minister and the rev. Bruce Clarke.*

Now that a hearing was a reality, he had to act to try to stop things going further.

First, he wrote to Dr. Dobbs with attached documentation for signature for the charges to be withdrawn. The Discipline Ordinance 2006 provided that the charges could not be withdrawn without the written consent of the respondent. Dr. Dobbs declined the offer.

Second, later, he wrote to Dr. Dobbs seeking his agreement to a mediation by a Christian organisation and submitting forms for signature. These forms had been prepared by him with the sketchiest information about the nature of the dispute.

By this stage, Machelie had made a formal complaint to him on her own behalf and on behalf of her daughters (all under the age of 18) in relation to the conduct of Figtree leadership and staff in shunning and excommunicating them. She had also made a complaint to the Episcopal Standards Commission about Archbishop Jensen's failure to intervene to protect her and her daughters against this abusive and, in the case of excommunication, unlawful, behaviour.

Therefore, one form was to be signed by Machelie Dobbs and the other by Dr. Dobbs. In both cases only Phillip Gerber himself would be the other party. Both Dr. and Machelie Dobbs declined to sign the forms, pointing out that a mediation needed to involve Emma and her mother, and certain key Figtree personnel. Dr. Dobbs also pointed out that the mediation process was inappropriate where, as here, truth was an issue.

The charges were prepared (the age-16 hug reappeared despite the view of the PSC, but not the age 14 hug rejected by the investigator), served on Dr. Dobbs and a date set for a 'mention' (a procedural hearing) before the Tribunal.

The first mention:

Dr. Dobbs, Mabelle and I attended at St. Andrew's House, Sydney, the headquarters of Sydney diocese. Phillip Gerber was accompanied by a barrister. The deputy president of the Disciplinary Tribunal was accompanied by the diocesan Registrar Dr. Philip Selden.

Dr. Dobbs said he required the Tribunal to decide first on jurisdiction, that is, whether he was a church worker, because if he was not then the tribunal could not hear the case and everything that Phillip Gerber had done or arranged for others to do was outside his authority and therefore an abuse of power.

We all went to a conference room to draw up short 'orders' that the Tribunal would make setting up a process for filing documents including, on Mr. Gerber's part, a statutory declaration by FAC's senior minister Rod Irvine about if, and if so, when, how (writing or conversation) and in what terms, he appointed Dr. Dobbs to a position of leadership in the parish and any other statutory declarations that he intended to rely on to prove that he had jurisdiction.

As I approached the door, Phillip Gerber, from inside, shut the sliding door in my face and held it shut against my efforts to open it, until, reprimanded by his barrister, he allowed me to open it and come in.

A statutory declaration from Rod Irvine is filed and served.

It says, firstly that Rod Irvine was not aware that Dr. Dobbs had been conducting a 'coffee ministry' until about January 2007 (which was when it ended); and, secondly, that he had not appointed Dr. Dobbs to it (or, by implication, to anything) but that he had delegated such appointments to the Executive Minister Bruce Clarke.

A statutory declaration from Bruce Clarke is filed and served.

It says that Bruce Clarke did not appoint Dr. Dobbs to a 'coffee ministry' (or anything else) although he talked about people spontaneously 'raised up' to undertake some form of volunteering for the parish.

A statutory declaration from Yvonne Gunning is filed and served.

In it she tries to assert that *she* had appointed Dr. Dobbs to be a 'leader' at two children's camps. There were two problems with this:

1. She had not been delegated the power of appointment of any person to a position of leadership by the senior minister as required by the terms of the Ordinance; and
2. At these camps children who attended without any role were termed 'campers' and children and adults who attended with some form of role (Dr. and Mabelle Dobbs were house parents) were termed 'leaders'. There were children as young as 10 who were termed 'leaders'. Clearly this was not the kind of 'position of leadership' that was envisaged by the drafters of the clause of the Discipline Ordinance 2006 nor by the members of Synod 2006 who voted to pass the Ordinance into church law.

Another irrelevant statutory declaration is filed and served.

This one is by the employed staff member who was the leader of the refreshment and hospitality ministry of the parish. As the issue was whether Dr. Dobbs had been appointed to a position of leadership in the parish by the senior minister or his delegate it is difficult to see how this statutory declaration could have even been contemplated as adding anything to the evidence for or against this. It was totally irrelevant.

The evidence of these statutory declarations added up to this: *Dr. Dobbs had not been appointed by spoken words or writing to a position of leadership in the parish by the senior minister the rev. Rod Irvine nor by his delegate the rev. Bruce Clarke. Therefore Phillip Gerber was guilty in taking on the*

case as he had no power or authority to do so, and everything he had done, including instructing the investigator, the investigation itself, the deliberations and report of the PSC, the referral by the Archbishop to the Tribunal and all involvement of the Tribunal was outside their authority and an abuse of (an abusive) process.

As a sideline: all the statutory declarations produced by Phillip Gerber were in the wrong form. This form stated that they had been prepared under the provisions of a Western Australia Act of Parliament, which did not in fact refer to statutory declarations, quite apart from being inapplicable in the state of New South Wales. We required him to have them prepared again in proper form, under the proper NSW Act of Parliament, because a false statement by anyone signing their declaration could be prosecuted if we desired to do so with a penalty imposed, bringing with it publicity and an unpleasant encounter with reality.

In addition, closer to the actual hearing, we drew up a statement of agreed facts, using a process that is always used in cases before the civil courts to isolate the actual findings of fact that the court is being asked to make, and getting rid of all the accumulated 'undergrowth' from the plethora of evidence that has accumulated, most of which is not relevant. This process requires each party to consider critically and carefully what the actual issues are and what is left in dispute between the parties, and what each party is going to have to prove. It is an excellent way of clearing the way to a possible settlement when the parties see how little is really in dispute, or what cannot be proved and therefore has to be abandoned. We sent this to Phillip Gerber. At first he refused to entertain this useful process, but later he produced his own poorly drafted version, which we had to reject.

At a later mention (by telephone conference):

Dr. Dobbs asked the Tribunal to direct Phillip Gerber to release to him a copy of the transcripts and original recordings of the interviews. Surprisingly, Phillip Gerber abandoned his initial opposition to this and the direction was made by consent. The transcripts (but not the original recordings) of the interviews were provided.

These gave a great insight into both the defective interview technique employed by the interviewer and the amount of malicious fabrication that was involved. The interviews form the basis of much of my later analysis of the evidence and my exposure of the personal animosity towards Dr. Dobbs that is demonstrated by all of the 'witnesses', except Emma who clearly still hoped she was loved.

3, 4 and 5 June 2009:

Three days were set down for the hearing by the Disciplinary Tribunal of the Anglican Church, Sydney diocese.

This was on the basis that if the Tribunal (in the teeth of the evidence, or, rather the absence of it!) decided that they had jurisdiction then they would proceed immediately to the hearing of the case or whatever remained of it.

We arrived ready to go with our arguments that neither of the two relevant statutory declarations filed by Mr. Gerber disclosed an appointment of Dr. Dobbs by the rector or his delegate to a position of leadership in the parish.

Phillip Gerber and his barrister refused to proceed to the hearing.

This was a tacit admission that neither their argument in favour of jurisdiction nor the substance of their case could be prosecuted. That is, they knew that the Tribunal did not have jurisdiction, and they also knew that even if it did, they did not have the ability to 'prove' their case, not just because of Emma's refusal to have anything more to do with it, but also because Emma's contradictory 'evidence' was unreliable, coloured as it was by her delusion that Dr. Dobbs returned her love.

It had taken 2 years to get to this point! And yet, both of these problems – the lack of jurisdiction and the lack of a viable case - were apparent from day 1, even before day 1.

Negotiations to settle:

With the refusal of Phillip Gerber and his barrister to proceed there was nothing left to be done but for Dr. Dobbs to attempt to negotiate something on top of what was already a simple fact: Phillip Gerber and his barrister knew that the Tribunal did not have jurisdiction and that everything that had been done by the PSU was outside the authority given by the Discipline Ordinance 2006.

The Tribunal members heard how Dr. Dobbs, Mabelle and their whole family had been treated by certain members of the former and current leadership of Figtree parish. The Tribunal members themselves were so concerned that they took the unprecedented step of intervening to negotiate and draft a compromise, the first clause of which is that they would recommend to the Archbishop that all the charges should be withdrawn and dismissed.

The Tribunal members also negotiated a clause saying that the then Assistant Bishop Al Stewart was to make a video announcing this, which was to be shown at all three services at Figtree Anglican church one Sunday and his message should also recommend that steps needed to be taken in the parish to lead the way to a reconciliation and restoration process towards all the Dobbs' family. In addition, the Director PSU, Mr. Phillip Gerber agreed to write to the Rev. Ian Barnett, the present senior minister and tell him that the restrictions contained in a letter from his predecessor the rev. Rod Irvine to me are inappropriate.

The Tribunal members and Dr. Selden (who was there as Registrar of the Diocese and the Tribunal and who was also active in negotiating the terms of the compromise) each personally guaranteed Dr. and Mabelle Dobbs that the recommendations would be put into effect in good faith. They saw to it that Mr. Phillip Gerber signed the document on behalf of the diocese.

What happened after this.

The announcement:

Phillip Gerber refused to adopt the form of letter to the parish and the announcement that represented the truth of the case, not just that there was no jurisdiction but also that there was no case to be answered.

That remains the case even now.

When the present Archbishop of Sydney diocese agreed to look at the case of getting an announcement made, the form drafted maintains (against the evidence) that there had been reasonable grounds for an investigation, when the fact was that all of the substance of the case was fabricated and/or engineered by Lee Nicholls manipulating her mentally vulnerable 20-year-old daughter.

It did at least acknowledge that the purported excommunication of Dr. Dobbs and his family was unlawful.

The lifting of the unlawful 'excommunication':

It was also part of the agreement that the bans on Dr. Dobbs that had been imposed by a letter delivered to Dr. Dobbs from the parish just before the fateful meeting (after which he was 'excommunicated') would be withdrawn.

Dr. Dobbs had rejected the terms of that letter on the basis that it imposed bans and restrictions that would only be appropriate if he were the worst kind of paedophile, and which even if the allegations had been true, would not have been warranted. If a 20-year-old falls in love with a married man in the congregation, let alone he with her, this is a matter for spiritual counselling and pastoral care, not bans and excommunication of the hapless object of her fantasy, and certainly not being dragged along with his family through the excoriating and highly public process inflicted on the

Dobbs' family.

Shortly after the charges had been withdrawn and dismissed in accordance with the agreement the eldest of the Dobbs children, by now aged 22 and completing his law degree, went to see the rev. Ian Barnett, the present Figtree senior minister and asked him when the family could return to worship at his church. He replied that they could not until the website *anglicanfuture.com* (the predecessor of *churchdispute.com*) was taken down.

This was not part of the agreement.

I wrote to the rev. Barnett by email to this effect: that as the website was not 'owned' by the Dobbs family they could not comply with his demand; that the website was not owned by me and I could not take it down; I was the 'owner' of Louise's Page that formed part of the website but I was not disposed to remove its' content which covered more than just the Figtree case; however, once the parish complied with the agreement I would be happy to report that fact. I did not receive a reply.

It is appropriate at this point to mention the close relationship between the rev. Ian Barnett and the former FAC senior minister, the rev. Rod Irvine: rev. Ian Barnett was a junior minister at Figtree after his ordination, remaining there for some years until taking up a position of minister (rector) of Shellharbour Anglican church. During those years at FAC he was effectively trained by the rev. Rod Irvine. He returned from Shellharbour to Figtree as senior minister.

On 30th May 2010 Mabelle Dobbs is physically and verbally assaulted in Figtree Anglican Church:

On this date, Dr. Dobbs, his wife Mabelle, three of their children, and friends attended a service at FAC to see Stephen Leungu preach. He was a noted evangelist. After an opening session of worship songs, the minister asked the members of the congregation to welcome people around them. A woman sitting behind Mabelle, Helen Wilmot, reached forward and poked at Mabelle. When Mabelle turned around Helen said aggressively, 'have you repented' to Mabelle, 'has your husband repented yet?'. Mabelle replied, 'have you repented'. Helen responded with some talk about 'unresolved issues'. After the service Helen Wilmot started again about had Mabelle repented, and that there were 'unresolved issues'. Mabelle had to get up and move away.

But Helen Wilmot continued talking to one of the friends of Dr. Dobbs and Mabelle, Robyn Elliott, who prepared a report of this conversation which I sent to Archbishop Jensen. No doubt he was especially interested in this part:

*I asked if she knew that the Arch Bishop had written a letter to the leadership asking that the family be brought back into the church and receive a public apology. She said **she had read that letter (from Arch Bishop) and said they don't accept it.** The reason for the letter was that the matter **wouldn't stand up in court.** (ie. they remained guilty). Besides, the **Arch Bishop people had no jurisdiction** (power?) as the **rector can override the instruction** he was given. (Bold type added by Mrs. Elliott).*

Perhaps not surprisingly, Mabelle Dobbs did not receive any apology from anyone in the parish or the diocese about this monstrous abuse of worship in FAC. However it was a quieter and obviously much chastened Helen Wilmot who encountered the Dobbs family at a Christian art show sometime later. However, the wrong attitude of FAC ministers and staff towards then Archbishop Peter Jensen so vividly spoken about by Helen Wilmot continues in the lack of cooperation of the rev. Ian Barnett and his staff, among others, with the strongly expressed wish of the present Archbishop of Sydney Dr. Glenn Davies to resolve the outstanding issues in a Christian spirit of reconciliation.

Summing up

It is difficult not to feel great anger when I consider the actions of those who, from way back when Helen Irvine slandered Dr. Dobbs to Yvonne Gunning by accusing him of being 'guilty' of sexual harassment of female students at the University of Wollongong, acted in concert to take poor deluded Emma Nicholls into a nightmare of humiliation with the exposure of her pathetic fantasy of love, coaching her (ultimately without conspicuous success) in her inadequate 'evidence', sending her back to the Dobbs home repeatedly in an attempt to try to get a case, as if staking out like a young goat as prey to trap a predator, and terrifying her with the thought that she might have to stand up in a court (tribunal) to be cross-examined by 'men in suits' (as she said to Dr. Schloeffel and he disclosed in his interview with Ken Taylor).

There is also their actions to defame Dr. Dobbs far and wide despite having no evidence, and their unlawful expulsion of Dr. Dobbs, his wife Machel, and all their six vibrantly Christian children from the congregation and all youth and children's activities. This has resulted especially in such damage to those children who, now as adults, no longer trust the church or the so-called Christians that inhabit it, and who refused the opportunity to talk to Archbishop Davies because they were still trying to cope with the scars from that day when the church they loved turned its back against them and cut them off from their friends and tried to cut them off from God.

I do not think it is going at all too far to call these people conspirators. Let me name them: initially Helen Irvine, Yvonne Gunning, Lee Nicholls, and the Director PSU Phillip Gerber. There is also a suggestion that another one of the PSU personnel, Margaret Fuller, a counsellor and herself a member of the congregation of Figtree Anglican Church, was not unaware of what was happening. This might well be before Lee Nicholls and Yvonne Gunning finally telephoned her to make a 'formal' complaint, 20 days after Lee Nicholls was interviewed by Yvonne Gunning to complain that Emma had 'fallen in love with Dr. Dobbs', because at that stage 20-year-old Emma Nicholls refused to make a complaint.

Once Emma Nicholls had been coerced into giving a statement in a 3-hour interview with Yvonne Gunning after Bruce Clark had to be told by the PSU that they could not proceed without a complaint from Emma Nicholls herself, we can add these names to the 'inner circle' of conspirators: the rev. Bruce Clark and the rev. Rod Irvine.

Then there are those involved against the Dobbs family, who followed on totally uncritically and even maliciously the lead given by the conspirators – the personnel of the PSU, the members of the PSC involved in the farce that was the PSC process, the then Bishop of Wollongong Al Stewart by his involvement in interviewing the Nicholls' mother and daughter without any concern for a perception of bias and not likewise interviewing Dr. Dobbs and his family, and then making the false and misleading announcement to the congregations of FAC, and various members of the parish staff, lay leadership and congregation.

What is now happening?

Nothing.

Despite the best efforts of Archbishop Glenn Davies, the people involved in the case from Figtree parish and the diocesan offices of Sydney Anglican church refuse to comply in a proper Christian spirit and seek forgiveness and reconciliation. They do no more than spout a spurious self-justification that they *had* to investigate the complaint. Surely not, when so many of them were involved from well *before* the date of the complaint trying to stitch together evidence, firstly, to get rid of Emma out of the Nicholls family home (as far as her mother Lee Nicholls, and her father were concerned), and, secondly, to 'get' Dr. Dobbs (as far as clergy, employees and other people of the parish of Figtree were all concerned).