

**A SCARCE VICTORIA CROSS CARTES DE VISITE OF LIEUTENANT CHARLES GEORGE BAKER AND COLONEL SWIRE BAKER WHO WAS AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS FOR ACTIONS DURING THE INDIAN MUTINY AND AN ATTACK ON THE REBELS AT SUHEJNEE IN WHICH HE LEAD A CAVALRY ATTACK WHICH DROVE THE ENEMY OUT**

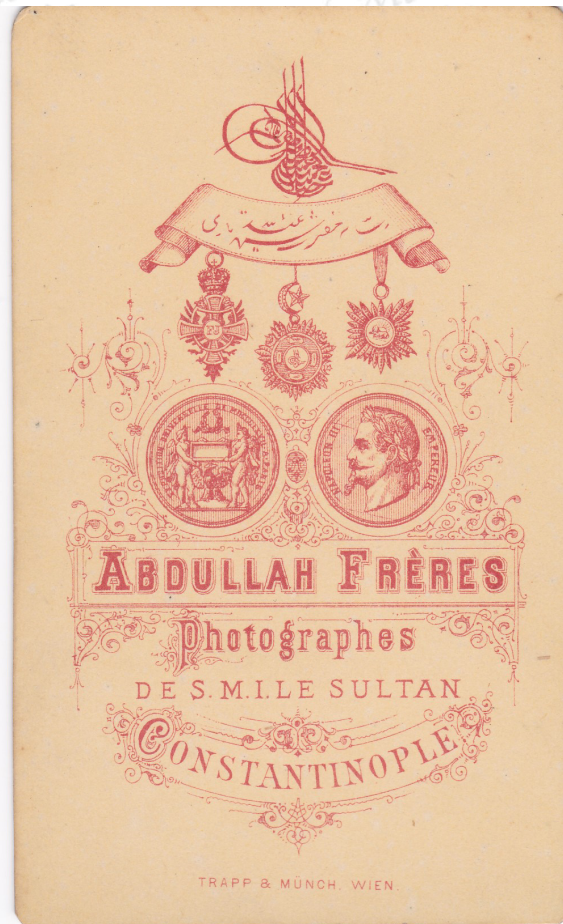


*“For gallant conduct on the occasion of an attack on the rebels at Suhejnee, near Peroo, on the 27th September, 1858, which is thus described in this officer's own words. The enemy advanced. Without exchanging a shot, I at once retired slowly, followed up steadily by the rebel line for 100 yards clear of village or jungle, when, suddenly wheeling about my divisions into line, with a hearty cheer, we charged into and through the centre of the enemy's line, Lieutenant Broughton, with his detachment, immediately following up the movement, with excellent effect, from his position upon the enemy's left. The rebel right wing, of about 300 men, broke at once, but the centre and left, observing the great labour of the horses in*

*crossing the heavy ground, stood, and receiving the charge with repeated volleys, were cut down, or broke only a few yards ahead of the cavalry. From this moment, the pursuit was limited to the strongest and best horses of the force, numbering some 60 of all ranks, who, dashing into and swimming a deep and wide nullah, followed the flying enemy through the village of Russowlee, and its sugar-cane khets, over two miles of swamp, and 500 yards into the thick jungles near Perob, when, both men and horses being completely exhausted, I sounded the halt and assembly, and, collected my wounded, returned to camp at Munjhaen about 6PM.â€ The charge ended in the utter defeat of the enemy, -and is referred to by Lord Clyde as adeserving of the highest encomium, on account both of conception and execution”*

Charles George Baker (1830-1906) was born on 8th December 1830 in Noacolly, Bengal, India, and led a very adventurous and unusual life, which began with service at sea. He was employed by the P & O Company who conferred on him a testimonial for his part in the rescue of the passengers and crew of the SS Duro in 1854, which was wrecked on a shoal off the Paracel Island in the South China Sea. Accompanied by six other volunteers, Baker made a perilous voyage of over 500 miles in an open boat to fetch help. Short of water and food, they had to contend with heavy seas and the threat of Chinese pirates until they reached safety.

Charles Baker was commissioned in the Bengal Military Police in 1856 and in 1858 was involved in mopping up operations in West Behar with the irregular horsemen of Rattray’s Sikhs. He was recommended for the VC, which was published on 25th February 1862.



On 27th September 1858, at Suhejnee, the enemy had advanced with a strength of 900 to 1,000. Without exchanging a shot, Baker retired slowly, followed up steadily by a rebel line for 100 yards clear of the village, when suddenly he wheeled around his divisions and led a charge into and through the centre of the enemy's line. Lieutenant Broughton, with his detachment, immediately followed up Baker's move, with great effect, from his position on the left. The enemy's right wing, of about 300 men, broke at once, but centre and left, observing the great labour of the horses in crossing the heavy ground, stood, and receiving the charge with repeated volleys of fire, were cut down or broke only a few yards ahead of the cavalry. From this moment the pursuit was limited to the strongest and best horses of the force, numbering some 60 of all ranks, who, dashing into and swimming a deep, wide nullah, followed the flying enemy through the village of Russowlee and its sugar cane khets, over two miles of swamp, and 500 yards into the thick jungles near Peroo, when, both men and horses being completely exhausted, Baker called the halt and assembled the men, and collected the wounded before returning to camp at Munjhaen.

His action was later described by Sir Colin Campbell as "having been as gallant as any during the war." Promoted to Deputy Inspecting General of Police, Baker received his VC by registered post. He retired in 1863 on health grounds, but in 1877 he joined the Turkish Imperial Ottoman Gendarmerie during the war between Turkey and Russia.

He was captured by the Russians in the Balkans and spent some time in captivity. In 1882, he transferred to the Egyptian police force and retired in 1885 as Chief Secretary with the Ministry of the Interior with the rank of major-general. He returned to England and died on 19th February 1906 in Sherborne, Dorset. He was buried in Christchurch Cemetery, Christchurch, Dorset. His medals are not publicly held.

LOCATION OF MEDAL: NOT PUBLICLY HELD. BURIAL PLACE: CHRISTCHURCH CEMETERY, CHRISTCHURCH, DORSET.

The above taken from the fine vconline website:

<http://www.vconline.org.uk/charles-g-baker-vc/4585939767.html>

A scarce original period VC recipient VC CDV