

EXHIBIT No. 16A.

SIR,—

Napier, 26th August, 1897.

By an Order in Council of the 10th March, 1869, the distinction (the New Zealand Cross) shall "not be claimed by any individual on his own account, but the claim must be made by the Commanding Officer of the Force or district."

In accordance with this order (Colonel St. John, then commanding the district at Opotiki, being since deceased), it affords me great pleasure to recommend Mr. Harry Wrigg, late cornet, Bay of Plenty Volunteer Cavalry, to be a recipient of this highly coveted distinction, to which, in my opinion, he is fully entitled, for his act of bravery in voluntarily carrying despatches from Opotiki to Tauranga (and returning), through a country swarming with hostile Natives, along a route where only the day before they had murdered two old settlers (Mr. Bennett White and the mailman, whose name I forget), and at a time when the rivers were in high flood and exceedingly dangerous to cross.

Strictly speaking, perhaps, I should not be now making this application, as I was not "the Commanding Officer of the Force or district," but I was District Adjutant (through whom all orders were issued), and I am quite certain that had the late Colonel St. John been alive he would have made every effort to obtain the decoration for Mr. Wrigg. It may be said also that the claim should have been made before; but I respectfully submit amongst others, as a precedent, that Colonel McDonnell received his Cross in 1886 for an act of bravery in 1863, or twenty-three years after. A perusal of the accompanying documents will, I feel sure, enable you to strongly recommend Mr. Wrigg's claim to His Excellency the Governor's most favourable consideration.

I have, &c.,

M. N. BOWER,

Late District Adjutant, Opotiki.

Hon. T. Thompson, Defence Minister, Wellington.

EXHIBIT No. 17.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER from Mr. H. Wrigg to Captain Bower.

(Private.)

Frogmore House, Symonds Street,

MY DEAR CAPTAIN BOWER,—

Auckland, 31st August, 1897.

I am just off a sick bed, and was able to go down to interview the Defence Minister to-day, Sir Maurice O'Rorke having very kindly offered to make an appointment, and went with me to see him. I must tell you that I sent a type copy of all the correspondence to a very old and true friend of mine in Wellington—Sir Osborne Gibbes, Bart.—and asked him to see Sir Arthur Douglas (another baronet), the present Under-Secretary for Defence, and I enclose you his reply, which you can destroy when read. Seeing the real difficulty that might perchance occur, I thought it better to make an additional statement, a copy of which I enclose for your information, and after explaining matters to the Minister hand him the same, which I did. He told me he had not as yet seen my papers or your recommendation, but that he would on his return to Wellington look into the matter, as of course as the case stood he could not give an opinion, but that several who had seen the papers had spoken to him. So the case stands, and I presume you will be the first that will have an official reply. I was in doubts whether I would again trouble you after so much kindness upon your part, but after a little consideration thought it better to let you know. Never mind replying to this, it will be time enough when you hear from Wellington.

Believe me, &c.,

HARRY WRIGG.

EXHIBIT No. 24.

SIR,—

27th September, 1897.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo advancing the claims of Mr. Harry Wrigg, late cornet in the Bay of Plenty Volunteer Cavalry, for the decoration of the New Zealand Cross for services rendered by him on the 29th June, 1867.

In reply, I am directed to inform you that the Government has decided, after full consideration of the question, that the list of recipients of the New Zealand Cross for the Native wars in this colony must be considered as closed, and that they are unable therefore to make the recommendation you ask for.

I have, &c.,

ARTHUR P. DOUGLAS, Major,

Under-Secretary for Defence.

Captain M. N. Bower, Town Clerk, Napier.

EXHIBIT No. 18.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER from Mr. H. Wrigg to Captain Bower.

Frogmore House, Symonds Street,

MY DEAR CAPTAIN BOWER,—

Auckland, 30th September, 1897.

I suppose you will wonder why I have not communicated with you sooner re Cross, but, to tell you the truth, the matter is not finally finished yet. I have all the Auckland members still fighting for me, as you will see by enclosed note I received from Hon. Jennings.

Believe me, &c.,

HARRY WRIGG.