

It was not until 10th December 1948 that his young widow, Mrs Ena Cairns, was listening to a BBC radio programme and heard an account of her husband's bravery and the subsequent loss of the citation. In fact, this was the first that Mrs Cairns had heard of the citation and she decided to take steps to see that her husband's bravery should be properly recognised. On 20th May 1949, more than 5 years after Lieut Cairns' heroism, the following announcement appeared in the London Gazette:

"The King has been graciously pleased to approve the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to Lieutenant George A Cairns, The Somerset Light Infantry, attached South Staffordshire Regiment."

At the time of his heroic deed, both George Cairns and his wife were employees of a bank which later became the Banque Belge Ltd. The Bank commemorated Cairns' award of the Victoria Cross by installing a bronze plaque which, for many years, took pride of place in the main Banking Hall. After the building was demolished as part of a new building project, the plaque had to be removed and was kept in the bank archives. Unfortunately, the plaque was not installed again and it ended up in the archives of the Generale Bank in Brussels.

Nevertheless, the Generale Bank is extremely proud of George Cairns and has asked that the plaque should be presented to the Somerset Military Museum, which holds exhibits covering the history of the Somerset Regiments, including Cairns' old Regiment - The Somerset Light Infantry.

The presentation of the bronze plaque will be made on Friday, 5th November 1993 in a brief ceremony at the County Museum, Taunton. The Chairman of the Trustees of the Somerset Military Museum Trust, Colonel Sir Walter Luttrell KCVO MC, will officially unveil the plaque which will be installed near the Museum Medal Gallery.