

**AN OUTSTANDING AND RARE ROYAL NAVY OFFICERS QUEEN'S SOUTH AFRICA 1899 AND LETTER GROUP AWARDED TO A MIDSHIPMAN OF H.M.S. POWERFUL WHO DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF AND WAS WOUNDED DURING THE SIEGE OF LADYSMITH. COMMANDING THE 12-PR. GUN 'LADY HELEN' AT CAESAR'S CAMP, INCLUDING DURING THE GREAT BOER ATTACK ON THAT PLACE ON 6 JANUARY 1900, FOR HIS SERVICES, HE WAS TWICE MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES AND ALSO IN CAPTAIN LAMBTON'S REPORT ON THE 6 JANUARY ATTACK.**



QUEEN'S SOUTH AFRICA 1899, CLASP, DEFENCE OF LADYSMITH 'MID: HON: I.L.A. CARNEGIE, RN, HMS POWERFUL'

M.I.D. *London Gazette* 8 February 1901. General Sir George White, despatch of 2 December 1899

M.I.D. *London Gazette* 12 March 1901. Captain Lambton's despatch of 11 January 1900

"Mr. Carnegie has had charge of a 12-pr. Gun at Caesar's Camp since 27th November, 1899, which he has fought successfully under, at times, a hot fire."

Obituary from *The Times*, January 6 1909:

"Lieutenant the Hon. Ian Ludovic Andrew Carnegie, who died on January 4, was the youngest son of the late and brother of the present Earl of Northesk. He joined the Royal Navy in May, 1897 and while serving as a Midshipman of the Powerful was landed with the Naval Brigade which took part on the successful defence of Ladysmith. The Captain of the Powerful, in his report, says:- "Mr. Carnegie has had charge of a 12-pr. Gun at Caesar's Camp since 27th November, 1899, which he has fought successfully under, at times, a hot fire." He was wounded during the siege and was mentioned in Sir George White's despatch of December 2, 1899. He passed for Sub-Lieutenant in January, 1901 and was specially promoted to Lieutenant for his services at Ladysmith, July 15, 1902. He joined the Duke of Edinburgh, in

the First Cruiser Squadron in August 1907 and was attached to that vessel at the time of his death. The funeral service will take place at Weymouth to-day at 2.30pm."



And another:

*"Carnegie — Lieutenant the Hon. Ian Ludovic Andrew Carnegie, third son of the ninth Earl of Northesk, Ethie Castle. Born, 30th September, 1881 ; godmother, H.R.H. Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll; godfathers, the late General Andrew Wauchope, C.B., C.M.G., and Lord Carnegie. Joined H.M.S. "Powerful" as Midshipman. Went to Ladysmith with Naval Brigade under Captain the Hon. Hedworth Lambton, R.N. ; slightly wounded. Was mentioned in despatches. On the return of H.M.S. "Powerful" to this country. Midshipman Carnegie was the recipient of handsome presents in Hampshire. From the inhabitants of Longwood he received a fine pair of field-glasses, together with an illuminated address, " as a memento of the Siege of Ladysmith," while the inhabitants of Owslebury gave him a silver flask inscribed — " Presented by the people of Owslebury to Midshipman Ian Carnegie, Her Majesty's ship ' Powerful/ Her guns saved Ladysmith, October, 1899, to February, 1900." The Queen received the Naval Brigade from H.M.S. "Powerful," which served at Ladysmith and elsewhere in South Africa, at Windsor, on 2nd May, 1900. Midshipman Carnegie became Sub- Lieutenant Jan. 15, 1901, and Lieutenant, 15th July, 1902. South African medal, with clasps for Ladysmith, Waggon Hill, and Natal."*

The Honourable Ian Ludovic Andrew Carnegie was born on 30th September 1881, the son of Lieutenant Colonel George John Carnegie, the 9th Earl of Northesk, and his wife, Elizabeth Georgina Frances Elliot. From a Old Naval family, his Grandfather having Commanded H.M.S. *Britannia* at Trafalgar, Carnegie joined the Royal Navy as a Cadet in 1895 and was posted to H.M.S. *Britannia*. Attaining the rank of Midshipman in 1897, he was posted to the cruiser H.M.S. *Powerful*, under Captain Hedworth Lambton. Initially serving on the China Station, on the return voyage in 1899 Lambton was ordered to Durban, South Africa, at an important point in the Second Boer War. He stopped at Mauritius, and on his own initiative

picked up a battalion of soldiers stationed there. Knowing that the British forces at Ladysmith urgently needed more powerful guns, Captain Percy Scott from *Powerful's* sister ship, *Terrible*, devised carriages to transport naval cannon, and Lambton then led the soon to be famed Naval Brigade from *Powerful* to the rescue. The Naval Brigade would play "a most important role" in the defence of the town of Ladysmith in the period from 30 October 1899 to 28th February 1900.

In a letter addressed to his brother, The Honourable Douglas Carnegie of Brookwood Park, the envelope with assorted postmarks and dates 30.10.1899 to 27.11.1899, in which he reveals that he is about to go ashore, Carnegie wrote;

*'... I am just off to the front. I don't like to tell mother but in case I do get shot Asst. Eng. Shirwell, H.M.S. Powerful, is looking out for my gear ... We are going up tonight in armoured trains and I believe we are going through to Ladysmith. The Boers have cut off the wires and we may have to fight our way through ... I am off in half an hour, Goodbye ...'*

The Ladysmith Brigade consisted of 2 x 4.7" quick firing naval guns, 4 x 12 pr naval guns and 4 Maxims (only one used), 17 officers; H.M.S. *Powerful's* Captain, 4 Lieutenants, 1 Fleet Paymaster, 1 Surgeon, 2 Engineers, 1 Gunner and 7 Midshipman. There were also 267 men, included the guns' crews, small-arm companies, 2 engine-room artificers, and 6 stokers as a gun-mounting party, 42 stokers as stretcher-bearers and ammunition carriers, 8 armourers, 2 cooks, 8 marine servants, and a ship's steward's boy, besides a ship's corporal and a sick-berth attendant, blacksmith, and carpenters.



The journey to Ladysmith from Durban was 189 miles (304 km). They began by special train then with oxen pulling the guns but when the oxen died the sailors took over pulling the guns themselves. In this endeavour they manhandled the guns "through the wild and broken country" of the South African veldt and "arrived in the nick of time" to play "a most important role in the defence of the town". Although the Boer attackers were kept at bay

unfortunately the Naval brigade became besieged themselves. A second Naval brigade from *Terrible* left Durban for Ladysmith and joined with the relief column led by General Buller and assisted in the lifting of the siege. The Royal Tournament field gun competition commemorated the participation of *Terrible* and *Powerful* in the relief of Ladysmith. Shortly after their arrival on 30 October 1899 the Naval Brigade of *Powerful* attacked Boer positions at Lombards Kop, Ladysmith.

In a letter to a friend, Lewin, without envelope, dated at '*Wagon Hill, 14th Feb. 1900*'; and an old handwritten copy of a letter sent to a Mr. Rawnesley, this having been dated at '*The Lady Helen Battery, Caesar's Camp, Jan. 17th 00*', and describing his first experience of enemy shellfire, the day he arrived at Ladysmith;

*'... We arrived at Ladysmith about 10 a.m. on Monday and were greeted by three 6-inch 94-pound shells which came over one after another and landed about 200 yards from us ...'*

The written and dated during the siege, Carnegie's remaining letters were all posted after the lifting of the siege for obvious reasons, but in them, they detail a rare to survive account of his experiences. Letters to his mother (4), the envelopes all addressed to 'The Dow. Countess of Northesk, 6 Hans Crescent, London S.W.' and with assorted postmarks, including 'Ladysmith, Natal' and 'Simonstown', and differing dates in March 1900, the contents often of an interesting nature, including accounts of coming under fire, e.g. letter written at 'Caesar's Camp, Friday Feb. 23rd Feb.' in which he states;

*'I am in command of a 12-pounder 12-cwt. gun and am detached from the rest of the Navy who are on the other side of the town. I have travelled about a good deal with my gun on this hill and Wagon Hill which is next to it and have always been near to Buller's people when they have tried to come in. I came here three days ago to stop the Boers working on the river. We cannot quite make out what they are doing but it looks like the beginning of a bridge or a dam. They cannot show their noses there now as we give them a few shells when we see them work. It is rather fun as the Boer 6-inch "Long Tom" is only 5000 yards from here, which is quite a short distance for him and he fires at us when we fire, so we have to be very quick getting under cover, but we are quite safe as he has hit the gun pit several times and cannot make any impression as there is quite 15 feet of earth and sandbags and stones between us and him ...'*

As noted in despatches, from 27 November 1899, Midshipman Carnegie was the Officer in command of H.M.S. *Powerful's* 12 pounder gun at Caesar's Camp, the others being positioned at various other posts around Ladysmith. As with the other gun's, they were given a Ladies name, in Carnegie's case, his was called '*The Lady Helen Battery*'. George W. Stevens, a correspondent for the Daily Mail noting Carnegie's command:

*"This handful of sailors have been the saving of Ladysmith. You don't know, till you have tried it, what a worm you feel when the enemy is plugging shells into you, and you can't possibly plug back. Even though they spared their shells, it made all the world of difference to know that the sailors could reach the big guns if they ever became unbearable. It makes all the difference to the Boers too, I suspect; for as sure as Lady Ann or Bloody Mary gets on to them, they shut up in a round or two. To have the very men among you makes the difference between rain-water and brine. The other day they sent a 12-pounder up to Caesar's Camp under the command of a boy who, if he were not commanding big men round a big gun in a big war, might with luck be in the Fifth Form. 'There's a 94-pounder up there,' said a high officer, who might just have been his grandfather. 'All right, sir,' said the child, serenely, 'we'll knock him out.' He hasn't knocked him out yet, but he is going to next shot, which in a siege is the next."*



THE CONNING TOWER POSITION AT LADYSMITH CARNEGIE AT RIGHT

Carnegie would Command his 12 pr during the great Boer attack on Caesar's Camp and Waggon Hill on 6 January 1900, see the following for details in brief, though a great deal is written on this attack in books about the siege itself:

<https://www.angloboerwar.com/books/194-martin-old-soldiers-never-die/3276-martin-the-battle-of-wagon-hills-and-caesar-s-camp>

In Captain Lambton's report on the attack of 6 January Lieutenant Halsey, commanding the 4.7" at Cove Redoubt, Gunner Sims and Mr Sheen, Engineer, commanding the 4.7" at Waggon Hill and Midshipman Carnegie, Commanding the 12 pr at Caesar's Camp, were singled out for praise. In Carnegie's case:

*"The 12 -pr on Caesar's Camp in charge of Hon Ian Carnegie, Midshipman, was actively engaged during the day with the enemy's guns on Middle Hill and to the left of Flat-topped Hill, making good shooting and receiving a hot fire in return, one shell bursting in the embrasure, without, however doing any harm."*

A very good article on *Powerful's* naval Brigade at Ladysmith can be found here:

<https://www.britishempire.me.uk/hms-powerful-and-the-naval-brigade-in-ladysmith.html>

The enthusiastic response in Britain to the "heroes of Ladysmith" was enormous and made Captain Hedworth Lambton a well-known public figure. Queen Victoria sent a telegram

saying, "Pray express to the Naval Brigade my deep appreciation of the valuable services they have rendered with their guns." while a reception and celebratory march through London were among the first events ever recorded on film.

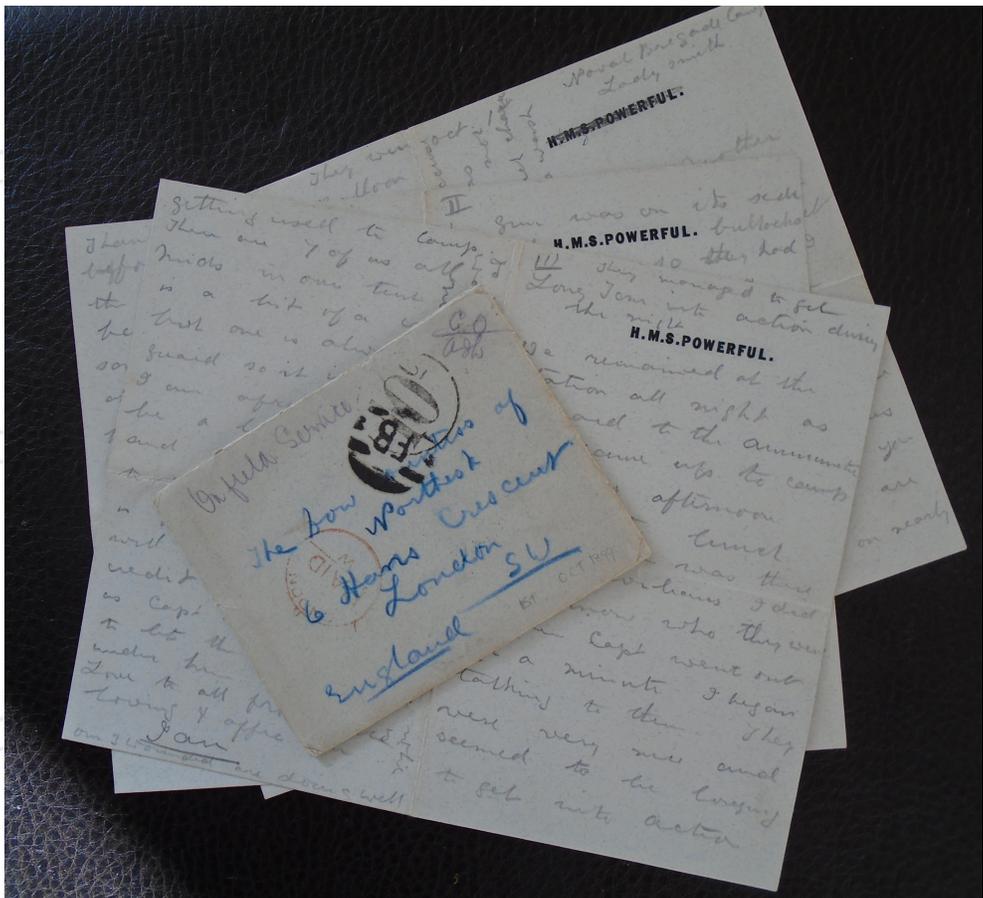
A newspaper described the *Powerful's* return home:

*"As the great vessel steamed into Portsmouth Harbour at four o'clock this afternoon, she was greeted with thunders of applause .... vessels lying off here were dressed with flags, and their crews, swarming along the yards, swelled the roar of welcome.....By three o'clock the jetty was thronged with men, women and children. ... A more eager, joyous gathering I never saw.....We cheered, we waved hats and handkerchiefs and we were half wild with delight."*

Lambton was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath, and it was in this year that his caricature was published in Vanity Fair. In 1921 a new Primary School in Ladysmith was named after Lt Frederick Greville Egerton, a gunnery officer from the *Powerful* who lost his life during the action at Ladysmith. For their services during the siege, although all seven Midshipman of *Powerful* were mentioned in Captain Lambton's despatch for having *"behaved with great coolness under fire, and satisfactorily carried out the duties allotted to them."* Carnegie, however, was the only Midshipman singled out in Captain Lambton despatch for particular praise, reflecting the fact that he commanded one of the guns for the majority of the siege, bringing it into action numerous times; *"Mr. Carnegie has had charge of a 12-pr. Gun at Caesar's Camp since 27th November, 1899, which he has fought successfully under, at times, a hot fire"*, as well as his report on the 6th January attack as previously noted. Carnegie was also the only Midshipman mentioned in General Sir George White's despatch of 2 December 1899. In addition, Carnegie was duly recommended for early promotion, and gained advancement to Sub Lieutenant in January 1901. He was also amongst those who were specially presented with the Queen's South Africa Medal by King Edward VII. Each member of *Powerful's* naval brigade were also received a special presentation watch, engraved with their name to the reverse and *"SIEGE OF LADYSMITH. / 118 DAYS / 1899-1900 / H.M.S. POWERFUL"*.



A NAVAL BRIGADE 12 PR GUN AT LADYSMITH



owe to the  
 and I a  
 to write  
 we  
 up to  
 arm  
 and I  
 going thro  
 Ladysmith  
 Boers have cut off  
 the wires and

we may have to  
 fight our way thro  
 I am right guide  
 B Company with  
 Hodges who  
 very much  
 give my  
 all  
 try &  
 as often as  
 of course  
 may find it  
 possible to get  
 to Ladysmith in

WIRELESS  
 2 PM  
 NO 27  
 99  
 H.M.S. POWERFUL

SOUTHAMPTON  
 25 10  
 99  
 HOME LETTER 100

I thanked the Captain  
 before my Company for  
 the assistance we had  
 been & said we  
 saved a General engaged  
 as they would have  
 had to take the gun  
 all all costs to save  
 the town. We went  
 back to the station very  
 tired but very pleased  
 with ourselves. I was  
 not frightened under  
 fire but am not  
 yet certain what I shall  
 feel like among the  
 bullets.

II  
 The gun was on its side  
 and the **H.M.S. POWERFUL** bullocks  
 had bolted so they had  
 to hoist the gun &  
 just then they began  
 the general retreat  
 as they retreated slowly  
 under fire to the place  
 I left them at. These  
 guns were not the  
 ordinary 12 lbs field  
 guns but the larger  
 12 lbs mounted on  
 an invention of Capt  
 Scotty of Terrible.

with 42 Field Battery then  
with the Manchester Reg.  
and now with 2nd Rifle  
Brigade who are the victors  
of the day. This is the  
hill that was attacked  
so fiercely on Jan 6th  
we were not here then  
being on the road with  
about 1000 yards off but  
we got a pretty hot time  
too. My crew which  
consists of Hemming  
Pomroy and Brown and  
I stokers said they enjoyed  
it but I didn't the no  
one was hit.

14th Feb. 1900 Wagon Hill.  
Ladysmith.  
My dear Edwin.  
I wonder how  
you are, and what  
kind of time you &  
answery have had.  
I think you are more  
lucky in every way  
than we are here.  
I think I have written  
to you every time every  
time we expected to be  
relieved and have torn

2 pm on Thursday we we got  
a tremendous reception  
Then men were lunched by  
the Germans and we lunched  
at a hotel with Capt Scott  
marching through the town  
amid tremendous  
to the docks where  
and went  
This is a  
very comfortable  
rolling rather  
have a good  
You cant see  
it is to have  
again and to  
one core walk  
being shot at.  
I am keeping ab  
of the siege and relief until  
I see you which I think  
will be about April 15th

Sat. 10th Feb. 00. SS. Columbian  
At Sea  
My dear Mother  
I hope you got my  
right. I sent  
the Airbroth  
it was the shoulder  
on were one  
ough day  
use absolutely  
ute after  
ved and  
munt to  
ben very  
ng away so  
and everybody is  
picking up wonderfully with  
good food and tea and  
I was very lucky never  
being ill but of course  
am still rather weak in

The Dow. Countess of Portlaoigh  
6 Hans Crescent  
London  
SW  
6 MAR 1900



Carnegie married Anna Barbara Atkinson, the daughter of Colonel Bradford Atkinson, on 30th March 1905, but died of enteric fever and pneumonia on 4th January 1909, whilst serving as a Lieutenant aboard H.M.S. *Duke of Edinburgh*. At his funeral at Owelsbury on 6 January, Carnegie was given full Naval honours, his coffin covered with a Union Jack, being placed on a gun carriage and drawn by blue jackets. Between three and four hundred Officers, sailors and marines were landed in full naval dress. Several Admirals were present as well as other dignitaries.



Condition NEF, attractive patina. Sold with:

Seven original and important handwritten letters written by Midshipman The Honourable Ian Ludovic Andrew Carnegie 'On Active Service' during the Boer War. Five in original South Africa sent and stamped envelopes, the first two stamped H.M.S. *Powerful* as are the letters/pages. Letters were sent to various people; one to his brother, four to his mother The Dowager Countess of Northesk, etc. All of the letters concern his experiences during the Ladysmith operations, and are all contained in an old envelope with outer ink inscription, 'Ian's letters from South Africa 1899 & 1900'. Ten sheets of paper in all, the majority written on both sides of each page as folded and the same to reverse (effectively near forty pages of text). Also sold with a file of research with copy service, with LG, obituaries and other research on CD

Provenance: Ex DNW, the medal 4th April 2001, hammer £3500; the letters 23rd June 2005,

hammer £210, the latter being a bargain price for such rare letters. They have since been reunited.

**NOTE:** Listed separately in the Militaria section of this website is the photograph album belonging to Lieutenant Heneage, one of H.M.S. Powerful's other Officers who served throughout the siege of Ladysmith. Amongst others, it contains 38 rare photos taken during the siege of Ladysmith, mostly Naval Brigade related, with Officers, guns and including at least 2 photos with Carnegie.