

504. What were the terms you had given him?—I cannot say the terms, Sir.

505. *Colonel Pitt.*] You communicated Mr. Seddon's memorandum to him?—Yes. I wrote to Inspector Emerson on the 19th March, 1892 :—

Referring to your minute 289/92, of the 3rd instant, covering a report from Sergeant-major Moore in reference to the repayment of the compensation (£700) paid to him on his retirement from the service in June last, and requesting that the refund may not be insisted on, I am directed by the Hon. the Defence Minister to request you to inform Sergeant-major Moore that, as he accepted his present position on the distinct understanding that the moneys received by him as compensation were to be refunded, he regrets that his request cannot be complied with, but that if the terms to which the Sergeant-major agreed are unduly oppressive, he has no objection to their being amended by extending the time in which the refund is to be made. I am to add that, in the event of compensation being again payable to Sergeant-Major Moore, the basis of computation will be the same as in the former case.

A. HUME, Commissioner.

Then he appealed again, on the 9th April, 1892 :—

Having had many expensive removals, a considerable amount of sickness in my family, and having incurred much expense in the education of my children, on receipt of my compensation I was obliged to encroach heavily upon it in the liquidation of accounts contracted. On accepting my present position I understood that a refund would not be demanded until I had again reached my former position. If the above proposal cannot be accepted, I beg most respectfully, further, to request that I be allowed to retain the compensation on the distinct understanding that upon my removal from the service I shall have no further claim upon the Government for compensation.

S. MOORE.

That was submitted to the Defence Minister on the 14th May, 1892. The Minister says, "In this matter Sergeant-major Moore has broken faith. He agreed to refund, and at the time he knew his position, and which position is now bettered. Refusal to comply means bar to promotion, and loss of my confidence in this officer." And, further than that, when the vacancy of Inspector did occur he did not get it, on that ground.

506. *Mr. Taylor.*] He was kept sergeant-major?—Yes; and died as sergeant-major.

507. He was drafted as sergeant-major to the West Coast?—To Westport; but that made no difference. Then, there was another appeal from him on the 31st May, 1892. He says there :—

I beg to state I feel very much disappointed that my former reports on this matter have not been deemed satisfactory by the Hon. the Defence Minister, and feel greatly hurt that, owing to my being unable to refund this compensation, it will "mean a bar to promotion and loss of his confidence" in me. I may mention that in all interviews I have had with the Hon. Mr. Seddon I have found him exceedingly courteous and kind to me, and I very much regret that he should now express himself as stated in the above-mentioned memorandum from the Commissioner, to the effect that I have broken faith with him; and I can safely assert that I have never intentionally or wilfully broken faith with any man on any subject whatever, and fail to see how in the face of my previous reports I can be accused of having done so in this instance. I have made no attempt at concealment of my position financially, and my previous reports, above quoted, show it fully; and, as already stated in them, I cannot refund the whole of the money, nor do I think it would be just to ask me to do so, as I was under the impression that a refund would not be asked for until I regained my former position, that of second-class Inspector, and I submit the tenor of the correspondence in this matter generally leads to that impression. In my previous reports it will be seen that I have been to considerable expense prior to and after my retirement, and have necessarily encroached very heavily on the compensation-money. I have house property, but what with clearing it, and the fact that property of this description has so deteriorated in value, to realise on it would now simply mean ruin; and I regret to have to state that recently I had to pay over £400 in calls, &c., in connection with a gold-mining speculation which I entered into in Eaglehawk, Victoria, in the year 1858, but glad to be able to say I am now clear of it and all other liabilities. Out of the compensation received I have still about £200, which sum I am willing to refund should the Government urge on it. This is the only offer I can make, as I have no other means, except as stated, at my disposal. Should I regain my former rank, I would then willingly submit to deduction being made from my salary of £30 a year towards liquidating the balance. Under the circumstances, I most respectfully trust that the Commissioner of Police will be pleased to place this report before the Hon. the Defence Minister, and to advise this course to be adopted.

S. MOORE, Sergeant-major.

Then, in reply to that, I sent the following to the Minister, dated the 28th June, 1892 :—

If Sergeant-major Moore before being taken back promised to refund his compensation, his conduct cannot be too severely commented upon, and has certainly been the reverse of straightforward and honourable. There is, of course, no promise in any official documents. He now states he can only pay back £200 of the £700, which is the only offer he can make, but if he was promoted to his former rank he could pay back £30 a year, which would take upwards of twenty-three years to pay the amount back in full. If he stated before he was taken on as sergeant-major that he was prepared to pay back the compensation money on being taken back, then I consider he should be forced to keep his promise.

A. HUME.

The Minister notes: "I quite concur in this memo. He did promise to refund the moneys by his own admission; since asked to refund he has speculated, and lost £400 of Government moneys." Then he was passed over for promotion, and he is now dead.

508. *Colonel Pitt.*] Why did they not discharge him from the Force or put him back to the position he was in?—I do not know, Sir. I suppose because of the Parliamentary recommendation.

509. *The Chairman.*] When did he die?—On the 28th April last.

510. How long did he remain in the Force after that correspondence?—He got sick, and then he was removed to Westport from Gisborne.

511. What provincial district had he been in as Inspector of Police?—Otago principally.

512. Had he ever been on the West Coast as Inspector?—No, I do not think so.

513. *Mr. Taylor.*] I would like to ask Colonel Hume whether he knows what age Sergeant-major Moore was when he was reappointed?—I could not say straight off, but I think about sixty-three or sixty-five. [Fifty-seven, since ascertained.]

514. Then, with regard to Matthew O'Brien—O'Brien is still in the Force?—Yes, he was when I gave up charge.

515. Was he not sent from Helensville for being of drunken habits?—No.

516. What was he transferred from Helensville for?—For not keeping his books up to date.

517. *The Chairman.*] What is he now?—He is a first-class constable, stationed at Auckland.

518. *Mr. Taylor.*] Was he in charge of the Helensville station?—He was deprived of the charge of a station, and, I think, fined 10s. for not keeping his books properly.

519. Have you any report on him by Mr. Bush, Stipendiary Magistrate?—No.