

he regards the carrying of the despatches through a country swarming with hostile Natives as an act of bravery. That, you say, was an exaggeration?—Simply ridiculous. The practice was, when it was thought the Natives were about, to send an escort as far as Ohiwa. Occasionally I had to take an escort myself coming back from Tauranga; one had to take the chance, because there were no means of sending for an escort.

479. Speaking from your knowledge of camps, and of the district of Opotiki at the time of 1867, would any act of conspicuous bravery have been the subject of conversation?—Certainly it would.

480. These things were very largely talked of in camp?—Yes.

481. Were there newspaper correspondents at Opotiki at the time?—Yes; not regular correspondents, but occasionally articles appeared in the Auckland papers of the doings in Opotiki. I do not think there were any regular correspondents.

482. Have you heard of any instance of the New Zealand Cross being conferred after an interval of thirty years?—No.

483. Or any instance of persons receiving it not being mentioned in despatches at the time of the occurrence for which it was conferred?—No.

484. *Mr. Wilford.*] Are you prepared to swear, Major, that his (Mr. Wrigg's) name was never mentioned in despatches?—No, I cannot swear that.

485. It may have been mentioned for all you know?—It may have.

486. You say the practice was to send an escort to Ohiwa when there was danger?—Yes.

487. Then, there was danger at times?—Yes. There was one murder of a Maori committed previously on that coast.

488. It was considered advisable to send an escort on account of the danger. If it was known Natives were hovering in the vicinity some troopers were sent?—They would be sent as an escort.

489. There were occasions when it was considered a very dangerous ride?—No, not very dangerous.

490. Sufficiently dangerous to require an escort of twenty-five men?—Yes.

491. It was merely, then, a figure of speech when you made that statement, "Walking down Lambton Quay"?—I said that because the country had been scoured by troops, and there were parties searching for the bodies of the men murdered.

492. I understand that these expedition parties that used to go out scouring the district were in considerable numbers, were they not?—Perhaps fifty or seventy men.

493. And the country was of such a class that the movements of these fifty men would be observed before they reached Ohiwa by any one on watch at Ohiwa?—If they marched by the beach.

494. That was the usual course?—No; not always.

495. It must be perfectly well admitted that, though the Native were never seen, still they were there at times?—Oh, yes.

496. Though they were never seen, still they showed they were there by the murders they did. Do you know the bluff that runs down by Ohiwa?—Yes, Onekawa.

497. Would that bluff afford a suitable ambuscade to any Natives that might be looking out for passers-by?—No.

498. You disagree with Mr. Haselden and another witness that we had, and Captain Preece?—It was too high. Firing from a height is not the kind of place where Natives could successfully fire on people passing. There were places much more suited for ambuscades than Onekawa.

499. Many?—Where there was access from the shore to the beach, other than from a high cliff.

500. When you say there were suitable places for ambuscades, and admit murders have occurred, and Natives were seen in the vicinity, what do you mean by saying there was no more danger than walking down Lambton Quay?—I mean men thought no more in journeying along the beach in those days, and the country had been carefully scoured by the troops, and there was not the slightest reason to suppose any Natives were in the vicinity at the time.

501. You made the statement there was no more danger of going on that track than walking down Lambton Quay?—I made that statement.

502. I believe you, as Judge of the Native Land Court, have been sitting at Palmerston North for some time?—Yes, I have sat there.

503. Were you there on the 12th August of this year deciding a Native case?—No.

504. Were you in Palmerston North on the 12th August?—I may have passed through Palmerston about that time.

505. You were not living there?—No.

506. Have you written to any paper on this subject?—I wrote one letter to a paper—the *Herald*.

507. Did you sign your name?—No.

508. What name did you put on it?—"East Coaster."

509. Why did you not sign your own name?—It is not the custom.

510. You were not ashamed of what you had to say. You preferred to write under a *nom de plume*—"East Coaster": did not you use an "East Coast resident of thirty years"?—No.

511. Did not you write a letter to the *Evening Post* and say that the road was as safe as riding down Lambton Quay, and there was no more danger?—I only wrote one letter.

512. You swear on oath positively you never wrote any letter to the *Evening Post*?—I had some communication with the *Evening Post*, and sent some extracts.

513. I asked you whether you wrote a letter to the *Evening Post* on the subject: why did you say you did not?—I wrote one letter which appeared in the *Auckland Herald*.

514. You say you wrote a letter to the editor of the *Evening Post*, and sent him some newspaper extracts?—But I have no idea that they were published.