

THE OUTSTANDING 'SCOTS GREYS' VICTORIA CROSS RELATED WATERLOO AND CRIMEAN WAR FAMILY GROUP. THE FATHER, A CORPORAL BEING SEVERELY WOUNDED DURING THE FAMED CHARGE OF THE UNION BRIGADE AT WATERLOO, HIS SON A PRIVATE, LOST A LEG WITH THE GREYS AT BALAKLAVA, CHARGING WITH THE HEAVY BRIGADE, HIS LIFE BEING SAVED BY A SERGEANT WHO WAS AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS AS A DIRECT RESULT. ADDITIONALLY, HIS GRANDSON'S MEDAL FOR SERVICE WITH THE IMPERIAL YEOMANRY IN THE BOER WAR



1) WATERLOO 1815 'CORP. ALEXANDER GARDNER, 2ND OR R.N. BRIT. REG. DRAG.', fitted with original steel clip and straight bar suspension, contact marks and couple of EK's, attractive patina, original ribbon, NVF

2) CRIMEA 1854-55, 2 CLASPS, BALAKLAVA, SEBASTOPOL 'PTE. A. D. GARDINER, 2D DRGNS.' officially engraved naming by Hunt & Roskell as per roll; TURKISH CRIMEA, BRITISH ISSUE, UNNAMED AS ISSUED, fitted with small rings for suspension, unofficial rivets between clasps (Sebastopol clasp issued separately), small EK to first, attractive patina, original ribbon, GVF

3) QUEEN'S SOUTH AFRICA 1899-1902, 2 CLASPS, CAPE COLONY, SOUTH AFRICA 1902 '38905 PTE. W. E. GARDINER, 32ND BN: IMP: YEO:', attractive patina, original ribbon, GVF

ALEXANDER GARDINER

Alexander Gardiner was born at New Kilpatrick, Dunbarton, Scotland, circa 1794, and enlisted for the 2nd Dragoons at Glasgow on 25 January 1809, aged 15 years. Promoted to Corporal in April 1815, he served at Waterloo in Captain Poole's Troop and was severely wounded during the battle in which the regiment covered itself in glory. Musters show Gardiner remained in hospital in Brussels until at least late September 1815. Of the 2 officers and 70 men in Poole's troop, 37 became casualties; both officers were wounded, 18 men were killed, and 17 wounded, 2 of these dying of their wounds.

Recovering from his wounds, Gardiner was promoted to Sergeant in August 1818, and to Troop Sergeant-Major in January 1826. He was, however, reduced to Private from November 1829 until February 1830, when he was restored to the rank of Sergeant. He was discharged at Dalkeith on 5

May 1835, aged 41, intending to reside at Oswestry, Salop. Having moved to Oswestry, Gardiner enlisted into the staff of the North Salopian (later Shropshire) Yeomanry Cavalry, serving with them for many years. He died at Llwynymen, Oswestry on June 1848. The local newspaper, Eddowes's Journal and General Advertiser for Shropshire, and the Principality of Wales, carried a lengthy report on Wednesday 28 June covering the *'Funeral of the late Sergeant-Major Gardiner, late of the Scots Greys.'* He was buried with full military honours, with an escort being provided by the North Shropshire Yeomanry. *'The late Sergeant-Major,'* the report concluded, *'served in the Greys twenty five years, was with that fine regiment at Waterloo, and has now three sons in its ranks, the eldest of whom is a corporal, and all respected by their commanding officers.'* No less than 4,000 people lined the route of his hearse to pay their respects, with three rounds being fired over the grave by the soldiers present:

OSWESTRY.

FUNERAL OF THE LATE SERGEANT-MAJOR GARDINER, LATE OF THE SCOTS GREYS.

Saturday last being the earliest day the arrangements for interring the remains of this much-respected veteran would admit, great interest was excited, a similar burial not having taken place here for a number of years. The members of the Oswestry squadron of the North Shropshire Yeomanry were noticed of the day, and early on Wednesday morning a messenger was despatched to head quarters. On Friday evening Sergeant-Major Boyd, from Pross, assembled the firing party in the Town Hall, and after a short drill the carbineers were considered fully acquainted with the exercise attending military funerals. Saturday morning was wet and unfavourable, no doubt operating to prevent many from attending who otherwise would have been present. About twelve o'clock the splendid band of the regiment, with their new brass instruments, and under the direction of their talented master Mr. C. Muller, arrived. Soon after this time Captains Jones and Croxon, Lieutenant Kinchant, the Viscount Dungannon, and Veterinary Surgeon J. M. Hales, joined the party, as also did Sergeant-Majors Lee, of Whitchurch, and Whaite of Ellesmere, with several other noncommissioned officers from a distance. At two o'clock, the whole being assembled, and the left arm of each girl with a crape band, were also the hilts of the officers' swords, and the musical instruments, they proceeded to meet the corpse in the outskirts of the town. Deceased's late residence being about a mile from the churchyard, the body was conveyed greater part of that distance in a hearse, accompanied only by the mourners and a few private friends. The coffin, made of heart of oak, richly adorned with ironed furniture, in allegorical devices, bore a plate of the same material, whereon was engraven the simple inscription—'Alex. Gardiner, aged 54, 1848.' Everything being ready, the procession, under the command of Sergeant-Major Boyd, moved on at slow time in the following order:—The guard, with arms reversed, headed by Corporal Higham; the band, playing the Dead March in Saul; the corpse, on a bier borne by eight pensioners—the coffin surmounted by the deceased's sword and helmet; and the pall supported on either side by three noncommissioned officers of equal rank; three sons of deceased's as chief mourners, Edwin, in the uniform of the Greys, and his two younger brothers, attended by Mr. Smith, of the police establishment, formerly a Sergeant in the Grenadier Guards; a fine grey charger, in rich mourning trappings, led by two of the Yeomanry, bearing staves covered with crape hoods; Dr. Harvey Williams and private friends; non-commissioned officers and privates of the North Shropshire Yeomanry Cavalry,

in ranks of threes; sergeants, corporals, and privates, belonging to the several recruiting parties stationed in Oswestry—viz. Royal Artillery, 20th and 81st Regiments of Foot; Lord Dungannon and R. H. Kinchant, Esq.; Captains Jones and Croxon, &c. &c. So great was the crowd in the streets, through which the truly mournful pageant passed, that Sergeant Ralphs, to whom much is due for the active part he took in the conducting of the funeral, and the police, had some difficulty in keeping the way clear. The shrill and sorrowing strains of the trumpets and other brass instruments, with the monotonous mournful time-beat of the brass drum, deepened by a lowering atmosphere, had an effect upon every heart that will not soon be forgotten. So dense was the crowd when the funeral reached the churchyard, that some difficulty was experienced in making way into the church. After the body had been placed in the chancel, and the congregated multitude were seated, the burial service was impressively read by the Rev. S. Waring. The crowd which surrounded the grave, the churchyard, and adjoining street, together with the persons in the opposite windows, on the roof of the church, top of the tower, the trees, and every spot that commanded the slightest view, was immense. At a low estimate the number may be called upwards of four thousand persons, drawn together by the melancholy novelty. The funeral service ended, the soldiers fired three rounds of carbine shot over the grave in a very correct manner, the band sounding between the intervals a few notes from the march. After every mark of respect had been paid to the remains of poor Sergeant-Major Gardiner, his old comrades, who had seen him to his last home, re-formed in the street, the word march was given, the band playing a quick step, and on arriving at the Bailey Head the party was dismissed, and, after partaking of some slight refreshment, each member went to his respective home. The praiseworthy conduct of every one who bore any part in the mournful proceeding of the day, from the greatest to the lowest, speaks volumes in testimony of the regard in which the deceased soldier was held by the whole regiment, not only by those of equal rank with himself, but by his superior officers, witnessed by their attendance at the funeral. Much is due to Mr. Muller and every member of the band, for their ready services, to the several sergeant-majors and other non-commissioned officers, especially those from a distance, and to every member who attended on the occasion. Altogether the day will be strong in the recollection even of the youngest person for many years to come. The late sergeant-major served in the Greys twenty-five years, was with that fine regiment at Waterloo, and has now three sons in its ranks, the eldest of whom is a corporal, and all respected by their commanding officers.

ALEXANDER DOUGLAS GARDINER

Alexander Douglas Gardiner was born at Norwich, circa 1826, second son of Troop Sergeant-Major Alexander Gardiner, who was then stationed in that town. He enlisted into the 2nd Dragoons at Athlone on 14 April 1848, being recruited by his brother, Private James Gardiner, of the same regiment. He was, in fact, one of three brothers to follow into their father's regiment, the now famous Scots Greys. Aged 22, he enlisted for a period of 12 years, but army life cannot have been to his immediate liking, if ever it was, as he had committed some misdemeanour before the year's end that landed him in prison for a week. He was in trouble again in August 1851, this time serving a sentence of three months. Taking part in the Crimean War, he was present with his regiment at the battle of Balaclava where he charged with the Heavy Brigade, during which, like his father before, was severely wounded. Indeed Gardiner was so severely wounded at Balaklava that he was discharged

from the army at Chatham on 23 October 1855, in consequence of being 'disabled by amputation of left thigh at its centre after cannon shot wound received at Balaklava.'

Gardiner's wound, which was reported in the London Gazette on 12 November 1854, and the circumstances of the occasion are of great interest in that his life was saved by Sergeant Henry Ramage, who won the Victoria Cross on that day. Sergeant Ramage's Victoria Cross citation was published in the *London Gazette* of 4 June 1858:

"For having, at the Battle of Balaklava, galloped out to the assistance of Private McPherson, of the same Regiment, on perceiving him surrounded by seven Russians, when by his gallantry he dispersed the enemy, and saved his comrade's life. For having, on the same day, when the Heavy Brigade was rallying, and the enemy retiring, finding his horse would not leave the ranks, dismounted and brought in a prisoner from the Russian lines. Also for having dismounted on the same day, when the Heavy Brigade was covering the retreat of the Light Cavalry, and lifted from his horse Private Gardiner, who was disabled from a severe fracture of the leg by around shot. Serjeant Ramage then carried him to the rear from under a very heavy cross fire, thereby saving his life, the spot where he must inevitably have fallen having been immediately afterwards covered by the Russian cavalry"



Gardiner having returned home, local newspapers reported ; *'A few benevolent individuals in Oswestry commenced a subscription in order to present him with an artificial leg to supply in place of the one lost in the memorable charge at Balaklava. The expense of such an article being very considerable, doubts were entertained of the sum sufficient being raised for that purpose.'* However it was later reported that by Royal Order, construction of an artificial leg commenced; *'The inhabitants of Oswestry had partly subscribed to alleviate the loss of Gardinier but the subscription not being sufficient to defray the expense, Her Majesty at once made up the difference required from her own purse.'*

Alexander D. Gardiner died at Warrington on 14 May 1879, aged 52 years. An article in the *Northwich Guardian*, 24 May 1879, tells of his funeral, the large number of attendees, with family and friends, along with local dignitaries forming the funeral procession. It describes how after spending 18 months in hospital after his return from the Crimea, he was employed as chief clerk of the Dallam Forge Company, where he remained employed until his death. It also tells how not only his father had served in the Scots Greys, but his three brothers and his grandfather had also.

WILFRED ERNEST GARDINER

Wilfred Ernest Gardiner was born at St Paul's, near Warrington, Lancashire, on 10 May 1872, the fifth child and second son of Alexander Douglas Gardiner. He volunteered for service with the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa at Worsley on 6 January 1902. He served in South Africa with the 144th Company, 32nd Battalion, Imperial Yeomanry, from 7 May until 18 October 1902, just in time to witness the closing stages of the Boer War. He was discharged at Aldershot on 26 October 1902, at his own request after serving for only 294 days. He subsequently pursued a career as a Foreman Engineer, and died at Manchester on 29 April 1946, aged 73 years.



An outstanding Scots Greys family group, not only did the father and son take part in and were severely wounded during two of the most famous charges in British military history but the Victoria Cross was awarded as a direct result of the son's life being saved at Balaclava

THE GREYS AT WATERLOO, AND THE CHARGE OF THE UNION BRIGADE taken from the Regimental museum;

'The Greys went into the battle three hundred and ninety-one strong; by the evening one hundred and two of them were dead and ninety-eight were wounded. These figures reversed the usual ratio of killed to wounded and may be explained by the nature of the Regiment's part in the battle. Formed up on the reverse slope of a ridge (in order to be invisible to the greater part of the French Army), the Regiment had had to wait for several hours. In front of them were the infantry of the 9th Brigade within the 5th Division, and the battalions within this Brigade were facing down the slope towards the masses of French infantry, advancing in columns across the valley and up the slope. The Brigade was ordered to open fire, and did so with great effect, the volleys of musket balls tearing bloody swathes through the French soldiers. Volley after volley shook and staggered the columns, yet they kept coming, so the Union and Household Brigades were ordered forward to lend their weight to the argument. The effect of these regiments of heavy cavalry charging down the slope and full tilt into the massed ranks of the French can be imagined. The two French Divisions commanded by Donzelot and Marcognet, within the 1st Infantry Corps of the French Armee du Nord commanded by General Jean Drouet, Comte d'Erlon, were cut to pieces or trampled by the wielded steel and thundering horseflesh of the Union Brigade and Household Brigade (Life Guards and Royal Horse Guards).

Two French standards, only recently given to the 45th and 105th Regiments of Infantry by the newly-returned Emperor, and topped with their glittering gilded eagles, were taken by the Royals and the Greys. Sergeant Charles Ewart relieved the 45th Infantry of its rallying-point early in the engagement and cut down two other French soldiers as well as the standard-bearer in order to keep his prize, which he was ordered to take to the rear before rejoining the Regiment. Ewart was an expert swordsman, at a period when strength with the sword was more important than grace or skill, and adept at handling an ugly, badly-balanced, poor quality weapon which was little use when used at the point or thrust and scarcely better at cutting; that he managed to use it with such frequent and terminal effect speaks more for the strength of his arms, shoulders and back than for the efficiency of his weapon. He had already spoilt the day of a decidedly unchivalrous French officer by the time he

got stuck into the standard-bearer of the 45th. This bad-mannered Frenchman had had his life spared by Ewart on the request of Cornet Francis Kinchant at the beginning of the action but had then, when Ewart's back was turned, pistolled Kinchant in gratitude. Hearing the shot and seeing his officer fall, Ewart had an understandable sense of humour failure and promptly decapitated the Frenchman. In later years Ewart referred to his capture of the eagle but seldom, and always with unfailing modesty, giving the impression that he was far prouder of the summary justice dealt to an enemy who had shown such a poor grasp of good manners. Ewart's move to the rear with his captured standard and eagle may well have saved his life and preserved the trophy for the Regiment. As he was trotting rebelliously to the rear- having been ordered so to do by the Brigade commander - the Greys swept onward into the valley, cutting, slashing and cheering, and up the facing slope through a field battery of French cannon - whose gunners were given short shrift - far further than they should have advanced. As a result, the horses became quite blown and the Regiment unable to rally, escape quickly or properly defend itself when it was fallen upon in revenge for its slaughter by the 6th and 9th Cuirassiers of Farine's Brigade of Cavalry. Attempting to return through the now largely disabled guns of the French artillery, the Regiment was attacked in the flank by the 4th Lancers and seriously cut up. Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, commanding the Regiment, was wounded in both arms and attempted to lead the Greys out of the action while holding the reins in his teeth; he was soon shot dead. Amazingly, a remnant of the Greys survived the action and, temporarily brigaded with the Life Guards, repeatedly attacked French infantry positions on occasions during the remainder of the battle.



As the tide began to turn in Wellington's favour, and the Imperial Guard were broken by the fire of the Foot Guards and as Napoleon turned to flee, so the surviving Regiment joined in the pursuit to end the matter. As memories of the horror of the battle faded, and as its glories became magnified in the telling and by the passage of years, so the stories began. As Britain grew stronger, largely as a result of the defeat of France at Waterloo, so the true historical significance of the battle began to be appreciated and one of its most famous episodes, the charge of the Scots Greys, became a subject for artists and myth-makers. Historical accuracy is the first casualty in the pursuit of romance and, while the friendly link that has bound the Greys and the Gordon Highlanders so closely over the years is to be valued, there is no doubt that the 92nd never rode into action at Waterloo hanging onto the stirrup-leathers of the Greys. It is probable that many Gordons were trampled or knocked over as the Regiment rode through the 92nd in their eagerness to get at the French. Of far greater interest and significance remain the sword said to have been used at Waterloo by Charles Ewart and the bullet-

holed saddle that bore Lieutenant James Gape into action and out again on 18 June 1815. Both are displayed in the Regimental Museum in Edinburgh Castle

A depiction of Sergeant Charles Ewart, having taken the standard from the standard-bearer of the 45th French Infantry, defending his prize from recapture by a French lancer. Painted in 1847, a year after Ewart's death, this massive canvas, approximately 11ft x 9ft, is a highly romanticised view of Ewart as the noble Victorian hero. Artist: Richard Ansell 1815 – 1885



FIGHT FOR THE STANDARD

THE GREYS AT BALACLAVA AND THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE

The 2nd Dragoons (the Scots Greys) formed part of 'Scarlett's 300' who charged with the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava; consisting two squadrons of the Scots Greys and one of the Inniskillings. Commanded by General Sir James York Scarlett, the Heavy Brigade made a gallant uphill charge to defeat a greatly superior force of onrushing Russian cavalry. The 1st Dragoons, 4th and 5th Dragoon Guards and a 2nd squadron of the Inniskillings also took part in the charge, however the Brigade did not charge as one, these Regiments being in the second and third lines that supported the Greys and Inniskillings after the first line had crashed into the Russian cavalry, hence the '300' title being applied to the leading line. The desperate sword on sword battle lasted but 10 minutes before the Russians retreated and the heavy Brigade reformed, with the Greys and Inniskillings suffering the brunt of the 78 casualties.

An hour and a half later, the Light Brigade fatally charged the Russian guns, resulting in the Brigade being all but wiped out as an effective fighting unit. During the charge, the Heavy Brigade supported the Light Brigade, suffering casualties from the artillery crossfire as they rode up the valley but they pulled up and reformed before entering into the Russian batteries, therefore not suffering the same fate

as the Light Brigade. Casualties in the Heavy Brigade would have been far higher had it not been for the French Chasseurs d'Afrique, who bravely charged the flank of the Russian battery on the Fedioukine Heights, forcing them to drag away their guns. Again, it was the Greys and Inniskillings that suffered the brunt of the casualties from the artillery crossfire. Recorded casualties for the 700 strong Heavy Brigade at Balaclava on 25 October were 105, the Greys suffering more than the rest of the Brigade combined, with 60.



On 25 October 1854, the Scots Greys musters show only 153 effective troop horses, the latter being the lowest number of the entire brigade. Officers had their own horses, so these can be added to this number, though a number of mounted men would have been on forage or picket duties, so can be reduced again. As such, with only in the region of 150 chargers, the 60 casualties suffered by the Greys at Balaclava was a significant percentage of those who charged. As with all such cavalry charges, a large number of men would have suffered slight wounds that did not require treatment and their wounds were not recorded. This will have been the same with all Regiments. 270 Balaclava clasps were issued to the Scots Greys, which shows the issues with knowing who did charge and who were present at the camp at Balaclava but didn't actually charge.

Note; Since the Inniskillings only had 185 effective troop horses on the 25 October, split into two squadrons, only one of which were counted in Scarlett's '300', the actual number of the three Squadrons should be nearer 230. The figure of 300 was almost certainly based on the on paper compliment of three squadrons of cavalry, not the actual number of effective men on the day.

THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE FROM KINGLAKE'S 'INVASION OF THE CRIMEA,' VOL. V

“....All this while, the string of the 300 red coats were forming Scarlett's slender first line in the valley beneath, and they seemed to be playing parade. At the moment I speak of, the troop officers of the Greys were still facing their men; and their drill rules, it seems, had declared that they must continue to do so till the major of the regiment should at length bring them round by giving the order, Eyes right! Not yet would the Greys consent to be disturbed in their ceremonies by the descending column.”

"A singular friendship had long subsisted between the Scots Greys and the Inniskilling Dragoons. It dated from the time of that famous brigade in which three cavalry regiments were so brought together as to express by their aggregate title the union of the three kingdoms, yet offer a sample of each (the 'Royals' represented England).... Then, as now, the Greys charged in the first line, and on the left of the Inniskillings.

The Greys were led by Colonel Darby Griffith; and the two squadron leaders who followed him were Major Clarke on the right, and Captain Williams on the left. Handley, Hunter, Buchanan, and Sutherland were the four troop leaders of the regiment; the Adjutant was Lieutenant Miller; the serrefiles were Boyd, Nugent, and Lenox Prendergast. And to these, though he did not then hold the Queen's Commission, I add the name of John Wilson, now a cornet, and the acting adjutant of the regiment, for he took a signal part in the fight."



"A soldier who was in the midst of the terrible conflict at Balaclava, and who escaped unhurt, gives the following account of what he felt and saw in that deadly struggle:—

"We charged. Oh, God! I cannot describe it; they were so superior in numbers; they "out-flanked" us, and we were in the middle of them. I never certainly felt less fear in my life than I did at that time; and I hope God will forgive me, for I felt more like a devil than a man. We fought our way out of them as only Englishmen can fight; and the 4th, 5th, and 6th were there up with us. I escaped without a scratch, thank God, though I was covered with blood; my horse was not even wounded. But oh! the work of slaughter that then began—'twas truly awful; but I suppose it was necessary. We cut them

down like sheep, and they did not seem to have power to resist. The plain is covered and covered with dead Russians, and, of course, we left some of our poor comrades on the field. We only lost two and about seven wounded. Well, when we had finished this lot we thought of going home to breakfast; but no, they (the enemy) had some guns over the hills that Lord Raglan sent word were to be charged, and captured at any cost. So off we went again. They received us very quietly into their ground—Lord Lucan leading the Heavies, and Lord Cardigan the Light Brigade. The Light charged first this time, took the guns, cut down the gunners, and then, when they thought all was right, they were met by thousands of Cossacks, who had been in ambush. The Royals, the Greys, the 4th, 5th, and 6th, now charged again. The butchering was repeated; when suddenly a cross front and rear fire opened upon us from the hills—cannon, rifles, and file firing.

"I cannot attempt to describe to you the scene that ensued—balls, shells, and rockets whizzing about our ears. The men on the right and left of me were both killed on the spot. We hacked our way out of it as well as we could, but were obliged to leave the guns. Colonel Yorke had his leg broken, and all the officers in the front rank were wounded. The Heavy Brigade have not lost many men; but, sad to tell, out of about 600 of the Light Brigade that went into the field, only 400 came out; but this is nothing to what the enemy suffered."