

Restored and Rededicated:  
Honouring the British Officer From a Zulu Wars Grave.

Ian Knight

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Royalty and family members gathered today at the restored and rededicated grave of a British officer who fought in the Zulu wars.

Among the guests was a Zulu princess who joined members of Lt Col Francis Northey's family for the rededication in the quiet corner of Epsom cemetery.

Lt Col Northey was first buried in South Africa, after he was mortally wounded in 1879. However, he was later repatriated which was unusual for the time.

His original grave was marked with a wooden cross that came with Northey's body back to the UK. Just like the original, a replica wooden cross is now part of his headstone.

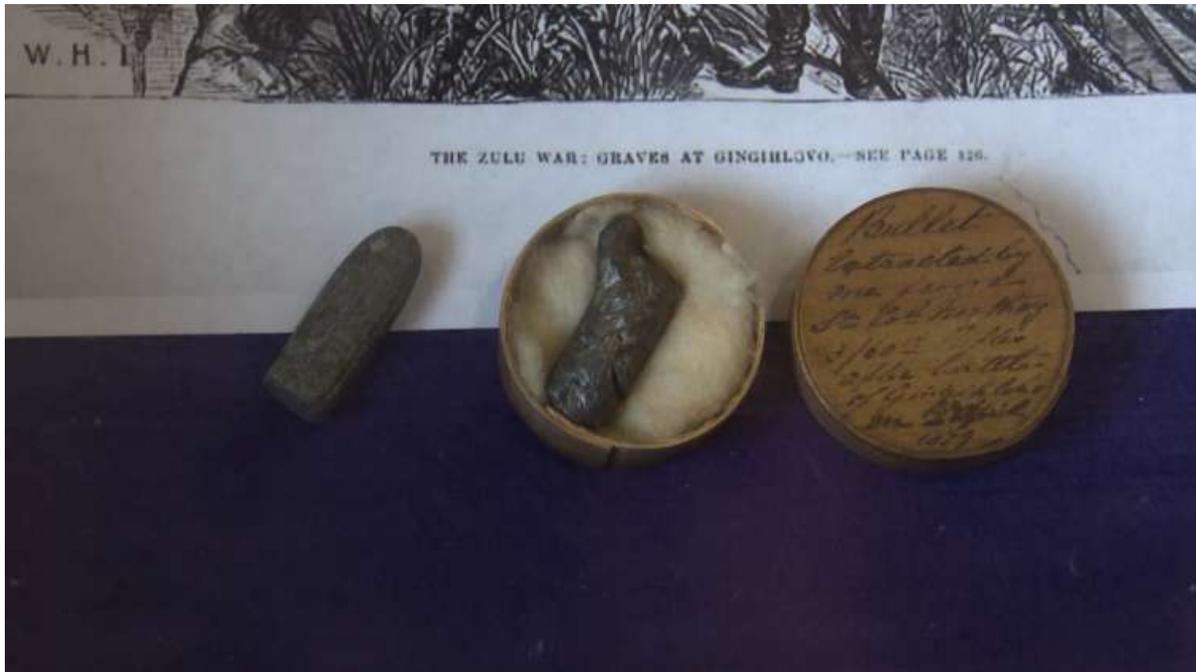


Over a decade of restoration work has led to today's events

Interestingly, the Northey family also have a rather unusual heirloom as Lt Col Simon Bedford, a relative of Lt Col Northey explains:

“We've got the bullet that struck him in the shoulder on the 2nd April 1879. It was extracted by a naval surgeon immediately after he was shot. Then it was kept and it has been handed down in the family over the years and we still have it.”

At the rededication ceremony, the re-enactment society provided a taste of history from the time Lt Col Francis Northey was killed.



The bullet that wounded Lt Col Francis Northey is now a family heirloom

HRH Princess Zama-Zula Shange said at the event:

“I think it is very important for the family to have his grave here and also to have a place to remember him, and to honour him that he didn’t die in vain. Also to embrace our warriors as well and our kings who fought in the war and died.”

Today marks the end of preservation work that started 18 years ago in hopes of preserving the officer’s grave for future generations of the Northey family.