

they are—all of which but four are based upon the perusal of certain documents; these four certificates purport to be from persons who speak from their own knowledge?—Here I may mention something that might help to give the Committee some idea of the condition of things there at the time, and what was the practice when these alarms occurred. It is a note in my journal of the 10th August: "At 7 o'clock a.m. heard heavy firing at Waioeka. Major St. John went out and sent me word that the Hauhaus were firing on the redoubt. Sent out the cavalry and forty or fifty men. Then followed, but met an orderly, who reported that the rebels had bolted. So returned. Sent two orderlies to Tauranga with letters."

450. Two orderlies went?—Yes. Again St. John went out at night with seventy men; some of the rebels were known to be wounded. They were probably about seventy strong.

451. The first of the four of the certificates I was going to call to your attention is from Captain Bower, district adjutant at Opotiki in 1867. Can you say whether he was at Opotiki on the 30th June, 1867, or about that time?—I am strongly inclined to believe that he was not there at the time.

452. Why do you say that?—Because the arrivals and departures of the officers in a small camp were matters of note, and it was my practice generally to note these things in my diary, and I cannot find any mention of Captain Bower. I do not find his name all through. I find no mention of Captain Bower at all.

453. Have you no recollection of him being there when you arrived from Tauranga?—No, I have not. I have a note of his arrival by steamer on the 18th July, he and a lot of others.

454. Would that be from Napier or Auckland?—No, from Auckland or Tauranga. Steamers always called at Tauranga from Auckland.

455. Captain Bower, speaking of the ride we have been told of, which started on the 29th, would imply that McDonald and Wrigg started from Opotiki on the day before you met McDonald, which was Sunday, the 30th; was it on that date you met him?—I met him on the Sunday night. According to that camp order, he appears to have started three days after the murders.

456. You met him on the Sunday night?—Yes.

457. What distance would that be from Opotiki?—About forty-seven miles, speaking roughly.

458. When would he probably have left Opotiki to reach Maketu: would he likely have started on the Sunday morning?—It was possible to do it in a day, but it would be very hard riding.

459. Supposing he had started on the Saturday night?—He might have travelled a stage on Saturday night, and got on the rest of the way on Sunday.

460. Is it likely a man starting with despatches on the Saturday morning from Opotiki would only reach Maketu on Sunday night?—It would be very slow travelling, from the date of the murders.

461. He could not go to Tauranga and return in three days at that rate from Opotiki?—Hardly, I should think, on one horse.

462. The certificate that Captain Bower gave, referring to the ride, proceeds in these words: "Their service was most dangerous." What do you say to that: was it most dangerous?—No more dangerous than walking down Lambton Quay.

463. "Their route being along where the road was dangerous and rivers in flood": how about that?—The rivers were high.

464. The document goes on: "They reached Tauranga, and returned from thence to Opotiki, after successfully completing an arduous and very dangerous duty": what do you say to that?—That is all nonsense.

465. Did you know a Captain Simpson at Opotiki?—Yes.

466. Was he there in June, 1867?—I think about that time he was surveying up the Whakatane Valley.

467. To the best of your recollection, was he in Opotiki at the time?—I know he was laying off sections up the Whakatane at that time. I know where his work was at that time.

468. Did you know Captain Percival?—Yes.

469. Was he in Opotiki in June, 1867?—Not there in June. He was paymaster for the forces stationed there, and used to come round periodically by sea from Napier.

470. Then, to the best of your recollection, he was not in Opotiki at the end of June, 1867?—I am confident he was not.

471. In the certificate he has given he says, speaking of the ride by Wrigg and McDonald, the volunteers carrying despatches, "it was a very dangerous feat indeed." What do you say: was it a dangerous feat?—No, certainly not. I know Captain Percival very well. I have known him very well for five and twenty years. For two years he was clerk to me. We sat at the same table, and spent our evenings together.

472. Did he ever refer to this ride of Wrigg and McDonald?—No.

473. Did he ever tell you he was in the British service?—I was not aware he had ever been in the British army.

474. He goes on to say, "Considering the country between Opotiki and Tauranga was swarming with the enemy"?—Oh, that is all nonsense. The greater part of the country was occupied by the Arawa friendly Natives and European settlers.

475. Did you know Mr. George H. Leaning?—I remember a young man of that name in a store at Opotiki.

476. Was he a voluntary trooper?—I remember him being in Mr. William Kelly's store there.

477. His statement says, "I certify that I was a voluntary trooper in the Bay of Plenty Volunteer Cavalry, when Bennett White and the mailman were murdered, and when Cornet Wrigg stepped forward and volunteered to carry despatches in 1867 and 1868"?—Yes.

478. Later on we find Captain Bower, besides giving the certificate I have read, made application for the bestowal of the New Zealand Cross on Mr. Wrigg, and in that application he says that