

18 Samuel Wassall VC



Wassall was born in the West Midlands, probably in Aston, and after leaving the army became an electrician in the Shipyard. He lived at 34 Lyon Street.

Where is the grave?

Take the first left from the Devonshire Road entrance, and follow the bottom path along to the second 'roundabout'. Turn right, and the grave is a few yards up on the left.

The stone is a recent one dating from 1985 or so.



One of three VCs from Barrow that I have read about: the other two (Forshaw and White – no relation) from WW1, are not buried in Barrow.

Wassall was 22 years old, and a private in the 80th Regiment of Foot (later The South Staffordshire Regiment), during the Anglo-Zulu War when the following deed took place on 22 January 1879 at the Battle of Isandhlwana, Zululand, South Africa, for which he was awarded the VC:

For his gallant conduct in having, at the imminent risk of his own life, saved that of Private Westwood, of the same regiment. On the 22nd January, 1879, when the Camp at Isandhlwana was taken by the enemy, Private Wassall retreated towards the Buffalo River, in which he saw a comrade struggling, and apparently drowning. He rode to the bank, dismounted, leaving his horse on the Zulu side, rescued the man from the stream, and again mounted his horse, dragging Private Westwood across the river under a heavy shower of bullets. *The London Gazette*: no. 24734. p. 3966. 17 June 1879 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Wassall

Wassall is referenced in the Royal Welsh Regimental Museum (Brecon), where there is an interesting room devoted to the Anglo-Zulu Wars.

Wikipedia reports that his Medal is in the Regimental Museum of the Staffordshire Regt, at Whittington Barracks, near Lichfield, Staffs.

Further information:

<http://www.rwassell.com/samindex.htm>

<http://www.rwassell.com/sampass.html>

<http://www.rorkesdriftvc.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=2343&sid=7f66a832bc579292198eb0f1e9438107>