

Problems reviewing Saul David's new book  
*ZULU The Heroism and Tragedy of the Zulu War*

By Adrian Greaves

A number of members brought to my attention that Saul David used extracts from my book *The Curling Letters from the Zulu War*, published by Pen & Sword, for his recent BBC TV programme *Timewatch; Zulu, The Real Story*. The programme failed to acknowledge me or my publishers as the source for the published *Curling Letters*, for which the BBC subsequently apologized. Saul David later stated he was unaware the BBC had omitted to acknowledge me. Having accepted the BBC apology I nevertheless awaited Saul David's new Zulu War book with some suspicion and trepidation.

In early September I was annoyed to discover that Saul David had, yet again, 'cherry picked' the best letters from the *Curling Letters* for his new book, *Zulu*, without either my or my publisher's permission. I originally obtained written permission from the Curling descendents to use and publish the Curling letters, the transcription of which involved Society member Brian Best in many weeks of hard and meticulous work. Naturally I consider Saul David's unashamed use of the *Curling Letters* to be, at least, unfair and discourteous.

I immediately made my strong objection known to Saul David and his publisher, Penguin, and although they received my solicitor's letter refusing them permission to re-publish the letters, they have nevertheless done so.

To add insult to injury, Saul David claims in his book's 'Acknowledgements' that Ian Knight and I helped him with his book, we did not. Neither of us wish to be associated with his errata filled book. Saul David mis-spells some important battlefield locations and participants' names, as well as including awful 'howlers'; as a prime example, he is totally wrong with regard to the number of Victoria Crosses awarded. Had we or others in the field helped with his book, as he falsely claims, his book would be less error-ridden.

As there is much in Saul David's *Zulu* that echoes my own work, a review by me would be difficult. Because of his depth of knowledge a detailed and reasoned review of this book by Ian Knight would be more worthwhile - and so, with Ian's permission, a copy of his review is published separately in this Journal.

As members will know, Ian Knight was the historical consultant to Saul David's BBC documentary *Timewatch; Zulu, The Real Story* - which was conveniently re-shown by the BBC just days before the launch of Saul David's book *Zulu*.

Curiously, neither Ian Knight nor I were invited to the London launch of this book. Our several requests to attend the event were sent to Saul David, his publicist and to his editor at Penguin Books. All our requests were ignored.