

back to Opotiki, and yet be in time to have gone out with the expedition to fetch Moore's and Beggs' bodies in?—They could not have gone out that day.

366. Did they have time to go to Tauranga and get back to Opotiki before the detachment went out to fetch in the bodies of Moore and Beggs?—That I could not say.

367. You reckon it was about a week. Then, they would have had plenty of time. They would have had time to return to Tauranga then before they went out for the bodies?—Yes.

368. Mr. Wrigg said he started out at once to fetch in the bodies of Moore and Beggs?—That could not have been so.

369. You did not know what time he returned?—No.

370. He may have returned before the detachment went out. You left in the morning, and you say it is not possible for you to have missed him on the beach?—It is not possible.

371. In crossing the rivers you might have missed him?—If he had taken the top crossing and we took Wilson's Crossing, we would have missed him then.

372. It is possible you may have missed him?—Yes.

373. Have you been in communication with anybody else except Captain Mair in this matter?—No, I have not.

374. You have not been rushing into print with letters?—No.

*Mr. Hutchison:* I want to read to you this declaration, Mr. Wood, and I want you to say whether it is correct or not: "I, Albert Wood, of the Thames, in the Provincial District of Auckland, miner, do solemnly and sincerely declare that I remember well all the circumstances connected with the murder of Bennett White and the mailman in June, 1867. I was one of the troopers—about twenty-five or thirty in number—who were sent out to search for the bodies. When we reached the scene of the murder it was then too late to do anything, so we took cover in the scrub at Waiwhakatoitoi, keeping our horses bridled and saddled."

*Witness:* No; the saddles were off.

375. *Mr. Hutchison.*] You say that is not correct—that the saddles were off?—Yes.

376. The declaration continues as follows: "and tethered to our legs, and remained in perfect silence throughout the night, neither lighting our pipes nor making fires. The next morning we searched for bodies, but only Bennett White's head was found, and the carcass of the mailman's horse. The main body of our men followed the enemy's trail a long distance inland, while Lieutenant Thompson, myself, and two others went to Ohiwa with a Native woman—Ramari te Wai—and a young woman and boy. Then, we went up to the tableland to warn a surveyor's hand who was working there. We then returned to Opotiki, long after the main body had got back. The same evening it was arranged that Trooper McDonald was to go to Tauranga with despatches. He particularly wanted to go on urgent private business; also to do something for his brother-in-law, Angus Smith, who then kept the store. Mr. H. Wrigg wished to go too, as he had to transact some business and get tracings, &c., for Mr. Gwynneth, at the Survey Office, Tauranga. I begged my commanding officer to let me go, but as he said the two others had special reasons for going, I would have to give way. There was no honour attached to going, neither was there any danger, and every man in the troop would have been glad of the chance of going. In my opinion, Mr. Wrigg was less entitled to special honour than any man in the whole Force, for he had done nothing whatever to deserve it. And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of 'The Justices of the Peace Act, 1882.'—ALBERT WOOD. Declared at Thames, this 23rd day of September, 1898, before me, James Finlay, a Justice of the Peace in and for the Colony of New Zealand."—Yes, that is right.

377. Is it correct, with one exception, that the horses were not saddled?—"Mr. Wrigg" ought to be added, in front of the word "McDonald."

378. When it was sent you, you considered it was substantially correct?—Yes.

379. With the exception that the horses were unsaddled, instead of saddled, and that Cornet Wrigg's name should have been before Trooper McDonald's, it is correct?—Yes.

380. *Mr. Wilford.*] You say here, "that Mr. Wrigg had to transact some business, and get tracings, &c., for Mr. Gwynneth at the Survey Office, Tauranga." Who told you that—Lieutenant Thompson?—That is the put-off I got when I wanted to go.

381. You say Mr. Wrigg was less entitled to honour than any man in the Force because he was no time in the Force, and did very little work while he was in it. Is that your suggestion or Major Mair's?—That is my own.

382. The question about Trooper McDonald's and Wrigg's name is not your own?—No.

383. And the question about the saddle is not your own?—No.

384. *Mr. Hutchison.*] One name should be in front of the other?—They always put an officer in front of the man.

385. *Mr. Field.*] You recollect the missing, or the alarm concerning the men Moore and Beggs?—Yes.

386. Do you recollect the alarm coming into camp?—Yes.

387. How long before or after the murder on the beach was that?—It was before the murder on the beach, but I cannot say how long.

388. You say that you lived with Lieutenant Thompson, I think?—Yes.

389. He was the lieutenant of your troop?—Yes.

390. I suppose on that account you were kept pretty intimately acquainted with what was going on?—Yes.

391. Had it been usual previous to the murder of Bennett White for men to ride along that beach in ones and twos, either troopers or civilians?—It was a common practice.

392. Had any of your troop been up the beach previous to this occasion?—Yes; we had been looking at our land previous to that, I believe. In company we had been along the beach times out of number.

393. I am asking whether or not you had been along the beach?—Oh, yes. It was thought nothing of. When I went up on this land to warn those men to come down, and tell them