

17. Then, with respect to this Captain Rowe. Is he still in the employ of the Government?—No. Immediately after the Court of Inquiry, the Hon. Major Atkinson, acting in the absence of the Defence Minister, was not satisfied with the proceedings of the Court, and at once dispensed with the services of Captain Rowe as a paid officer.

18. On what ground?—Simply that he was dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Court. He did not consider the officer fit to remain in that force. His commission was not cancelled. He was simply dispensed with as a paid officer.

19. What part of the evidence was it that gave dissatisfaction to Major Atkinson with respect to Captain Rowe?—I think the proceedings generally.

20. The charge made, as I understand it, was that he had sold a mare for £35 and credited the Government with £30, and falsified certain accounts?—Yes.

21. Did it appear that there were any grounds for these charges?—There appeared to be grounds certainly.

22. Was the mare sold for £35, and did the Government only receive £30?—It is very difficult for me to say. The Investigating Officer said he was not guilty.

23. From perusing the evidence, what conclusion did you come to in your own mind? Did you think that the mare had been sold for £35, and that the Government did receive only £30?—The evidence is very complicated for and against. The Investigating Officer was the best person to judge. There certainly appears to be good grounds for preferring the charges.

24. These persons were justified in making a charge?—Yes; but I am unable to say whether the officers were guilty or not.

25. Do you think these persons were deserving of commendation for making these charges?—Certainly; but the petitioners had nothing to do with it in either case.

26. I understand the Court of Inquiry constituted on that occasion came to the conclusion that Captain Rowe was not guilty of the charges preferred against him?—Yes; and further, that the charges were vindictive and malicious.

27. But the Government did not come to the same conclusion after reading the evidence?—Major Atkinson came to the conclusion that Captain Rowe was unfit to remain in the force, and dispensed with his services.

28. *Mr. Swanson.*] I think you said that Small was dismissed from the service before these charges were made?—No, I did not. Mr. Craig was dismissed for misconduct before he brought these charges against Captain Rowe.

29. You said that Major Atkinson perused the evidence, and was not altogether pleased with it?—Yes.

30. Did he not state that he was very much disgusted with the whole proceedings. In his letter to Major Gordon, he wonders very much how Major Gordon could have come to the conclusion he did, and wants some explanation. Is not that so?—The Minister was not satisfied with the proceedings, said the officer was not fit for the service, and dispensed with his services.

31. Major Atkinson, so far from being satisfied, was satisfied that the Court was corruptly held, that the officer had been favoured, and that the inquiry was loosely and badly conducted?—That is the difference between the Investigating Officer, who had an opportunity of seeing the demeanour of the witnesses, and Major Atkinson. That difference I cannot explain.

32. Was it not true that these men were ever locked up by these officers on a charge of stealing?—There was one of them placed in arrest about some missing papers, and brought before the Resident Magistrate in Waikato.

33. What was the result of the inquiry?—As far as I recollect, it was not proven.

34. If these men can show that they have been put to any loss in consequence of laying these informations against these officers, or as witnesses in this matter of bringing this conduct home to this officer, do you not think they ought to be paid?—Both were in the pay of the Government at the time, and were simply called in as witnesses by Craig to give evidence, and they gave evidence.

35. If they can show that they have sustained any loss, or incurred any expense about this matter, in trying to bring the attention of the Government to a case of this sort, ought they not to be paid?—If they can fairly prove that they were put to any particular expense, it would be fair to do so; but there is nothing in the correspondence to show that they were put to any expense whatever.

36. This man who was locked up seems to have been put to some expense?—That has nothing to do with this case. I do not think Major Gordon had anything to do with that.

37. Where is Captain Rowe now—still in the Government service?—No; his services were dispensed with at the time.

38. Is he not in the Government service in some other capacity?—He is an officer of Militia.

39. *The Chairman.*] But not in the service of the Government?—Not on pay.

40. Is Major Gordon still in the Government service?—Yes.

41. And is he usually employed in these Courts of Inquiry?—Not usually. He has been employed several times.

42. Since then?—Not since, that I am aware of.

43. Do I understand you to say that if these men can show that they have been at any loss or cost over this matter, they ought to be paid?—I think so.

44. *Mr. Murray.*] Do you know of any motives that the witnesses might have—any animosity—to induce them to prefer those charges against Captain Rowe?—The petitioners had nothing to do with preferring the charges.

45. Had Small and Barlow any animosity, that you are aware of, against Captain Rowe?—None, except what is stated by Sergeant Cook in his evidence, that they seemed desirous to get rid of their officers.

46. *Mr. Swanson.*] If these things were true, do not you think it was high time such officers should be dispensed with?—Certainly.

47. *The Chairman.*] Do you think the question of whether there was a motive or not, or what that motive was, ought to influence the Court if the charges were proved to be true?—I certainly