

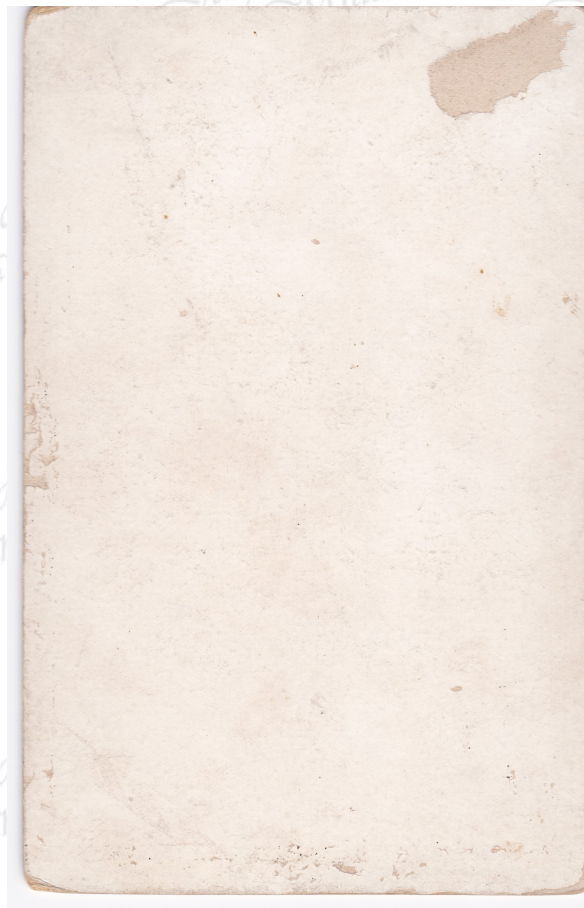
A SCARCE VICTORIA CROSS CABINET CARD OF COLONEL-SERGEANT WILLIAM GARDNER. WHO WAS AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS FOR ACTIONS DURING THE INDIAN MUTINY AT BAREILLY IN WHICH HE SAVED THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CAMERON



“For his conspicuous and gallant conduct on the morning of the 5th of May last, in having saved the life of Lieutenant-Colonel Cameron, his Commanding Officer, who during the action at Bareilly on that day, had been knocked from his horse, when three Fanatics rushed upon him. Colour-Sergeant Gardner ran out, and in a moment bayoneted two of them, and was in the act of attacking the third, when he was shot down by another soldier of the Regiment.”

William Gardner (1821-1897) was born in Nemphlar, Lanarkshire on 3rd March 1821. He joined the 42nd Regiment of Foot (later The Black Watch) and took part in the Crimean War, where he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. He was then posted to the Indian Mutiny, where on the 5th May 1858, he would perform the act of gallantry at Bareilly which would earn him the Victoria Cross.

The British had advanced to within 5 miles of the city, when a party of about 360 Ghazis made a furious charge. Sir Colin Campbell gave orders for the 42nd to close ranks and use their bayonets. The Ghazis charge was furious and not easily repelled, dodging the bayonets and cutting the men's legs. At this point, Colonel Cameron was pulled from his horse by a Ghazi, who leaped up and seized him by the collar while he was enraged with another on the other side. His life was then saved by Colour Sergeant Gardner, who seized an enemy's tulwar and rushed to the colonel's assistance, he cut off the Ghazi's head. General Walpole was also pulled off his horse and received two sword cuts, but was rescued by the bayonets of the 42nd.



Gardner was recommended for the VC and was gazetted on 23rd August 1858. The only record of his receipt of the medal was that it happened in India in 1859. After a distinguished career in the Army, he retired back to his native Scotland. He died on 24th October 1897 at Bothwell, Lanarkshire and was buried in Bothwell Park Cemetery. In 2008, his VC and other campaign medals were sold by Dr David Gardner, his great-grandson to the Ashcroft Collection for £135,000. The money was then donated to several local charities for ex-servicemen.

LOCATION OF MEDAL: LORD ASHCROFT GALLERY, IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM.

BURIAL PLACE: BOTHWELL PARK CEMETERY, BOTHWELL, STRATHCLYDE.
SECTION A, LAIR 1532/3

The above taken from the fine vconline website:

<http://www.vconline.org.uk/william-gardner-vc/4586759116.html>

A scarce original period VC recipient VC Cabinet Card