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Stolen VCs recovered

Nine Victoria Crosses stolen in New Zealand were recovered after a reward of £120,000 was offered for their safe return.

The VCs were among 96 medals, including two George Crosses and an Albert Medal, taken in a raid on the national Army Museum in the central North Island town of Waiouru early in December.

The entire haul has been recovered in "mint condition" as a result of the reward, police said. Two-thirds of the reward was put up by the British peer Lord Ashcroft, who has a collection of around 150 VCs.

"The reward... has encouraged a person to come forward and facilitate the return of the medals to police," said Detective Senior Sergeant Chris Bensemann.

The audacity of the well planned raid shocked the nation. Celebrities joined a television advertising campaign appealing to the thieves to return the medals.