

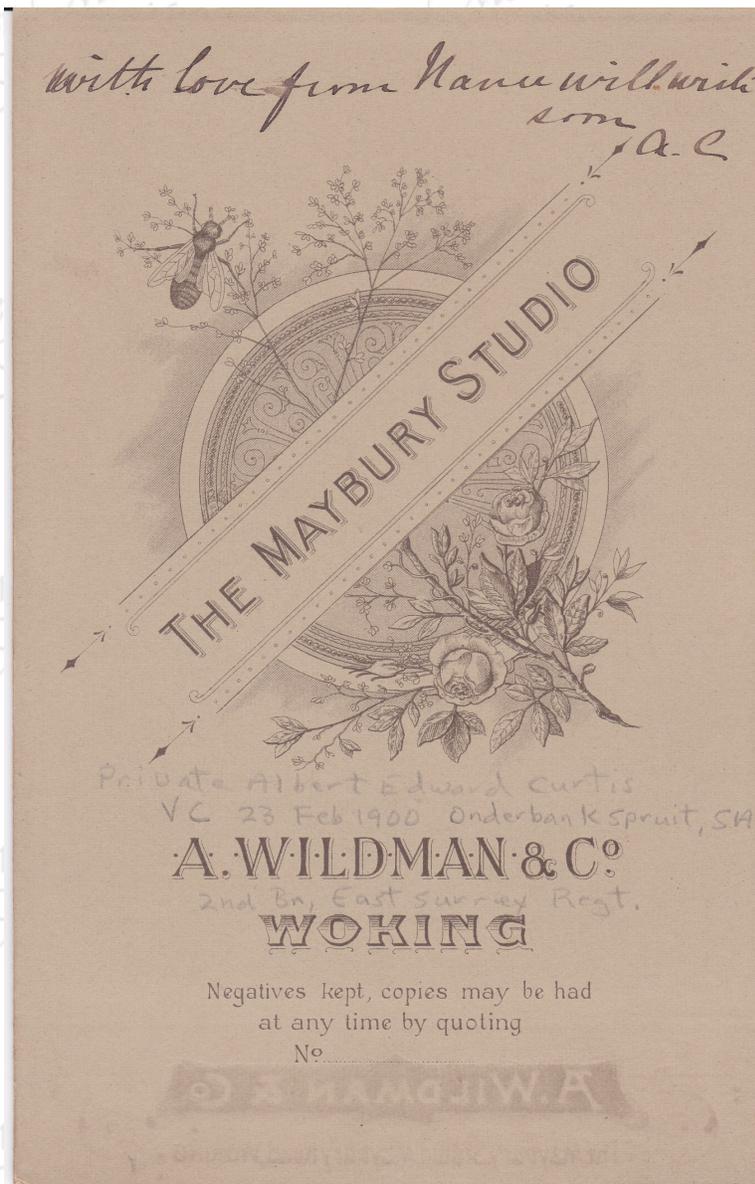
**A SCARCE VICTORIA CROSS CABINET CART OF PRIVATE ALBERT EDWARD CURTIS WHO WAS AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS FOR ACTIONS DURING THE SECOND BOER WAR AT ONDERBANK SPRUIT, IN WHICH HE RESCUED WOUNDED COLONEL HARRIS AND CARRIED HIM OUT OF THE LINE OF FIRE WITH PRIVATE MORTON.**



*“On the 23rd February, 1900, Colonel Harris lay all day long in a perfectly open space under close fire of a Boer breastwork. The Boers fired all day at any man who moved, and Colonel Harris was wounded eight or nine times. Private Curtis, after several attempts succeeded in reaching the Colonel, bound his wounded arm, and gave him his flask — all under heavy fire. He then tried to carry him away, but was unable, on which he called for assistance, and Private Morton came out at once. Fearing that the men would be killed; Colonel Harris told them to leave him, but they declined, and after trying to carry the Colonel on their rifles, they made a chair with their hands, and so carried him out of fire”*

Albert Edward Curtis (1866-1940) was born on 6th January 1866 at Guildford, Surrey. He began his military career in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders but sometime during 1893 transferred to the East Surrey Regiment. In 1899, he was with his Regiment when they embarked for South Africa for the Second Boer War.

On the 23rd February, 1900 at Onderbank Spruit, Colonel Harris lay all day long in a perfectly open space under close fire of a Boer breastwork. The Boers fired all day at any man who moved, and Colonel Harris was wounded eight or nine times. Private Curtis, after several attempts succeeded in reaching the Colonel, bound his wounded arm, and gave him his flask — all under heavy fire. He then tried to carry him away, but was unable, on which he called for assistance, and Private Morton came out at once. Fearing that the men would be killed; Colonel Harris told them to leave him, but they declined, and after trying to carry the Colonel on their rifles, they made a chair with their hands, and so carried him out of fire.



Curtis was gazetted for the VC on 15th January 1901 and was invested with his Victoria Cross by HRH The Duke of York (the future King George V) at Pietermaritzburg on the 14th

August 1901. He was also awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with 5 clasps, and the King's South Africa Medal with two clasps. He was promoted to Sergeant before he left the service. Following his army service, Albert Curtis became a Yeoman Warder on 30th May 1910, aged 44. As a Yeoman Warder he lived with his wife Annie in accommodation in the Martin Tower and retired to the Supernumerary List on 1st November 1931. He died on 18th March 1940 at his home in Chipping Barnet.

Curtis was buried in an unmarked grave in Bells Hill Cemetery, and this remained the case for nearly 60 years when in February 2000, following the work of a local pensioner, Dave Tomlins, after locating the grave, a new headstone was placed. The event was attended by amongst others, Lieutenant Colonel Eric Wilson VC, and Colonel Stuart Archer GC. His medals were auctioned by Spinks in October 2000, and realised a hammer price of £40,000 and were obtained by the Ashcroft Trust, and are now displayed in the Imperial War Museum.

LOCATION OF MEDAL: LORD ASHCROFT GALLERY, IW MUSEUM.

BURIAL PLACE: BELLS HILL CEMETERY, BARNET, LONDON. PLOT 435, GRAVE B5

The above taken from the fine vconline website:

<http://www.vconline.org.uk/albert-e-curtis-vc/4586317456.html>

A scarce original period VC recipient VC Cabinet Card. Measures 16.8 x 10.8cm