

his incapacity. With regard to charge No. 6, he could not contend that the Department had proved this giving of information in the month of December. Mr. Fisher had retracted his former statement, and now considered Willis more likely to be accurate than he himself. The point was not particularly material. He would, however, say that it was difficult to believe, in the face of their present knowledge, that the rumour was unconnected with Willis himself. Willis said he considered it necessary in the public interest that the matter should be disclosed; but he retained the knowledge of it in his bosom from between January and June, 1904, until April, 1905, when he had confided it to Mr. Fisher. He waited until Mr. Fisher was a member of Parliament, he says, and then gave the information to him.

Mr. Willis interjected that he had already explained his reason for this. He had not known before of a member of Parliament to whom he would trust the information, either with regard to this payment or any others that had gone through since.

Mr. Stringer said that no doubt Mr. Fisher would feel flattered by the singular trust reposed in him by Mr. Willis, but that did not alter his case.

In answer to a question, the Board said that the result of the inquiry would be notified to Mr. Willis in due course.

## APPENDIX.

### EXHIBIT A.

P.O. No. 75.]

#### POST OFFICER'S DECLARATION.

(Being the First Schedule in "The Post Office Act, 1881.")

I, JOSEPH WILLIS, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I will be true and faithful in the execution of the trust committed to my charge, and that I will not willingly or knowingly open, detain, return, or delay, or cause or suffer to be opened, detained, returned, or delayed, any letter which shall come into my hands, power, or custody, by reason of my employment in the Postal service, except with the consent of the person to whom such letter shall be directed, or in such cases as are or may be provided for by the Post Office Acts, or by any rules or regulations to be made in pursuance thereof.

And I do further declare that I will not intentionally read the contents of any letters which I may lawfully open, except so far as may be necessary for the purpose of ascertaining the name and address of the writer, or for any other lawful purpose; and that I will not divulge to any person whatever, except so far as lawfully required, any of the contents of any such letter which may have come to my knowledge in course of opening and examining the same for any such purpose as aforesaid.

J. WILLIS.

This declaration was made before me, at Christchurch, in the County of Selwyn, the 27th day of February, 1894.—C. M. Gray, Justice of the Peace.

P.O. No. 75.]

ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH OFFICERS.—Declaration to be made by all persons employed or engaged in any Telegraph-office of the Post Office and Telegraph Department, New Zealand.

I, JOSEPH WILLIS, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I will be true and faithful in the execution of the trust committed to my charge, and that I will not willingly or knowingly divulge the contents of any telegram coming to my knowledge in my official capacity, or suffer any other officer in the service to divulge the contents of any telegram coming to his knowledge in his official capacity. Moreover, I will neither detain nor delay, nor will I suffer any other officer in the service to detain or delay, any telegram intrusted to the charge of the Department for delivery, unless in such cases as may be provided for by the regulations and conditions approved of by the Electric Telegraph Commissioner.

J. WILLIS.

This declaration was made before me, this 11th day of June, 1895.—C. M. Gray, J.P.

P.O. No. 75.]

#### POST OFFICER'S DECLARATION.

(Being the First Schedule in "The Post Office Act, 1881.")

I, THOMAS WALTER WEST, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I will be true and faithful in the execution of the trust committed to my charge, and that I will not willingly or knowingly open, detain, return, or delay, or cause or suffer to be opened, detained, returned, or delayed, any letter which shall come into my hands, power, or custody, by reason of my employment in the Postal service, except with the consent of the person to whom such letter shall be directed, or in such cases as are or may be provided for by the Post Office Acts, or by any rules or regulations to be made in pursuance thereof.

And I do further declare that I will not intentionally read the contents of any letters which I may lawfully open, except so far as may be necessary for the purpose of ascertaining the name and address of the writer, or for any other lawful purpose; and that I will not divulge to any person whatever, except so far as lawfully required, any of the contents of any such letter which may have come to my knowledge in course of opening and examining the same for any such purpose as aforesaid.

THOMAS WALTER WEST.

This declaration was made before me, at Oamaru, in the County of Waitaki, the 26th day of August, 1899—George Brownlee, Justice of the Peace.