

217. Then, the fact that a man went along that beach, or a pair of troopers went along that beach, would not excite comment?—It would not.

218. You were a young man in those days, I presume, Mr. Ford?—I was a young man then. I am fifty-five years of age on the 20th of this month.

219. I suppose you took a fairly active part in what was going on?—The usual share.

220. You did not shirk duty?—No, indeed. I was full of life.

221. I take it that any act of conspicuous bravery would have been a matter of talk and comment: is that not so?—Quite so.

222. Did you ever hear Wrigg's name mentioned in connection with any such action?—No, sir.

223. *Mr. Moore.*] You say there was no parade of the corps at the time Cornet Wrigg volunteered?—No.

224. Do you think any conspicuous act of bravery could have been carried out at that time without coming under your notice at the camp?—I feel quite positive that it could not have.

225. Was it the practice to mention any act of special merit?—It would have been read in orders before the whole parade.

226. Such an occurrence as Mr. Wrigg refers to as having occurred?—It would have been read in orders by Major St. John.

227. Was there anything of that sort?—Nothing.

228. *Mr. Monk.*] Do you know whether the relations between Major St. John and Captain Gwynneth were cordial or strained?—I could not say.

229. Supposing the camp order was issued at that time, who was the proper person to sign it?—All camp orders were signed by Major St. John.

230. Who next to him should have signed it, allowing that he was not there?—The next officer in command would be Captain Walker, as far as I can remember. I think he was second in command. There was Major Mair, I forget whether he acted on these occasions.

231. Would it be a breach of discipline for Captain Gwynneth to sign the order?—In the presence of his superior it would. Major St. John was an active-service man, and Mr. Gwynneth had only just then joined the cavalry and knew nothing about military practice, and must have taken all his instructions from Major St. John.

232. Major St. John has been in the Imperial service, has he not?—I think so.

233. He was considered a good soldier?—Yes.

234. If Captain Gwynneth had issued a camp order would not Major St. John have called him to book for having done so?—I think he would have done so.

235. Did you hear then of any contention, or any question being made, as to a breach of discipline on the part of Captain Gwynneth by Major St. John?—I have no recollection.

236. His troop would have been sure to have known?—Yes.

237. It would have been notorious, would it not?—Yes.

238. *Mr. Holland.*] You said you were the second man to join the corps?—I think so.

239. Did not Mr. Wrigg join before you?—I could not tell you.

240. Was Mr. Wrigg not nominated as a lieutenant?—Not to my knowledge, unless it was a matter in the survey camp.

241. Was he not nominated to the Government for cornet before the company was formed?—I am not aware of it.

242. You would be surprised to see here in the minute-book he was nominated for lieutenant before the company was formed, but lost it by three votes, out of four men. Then he was nominated for cornet, and recommended to the Government for cornet, before the company was formed. Mr. Wrigg's name is mentioned in this book as third, and yours is not mentioned until the 37th is reached?—I am only telling you what a man said to me coming out of the room. He said, "Old man, you are No. 2; I am No. 1."

243. When did that meeting take place?

Mr. Wilford: On the 31st October, 1866. He was only in it three months, and you speak of June, 1867*?—During all the time we were in Opotiki I had only seen him on one occasion in active service.

244. Look at this minute-book: is that your signature?—It is very like my signature. And does it state the men who were sworn there?

245. This is it: "We, the undersigned residents of Opotiki, being desirous of forming ourselves into a Volunteer cavalry corps, do now offer our services in accordance with certain resolutions passed at a meeting held in Opotiki on the 23rd October, 1866." And then follow the names.

246. *The Chairman.*] This resolution in the minute-book appears to be an application addressed to the Defence Minister for the formation of the Bay of Plenty Cavalry corps, and Mr. Wrigg's name is third. Mr. Ford's name is No. 37 on the list. Would it not appear, Mr. Ford, forasmuch as Mr. Wrigg's name appears third on the list of applicants who signed the application form to the Defence Minister to form the Bay of Plenty Cavalry corps, that Mr. Wrigg took a prominent part at a very early stage in the formation of that company?—It would seem so. But I know when the left wing were disbanded the first thing was to evade getting into the Militia.

247. *Mr. Hutchison.*] Here is a minute of the 9th February, 1867: "This is really the first meeting, and the day that members were sworn in.—J. F. C."?—I have forgotten all about those meetings in the minute-book.

Mr. Wilford: You were wrong when you said those meetings did not take place.

Mr. Hutchison: Here is another entry in the minute-book: "On the 9th February Mr. Wrigg proposed, and Captain Gwynneth seconded, That Donald McDonald be a member of the corps."

Mr. Holland: I have pointed this out because some say they did not know Mr. Wrigg, and had never seen him, while from the first meeting of the corps he is mentioned in this minute-book.

* The services of the Bay of Plenty Cavalry Volunteer Corps were accepted on 23rd December, 1866: *vide New Zealand Gazette* No. 5, Jan. 19, 1867, page 47.