

Charles Kitchel Gardner (27 Feb 1787 – 1 Nov 1869)

Gardner. November 1, Col. Charles K. Gardner in his 83d year. Friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral Thursday next at 12 noon from his late residence, 566 New Jersey avenue.

The Evening Star, November 4, 1869

The Funeral of Colonel Gardner



COL. CHARLES K. GARDNER.

The funeral of the late Charles K. Gardner, for a long series of years a resident of this District was attended from his late residence on New Jersey avenue south of the Capitol by a very large concourse of friends at noon today. The beautiful burial service of the Episcopal Church was read by Rev. A.F. Steele, of St. Mark's Memorial Chapel after which the remains, encased in a handsome walnut coffin, rosewood finish were borne to the hearse (Messrs. J.H. Houston, D.W. Middleton, B.B. French, J. Carroll Brent, James Adams and Charles Sherman being the pall bearers) and the cortege being formed by Mr. R.W. Barker, the undertaker, proceeded to the Congressional Cemetery where they were interred. There were a large number of his old associates in the public service present, as also many of the "Oldest Inhabitants" and as the cortege left the residence the bell of Columbia Engine Company -- of which company he was many years ago President -- was tolled in respect to his memory and the flag placed at half mast.

The National Intelligencer, July 6, 1853

The New Surveyor General of Oregon

Our fellow citizen, Col. Charles K. Gardiner, recently appointed Surveyor General of Oregon, starts for the scene of his duties, via the Panama route, on the 5th of August. He will be accompanied by his two sons, Mr. Charles Gardiner, and Mr. Clinton Gardiner. The latter has served four years as a surveyor under Major Emory, U.S.A.

Ensign 6th Infantry May 3, 1808, 2nd Lieutenant June 10, 1809 Captain 3rd Artillery July 6, 1812 Major, Assistant Adjutant General, March 15, 1813 transferred to 23rd Infantry April 15, 1813. Major, 25th Infantry June 26, 1813 transferred to 3rd Infantry May 17, 1815. Colonel, Adjutant General, April 12, 1814 resigned March 17, 1818 died November 1, 1869. He was the author of the designation of companies (May 22, 1816) by the letters of the alphabet.

Madison Davis, "A History of the City Post Office," Columbia Historical Society, Vol. 6 (May 12, 1902), pp. 143 - ???

On the 31st of March, 1845, Dr. Jones was a second time removed from the office of postmaster by a Democratic President, and Col. Charles K. Gardner, a very distinguished man -- one of the heroes of the War of 1812 -- was appointed to succeed him.

Charles K. Gardner was born in Morris County, New Jersey, in 1787, and in 1791 removed with his parents to Newburg on the Hudson, where he began and finished his education. He was a student of medicine with Dr. Hosack in New York in 1808, when he received the appointment of ensign in the old Sixth Regiment of Infantry of the regular army. In the following year, while on duty at Oswego, he was appointed adjutant of his regiment, and he served as such at various points. At Baton Rouge, Louisiana, General Wade Hampton appointed him his brigade inspector. In July, 1812, he was appointed captain of the Third Artillery, and in the following month General Armstrong, then in command at New York, made him his brigade inspector. In March 1813, he was in charge of the Adjutant-General's Office at Washington as assistant, but was soon after promoted to be major of the Twenty-fifth Infantry, and ordered to the northern frontier at Sackett's Harbor. He was in the battle of Chrysler's Field. In the following spring he accompanied General Brown's division first from French's Mills to Sackett's Harbor, and then to Buffalo, and in April received the appointment of Adjutant-General with the rank of colonel. For distinguished services on the Niagara frontier he was brevetted lieutenant-colonel, but being then colonel, he declined the honor. In May, 1816, he was recommissioned Adjutant-General of the Army of the North, and in 1818 he married and resigned. In 1822-23 he edited the New York "Patriot," and was appointed corresponding clerk in the Post Office Department. In 1829 he became Assistant Postmaster-General, in 1836 Auditor for the Post Office Department, and still later Surveyor-General of Oregon. In 1845, as above stated, President Polk appointed him postmaster of Washington, the salary of the office still being, as it had been for many years, only \$2,000 a year. Colonel Gardner was a distinguished author also, having written an admirable "Compend of Infantry Tactics" and a very comprehensive "Dictionary of the Army." He died in 1868, and is buried in the Congressional Cemetery at Washington. He was an amiable and courteous gentleman, and was uniformly successful throughout life. No matter what happened, Colonel Gardner was on top, or near it. He illustrated the old Arab proverb, "Throw a lucky man into the Nile, and he will come up with a fish in his mouth."

In a postal sense, nothing occurred during the administration of Colonel Gardner that is worthy of special mention. He was an upright, straightforward man, and therefore kept himself free from censure by the Post-Office Department, as well as from the adverse criticism of the people. He was also a popular man, and did whatever was right to accommodate and please the public. The post-office remained in the rooms on Seventh Street, between E and F, though the postal business had increased to such an extent as to render them cramped and unsatisfactory. The gross revenue during the last year of Colonel Gardner's incumbency was \$59,730.18. His salary remained through his term \$2,000 a year, though his receipts from box rents no doubt carried it up to \$3,000 or more. It was during Colonel Gardner's administration that postage stamps -- now indispensable -- first came into general use, although prepayment of postage was still optional.

In 1847 and 1849 we find the following named persons to have been in office:

J.E. Kendall, Asst. P.M.	J.T.C. Clark
Lambert Tree	R.H. Brown
James A. Kennedy	F.J. Bartlett
Richard Say	J.W. Davis
M. Brooke Jones	J. McLean Gardner
Thos. L. Noyes	C.T. Gardner
Cornelius Cox	Wm. T. Jones
Michael P. Callan	Josiah Goodrich
Samuel Crown	John H. Tucker
Josiah W. Hicks	Patrick Sweeney
J.B. Iardella	Johnson Simonds

Colonel Gardner's residence was on Capitol Hill.

On the 28th of June, 1849, during the presidency of Zachary Taylor, Colonel Gardner was removed from the office of postmaster -- politics being the reason -- and William A. Bradley was appointed in his stead.

Dictionary

Gardner, Charles Kitchell, soldier, was born in Morris county, N., in 1787. In May, 1808, he joined the U.S. army as ensign in the 6th infantry, was promoted adjutant, May, 1809, 2d lieutenant, June, 1809, 1st lieutenant, March 1811, and served as brigade inspector to General Hampton from April 1811. He was promoted captain of the 3d artillery in July, 1812, brigade-major on the staff of General Armstrong, Aug. 4, 1812 adjutant-general, March 18, 1813, and transferred to the 23d infantry. In the war of 1812 he took part in the battles of Chrysler's Field, Chippewa, and Niagara, and in the siege and defense of Fort Erie. He was promoted lieutenant-colonel for distinguished and meritorious services, Feb. 5, 1815, and in May, 1816, was made adjutant-general of the division of the north. He resigned his commission, March 17, 1818. He was the first assistant postmaster-general, 1829-37 auditor of the post-office department, 1837-41 commissioner to settle affairs in connection with the Indians in the Southern states, 1841-45 postmaster of Washington, D.C., 1845-49 surveyor-general of Oregon, 1853-57, and clerk of the U.S. treasury department, 1857-67. He published: A Compendium of Military Tactics (1819) A Dictionary of Commissioned Officers who have served in the Army of the United States from 1789 to 1853 (1853) and A Permanent Designation of Companies and Company Books, by the First Letters of the Alphabet. He died in Washington, D.C., Nov. 1, 1869.