

45. In details you are not clear on, the main facts are obscured?—I do not see that. I could not very well remember.

46. Of course you have heard the statement, have you not, made by Wrigg that volunteers were called for to carry despatches to Tauranga, and that he volunteered?—I heard he stated that.

47. You understand by that that he volunteered alone from the troop?—Yes.

48. And as you were a member of the troop at that time, if his statement is correct it is to a certain extent a reflection on yourself?—"If," yes.

49. You have no recollection of any volunteers being called for to carry despatches?—None whatever. Had volunteers been called for, the whole troop would have stepped to the front. "Volunteers wanted," that means "step to the front." I have done it so often I know something about it.

50. When volunteers are called for, I presume a man prepared to go as a volunteer steps out from the ranks?—From wherever he is.

51. Are you prepared to state positively that no volunteers were ever called for by Captain Gwynneth to carry despatches to Tauranga?—I am quite certain no volunteers were ever called for on that occasion.

52. Would you recognise Captain Gwynneth's signature?—After thirty-one years I certainly could not swear to it.

53. You might look at this camp order. It (the signature) is a peculiar one?—I could not call to mind his signature.

54. Now, this extract from camp orders purports to be signed by John Gwynneth, is dated 28th June, 1867, and says: "Cornet Wrigg and Trooper McDonald will proceed to-morrow to Tauranga with despatches to Colonel Harington, or officer commanding the district." That is signed by Gwynneth, and dated 28th June, 1867?—Quite so.

55. Can you suggest any reason why that should not be in order?—There is something missing about that; it does not say that they had volunteered to do special duty.

56. That is on the back of it. You see they volunteered?—I say they did not volunteer. That is the reason it is not there.

57. We have got on the back of this camp order: "Cornet Wrigg and Trooper McDonald volunteered for the within-named service at a time of great danger, as the Natives were known to be in force in the vicinity, and the road they had to travel was that upon which Bennett White and the mailman had been murdered only the day previously, and abounding with every facility for ambushes. On the evening immediately after their return from this duty, which was performed with credit to themselves, and whilst yet in the saddle, they accompanied and assisted me in the search for the bodies of Messrs. Moore and Beggs, who had been dragged from their dwellings into the bush and murdered by the Natives, in which search we were successful in finding the bodies and bringing them into camp." Are you prepared to contradict that statement of Gwynneth's?—Most undoubtedly.

58. You know you did not care to go?—There was a reason. They did not give us a chance. It was a bit of favouritism.

59. It was a bit of favouritism of Captain Gwynneth's to Wrigg?—To McDonald; they managed to be picked out.

60. Was the road from Opotiki to Ohiwa dangerous?—Not as long as the troops were there. It was very seldom that the rebels came round that way. If they did we always got warning.

61. Would you consider passing the bluff at Ohiwa a dangerous undertaking then?—It is not advisable to go alone. But a trooper is quite capable of taking care of himself.

62. Is it not a fact that the bluff at Ohiwa affords capital ambush for any hostile Natives?—Well, they have got cliffs all the way along. They could fire from the cliffs.

63. A party passing would have no means of protecting himself except by galloping quickly, I suppose?—Well, he never did, only on this occasion.

64. I suppose a party passing that bluff would have no means of protecting himself except by galloping from a Native ambush there. He could not get away out of range?—If it was a civilian I suppose he could, but a trooper generally returns the fire. On this occasion they let a European pass. In fact, they detained him, got him and kept his horse, as he was a man they did not want to kill. Bennett White had given evidence of the murder of Falloon against them.

65. Who first asked you to make a declaration in this matter?—I do not know that it was Mr. Hutchison. I got a communication from him.

66. Have you got the communication from him?—I know when I read this I put certain letters in the paper contradicting this.

67. You received a letter from Mr. Hutchison, enclosing a declaration for signature?—Yes.

68. Was that declaration already drawn up for your signature?—Yes.

69. Then the words of the declaration are whose words—the actual wording of the declaration?—I think they tally with my letter.

70. The words of the declaration are Mr. Hutchison's, are they not?—I could not say.

71. Did you write a letter to Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Ford, about the matter before you received one from him?—I think it was to Mr. Hutchison I wrote. I will not be sure.

72. Did you keep a copy of that letter?—I did not.

73. And, then, it was in answer to that letter that you received a letter from Mr. Hutchison and the declaration, and you might say to the best of your recollection it embodied the terms of the letter?—Yes.

74. You signed the declaration because you believed the same to be true?—That is correct.

75. Do you remember or have you any knowledge of who actually carried the despatches?—As far as my recollection goes I believe it was McDonald who carried the despatches.

76. Will you tell me why you believe that?—Simply from memory.