

## EXHIBIT No. 10.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM Captain BOWER to Mr. H. Wrigg.

DEAR WRI GG,—

Town Clerk's Office, Napier, 9th March, 1898.

I saw by the *Auckland Herald* that you had at last been awarded the "Cross," and, although I have not been communicated with, and only learnt it by seeing it in the newspaper, you must accept my most hearty congratulations not only that your brave action should be duly recognised, but that your unceasing efforts since have met with the success they deserve. . . .

Yours, &amp;c.,

M. N. BOWER.

## EXHIBIT No. 26.

SIR,—

Palmerston North, 24th March, 1898.

I have the honour to state that I have heard with surprise that it is the intention of the Government to award the decoration of the New Zealand Cross (which is the equivalent of the Victoria Cross) to one Harry Wrigg for some supposed act of valour for carrying despatches between Opotiki and Tauranga in the year 1867.

I would most respectfully request that you may make every possible inquiry into this matter, and that the Government should pause before degrading this honourable military order by awarding it lightly for services which do not want so high a distinction.

I submit that had the services rendered by this gentleman been of such a nature as to warrant any special commendation, he would have been recommended for special favour by the officers in command in their despatches to the Government at the time; also that the New Zealand Cross or Victoria Cross would not be recommended by any military commanding officer unless the special act of bravery took place under fire, the mere carrying of despatches where there was a possibility of being fired at by the enemy would not justify the award of the order. If this were the case the Victoria Cross in the Imperial Army would become a very common and worthless order.

Had the services of this gentleman been of the nature which would justify his being recommended for special distinction by the commanding officer his name would have been well known amongst the colonial forces.

There is no doubt there are officers and men both in the New Zealand Forces and Imperial Army who have done acts of valour under fire which would justify the award of the New Zealand Cross or Victoria Cross. I do not think, however, that there is a single instance on record of the Victoria Cross having been awarded after a lapse of thirty years.

In conclusion, I would again urge that this honourable decoration should not be rendered valueless by being given for any service except conspicuous bravery in the field, such as carrying a wounded comrade under fire, leading a forlorn hope, or some act which would inspire men with confidence when wavering in an attack on the enemy, or covering a retreat when under fire.

I have, &amp;c.,

GEORGE PREECE, Capt., N.Z.M., N.Z.C.

The Honourable the Defence Minister, Wellington.

## EXHIBIT No. 23.

DEAR PREECE,—

Napier, 20th April, 1898.

I would have replied to your note of the 24th ultimo long before this, but I have been so fearfully busy (yearly balance) that I could not do so. *Re* Wrigg's Cross, I remember all about it, and what's more I am to blame for his getting it. He wrote asking me to apply for him as St. John was dead, and he (Wrigg) according to the regulations could not apply himself. As I was district adjutant at Opotiki at the time and remembered the circumstance, I wrote to the Defence Office just stating the bare facts, and telling him at the same time that he had no more chance of getting it than I had. However, as you know, he did get it, or rather it is awarded him—which, I suppose, is much the same thing. Perhaps he deserved it, and perhaps he didn't any more than poor old "Paul-up-a-Tree," who when he really was in a funk had the pluck to let every one see it. Peace to his ashes! You have already got the "hang" of the thing, so I need not dwell on this infernal subject any more. I told them at home I was going to write, and they both wish to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Preece, in which I cordially join, and remain,

G. A. Preece, Esq., Palmerston North.

Thine,

M. N. BOWER.

## EXHIBIT No. 20.

Captain Bower, Napier.

Auckland, 27th June, 1898.

PARLIAMENTARY gossip to-night's *Star* says New Zealand Cross likely to be warmly debated. It is stated that Captain Bower who recommended Cross has recently admitted in a letter to Captain Preece that he regretted his action. Reply paid.

HARRY WRI GG.

## EXHIBIT No. 12.

TELEGRAM from Mr. H. WRI GG to Captain BOWER, and Reply.

To Captain Bower, Napier.

Auckland, 28th June, 1898.

SURELY your letter did not imply that I had not earned the Cross. Placed now in most awkward position.

HARRY WRI GG.

To Harry Wrigg, Auckland.

Napier, 28th June, 1898.

CERTAINLY not.

M. N. BOWER.