

our Empire, under the same terms and conditions as those on which it is granted to officers in our Volunteer Force by our Royal Warrant of the twenty-fifth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, except that in the case of India eighteen years' service shall be the qualifying period: Provided always that the power of conferring the decoration upon an officer, or of removing the name of an officer from the registry of individuals upon whom the said decoration shall have been conferred, shall be exercised on our behalf, with the same force as if exercised by us, by the Governor-General of India, the Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada, or by the Governor of the colony or dependency, according as such officer shall have served in a Volunteer Force of India or of such colony or dependency, and the name of an officer so granted the decoration or removed from the registry shall be published in the official gazette of India or of the said colony or dependency as the case may be.

And we do further ordain that officers who have given qualifying service in the Volunteer Forces of any portion of our Empire shall be entitled to reckon such service as part of the qualifying service required for this decoration.

And we reserve to ourself, our heirs and successors, full power of altering, annulling, abrogating, augmenting, interpreting, or dispensing with these regulations, or any part thereof, by a notification under the Royal Sign-manual.

Given at our Court at Balmoral, this twenty-fourth day of May, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four, in the fifty-seventh year of our reign.

By Her Majesty's command.

H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

War Office, 29th July, 1892.

THE VOLUNTEER OFFICERS' DECORATION WARRANT.

Victoria R.

VICTORIA, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith. To all to whom these presents shall come, greeting:

Whereas it is our Royal desire to reward the long and meritorious services of officers of proved capacity in our Volunteer Force:

Now, for the purpose of attaining this end, we have instituted, constituted, and created, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do institute, constitute, and create a new decoration, which we are desirous should be highly prized by the officers of our Volunteer Force; and we are graciously pleased to make, ordain, and establish the following rules and ordinances for the government of the same, which shall from henceforth be observed and kept:—

Firstly, it is ordained that the decoration shall be styled and designated "The Volunteer Officers' Decoration," and shall consist of an oak wreath in silver tied with gold, having in the centre the Royal cipher and crown in gold.

Secondly, it is ordained that the decoration shall be suspended from the left breast by a green riband of one inch and a half in width from a silver oak bar-brooch.

Thirdly, it is ordained that the decoration may be worn by us, our heirs and successors, Kings and Queens regnant of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and it shall be competent for us, our heirs and successors, to confer the decoration upon any of the Princes of the Royal Family of Great Britain and Ireland.

Fourthly, it is ordained that no person shall be eligible for this decoration, nor be nominated thereto, unless he is or was a commissioned officer, and has served twenty years in our Volunteer Force, is recommended by the commanding officer of the corps in which he has served, and is duly certified by the district military authorities in which the corps is located as having been an efficient and thoroughly capable officer, in every way deserving of such a decoration: Provided, nevertheless, and we do hereby declare, that half of any time during which an officer of our Volunteer Force may have served in the ranks of our said Force shall reckon as qualifying service towards the twenty years required as aforesaid.

Fifthly, it is ordained that the names of those upon whom we may be pleased to confer the decoration shall be published in the *London Gazette*, and a registry thereof kept in the office of our Principal Secretary of State for War.

Sixthly, in order to make such additional provision as shall effectually preserve pure this most honourable distinction, it is ordained that if any person on whom it shall be conferred be convicted of any act derogatory to his honour as an officer and gentleman, his name shall forthwith be erased from the registry of individuals upon whom the said decoration shall have been conferred by an order from us under our Royal Sign-manual, and a notification thereof shall be duly published in the *London Gazette*.

Lastly, we reserve to ourselves, our heirs and successors, full power of annulling, altering, abrogating, augmenting, interpreting, or dispensing with these regulations, or any part thereof, by a notification under our Royal Sign-manual.

Given at our Court at Osborne, the twenty-fifth day of July, in the fifty-sixth year of our reign, and in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two.

By Her Majesty's command.

EDWARD STANHOPE.

No. 4.

(No. 27.)

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 22nd June, 1894.

I have the honour to transmit to you, for the consideration of your Ministers, a copy of a letter from the Office of Irish Fisheries, inquiring whether