

impression was when I wrote that letter to Mr. Wrigg, and I have told you the reasons why I now doubt it.

510. Supposing an event happened ten years back, and I had got a diary, and had made a mistake, would you take my diary against your own personal opinion?—For thirty years, I should have thought a thing put down at the time was better than my own memory.

511. *Mr. Field.*] You say that the dangerous part of the road, Captain Bower, was from Opotiki to Ohiwa?—Yes.

512. Was the rest of the road dangerous—were you subject to attack from the enemy between Opotiki and Ohiwa?—Then we get into the country of a friendly tribe.

513. Was the country occupied by the friendly tribe?—Yes.

514. You made some reference to the fact that probably an escort was sent out with Cornet Wrigg and the trooper McDonald?—I have no recollection particularly of an escort going with them. It has been shown to me that escorts did accompany men with despatches on occasions. I have no recollection of an escort accompanying Mr. Wrigg and McDonald.

515. Have you any recollection of despatches having been forwarded from Opotiki to Tauranga at this particular time? Is it within your knowledge that an escort accompanied the carrying of the despatches any portion of the way?—Yes.

516. Are you justified in saying that it was an ordinary thing for an escort to accompany despatches over the most dangerous part of the road?—When in an occurrence like this, a raid of the Natives down from the inland to the coast, and the troopers were sent from Opotiki to Tauranga, then it was easy to send out fifty or sixty men under an officer as far as Ohiwa.

517. You say that until a short time ago you believed that you had actually been at Opotiki when these despatches were sent?—Yes.

518. But is that after a perusal of Major Mair's diary?—There is no doubt in my mind.

519. You know Major Mair?—Yes.

520. Do you regard him as a precise and reliable man?—Yes.

521. You thought that the fact that this entry having been made in his diary caused in your own mind a grave doubt of your previous belief?—Yes.

522. A doubt still exists in your mind as to whether you were there or not?—Yes. I am sorry to say it does. I believe I was there, but I do not know.

523. You are sure Major Mair is not a man who would "fake" his diaries?—I am as sure of that as I am of sitting here now.

524. *Mr. Holland.*] In regard to your being absent at the time, Captain Bower, is it not regular in the service that the district adjutant should always be present in the camp?—Oh, yes. But a district adjutant sometimes went on duty. I was only a district adjutant of the left wing. The headquarters were at Tauranga, and the detachment under the command of Major St. John was stationed at Opotiki, and I was stationed at Opotiki. I often went up to Tauranga.

525. I can recollect in 1864, when I was in camp?—There are lots of things I do not remember about.

526. *Mr. Moore.*] I would like to ask how Captain Bower reconciles the answer he gave to Mr. O'Meara, that he considered Mr. Wrigg entitled to the Cross, when in his previous evidence he said, had he known as much as he knows now he would never have given the certificate?—As I have stated before in a letter to Captain Preece, I do not think that should be taken as a matter at all, as far as I am concerned.

527. You refer to the matter as an "infernal" subject, and that you were to blame for making the application?—It is an unfortunate expression, "blame." But I must reiterate that when I stated to Captain Preece about "Paul-up-a-Tree" and his courage or the reverse, there was no comparison whatever in my mind with Mr. Wrigg and "Paul-up-a-Tree."

528. When you referred to the matter as an "infernal" subject, do you mean it is a matter that never ought to have been touched?—I meant that I had been so infernally worried about the matter that I called it "infernal." That was in a private letter to my old brother officer, and I never expected he would have made it public. As he has made it public I must reiterate that it never entered my mind that I made that reference to "Paul-up-a-Tree," that because he was a funk and a coward it had any reference to Mr. Wrigg.

529. *Mr. Monk.*] Was there anything, Captain Bower, in the diary with which you braced your mind, some circumstances which led you to distrust the impression previously held by you?—It was the diary.

530. It did not bring to your mind any circumstance. There is just the bare statement?—Just the bare statement that I went away to Tauranga some five days beforehand.

531. Have you ever been an officer in the Imperial army?—Never. I was a trooper in the 10th Hussars.

532. You are generally acquainted with the usages of the Imperial army?—Yes.

533. When you received the note from Mr. Wrigg did you think it was material as to what you gave in the matter of securing to Mr. Wrigg the bestowal of the Cross? Will you give your opinion from your experience of military matters, and having been connected with the Imperial army? Did you think it possible for Mr. Wrigg to obtain the Cross after such a lapse of time? Did you feel when giving your evidence you were giving it with a special responsibility?—I perhaps did not give the question that amount of consideration which I ought to have done, but when I gave Mr. Wrigg this certificate, and when I made the application for him, I was acting in perfect good faith.

534. When this letter came from a brother officer, talking about "Paul-up-a-Tree," evidently alluding to some experience between yourselves at Wairoa, did you not resent the insinuation?—There was no insinuation.

535. Could you find no relevancy to "Paul-up-a-Tree"?—Mr. Wrigg never entered my head with reference to "Paul-up-a-Tree."