

**A SCARCE VICTORIA CROSS PHOTOPGRAPH OF MR ROSS LOWIS MANGLES,
BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE VOLUNTEERS, AND HIS WIFE. AWARDED THE
VICTORIA CROSS FOR ACTIONS DURING THE INDIAN MUTINY AT ARRA**



Ross Mangles Jun^r & his Wife.

Ross Lewis Mangles (1833-1905) was born in Calcutta, India on 14th April 1833, the son of R.D. Mangles, a member of the Bengal Civil Service, and after his retirement MP for Guildford, and a Director of the Old East India Company). He was educated at Windlesham House School (1842-1843), Bath Grammar School (1843-1851), and at Haileybury College (1851-1852), entering the Bengal Civil Service in 1853. In 1857 he was Assistant Magistrate

at Patna, accompanying the 45th (Rattray's) Sikhs in quelling a disturbance in Patna City, subsequently joining the Arrah Relief Force as a volunteer.

Fifteen Europeans and fifty of Rattray's Sikhs were holding out in Arrah against 4,000 mutineers. The Relief Force fell into an ambush on the night of 29th July 1857, and lost 300 of the 450 men. A retreat was made next morning under heavy fire from the Sepoys. At the first attack, Mangles was wounded, but regardless of that, he helped the surgeon to look after the injured men, and fetched water for them. Later, during the assault, Richard Taylor, of the 37th Regiment, implored Mangles not to leave him when he was wounded. Under a hail of enemy fire, he bound up Taylor's wounds, and carried him six miles over swampy ground to safety.

Taylor told the story to the surgeon treating him, who in turn, told Sir James Outram. Outram later told Lord Canning, and the decision was made to award Mangles the Victoria Cross. At the time, civilians were not included in the warrant, so following Lord Canning's request to London that Mangles and William McDonell (another civilian) should be awarded the VC, and the amendment was passed on 10th August 1858. He was gazetted on 6th July 1859, becoming the first civilian to be awarded the VC. Mangles received his VC from Queen Victoria on 4th January 1860 at Windsor Castle. He was able to attend the investiture as he was on extended sick leave from India.

Mangles retired back to England after returning to India for a time. He lived in the village of Pirbright in Surrey, where he died aged 71 on 28th February 1905. He was laid to rest in Brookwood Cemetery, and the grave was restored in 2006 by Pankhurst Graphic Masonry of Woking.

Original 14.8 x 11 cm photograph, pasted onto paper backing. Presumably removed from old album. The above taken from the fine vconline website:

<http://www.vconline.org.uk/ross-l-mangles-vc/4587508043.html>

A scarce original period VC recipient VC photograph