

## HENRY ALFRED WALSH

Father: Theodore Walsh, Mother: Isabel Patton

Grandfather: Captain Thomas Patton, of Bishops Hull, Taunton  
Owner of Stoke House and Stoke Court, Stoke St Mary

Date of Birth - 18th August 1853, Bishops Hull, Taunton

28th February 1874 Lieutenant (from Militia) - Somersetshire Light Infantry –

1878-9 South African War - - Kaffir Campaign. With Mounted Infantry in Expedition against Sekukuni. – Zulu Campaign. Served with Mounted Infantry, reoccupation of the camp at iSandlwana action at the Ezunganyan and Mountain, actions at Kambula, reconnaissance and battle of Ulundi.

26th February 1880 Adjutant - Somersetshire Light Infantry –  
20th October 1883 Captain - Somersetshire Light Infantry (1st Battalion)

Medal with Clasp.



*Henry Walsh in uniform as Brevet Major*

Lt Walsh was with the First Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry and was with them during the Anglo Zulu War of 1879.

The regiment was part of No. 4 Column, under the command of Brevet Colonel Evelyn Wood and was not involved in the disaster at iSandlwana on 22nd January, 1879, nor the successful defence at Rorke's Drift on 22nd/23rd January, 1879.

However Lt Walsh was attached to No. 1 Squadron, Imperial Mounted Infantry.

The mounted infantry had been raised to make up for the shortfall of regular cavalry in South Africa. The squadron was mounted on local horses and armed with carbines in lieu of their Martini-Henry rifles. The soldiers retained their foreign-service helmets and regimental tunics, but were issued with Bedford cord breeches, riding boots and a brown leather ammunition bandolier. They retained their haversacks and Oliver pattern water-bottles but discarded the rest of their valise pattern equipment for mounted service.

### *Colonel Russell*



No 1 Squadron Imperial Mounted Infantry, No 3 [Centre] Column) under (Brevet) Lt Col J C Russell was a composite grouping drawn from four of the eight imperial infantry battalions serving in South Africa at the time . It had sections from:-

2nd/3rd Buffs,  
1st/24th (2nd Warwickshire and shortly afterwards SWB),  
1st/13th ((1st Somersetshire) (Prince Albert's Light Infantry)) and the  
80th Regt (Staffordshire Vols and shortly after South Staffords).

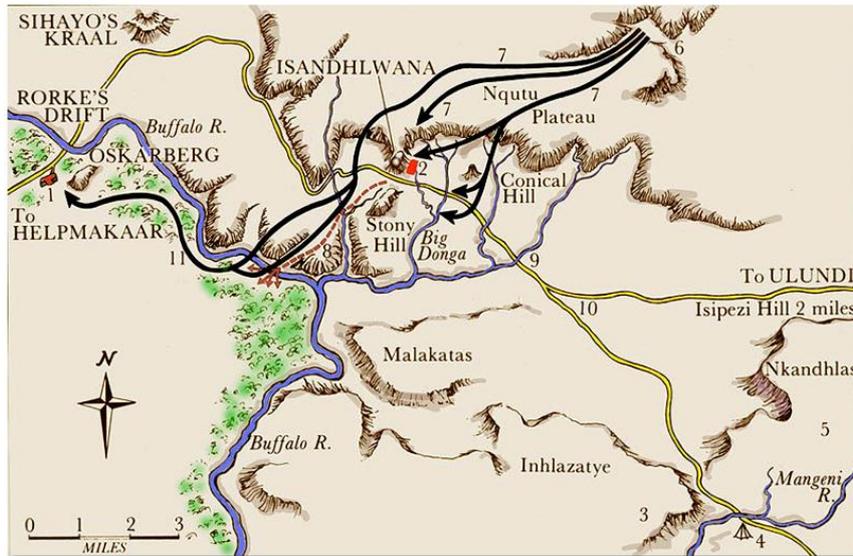
Section commanders were respectively:

Lt N (Nathaniel) Newnham Davies,  
Lt H A (Henry) Walsh,  
Lt Edward Stevenson Browne (later VC - Battle of Hlobane).

Lt Walsh was part of the group that successfully attacked Sihayo's Kraal and was back in the camp at iSandalwhana by 21 January.



*Imperial Mounted Infantry Troopers*



The route taken by no.3 Column was along the yellow track beginning at Rorke's Drift where B Company 2/24th were ordered to remain. There were another 2 companies of 1/24th posted at Helpmakaar. The first action was at Sihayo's Kraal on 12th Jan. The column then proceeded along the bottom edge of the plateau to Isandhlwana. The black lines show the direction and route of the Zulu impi on 22nd Jan. The dotted brown line indicates the route taken by those who managed, or attempted, to escape the carnage.

1. Rorke's Drift Mission Station
2. Camp at Isandhlwana
3. Major Dartnell's Bivouac, 21st-22nd Jan
4. Site of intended new camp
5. Where Chelmsford breakfasted on 22nd Jan
6. Ravine where Zulu Impi was found
7. Zulu attack on Isandhlwana
8. Fugitives' Route to Buffalo River
9. Where Hamilto-Browne watched the battle
10. Where Chelmsford met Lonsdale
11. Zulu attack on Rorke's Drift

Major Dartnell was sent south to try and discover the whereabouts of the main Zulu Impi.

Isandhlwana to Dartnell's camp was a distance of 11 miles [17.7 kilometres].

Major Dartnell was bivouacked on the Mangeni River and on 21 Jan sent a message to Chelmsford at iSandhlwana saying that he had sighted many Zulus and asking for instructions. Chelmsford ordered that a detachment of Mounted Infantry under Lieutenant Walsh be sent out to Dartnell, taking with them packhorses with extra rations and orders that Dartnell was to attack the Zulus 'when he thought fit'. Walsh's men set off not long after dark, and that evening the tattoo was sounded at iSandlwana at 8 p.m.

It was not long after the camp on the Mangeni River had settled down; however, when Walsh's party arrived from iSandlwana, the rumble of hooves and shouted challenges brought the bivouac to life again.

It was now quite dark, but Walsh had ridden across the plain safely, although one of his men told Maxwell that some shots had been fired at them about halfway from the camp.

Dartnell's second message to Chelmsford saying that he thought he had found the main Impi was taken through the night by Lieutenant Walsh and three of his Mounted Infantry. They had ridden the 17 kilometres from iSandlwana once already that night and Charlie Harford was impressed when they attempted the feat for a second time: "Walsh's was a very perilous journey with a eleven-mile ride in the dark, over very stiff country, hills, valleys, bush,

krantzes, dongas etc., all quite unknown to him, an occasional kaffir path, perhaps, leading to goodness knows where, and with every chance of being attacked by a lurking body of Zulus.”

Nonetheless, Walsh accomplished the journey safely, arriving back in the camp at about 1 a.m., and reporting to the headquarters tent of the column staff.

Lt Walsh then presumably re-joined Colonel Russell’s Mounted Infantry and left the camp with Lord Chelmsford at first light on the 22 January.

Lord Chelmsford’s column returned to iSandlwana early evening of the 22 January, camped there and rode on to Rorke’s Drift the next morning.

It was Colonel Russell and Lt Walsh who, that morning, were the first to enter the camp at Rorke’s Drift and talk to Lt Chard and Lt Bromhead.

[The above description of Lt Walsh’s involvement at iSandlwana and Rorke’s Drift is taken from a book “Zulu Rising by Ian Knight”]

Later in the year when Lt Chard came back to Taunton, one of the first people to meet him at the Station was Lt Walsh.

“Lt Chard recalled that, on arrival at Taunton earlier in the day, one of the first to meet him was Lieutenant H.A. Walsh of the 13th. Regiment of Foot, who also happened to be the first man who rode up to him after the defence of Rorke's Drift.”



Clip from film “Zulu” –

These are meant to be the IMI with Colonel Russell and Lt Walsh but a little artistic licence has been at work I fear.

After South Africa Lt Henry Walsh went on to fight in Sudan and commanded ‘B’ Company, Mounted Infantry Camel Corps. He was promoted to Brevet Major (a promotion awarded on

merit, rather than one that had been bought). He took part in several actions but at the battle of Abu Klea he was severely injured and returned home to England.

In December 1885, the town of Taunton, Somerset, presented him with a sword, ornamental silver tankard and the inevitable "illuminated address". There were many speeches describing his exploits.

His last post was Colonel, Chief Recruiting Staff Officer, London Recruiting District.

In 1906 he received a CB [Companion of the Order of Bath].

He retired to Bishops Hull, Taunton and died on the 25 November 1908.

Henry Walsh and his son are buried side by side at Taunton, St Mary's cemetery.



3071 WA 188821/WALL 8,001 13/22 188 P.R.B. GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM. 30 191

Section: Taunton Command: Report Number Bristol 268  
 Name of Cemetery: St. Mary's Cemetery Certified Correct and Complete. Schedule Number 1  
 Parish: Taunton Date: 16.10.11  
 County: Somerset Signature: P. R. Taylor Inspector. Category of Graves: D

Unit	Regt. No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Number or letter of		Type of Memorial	Type of Grave	Remarks
					Plot	Row			
Som. L. I.	7616	Chambers	Sgt. J.D.	2.8.15	Old ground	7175	P.F.	P.R.	with son.
1/Som. L. I.	3/6824	Stone	Pte. F.	8.2.19	"	7216A	M.W.	P.R.	with relatives
Som. L. I.		Walsh	Col. H.A.	25.11.18	"	6421	P.F.	P.R.	buried side by side
R.M.A.		Walsh	2/Lt. AGM	11.3.15	"	6420	P.F.	P.R.	
1/1 W. Som. Yeo	410	Peters	Sgt. S.E.	19.4.15	"	6024	P.F. M.W.	P.R.	
Yorkm. Regt.		Bentley	Lt. A.W.B.	8.12.18	"	7091	M.W.	P.R.	
13/ Rifle Bde.		Betty	Lt. A.W.	20.3.17	"	7056 B	P.F.	P.R.	
Col. 13th (L.C.)	2/260	Saffman	Lt. M.H.S.	10.1.17	"	7029	P.F.	P.R.	with wife
1/1 W. Som. Yeo	470	Ferpy	Pte. A.R.	4.10.18	"	7047	M.W.	P.R.	
Devon. Regt.	86234	Boon	Pte. H.	20.12.15	"	7049A	M.W.	P.R.	
3/Bde.	20615	Wenters	Pte. G.	29.3.15	"	7055	M.W.	P.R.	
11/ Rifle Bde.	20087	Hawkins	Lt. Col. F.M.	20.11.18	"	7002	M.W.	P.R.	
17/Hants. R.	34946	Thick	Pte. J.V.	9.1.17 Div. 4A	"	2046	M.W.	P.	with strange child

I hereby certify that a plan of this Cemetery is unnecessary (Sgt. J. R. Taylor Inspector.)

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 BATH. CO. 12265  
 F.S. 130-133 No. 22. 4-12-19  
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## OBITUARY.

### COLONEL H. A. WALSH.

Colonel Henry Alfred Walsh, C.B., who has died at his residence at Taunton, aged 65, joined the Somerset Light Infantry from the Somerset Militia in 1874. When his battalion was in Natal he was placed in command of a troop of mounted infantry, with whom he took part in the operations against the Kaffir chief Sekukuni. He and his men formed part of Lord Chelmsford's force during the Zulu War in 1879, but, being away reconnoitring, escaped the disaster of Isandula, to take part in the Battle of Ulundi. As a captain he served in the Nile Expedition of 1884 with the mounted infantry regiment of the Camel Corps, and fought at Gubat and Abu Klea, where he was dangerously wounded. At the close of the operations Captain Walsh, who was mentioned in despatches and promoted brevet-major, returned to the Somersets. In 1904 he was appointed chief recruiting staff officer for the London district. During the earlier period of the war he commanded No. 8 District of the Southern Command. To the exertions of Colonel and Mrs. Walsh has been largely due the successful organisation and maintenance of the Somerset County Fund for the Relief of Prisoners of War.

### COL. H. A. WALSH.

Colonel Henry Alfred Walsh, C.B., who died on November 25 at his residence, The Priory, Taunton, aged 65 years, had a distinguished career as a soldier, serving in the Kaffir Campaign, 1878-79, against Sekukuni, and in Zululand, where he took part in the re-occupation of Isandula and the battle of Ulundi (medal with clasp). Colonel Walsh, in the Sudan Expedition of 1884-85, was at Abu Klea, where he was dangerously wounded (despatches, medal with two clasps, bronze star, and brevet of major). In 1914 he resumed military duty as O.C. No. 8 District, at Exeter, retaining this command till 1917. Meanwhile he had been appointed County Commissioner of Somerset Boy Scouts. Colonel Walsh also took a great interest in the Somerset prisoners of war in Germany and Turkey. He married, in 1880, Ann Pollexfen Sparrow, who survives him. There were three children, two sons and a daughter. The elder son is Major T. A. Walsh, D.S.O. and bar, Somerset Light Infantry; the younger son, Lieutenant A. C. Walsh, R.I.A., was killed at Neuve Chapelle. His daughter married, in 1909, Captain A. H. Wheeler.