

read to him, and he pleaded guilty. However, Mr. Beard, solicitor, interfered, and said he would not allow the plea of guilty, and asked for a remand till the 28th. The Court at once acquiesced, and the remand was granted. It will be observed in the evidence that a person named Harris figures prominently before the Court. This person was boarding with Fitzsimmons (the prisoner) and his father, and immediately the two accused were released on bail Mr. Beard had Harris brought to his office. This was on the 25th ultimo. Immediately after this interview Harris disappeared, and has not since been seen or heard of. This man Harris is only partially known to the police here, and we had no knowledge that such imputation would be made or we should have detained Harris. However, the police here defy the imputation for either Harris or Tucker or Mr. Beard to prove, which I challenged him to prove when the case was before the Court, and which he signally failed to do; and, in the face of my challenge and Mr. Beard's inability to show any proof of his false accusation, yet the Court seemed inclined from the very first to assist the defence, which the general public here can and will prove. Under the circumstances the police here court the fullest inquiry, on the grounds that, if such false accusations can be levelled at myself and the two members at present on this station for independently doing our duty without a shadow of evidence to prove it, then no man is safe. Please see the leading article of the 29th ultimo taken from the *Wairarapa Star*.

HENRY McARDLE.

I may state that that was forwarded to the Commissioner, and he recommended that Sergeant McArdle should be transferred from Masterton.

121. Was he transferred?—Yes.

122. Straight away?—I cannot remember, but it must have been very soon afterwards, anyway. In June, 1896, the Minister writes, "The sergeant has been transferred to Nelson."

123. He is now in Nelson?—Yes, in charge of the sub-district.

124. Was he removed as a result of those petitions?—Yes, as a result of my report after I went up.

125. Why did you think he should be removed?—For the same reason as Mr. Pender. I thought he was too old for Masterton, for one thing.

126. He is not too old for Nelson?—Oh, no; the Nelson people are delighted with him.

127. Was that the only reason why you recommended the man's removal? As a matter of fact, was he not a common frequenter of hotel bars at Masterton?—No, I do not think so. I do not think he is a drinker.

128. *Mr. Taylor.*] I think I will put in a copy of the *Wairarapa Daily Times* dated the 29th February, 1896, containing a full report and the judgment of the Magistrate in connection with the fruit-stealing case. I would like to ask whether anything more was done with regard to the suggestion that Sergeant McArdle had acted improperly. Sergeant McArdle was asked to report on his own conduct, and I would like to know whether any fuller inquiry was made?—No other inquiry was held. Of course, as I pointed out before, Inspector Pender will know more about the matter.

129. Have you the papers of Constable Poland?—Yes.

130. When did he join the Force?—On the 17th April, 1894, from the Permanent Artillery, and he joined the latter Force on the 19th August, 1893. He was promoted to second-class rank on the 1st July, 1897.

131. Was that promotion in order, or was it an irregular promotion?—It was for saving life; it was for meritorious conduct.

132. Was it made by virtue of seniority or for special reasons?—For special reasons.

133. What district does Constable Poland come from?—He comes from Auckland.

134. Why was he promoted?—I sent the following recommendation to the Minister: "I have much pleasure in recommending third-class constable J. H. Poland to be promoted to second-class constable, with effect from the 25th instant, for his bravery in jumping off the wharf between 3 and 4 o'clock a.m. and rescuing Dr. C. W. Martyn from drowning. During the present year the constable has on two occasions stopped runaway horses, and certainly in one of these cases more than probably saved life. He has been in the Force since November, 1894, and previously served one year and eighty-two days in the Permanent Artillery. I intend taking steps to bring his conduct on the 25th instant to the notice of the Royal Humane Society of Australasia, with a view to obtaining a medal for him.—A. HUME, Commissioner.—30th June, 1897." This is minuted, "Approved.—T. THOMPSON.—1st July, 1897." I may say that Mr. Pender recommended his conduct to me for promotion. I wrote to the Royal Humane Society, and a bronze medal was presented to Constable Poland.

135. Was it customary to promote officers who had been the means of saving life?—Yes, when it is clearly proved to me. I must say that all sorts of dodges have been tried on, but when cases have been proved to me the men have been promoted. Some may have been overlooked.

136. Take the case of a man named Ryan: he was given £3 as a reward for saving life?—Yes.

137. Was he promoted?—I cannot say, but I will find out. I know a case where I found a man went down on the stringer and pulled a woman out of the water. I did not think much of that. He saved the woman's life, but he did not risk his own.

138. *Mr. Tunbridge.*] Will you kindly read paragraph 61 of the Police Regulations?—"Where any member of the Force has shown exceptional merit, or performed any specially valuable service, his promotion to a higher rank without regard to seniority, if recommended by the Inspector of the district, may be authorised, but on such occasions a notification will be published in the *Gazette* setting forth the circumstances of the case."

139. Was Constable Poland's promotion irregular?—No.

140. Is it not in accord with the police regulations?—Yes.

141. *Mr. Taylor.*] Was it gazetted?—Yes, I imagine so.

142. As a matter of fact, we had three cases of promotion which were not gazetted?—I explained those cases.

*Colonel Hume:* I should like to clear up the promotion of Constable McGill, about which I was in some doubt this morning. I find that the Accountant to the Police Department, Mr. Gold-