

A SCARCE VICTORIA CROSS PHOTOPGRAPH OF CAPTAIN HUGH ROWLANDS, 41ST (WELSH) REGIMENT. AWARDED THE VICTORIA CROSS FOR ACTIONS DURING THE CRIMEAN WAR



Sir Hugh Rowlands (1828-1909) was born on 6th May 1828 in Llanrug, Caernarvonshire, Wales. His father was a Welsh landowner, John Rowlands, who later was a local Justice of Peace and the Deputy Lieutenant of Caernarvonshire. His mother was Elizabeth Hartwell. He was educated at Beaumaris Grammar School and at Mr John Taylor's Cramming Academy in Woolwich.

Hugh obtained his first commission at the age of 20 in 1848 as an Ensign in the 41st Regiment of Foot, being promoted to Captain in August 1854. Earlier that year, he had proceeded with his Regiment to the Crimea and was present at the Battle of Alma, the repulse of the Russian sortie on 26th October 1854, and at the Battle of Inkerman. On the 5th November 1854, during the engagement at Inkerman, Hugh would be awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions that day.

During the Battle, Colonel Haly of the 47th Regiment of Foot had been wounded and was surrounded by several Russian soldiers. Hugh went to the Colonel's rescue, and then held the ground occupied by his advance picquet against the enemy at the commencement of the action.

Rowlands was recommended for and was one of the first men to be listed in the London Gazette as a recipient of the Victoria Cross (24th February 1857). On recovering from his wounds suffered at Inkerman, he returned to his Regiment and took part in the Siege of Sebastopol, including the attack on the Quarries on the 7th June 1855, two attacks on the Rifle Pits, and also the two attacks on the Redan on 18th June and 8th September 1855. He was again wounded during the Redan assault.

In addition to his VC, he was awarded the Crimean Medal with three clasps, promoted to Major by brevet, appointed a Knight of the Legion of Honour, awarded the 5th Class of the

Medjidie and the Turkish Medal. In 1866, he was given command of his Regiment, and from May 1875 to 1878 he also commanded the 34th Regiment of Foot attaining the rank of Colonel.



In 1867, he had married Isabella Jane Barrow, the daughter of T.J.R Barrow of the Royal Navy, who hailed from Ryelands, Gloucestershire. In 1878, Hugh was employed on special service at Luneberg, South Africa, and commanded the troops in actions with the Kaffirs at Tolako Mountain, for which service he was mentioned in despatches and received the campaign medal and clasp.

He was promoted to Major General in 1881, Lieutenant General in 1890, and General in 1894, and filled in various appointments both at home and in India, the most important being the command of the 1st Class District in Madras from 1884 to 1889. He also held the office for a few months of Lieutenant of the Tower of London, and the command of the Scottish district from 1894 to 1896, when he retired from the active list. In 1897 he was appointed Colonel of the West Riding Regiment, and the following year he was knighted. He then retired from public life and returned to North Wales.

On Sunday 1st August 1909, General Sir Hugh Rowlands died at his birthplace of Plas Tirion, near Llanrug, Caernarvonshire aged 81. He was laid to rest in St Michael's Churchyard, Llanrug.

Original large 28 x 20 cm photograph. The above taken from the fine vconline website:

<http://www.vconline.org.uk/sir-hugh-rowlands-vc/4588105633.html>

A scarce original period VC recipient VC photograph