

service. If Mr. Wrigg had performed any act or service above the common, our commanding officer, Colonel St. John, would no doubt have recorded the fact at the time, and reported the matter to the proper authorities. Colonel St. John lived for several years after the period referred to.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of "The Justices of the Peace Act, 1882."

A. S. FORD.

Declared at Coromandel, this 23rd day of September, 1898, before me—T. W. Rhodes, a Justice of the Peace in and for the Colony of New Zealand.

I, *John Forsyth Connelly*, of the City of Auckland, merchant, do solemnly and sincerely declare: I joined the Bay of Plenty Cavalry Volunteers on the 28th September, 1867, and served in the troop for over fourteen years, and was lieutenant. For some time before I joined the troop I was resident in Opotiki, and was well aware of all occurrences taking place in the settlement and district. I remember the news of the murder of Bennett White and Wiremu Popata, the mailman, on the beach-road nine miles north from Opotiki. I remember on the night following the receipt of the news Trooper McDonald leaving with despatches from Tauranga. There was no danger understood to render the road unsafe. I did not hear of any act of bravery by Acting-Cornet Wrigg then, or at any time, until it was known that the decoration of the New Zealand Cross was to be conferred on him. The minute-book of the troop has been in my possession almost continuously since November, 1869, and is the book marked "A," exhibited by me, and is, as far as I am aware, and believe, the only book used for recording the proceedings of the troop. George Leaning, who is in a testimonial produced by Mr. Wrigg in support of his claim, was never a member of the troop, as he describes himself.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of "The Justices of the Peace Act, 1882."

J. F. CONNELLY.

Declared at Auckland, this 26th day of September, 1898, before me—H. Rees George, a Justice of the Peace in and for the Colony of New Zealand.

I, *Benjamin F. J. Edwards*, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows: In the years 1866 to 1869 I was acting interpreter to Lieut.-Colonel Lyon, officer commanding the Opotiki Expeditionary Force at Opotiki, and afterwards to Major St. John, who succeeded Lieut.-Colonel Lyon in the command, and finally with Major W. Mair, now Judge of the Native Land Court, who assumed command when Major St. John left Opotiki. I was also in charge of the Native allies as sergeant-major on expeditions up the Opotiki gorges and into the Urewera country. I recollect the time—26th June, 1867—when the late Bennett White, a storekeeper of Opotiki, and a Native mailman named Wi Popata, were murdered on the sea-beach at Waiotahi, some four or five miles from Opotiki, by the Hauhaus under Te Maikoha; when some friendly Natives from Whakatane brought in the news that they saw the dead bodies of White and Wi Popata lying on the beach late in the evening (27th June, 1867). The next day Major St. John mustered the field force and we proceeded to the scene of the murder, accompanied by White's Maori wife and some other Natives. I think some of the Bay of Plenty Cavalry went out with us; but I am not quite sure if Mr. Wrigg went with them; I know he was a cornet in the B.P.C. at the time. After searching about for some time the Natives discovered White's head amongst a lot of seadrift. The bodies had been carried away by the ebb-tide during the night, and were only recovered some time afterwards some miles down the coast towards Whakatane. After scouring the country for some distance inland, and traces of the enemy could be plainly tracked for some distance, but we failed to come up to them, so we returned to Opotiki, Mrs. White carrying her dead husband's head in a handkerchief, and it was buried in the churchyard. I remember that two or three days after this Trooper McDonald, of the B.P. Cavalry, being sent to Tauranga with despatches by Major St. John, to the officer commanding at Tauranga, Lieut.-Colonel Harington, I think. Trooper McDonald was about to be married, but as there was no minister at Opotiki his intended wife accompanied him, and some of his comrades of the B.P.C. escorted them as far as Ohiwa to get them beyond the most dangerous part of the beach; once across the Ohiwa Harbour they were in a friendly country, as friendly Natives lived along the coast at Ohope, Whakatane, Matata, and Maketu, and on to Tauranga. It was on this occasion that Mr. H. Wrigg is said to have carried Major St. John's despatches to the officer commanding at Tauranga, Lieut.-Colonel Harington, through most dangerous country infested with Hauhaus. I give this a flat denial. He did not carry the despatches, nor was there any danger along the coast, except that between Opotiki and Ohiwa, a distance of about six or seven miles. He was not long in the B.P. Cavalry when he resigned and left Opotiki. I may state here that about a week or so after McDonald was sent to Tauranga, Major St. John mustered the field force, and we made a night march from Opotiki, and up the Wainana Valley we suddenly came upon the Hauhaus in their camp, early in the morning. The result was four of them were killed and three wounded; the rest of them retreated precipitately into the bush. We had one man wounded in this brush. This victory was considered by the friendly Natives a good *utu* for the murder of B. White and his companion. We returned to Opotiki the same day, carrying our wounded man with us. This ended the expeditions over this affair. Mr. Wrigg was not with us on this occasion, nor at any other time that I can remember. I now say that Mr. H. Wrigg never went through the enemy's country for ninety miles carrying despatches, as he claims to have done. It was McDonald who took the despatches, and Wrigg only volunteered to go with him; and the only dangerous part, as I said before, was between Opotiki and Ohiwa, and then they were escorted by their comrades through the most dangerous part of the beach, a distance of six or seven miles. I do not think I ever saw Mr. Wrigg after that. It is now thirty years since the affair took place, and it is a very long time to remember everything that took place then; but I am certain of this: Mr. Wrigg was never intrusted with Major St. John's despatches. He simply accompanied McDonald, who carried the despatches to Tauranga.