Eyewitness accounts are among the many sources used in the voluminous literature on the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, a major test of British command, transport arrangements, and the fighting qualities of the short-service soldier. Quite apart from the writings of the late Frank Emery, who refers to eighty-five correspondents in *The Red Soldier* and another twenty-four in his chapter on that campaign in *Marching Over Africa*,¹ there are invaluable edited collections of letters from individual officers by Sonia Clark² and Daphne Child,³ and by Adrian Greaves and Brian Best.⁴ While the papers and journals of the British commanding officers have been splendidly edited,⁵ some perspectives of officers and other ranks appear in testimony before official inquiries (into the disasters at Isandlwana and Ntombe, and the death of the Prince Imperial)⁶ and among the sources used by F. W. D. Jackson and Ian Knight, and by Donald Morris in his classic volume *The Washing of the Spears*.⁷ Yet the letters found by Emery – the core of the material used for the views of regimental officers and other ranks⁸ – represent only a fraction of the material written during the Anglo-Zulu War. Many more officers and men kept diaries or wrote to friends and family, chronicling their exploits in that war and its immediate predecessors, the Ninth Cape Frontier War (1877–78) and the campaign against the Pedi chief, Sekhukhune (1878). While several soldiers complained about the postal arrangements or the scarcity of stamps and paper, they still wrote letters, even improvising, as Corporal Thomas Davies (2/24th) did, by using gunpowder as ink.⁹ Their correspondence forms the core of this Chapter’s review of campaigning in southern Africa.

Several of the regiments who fought the Zulus had already served in southern Africa. The 1/24th (of the 2nd Warwickshires, later South Wales Borderers) and the 1/13th (Somerset Light Infantry) had served in southern Africa since 1875; the 2/Buffs, the 80th (2/South Staffordshires) and the 88th (1/Connaught Rangers) had joined them in 1877,
and the 2/24th, largely composed of short-service soldiers, had arrived in March 1878. These forces, coupled with the 90th Light Infantry (Perthshire Volunteers), two batteries of field artillery (N/5 and II/7) and the 7th Company, Royal Engineers, undertook a daunting array of garrison and other duties in Cape Colony, Natal, along the Zululand border, and in the Transvaal. Sir Arthur Cunynghame, the general officer commanding (GOC) South Africa, compensated for his lack of cavalry by forming mounted infantry from the 1/24th in 1875, and raising additional bodies of mounted riflemen, volunteers and mounted police from the colonial communities, as well as native auxiliaries, both before and during the Ninth Cape Frontier War. The Mfengu were willing to fight the Ngqika and the Gcaleka in the Transkei, while the Swazis readily joined in attacking the mountainous strongholds of the Pedi in eastern Transvaal.

The Ninth Cape Frontier War and campaign against Sekhukhune

The campaigns of 1877–78 were a series of largely desultory engagements, often involving small bodies of imperial troops (sometimes half-companies or less) and/or mounted police and their auxiliaries. These bodies repelled raids on police posts and convoys, skirmished in thick bush and periodically mounted reprisal raids – burning villages and seizing cattle. When the Xhosa massed in their thousands and engaged in set-piece battles – at Nyamaga (13 January 1878) and Cen-tane (7 February 1878) – they suffered heavy defeats, breaking before the disciplined fire-power of a few hundred infantry, mounted police, a rocket battery and a few guns. At Nyamaga, recalled Lieutenant Thomas R. Main, (RE), ‘our Martini Henrys produced terrible havoc amongst the enemy who, having no opportunity to reload, bolted across the open plain’, pursued by the police and Mfengu auxiliaries. Thereafter campaigning over the rolling hills, high plateaus, and bush-covered ravines and valleys became wearisome and tedious: ‘We trekked up & down the Transkei’, wrote Main, ‘but rarely brought the Kafirs [sic] to book’. Volley-firing was also to the fore when the small force under Colonel H. Rowlands, VC, tried to storm the rocky fastnesses of the Pedi. One soldier of the 1/13th described how the assault was launched on 27 October 1878, with companies deployed in skirmishing formation, supported by artillery, Swazis and the Carrington Horse. ‘In a short time’, he wrote, ‘one thought the gates of hell were let loose and that demons were fighting’. Under continuous fire and periodic counter-attacks, the 1/13th had to charge up a mountain, support the
Carrington Horse who ‘were too weak to keep their position’, and, despite driving the enemy up the mountain, had to retire ‘after six or seven hours hard fighting ... exhausted from thirst’. Having failed to capture the stronghold of Chief Sekhukhune, Rowlands prudently withdrew as his expedition was crippled by heat, lack of water and horse-sickness. The march back to the camp at Spekboom Drift, as a 1/13th Light Infantryman observed, was a debilitating experience: ‘When we got to the river I do not think there was one man but drank four canteens full of water as fast as one could drink, we were so exhausted and thirsty.’

Understandably the abortive campaign against Sekhukhune, undertaken over peculiarly difficult terrain by an under-strength force, had less impact upon British military thinking than did the bush fighting in the Transkei. Many of the commanding officers and regular forces, who would serve in the Anglo-Zulu War, fought in the Ninth Cape Frontier War. In March 1878 Lieutenant-General the Hon. Frederic A. Thesiger, later the second Baron Chelmsford, superseded Cunynghame. He utilised the estimable services of Colonel Evelyn Wood, VC, with the 90th Foot, and Major Redvers Buller in command of the Frontier Light Horse (FLH), to mount systematic drives through the bush to overcome the elusive Ngqikas by the end of May. The campaign repeatedly demonstrated that concentrated fire-power from small bodies of regulars, or sometimes colonials, could disperse much larger bodies of Xhosa, even without the aid of prepared defences. A Tauntonian described such an action when sixty police, supported by four 7-pounder muzzle-loading guns, sent ‘between 4,000 and 6,000 niggers running for dear life’, but when the trail of one of their guns broke down later they had to withdraw, whereupon the accompanying 400 Mfengus panicked and fled.

When another patrol of forty Connaught Rangers, twenty police and three volunteers was ambushed by about 1,000 Gcaleka (30 December 1877), several police, noted one of the volunteers, jumped ‘on their horses and [five or six] galloped through and away’. Major Moore, who earned a VC for leading the patrol, reported more positively: ‘The Connaught Rangers, boys though they are – not one of them had ever seen an enemy before – and some of the Frontier Armed Police, behaved admirably.’ He criticised only their ‘very mild’ shooting that accounted for a ‘small number of the enemy’. Local volunteers and the native levies had provided invaluable support, especially in pursuit of the enemy and their cattle, but their periodic displays of ill-discipline and unreliability evoked profound misgivings among the regulars.

Although the resistance of the Ngqika and Gcaleka proved unexpectedly stubborn, many soldiers realised that a more challenging war
with the Zulus was imminent. While based in King William’s Town in the summer of 1878, Lieutenant Main heard ‘rumours of unrest among the Zulus with their powerful army of 30,000 trained warriors, a very different foe to the undisciplined Kaffirs’. British units were ordered into Natal as war appeared imminent (it was eventually provoked by Cetshwayo’s rejection of an ultimatum from Sir Bartle Frere, the high commissioner for South Africa, requiring acceptance of a British resident and the disbandment of the Zulu army). Private George Morris (1/24th) anticipated ‘hard fighting’ ahead, while his comrade Private John Thomas approved of the strict discipline in Pietermaritzburg: ‘I saw six soldiers flogged on Saturday morning, and two this morning, for being drunk on the line of march. They will have to remember that the Zulus have got Martini-Henry rifles as well as we . . .’.

The Anglo-Zulu War: first invasion of Zululand

Chelmsford duly assembled his army of 17,929 officers and men, including over 1,000 mounted colonial volunteers and some 9,000 natives, and amassed a mighty array of transport – 977 wagons, 56 carts, 10,023 oxen, 803 horses and 398 mules. He planned to deploy five columns, two of which (No. 2 under Lieutenant-Colonel A. W. Durnford and No. 5 under Rowlands) were to defend the borders of Natal and the Transvaal, respectively, while the other three were to cross into Zululand on 11 January 1879. Wood’s No. 4 Column was to cross the Blood River and subdue the northern areas of the Zulu kingdom; Colonel C. K. Pearson’s No. 1 Column was to cross the Lower Drift of the Tugela (Thukela) River and establish a base for future operations at the abandoned mission of Eshowe; and No 3, or Centre, Column, nominally under Colonel Richard T. Glyn, but effectively under Chelmsford’s command, would cross into Zululand at Rorke’s Drift, where a supply depot was established on 11 January 1879. Soldiers found the country rugged and progress slow: companies of the 2/24th had to make roads for several days before advancing to the temporary camp site at Isandlwana. Even those serving in the lines of communication, like Private M. Gerrotty (2/4th), reported: ‘This is bad country to travel in. We marched 150 miles up country, hardly any water, and some of it of the worst description, all climbing up hills.’

Within a day of crossing into Zululand, Chelmsford launched an attack on Chief Sihayo’s mountainous kraal above the Batshe River. A corporal of the 24th wrote: ‘We were at great disadvantage owing to the rocks and bush, but we managed to rout them out in the long run after about eight hours’ fighting.’ He admitted that ‘it is very hard work travelling after these Zulus. They can run like horses.’ This early display
of Zulu mobility exposed the shortage of mounted men with the Centre Column, and a week later Chelmsford ordered Durnford, with the Natal Native Horse, a battalion of infantry and a rocket battery, to support his column.23

By the time Durnford, with his 250 mounted men, reached Isandlwana (about 10.30 a.m. on 22 January 1879), Chelmsford had already departed with six companies of the 2/24th, four guns of Harness’s battery, a detachment of mounted infantry, and the Natal Native
Pioneers. He had done so at first light after a reconnaissance party under Major John Dartnell reported 1,000 Zulus some 12 miles eastwards. Fearing lest Dartnell or another reconnaissance party under Commandant Rupert Lonsdale had encountered the main Zulu *impi*, Chelmsford planned to reinforce them but left a substantial force (five companies of the 1/24th, one company of the 2/24th, the two remaining 7-pounder guns, over 100 mounted infantry and four companies of the Natal Native Contingent) under Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Pulleine, 1/24th, to guard the camp. He also required Pulleine to keep his cavalry vedettes advanced, draw in his line of infantry outposts and defend the camp, if attacked. Once Durnford’s force arrived, including the rocket battery, there were nearly 1,800 men at Isandlwana; by the early evening, only some 55 Europeans and less than 400 natives survived.

Of the European survivors, most of the British soldiers testified before official inquiries or wrote letters that have been used in accounts of the battle. Captain W. Penn Symons (2/24th) reviewed some of this evidence in a regimental inquiry, including the testimonies of the six survivors of the 1/24th (Privates Grant, Johnson, Trainer, Williams, Bickley and Wilson) and observed: ‘It was very remarkable how their accounts afterwards varied. Men forgot what they saw and did amidst great excitement, and mixed up what others told them with their own experiences and reminiscences.’

Some survivors, like Lieutenant Curling, were profoundly shocked by the experience and were not always lucid in their recollections; others embellished their accounts, even in the case of H. C. Young possibly claiming to have escaped from Isandlwana when, according to Lieutenant Higginson, he was in Sandspruit on the day of the battle. Moreover these accounts, as F. W. D. Jackson has observed, ‘do little more than hint at the final stages of the battle’, where they gave the impression of organised resistance collapsing – an impression contradicted by Zulu testimony and the location of the dead.

Despite these shortcomings, the correspondents corroborated aspects of the battle, not least Colonel Durnford’s behaviour on reaching the camp, where he outranked Pulleine. Durnford had already learned from Lieutenant John Chard, RE, whom he had met while the latter was returning to Rorke’s Drift, that Zulus were moving on the distant hills, but the reports from outposts and vedettes were of varying accuracy. When Durnford heard subsequently that the enemy were retiring, he determined to pursue them and prevent any reinforcement of the main *impi* that was supposed to be engaging Chelmsford. An ‘eyewitness’ confirmed Lieutenant W. F. D. Cochrane’s claim that Durnford requested the assistance of two companies of the 24th, which Pulleine refused, and Trooper Muirhead (Natal Carabineers) regarded
Durnford as ‘the cause of all the disaster’ on account of his provocative advance at a time when the camp was not even protected by a laager of wagons. Pulleine had to defend the camp, which sprawled over half a mile of ground, but had neither entrenched it (which would have been difficult on the hard stony ground) nor organised a laager (a time-consuming and skilled task that may have seemed superfluous for a temporary camp site, where wagons were still bringing forward supplies from Rorke’s Drift). Although scouts were supposed to give adequate notice of any impending attack, Lieutenant Teignmouth Melvill, 1/24th, and others had warned of the dangers of undefended camps in Zulu territory, and when Captain Edward Essex led survivors back to Helpmekaar, after the battle, he immediately ordered the construction of a wagon laager to afford protection.

As regards the battle itself, Private Edward Evans of the mounted infantry was another survivor (and brought news of the disaster to Rorke’s Drift). In a letter to his mother and brother, he hinted at the problem of overextended lines but said nothing about the ammunition supply:

On the 22nd January 1879, at 4 a.m., General Lord Chelmsford marched out his main column, about 2,000 strong, intending to attack the main body of Cetyawyo’s [sic] army. . . and when our column was about 13 miles away from camp we (the men left in camp) could hear the roar of their cannons, and believed everything was going on successfully with them. Now comes the sorrowful history of our camp! About 9 a.m.our company of the 2–24th Regiment was on vidette [sic], or outline picket, on the left flank of ours, when the enemy made his appearance on the left front of our camp. Our picket opened fire on the enemy. We got the order, ‘Every man stand to his arms, and be ready for action at a moment’s notice.’ About 11 a.m. the enemy made its appearance in four large columns, estimated at 15,000 strong. Colonel Durnford, R.E., gave orders for his mounted men to go and flank them on the right, and the rocket party also went to meet them, but had no time to fire more than one rocket when they were cut up. Only one escaped. Then Colonel Pulleen [sic] took out about 500 of the 1-24th, and threw out a line of skirmishers in front of the enemy, when the poor fellows opened a most destructive fire on the enemy, knowing they had to fight for their lives, and intending to sell their lives as dear as possible. They were over numbered more than 20 to one. Two divisions of artillery were also pouring down upon them as fast as shot and shell could be used, but took no effect on the murderous savages. Where 100 would fall 300 would come up and fill up the gap. All the mounted men were guarding the back of the camp, but to no good. Heedless of shot or shell, or bayonet stabs, they kept coming in by thousands, and killed our men like dogs.

A 20-year-old Natal policeman served in support of Durnford’s flanking movement and wrote of the Zulus:
we saw the hill black with them, coming on in swarms, estimated at
20,000. We held a ditch as long as possible, but being outnumbered the
order was given to get into camp. Well we got there. I went all over the
place for a gun, but could not get one. My revolver was broken. . . . The
Zulus were in the camp, ripping our men up, also the tents and every-
thing they came upon with their assegais. 33

Only mounted men, like Evans and Muirhead, had any chance of
escape: Muirhead described how Surgeon-Major Shepherd was killed in
flight after briefly stopping to examine a fallen trooper. 34 One of the
escaping Basuto horsemen claimed that their chief had made them
concentrate their fire on one spot in the Zulu ranks, mowing ‘a lane for
the moment through the Zulus’ and then dashing through it. 35 ‘It was
a ride for life’, wrote Evans, ‘Many of our noble heroes that escaped
from the hands of the enemy lost their lives in crossing the Buffalo
River. Thank God for learning me to swim. My horse fell in the water,
and both of us went down together, and both swam out again – but a
very hard struggle.’ 36

The remainder of Chelmsford’s Column had apparently marched
out, ‘full of spirits at the thought of a brush with the enemy’, and heard
nothing from the camp until the sound of gun-fire about 12.30 a.m.
When a horseman brought news of the attack, the readiness of Lieu-
tenant-Colonel Arthur Harness, with his four guns and two companies
of 2/24th, to march back contrasted with the incredulity of Major
Gosset and other members of Chelmsford’s staff. 37 As Harness’s sol-
diers first marched back some 5 miles, then were ordered to rejoin the
column before finally being ordered to return to the camp, a colour-
sergeant of the 2/24th recalled: ‘It was awfully annoying this marching
backwards and forwards; but a soldier’s first duty is obedience and
away we went, though awfully tired.’ 38 A few miles from the camp, the
general and advance escort returned to explain that the camp had
fallen. When Chelmsford, who seemed, according to Private P. Fitzger-
ad (2/24th), ‘very near crying’, 39 ordered that the camp should be
retaken even at the point of the bayonet, the ranks responded with
three cheers. 40 By nightfall (times vary, but probably about 8 p.m.), the
column stormed into the camp with fire from guns and volleys, and
bayonets fixed. Apart from a few drunken Zulus, who were quickly
bayoneted, the soldiers found the camp deserted. 41 They spent a largely
sleepless night, punctuated by periodic alerts: as A. J. Secretan (Natal
Mounted Police) noted, ‘We were lying amongst thousands of dead,
both black and white . . . I myself was lying in a pool of blood and a
ghastly corpse was just beside me.’ 42

At sunrise the spectacle was even worse. Secretan observed that
some British soldiers had died ‘formed up in square, where they held

[ 42 ]
their ground till all were slain where they stood’. Like many others, he was appalled by the mutilated corpses and the ‘horses and oxen all lying about, stabbed and ripped up’.43 Several soldiers (Charles Mason, Daniel Sullivan, John James and R. Wilson) as well as Lieutenant Hillier (Lonsdale Horse) claimed that disembowelled band boys hung from butcher’s hooks.44 Whether these stories, like similar tales already documented, were true or were the products of rumour, hearsay and fevered imagination – as has been suggested45 – they circulated widely, feeding the hatred of the Zulu and the desire, as expressed by Private G. Griffiths [2/24th], for ‘revenge on the black heathens’.46 Such feelings, though, had to fester for some time, as the column had lost its colours, stores, valises, blankets, coats, tents and ammunition. ‘The Zulus’, wrote Private D. Buckley [2/24th], ‘took everything they could carry and what they could not carry they burnt.’47 As Chelmsford promptly ordered a withdrawal from Isandlwana, and retired on to the defensive in Natal, his soldiers consoled themselves as they awaited reinforcements. Many counted their blessings, as they too had been vulnerable, possessing only seventy rounds of ammunition per man.48 They extolled the achievements of their fallen comrades: ‘The enemy’, wrote Private P. Thomas [2/24th], ‘had to pay dearly for their day’s work’, a view echoed by the many who greatly exaggerated the number of Zulu dead.49 Similarly many were quick to blame Durnford for the debacle – and to identify other scapegoats: ‘those d——d volunteers and Native Contingent’, claimed Private Thomas Harding [2/24th], ‘ran away as soon as they saw the enemy coming’.50

British morale, nonetheless, revived after the heroic defence of Rorke’s Drift (22–3 January 1879), when some 140 men – 35 of whom were sick – resisted an onslaught from an estimated 4,000 Zulus (the uNdí Corps, a reserve not employed in the attack on Isandlwana). The base at least had warning of the impending attack, enabling Lieutenant Gonville Bromhead [2/24th] and Assisting Acting Commissary James Dalton, a former sergeant in the 85th Foot, to begin organising a perimeter defence while Chard, the officer in command, closed down the pontoon operations. Apart from two wagons, the perimeter consisted of piles of mealie bags and biscuit boxes – ‘a broken and imperfect barricade at the best, and nowhere more than two feet high’.51 Private E. Stephens (B Company, 2/24th) informed his mother that

a farthing would have bought all our lives. Then we got our guns and ammunition, struck camp, and barricaded the old storehouse as well as we could. Some were posted one place and another, and about an hour elapsed when we could see them coming. They say it was 4,000 altogether. Every man was to his post, and all the 300 natives we got ran away, and there was 146 of us altogether. We kept firing; it began about

[ 43 ]
three o'clock – kept on for two hours – when they succeeded in setting fire to the little house used as an hospital. It was getting dark then, and we expected help. We thought the General would come to us, but not so. We said we would die brave. We kept it up until daybreak, and, thank God, they ran away, and we went round to bury the dead, and we killed a good number.\textsuperscript{52}

From the hospital a Dundonian in the 1/24th, almost certainly Private John William Roy, who was mentioned in despatches, afforded a more garbled account:

When we heard the rapid firing we fortified the Mission Station as well as we could. The hospital was the missionary’s dwellinghouse, and the sick (about 20 of us) manned that, while the company were inside the fortification. We had only about three-quarters of an hour to secure ourselves as well we could. They came down upon us about three o’clock in the afternoon . . . They very nearly overpowered us. They took the hospital and set fire to it, while I and another old soldier were inside at the back window, and we did not know they had taken it at the front. My rifle got disabled, so I fixed my bayonet and charged out of the house . . . There were about 30 Zulus chasing us, but the men inside the fort shot them before they could harm us. There were four men burned alive in the hospital, they being unable to move with the fever. We kept our position until the morning and then the General came to our assistance.\textsuperscript{53}

An anonymous account in the \textit{Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser} was more informative. The Zulus initially ‘advanced quietly but quickly at a run, taking advantage of every bit of cover. It seemed as if they had expected to surprise the camp. Our men opened fire at 500 yards.’ As the advance party broke and scattered to their left, occupying the garden and orchard, where there was plenty of cover . . . Others came on in a continuous stream, occupied the hill above, and gradually encircled the two houses. All men who had guns were stationed on the hill, and kept up a continuous and rapid fire on the yard . . . Had they been good marksmen the place was untenable, but they fired wildly and badly for the most part.

Meanwhile parties of 15–20 Zulus ‘repeatedly attacked the end room of the hospital. They made these attacks in the most deliberate manner, advancing after the manner of their dancing, with a prancing step and high action; they cared nothing for slaughter’. They were resisted with bullet and bayonet: ‘seven or eight times at least, Lieutenant Bromhead, collecting a few men together, had to drive them off with a bayonet charge’. The shooting was deliberate and effective: in the morning, outside the window of the hospital defended by Private
Joseph Williams, ‘a young Welshman, with under two years’ service’, there were fourteen dead warriors ‘and several more down his line of fire’. After the hospital was vacated, the ‘fighting in places became hand to hand over the mealie sacks. The assailants used only their assegais. These they did not throw but used as stabbing weapons.’ The fighting continued until 4 a.m. when they gradually withdrew, carrying as many of their dead and wounded as they could. ‘The last of them left just before dawn. They left 370 dead on the field. These were counted and buried in heaps.

On the same day as the battle of Isandlwana, Pearson’s column encountered some 6,000 Zulus at the River Nyezane. The column had spent ten days struggling across the river-laced terrain of long grass and bush, gaining a foretaste of how slow and frustrating movement would be in Zululand. The teams of 16 oxen pulling each of the 130 wagons posed difficulties at river crossings where, as Sergeant Josh S. Hooper (2/Buffs) noted, ‘we had to drag most of the waggons across as the bullocks instead of pulling have a great inclination to lay down in the water’. The column’s length straggled over several miles, compounding its vulnerability, and, at the Nyezane, the advance guard bore the brunt of the Zulu attack. To prevent the Zulus from enveloping the lead units, Pearson ordered the Naval Brigade under Captain H. Fletcher Campbell, Lieutenant Lloyd’s artillery and two companies of Buffs to seize the crest of a nearby knoll. This split the enemy’s advance and brought into action two 7-pounders, rocket tubes and later a Gatling gun, while the remaining Buffs, the 99th (Duke of Edinburgh’s Lanarkshire) and a portion of the Naval Brigade skirmished on the flanks. Within an hour the enemy fled. While the column suffered 10 deaths and 16 wounded, official estimates of the Zulu dead exceeded 300.

Although the participants tended to exaggerate both the length of the battle and the number of Zulu casualties, they recalled key features of the engagement. Once again the native auxiliaries fled (many of their officers and non-commissioned officers could not speak the auxiliaries’ language, and some could not even speak English). While Dr Mansell, a surgeon with the column, appreciated that these were poorly armed soldiers (only every tenth man had a rifle), he was appalled that some tried to find shelter in the ambulance wagons. The credit for the victory, he added, belonged to ‘about five hundred men comprising a portion of the Buffs and the 99th Regiments’. Yet the gunners, sappers, mounted troops and the Naval Brigade contributed, too, with the sailors firing 300 rounds from the Gatling gun. While Lieutenant Main described the Zulus as ‘splendid fighters, but stood no chance against the white man & his Martini rifle, as long as the latter
remained steady’, Zulu fire-power inflicted relatively few casualties because it was aimed far too high: some sailors were among the first injured because they climbed into trees to get a better line of sight and were inadvertently shot.

The column moved on to a Scandinavian mission at Eshowe, where work began on the construction of a fort. This involved digging a trench some 10–12-feet deep, and 20-feet wide, with stakes planted inside. The earth from the trench was used to create a breastwork, with steps inside, and beyond the trench smaller holes were dug, containing sharpened stakes linked by wire to entangle the legs of any onrushing Zulus. The labour of constructing the trench soon paled by comparison with the boredom of living within its vicinity. Despite some mounted forays, several officers chafed at Pearson’s decision to wait for relief lest it demoralise the men. The fort was isolated (until a heliograph link with the Tugela was established) as runners rarely reached Natal (and, ironically, a couple who did get there brought news of the disaster at Isandlwana). Once ‘the extent of the loss became known’, wrote Mansell, ‘the men were much depressed about it’. Morale flagged within the fort: as Lieutenant A. V. Payne observed: ‘I have not had a single letter from home yet: we are reading some old papers we found up here 10 years old, principally old Illustrated News.’ Even worse, fever and dysentery swept through the ranks as men endured extremes of climate (fierce heat in daytime often followed by heavy rain at night), impure water, cramped conditions each night in a sodden earthwork fort and short daily rations (½lb of mouldy biscuit, 12oz wholemeal, usually in the form of dark and sour bread, 3oz of preserved vegetables and half the allowance of salt and pepper). By 5 March, ‘the Church [our hospital]’, wrote Sergeant Hooper, ‘is full of men, many raving and often too bad and weak to rave;’ by 26 March, the sick on ‘Convalescent Hill’ were ‘all very much emaciated . . . not one is able to lift his hand to even drive off the flies which continually worry them . . . the stench in the hospital is beyond my description’.

On 12 March another disaster befell the British forces near the Transvaal border when 800 to 900 Zulus attacked a camp on the banks of the Ntombe (Intombi) River. Their target was a convoy of eighteen wagons carrying stores, ammunition and provisions from Lydenburg to Natal, escorted by 106 soldiers of the 80th under Captain D. B. Moriarty. As the river had been swollen by heavy rain, sixteen wagons were on the northern bank, arranged in a V-shaped laager (a formation criticised by Major Charles Tucker when he visited the camp on the previous day because of the gaps between the wagons and the distance between the ‘legs’ of the V and the river). With the bulk of the men and the oxen within the laager, thirty-four men were left on the southern
bank, initially with Sergeant Anthony Booth in charge and later Lieutenant H. H. Harward. Under the cover of an early morning fog the Zulus crept to about 90 metres of the northern camp, whereupon, at approximately 5 a.m., they opened fire and attacked the camp with assegais. The only effective response came from the southern bank where the men were standing to, following an earlier errant shot. Sergeant Booth wrote: ‘I rallied my party by the waggon and poured heavy fire into them as fast as we could . . . I commanded the party on this side as Lieutenant Harward saddled his horse and galloped away leaving us to do the best we could.’ Booth’s section provided covering fire for some fifteen men, ‘all as naked as they were born’, who swam the river, and then held off 200–300 Zulus by firing volleys in a phased retreat to a mission station about 3 miles away. Captain Moriarty perished with seventy-eight men in this action, for which Booth earned a VC. Harward, who rode off to alert Major Tucker at Luneburg, later survived a court martial, but his career was ruined.

Wood’s No. 4 Column, though expected to march towards Ulundi in support of the Centre Column, had to pacify the territory en route to ensure the protection of the border town of Utrecht and the hamlet of Luneburg. Wood’s Column included two infantry battalions (1/13th and 90th), an artillery battery less one section, six troops of mounted volunteers (including a Boer contingent under Piet Uys) and two battalions of locally recruited Zulus, known as ‘Wood’s irregulars’. They were soon skirmishing with larger bodies of Zulus, burning their kraals and capturing thousands of head of cattle, sheep and horses. Morale soared as the enemy repeatedly broke before Wood’s fire-power. ‘We gave them volley after volley’, wrote Private G. Betts (90th), ‘which made them run in all directions.’ ‘We are in good fighting trim’, claimed a Crieff veteran, ‘we are old warriors (for this is our second war), and are used to fighting darkies.’ After receiving news of Isandlwana, Wood abandoned the march on Ulundi and established a camp at Kambula. A medical officer noted:

On one side of the camp is a precipice and the other side is very steep. In front there is a narrow open stretch of ground, and immediately in rear of our camp, about 250 yards off, perched on a small isolated eminence about 100 feet above us, is a fort with a deep ditch, mounting two guns. The camp consists of two laagers, an outside square one composed of about 90 waggons end to end, and an inner circle of about 50 waggons, where the oxen are kept at night. In addition the camp is intrenched [sic].

A trooper of the Frontier Light Horse (FLH) described how mounted outposts were positioned 5 miles from the camp and a mile at night, men had to ‘sleep with their boots and clothes on, with their ammuni-
tion around them’, and the ammunition boxes were ‘kept unscrewed and ready for use’.72

Wood kept despatching mounted forces under Buller to seize cattle and destroy nearby Zulu homesteads. Some Zulus surrendered, swelling the ranks of Wood’s irregulars, but the refractory abaQulusi frequently retreated to a mountainous plateau on Hlobane mountain. On 28 March Wood attacked this stronghold using a pincer movement, involving mounted troops and native levies. Although Buller’s force (some 160 FLH and 200 irregulars) reached the summit and began driving off Zulu cattle, supporting units (the Border Horse) became separated in the darkness and the abaQulusi harassed the rear guard. When the other part of the pincer withdrew at the sight of a massive Zulu army approaching along the valley below, Buller’s command had to conduct a fighting retreat. An officer of the FLH described how

We galloped along the top of the mountain, and found the way down was simply a sheer rocky descent . . . The Dutchmen in front rushed to try and get down first, as the Zulus were only 500 yards behind us on top, and the enemy approaching was apparently going to try and cut us off below. Nothing more or less than a terrible panic ensued . . . I and my horse fell a matter of 30 feet . . . On reaching the bottom I found men of all the different corps massed together preparing for a precipitous flight . . . the mass refused to listen to any of the eight officers down there. We beseeched, threatened, and cursed them, calling them cowards, and had actually to fire on them. It was no good, about 20 or 30 stopped, and we waited for what men to come down who could. Most arrived dismounted, and we had to watch helplessly the Zulus assegaing the brave fellows at the top. It was an awful sight. We then picked up what men we could get away, and made our way home.73

If few British regulars were involved in this rout – a rare example of a small body of men caught on a mountain top and harried by the Zulu – they were appalled by the spectacle of bedraggled men returning to Khambula. ‘It was an extraordinary sight’, wrote Lieutenant Fell (90th), ‘to see the men return into camp. All the horses deadbeat. Some carrying three men. Many had thrown away boots, coats, trousers, arms, and ammunition, in fact everything which could inconvenience them.74 Even worse were the tales of the slaughter, involving the loss of 15 officers and 79 men, mostly colonial irregulars, and at least 100 of Wood’s irregulars. During the night most of Wood’s remaining irregulars deserted,75 and the Dutch contingent departed after the death of their leader, Piet Uys. Forewarned of the approach of the Zulu army, some 20,000-strong, the 2,086 officers and men, including 88 sick, awaited the attack on the following day. By mid-morning, wrote Corporal Hutchinson, ‘the hills around us were black’76 as the Zulus advanced in
five enormous columns. By despatching his mounted troops as skirmishers, Wood provoked the right horn into a precipitate attack, whereupon it foundered, as Fell described, before ‘a storm of lead from our men in the laager’. Over the next four hours the Zulus mounted a succession of assaults, with their bravery all too obvious: ‘no matter how many were killed’, Hutchinson recalled, ‘still they kept coming on and still they were getting killed’. Although disciplined fire-power disrupted their attacks and kept them from reaching the fort, the rifles became so hot that soldiers could not hold them, whereupon ‘one party cooled their arms while the other fired . . .’. A bayonet charge by two companies of the 90th dispersed some Zulus who broke into the cattle laager: ‘they did not stand it’, wrote Private John Graham (90th), and many were shot retreating down the hill. When the Zulus eventually withdrew, Wood let forth his mounted troops. An officer of the FLH wrote: ‘We chased a column of 6,000, only 150 of us, but our blood was up and the enemy in retreat. We were no longer men but demons, screaming the same refrain “Remember yesterday!”’ While Buller’s troops left a trail of slaughter over 8 miles, a company of the 90th left the fort, shooting and bayoneting the enemy. Fell claimed that this was revenge for Isandlwana, but the battle in which over 2,000 Zulus died (compared with 29 dead and 55 wounded within the camp) had a much greater significance: as Private George Davies (mounted infantry) observed, ‘The battle will greatly dishearten them and do us a great deal of good . . .’.

Bolstering morale was certainly necessary, as the remnants of Glyn’s column languished in the cramped and unhealthy conditions at Helpmekaar and Rorke’s Drift with little to do once they had fortified the depots. In lengthy letters to his father, Lieutenant Charles E. Commeline, (RE), fully described the two months of tedium awaiting reinforcements, building earthworks and roads, bringing forward stores, ammunition and equipment, and coping with transport difficulties. Amid the frustrations came criticisms of Chelmsford: ‘The Zulus have completely out-generalled us’, wrote one of his column, while another feared that they had lived ‘in such a fool’s paradise, over-estimating our knowledge of the enemy and under-estimating their strength and tactics’. As these concerns found reflection in the press, Commeline doubted that Chelmsford ‘can remove the unfavourable impression that has been created’.

From mid-March onwards reinforcements began to arrive in Natal. They included five infantry battalions, two cavalry regiments, additional artillery, engineers and other support services, with most of the home-based units brought up to strength with volunteers from other units. Huge crowds had cheered the ‘Avenging Army’ when it left
Portsmouth and Southampton, while local newspapers, such as the *Ayr Advertiser* and the *Bridge of Allan Reporter*, engaged officers – from the 21st (Royal Scots Fusiliers) and 91st (Argyllshire) Highlanders, respectively – to write regular columns from the front. During the voyage officers and other ranks practised with their weapons, attended lectures on the Zulu, and read about events in Zululand (300 copies of the *Graphic* were sent to the steamship carrying the Argylls). 86 If this could hardly prepare soldiers for the stress of acclimatisation – what Private Charles Godfrey, a volunteer from the 45th to the 58th (Rutlandshire), would describe as ‘very hard marches in the burning sun of Africa’87 – they arrived at the front highly motivated and eager to grapple with the Zulu.88

**The Anglo-Zulu War: second invasion of Zululand**

Chelmsford employed the reinforcements initially to relieve Eshowe. On 29 March Chelmsford’s column (3,390 Europeans and 2,280 natives) entered Zululand, moving slowly across the swampy terrain and forming wagon laagers with external entrenchments every night. Travelling without tents, new soldiers, like Private C. Coe (3/60th Rifles), despaired of the torrential rains at night.89 On the morning of 2 April, when the relief force was still ensconced within its entrenched square laager at Gingindlovu, some 6,000 Zulus attacked. For an hour they swept round the sides of the square, suffering heavy casualties from the disciplined volleys and the Gatling guns at two corners (two naval 9-pounders fired from the other corners). Once again Zulu firepower proved largely ineffective (leaving 15 killed, 49 wounded and 3 severely wounded), but their skirmishing and bravery were highly praised. Captain William Crauford (91st) admired ‘very much the way they advanced to the attack, our men can’t hold a candle to them . . .’.90 Whereas Private Coe regarded the fire-fight as ‘fine sport whilst we were going at it’, a colour-sergeant of the 91st commented: ‘Nothing in the world could stand our fire . . . yet very hard to see our fellow-creatures sent to eternity’.91 As the Zulus withdrew, the mounted infantry and natives pursued them, killing many of the wounded and retreating enemy. Dr A. A. Woods was appalled by the difficulty of treating the wounded with ‘very defective’ medical stores and appliances; the confinement of wounded Zulu prisoners, left lying in the mud that ‘did not by any means redound to our credit as a civilised nation’; and the behaviour of the native auxiliaries: ‘Cowards naturally, they fear a Zulu as one would a mad dog. Dirty, lazy, and gluttonous beyond all conception, these are the allies who are helping to fight the Zulus, and whom their own officers utterly despise and treat as beasts.’95
Gingindlovu, nonetheless, was another decisive victory with over 700 Zulus killed and the relief of Eshowe accomplished on the following day.

Thereafter Chelmsford spent nearly two months accumulating forces, stores and transport for another two-pronged invasion of Zululand. Major-General E. Newdigate’s Second Division (5,000 men) was to strike across from Blood River, joining with Wood’s renamed ‘Flying Column’ (3,200 men) and later with Major-General H. H. Crealock’s First Division (7,500 men), once it had pacified the coastal region, in a joint thrust towards Ulundi. Only one day into the invasion [1 June] Prince Louis Napoleon, who had volunteered to join the reinforcements, was killed while sketching, but five of his eight-strong escort, including Lieutenant J. B. Carey, escaped without him. On 2 June Lancers, some of whom had recently completed a burial detail at Isandlwana, recovered the body of the Prince Imperial, naked save for a thin gold chain and scarred with seventeen assegai wounds. Captain R. Wolridge-Gordon (attached to the 94th) was not alone in regarding Carey as a ‘coward’, who ‘ought to be shot’, and a sergeant in the 1st King’s Dragoon Guards correctly anticipated that the death would cause ‘a great sensation in England and on the Continent . . .’.93

The Second Division pressed slowly onwards, forming entrenched laagers at night, periodically stopping to construct fortified depots, and suffering several night-time alerts in which some soldiers were shot by nervous pickets.94 Officers and men seemed eager to confront the enemy; they praised the rejection of Cetshwayo’s peace envoys, and consoled companies left behind to garrison Fort Newdigate and Fort Marshall.95 As mounted patrols skirmished with Zulus and burnt kraals, some of the Flying Column bemoaned the slowness of the advance, attributing it to the ‘vacillation which has characterised the Commander-in-Chief’s actions ever since the fatal day of Isandala [sic]’.96 Notwithstanding Chelmsford’s caution, the delays derived chiefly from the difficulties of moving 700 ox-driven wagons (when the Second Division joined with the Flying Column) over roadless, undulating terrain. Crealock’s Division moved even slower, with fewer oxen and many of them emaciated, struggling across rivers and marshy ground. It never made the assault on Ulundi. ‘A British army’, observed a Royal Scots Fusilier, ‘is a terribly cumbersome machine, and quite incapable of rapid movement.97

On 30 June after waiting in vain for Crealock, and knowing that Wolseley had been sent to supersede him, Chelmsford ordered the final advance on Ulundi. With 15 miles to go, the columns screened by the mounted troops, descended ‘into a great bushy valley’. Engineers and pioneers led the way, ‘axe in hand, felling timber all the way’, to the
White Mfolozi River. As the wagons had to move three or four abreast, an engineer recalled: ‘We were knocked up and expected an attack at every minute.’ Having laagered near the river, they suffered another false alarm on the night of 1 July, whereupon the native pickets and a company of the 24th stampeded into the laager: Wolrige-Gordon noted: ‘A sergeant, private, and drummer of the 24th are to be tried for it.’ Two days later the regulars watched anxiously as the mounted horse crossed the river, with Baker’s Horse dispersing 30 Zulu snipers and then acting as a covering party for Buller’s 500 horsemen as they undertook a reconnaissance mission and narrowly avoided a Zulu ambush. Meeting 4,000 Zulus, Buller conducted a skilful retreat, with only 3 dead and 4 wounded.

Before dawn on the following day Chelmsford launched his final advance, with 4,166 white and 958 black soldiers, 12 pieces of artillery and 2 Gatling guns. Once across the river, they advanced in square formation, ‘four deep, the ammunition and tool carts in the centre, the cavalry out all around us’, a difficult formation in which to manoeuvre over ‘rough and bushy’ ground, especially with wagons and carts. By 8.30 a.m. the square, having set one kraal on fire, reached the area reconnoitred by Buller on the plain of Ulundi. An army of 15,000–20,000 Zulus advanced towards the square: ‘We saw them’, wrote one engineer, ‘on our right, then front, then left, then they worked their swarms to our rear face . . .’. Mounted troops, including the Basuto scouts, fired on the Zulus, bringing them within range before retreating in orderly manner into the square. Soldiers marvelled at the manoeuvring of the Zulus: James Lambert (veterinary surgeon, 17th Lancers) described how they took ‘advantage of every bit of cover afforded by the inequalities of the ground and a very few bushes, and only showing their heads above the long grass’. Once the artillery and Gatlings opened fire (before the latter jammed), volley-firing followed, with the rear two ranks standing and the front two kneeling, pausing periodically to let the smoke clear. This firepower kept the enemy, as a corporal of the 90th claimed, at ‘a respectful distance’, but the artillery had to fire case as well as shrapnel and rockets, and at some points the Zulus got within 30 yards of the line. The Zulus appeared less determined than previously: as Corporal Roe (58th) observed, it only took about half an hour before they began to withdraw from the ‘dreadful fire of our rifle and canon’, and some Fusiliers complained that they had not even fired ten rounds of ammunition (the average consumption was only 6.4 rounds per man). Lancers and Dragoons harried the retreating enemy over 3 miles, crossing a deep donga and riding through high grass and over pot-holed ground. The Dragoons, as one of their number described,
‘galloped as hard as we could, but the Zulus ran very nearly as fast as we, so instead of losing time in dismounting we, with one consent, halted and fired.’107 Yet the Lancers, despite losing a few men and many horses, claimed at least 150 victims, and returned with all their lances red with blood.108 When the Zulus reached the nearby hills and began to mass out of reach of the cavalry, the 9-pounders were moved out and began firing: ‘Oh! how they bolted’, wrote Mr France, a wagon master in the square, ‘But to little purpose, for shell after shell followed them and told most effectively on them.’109 Buller’s Horse completed the Zulu humiliation by burning the king’s kraal and all the nearby kraals.

Having buried their 12 dead (another would soon die), the square collected their 69 wounded men and withdrew. As Wolrige-Gordon recalled: ‘We passed several dead Zulus, all of whom having their stomachs ripped open; this was done by our natives, who, as soon as the battle was over, began to get plucky, and went about killing the wounded without mercy.’110 Soldiers, though, realised the magnitude of their achievement. They had defeated the Zulu army in the open, exactly in the area between the Nodwengu and Ulundi kraals where Cetshwayo had wanted to fight. ‘We evidently astonished them’, wrote a Bristolian with the Flying Column, ‘by marching close to their kraal . . . and fighting them sans protection of earthwork of any sort’.111 The young short-service soldiers, despite the false alarms, had proved steady in battle [and apparently steadier than some of their comrades when Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Northey fell mortally wounded at Gingindlovu]: ‘a British force’, argued a Fusilier officer, ‘properly handled can easily defeat four times its numbers’.112 Lord Chelmsford, who planned the battle and remained mounted throughout it, impressed many observers: in the opinion of Sergeant O’Callaghan (58th), he had ‘proved himself an able general, and a cool, brave, and determined leader’.113 At home, however, such comments failed to assuage criticism of Chelmsford’s command or of his costly and cumbersome transport arrangements.114 Nevertheless, Chelmsford had routed the Zulu army, killing some 1,500 warriors and undermining the authority of Cetshwayo [who would be caught on 28 August 1879 by a squadron of dragoons]. ‘The battle of Ulundi’, asserted Lambert, had ‘re-established the prestige of the white man over the black, and probably decided the fate of southern Africa for many generations.’115

Notes

1 Emery, Red Soldier, pp. 258–62; and Marching Over Africa, pp. 185–6.
2 S. Clark [ed.], Invasion of Zululand 1879: Anglo-Zulu War Experiences of Arthur Harness; John Jervis, 4th Viscount St Vincent; and Sir Henry Bulwer (Johannesburg: CAMPAIGNING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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12 ‘The Sekukuni Campaign’, *Natal Mercury*, 14 December 1878, p. 5; Clarke, *Zululand at War*, p. 44.

13 Somerset Light Infantry Archive [SLIA], ARCH/332, ‘Impressions of Zululand, 1875 to 1879, by Lieutenant-Colonel J. M. E. Waddy of the Somerset Light Infantry’.

14 ‘The Kaffir War’, *Somerset County Gazette*, 23 February 1878, p. 7; *Curling Letters*, pp. 34, 36, 40.

15 ‘The Kaffir War’, *Uttoketer New Era*, 20 February 1878, p. 3.


19 RRWM, Z C/2/2, Pte G. B. Morris to his mother, 5 November 1878; ‘Letter from a Slain Private in Zululand to his Father in Pontypridd’, *South Wales Weekly Telegram*, 11 April 1879, p. 5.

20 War Office [Intelligence Branch], *Narrative of the Field Operations Connected with the Zulu War of 1879* [London: Greenhill Books; 1989 reprint of 1881 volume], pp. 145–6.

21 ‘A Sheffield Soldier’s Letter from the Cape’, *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 10 March 1879, p. 3; see also ‘Letter from an Abergavenny Man’, *South Wales Weekly

22 ‘A Voice from the Dead’, Western Daily Mercury, 27 March 1879, p. 5.


27 Jackson, Isandhlwana, pp. 37–40, and ‘The First Battalion, Twenty-Fourth Regiment, Marches to Isandhlwana’, in I. Knight (ed.), There Will Be an Awful Row at Home About This, special publication no. 2 (Victorian Military Society, 1979), pp. 3–16; see also Clarke, Invasion of Zululand, pp. 72, 75.

28 ‘The Responsibility for Isandula’, Bristol Times and Mirror, 6 June 1879, p. 3.

29 ‘Letters of an ‘Eye-Witness’, Evening Standard, 15 March 1879, p. 5; and letter of Mr Muirhead, Staffordshire Advertiser, 22 March 1879, p. 6. See also PRO, WO 33/34, pp. 257–8, 291 and Droogleever, Road to ISANDHLWANA, p. 205.


32 ‘The Battle of Isandula’, Montgomeryshire Express, 1 April 1879, p. 3.

33 ‘The Zulu War’, Newcastle Courant, 14 March 1879, p. 3.

34 ‘Heroic Conduct of Army Medical Officers’, Fleetwood Chronicle, 14 March 1879, p. 3.

35 ‘Narrative of a Survivor at Isandula’, Bristol Times and Mirror, 13 March 1879, p. 3.

36 ‘Battle of Isandula’, p. 3.

37 ‘Strange Statement by an Officer’, Western Morning News, 7 April 1879, p. 3.


41 Ptes F. Ward and R. Taylor in South Wales Daily News, 9 April 1879, p. 3; and ‘Letter from a Briton Ferry Man at Rorke’s Drift’, Western Mail, 4 April 1879, p. 3.


43 Folkestone Chronicle, 29 March 1879, p. 7; Capt. Church and Ptes W. McNulty, W. Rees and A. Kelly in ‘Echoes from the Front’, Evening Standard, 14 April 1879, p. 2; North Wales Guardian, 5 April 1879, p. 8; ‘Letter from Another “Missing” Soldier’, Western Mail, 9 April 1879, p. 3.


45 Emery, Red Soldier, pp. 95, 140; Knight, The Sun Turned Black, pp. 162–3.
46 South Wales Daily News, 28 March 1879, p. 3; see also Sgt Pilcher and J. James in Western Daily Mercury, 19 March 1879, p. 3; and ‘Letters from Merthyr Soldiers at Rorke’s Drift’, Western Mail, 24 March 1879, p. 3.


49 ‘Letter from an Abercarn Man in the 24th Regiment’, Western Mail, 11 March 1879, p. 3; for claims as high as 5,000–8,000 dead, see Pte J. Williams, ‘Letter from T. Williams of the 2–24th Regt’, South Wales Daily News, 8 March 1879, p. 3, and Ptes L. Cummings and T. Harding, ‘Letters from Merthyr Men’, Western Mail, 25 March 1879, p. 3; whereas recent estimates indicate about 1,000 dead and many more wounded: Knight, The Sun Turned Black, p. 156.

50 ‘Letters from Merthyr Men’, p. 3; see also Pte W. Light, ‘Bristolians in Zululand’, Bristol Observer, 5 April 1879, p. 4; ‘A Letter from Private Parry, a Merthyr Man’, South Wales Daily Telegram, 16 April 1879, p. 3; Sgt E. Daly, ‘Letters from the Front’, Dover Express, 28 March 1879, p. 3.

51 ‘The Fight at Rorke’s Drift’, Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser, 5 April 1879, p. 3. In places the contours of the ground made this a more formidable obstacle, but the defensive arrangements had weaknesses: Knight, The Sun Turned Black, pp. 167–70; Bennett, Eyewitness in Zululand, pp. 95–6; PRO, WO 32/7737, Lt J. Chard to Col. Glyn, 25 January 1879.

52 ‘Letters from Local Men’, South Wales Daily News, 25 March 1879, p. 3. This is almost certainly the ‘Private Thomas Stevens’ listed by Holme in The Noble 24th, p. 362: the spelling of ‘Stephens’ is the same as on the ‘Chard Roll’ and the letter was sent to his parents at the same address – Robin Hood Inn, Dowlais.

53 ‘The Disaster at Rorke’s Drift’, Weekly News (Dundee), 8 March 1879, p. 5; see also Holme, The Noble 24th, p. 315.

54 ‘Fight at Rorke’s Drift’, p. 3.

55 NAM, Acc. No. 2001/03/73, Sgt J. S. Hooper, typescript (TS) diary, 20 January 1879; see also Capt. H. G. MacGregor to Col. Home, 14 February 1879 in Clarke, Zululand at War, p. 145.

56 PP, Further Correspondence, SA, C 2260, pp. 4–5; see also ‘Letter from One of the Naval Brigade’, Salisbury Journal, 8 March 1879, p. 2; REL, Acc. 11315, ‘Recollections of Main’, 125.

57 NAM, Acc. No. 2001/03/73, Hooper, diary, 22 January 1879; Emery, Red Soldier, pp. 185–6; S. Iggulden (Royal Marines), ‘Letter from One of the Besieged Garrison at Ekowe’, South Wales Weekly Telegram, 23 May 1879, p. 3.

58 ‘The Zulu War’, Bradford Daily Telegraph, 28 April 1879, p. 3; PP, Further Correspondence, SA, C 2260, p. 5.

59 REL, Acc. 11315, ‘Recollections of Main’, 127–8; see also Emery, Red Soldier, p. 185; PP, Further Correspondence, SA, C 2260, p. 10; and ‘Letter from One of the Naval Brigade’, p. 2.

60 NAM, Acc. No. 2001/03/73, Hooper, diary, 22 January 1879.


62 REL, Acc. 11315, ‘Recollections of Main’, 132–33; Clarke, Zululand at War, p. 141.

63 Bradford Daily Telegraph, 28 April 1879, p. 3; see also NAM, Acc. No. 2001/03/73, Hooper, diary, 3 February 1879; Clarke, Zululand at War, p. 145.


65 NAM, Acc. No. 2001/03/73, Hooper, diary, 5 and 26 March 1879: on food, see Hooper’s diary entries for 3, 8 and 12 February 1879; water, Bradford Daily Telegraph, 28 April 1879, p. 3; and the effects of fever, ‘Letter from Lieut A. V. Payne’, p. 4.

66 PRO, WO 33/34, p. 323; Morris, Washing of the Spears, p. 473.

67 Sgt A. Booth to his wife, 14 March 1879, in R. Hope, The Zulu War and the 80th Regiment of Foot (Leek: Churnet Valley Books, 1997), pp. 94–7; Emery, Marching
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Over Africa, pp. 72–4; see also ‘Interesting Account of the Intombi Disaster’, Manchester Courier, 24 April 1879, p. 8.

68 Hope, The Zulu War, pp. 74, 77–8, 94.

69 ‘A Sheffield Soldier with Colonel Wood’s Column’, Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 26 March 1879, p. 3; see also ‘Soldiers’ Letters from the Front’, Liverpool Mercury, 1 March 1879, p. 7; and ‘Letters from a Beverley Gentleman with Colonel Wood’s Column’, Yorkshire Post, 24 April 1879, p. 6.


73 ‘The Battle of Kambula’, Manchester Guardian, 31 May 1879, p. 3; see also Clarke, Zululand at War, pp. 120–9; Emery, Red Soldier, pp. 223–4.

74 ‘A Sheffield Soldier with Colonel Wood’s Column’, Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 26 March 1879, p. 3; see also ‘Soldiers’ Letters from the Front’, Liverpool Mercury, 1 March 1879, p. 7; and ‘Letters from a Beverley Gentleman with Colonel Wood’s Column’, Yorkshire Post, 24 April 1879, p. 6.

75 ‘Letter from a Soldier (A Native of Crieff) Serving in Colonel Wood’s Column’, Strathearn Herald, 5 April 1879, p. 2.


77 ‘A Sheffield Soldier in Zululand’, Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 22 April 1879, p. 3; ‘With Colonel Wood in Zululand’, Liverpool Mercury, 5 April 1879, p. 6.


79 ‘A Sheffield Soldier in Zululand’, 17 June 1879, p. 3; see also ‘With the 91st at the Cape’, Bridge of Allan Reporter, 5 July 1879, p. 3.

80 ‘Letter to a Fleetwood Gentleman’, Fleetwood Chronicle, 30 May 1879, p. 6; Irish Times, 23 May 1879, p. 5; Bridge of Allan Reporter, 10 May 1879, p. 3, and 24 May 1879, p. 3.

81 ‘A Sheffield Soldier in Zululand’, 17 June 1879, p. 3; see also ‘With the 91st at the Cape’, Bridge of Allan Reporter, 5 July 1879, p. 3.

82 ‘A Sheffield Soldier in Zululand’, 17 June 1879, p. 3; see also ‘With the 91st at the Cape’, Bridge of Allan Reporter, 5 July 1879, p. 3.

83 ‘Letter from Zululand’, Ayr Advertiser, 26 June 1879, p. 5.

84 ‘A Sheffield Soldier in Zululand’, 17 June 1879, p. 3; see also ‘With the 91st at the Cape’, Bridge of Allan Reporter, 5 July 1879, p. 3.


86 ‘Reinforcements for the Cape’ and ‘The 91st Highlanders at the Cape’, Bridge of Allan Reporter, 8 March 1879, p. 2, and 19 April 1879, p. 3; Northamptonshire Regimental Museum Collection (NRMC), 397, Cpl W. Roe, TS diary, para. 10.


88 ‘Letter from a Sheffield Soldier’ in ibid.; ‘Sheffield Soldiers in Zululand’, Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 17 May 1879, p. 3.

89 ‘A Sheffield Soldier in Zululand’, 17 June 1879, p. 3; see also ‘With the 91st at the Cape’, Bridge of Allan Reporter, 5 July 1879, p. 3.

90 Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum (ASHM), N-C91.1, Capt. W. R. H. Crauford to father, 4 April 1879; see also ‘Letter to a Fleetwood Gentleman’, Fleetwood Chronicle, 30 May 1879, p. 6; Irish Times, 23 May 1879, p. 5; Bridge of Allan Reporter, 10 May 1879, p. 3, and 24 May 1879, p. 3.

91 ‘Letter to a Fleetwood Gentleman’, p. 6; see also Pte., 60th Rifles, in Lancaster Guardian, 28 June 1879, p. 7.

92 ASHM, N-C91.GOR.W, Wolrige-Gordon, diary, 2 and 4 June 1879; ‘A Visit to Isandhana [sic]’, Chichester Express, 22 July 1879, p. 3; see also ‘The Late Prince Imperial’, Manchester Guardian, 17 July 1879, p. 6; Sgt J. F. Bolshaw in Northampton Mercury, 26 July 1879, p. 3; and Morris, Washing of the Spears, pp. 530–1.

93 ‘A Thrilling Incident in the Zulu War’, Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 24 July 1879, p. 3; ASHM, N-C91.GOR.W, Wolrige-Gordon, diary, 6, 21 June and 1 July 1879.

94 Ayr Advertiser, 24 July 1879, p. 4, 14 August 1879, p. 5, and 11 September 1879, p. 5.
96 ‘The Expedition to Ulundi’, *Eastern Province Herald*, 18 July 1879, p. 5.
97 *Ayr Advertiser*, 14 August 1879, p. 5; see also ASHM, N-C91.1, Crauford to father, 21 May 1879, and to Carry, 28 June 1879.
99 ASHM, N-C91.GOR.W, Wolrige-Gordon, diary, 1 July 1879.
103 ‘Before and After Ulundi’, *Chichester Express*, 16 September 1879, p. 3.
107 ‘Before and After Ulundi’, p. 3.
110 ASHM, N-C91.GOR.W, Wolrige-Gordon, diary, 4 July 1879.
111 ‘A Letter from Zululand’, *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 1 September 1879, p. 3; ‘Statements of Prisoners Captured at Ulundi’, *Brecon County Times*, 23 August 1879, p. 6.