

An overview of the new *Who's Who of the Zulu War*

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This new work, written by two well-known Zulu War authors, is a considerable contribution to Anglo-Zulu War studies. In two volumes, published by Pen & Sword, the work should be available by the end of 2006. The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 continues to fascinate. But books and films tend to dwell on the heroics that made the war famous, they rarely show that the war was bitterly contested and savage, where prisoners were seldom taken and medical resources were negligible. Likewise, it is difficult to comprehend that it was fought out over rugged terrain and in the burning heat of an African summer.

While the politics of the war reflect an age very different from our own, the human cost remains readily comprehensible. Statistics reveal 76 officers and 1,007 British and Colonial troops killed in action, and 37 officers and 206 men wounded. A further 17 officers and 330 men died of disease.

The bright burst of headlines that heralded the war produced the inevitable crop of heroes and villains who became household names in Britain, but, for most, participation in the war was an anonymous affair. Those on the British side who planned the war, and many who seized the moments that the war presented, are featured in volume 1.

In the case of the Colonial participants, their activities, many of which are heroic, are rather better recorded in local newspaper accounts and diaries than those of the Zulus. Indeed, the lives of many Colonials reflect, no less than the Zulus, the changing balance of power in southern Africa in that crucial last quarter of the nineteenth-century. Their details and those of the Zulus are featured in Part II.

Because Zulu tradition was, until recently, mainly oral, it has previously been difficult to provide even the most basic outline of the lives of Zulu participants. Over 40,000 Zulu men, in total, took part in the defence of their country. Zulu losses throughout the war are estimated to have been as high as 10,000 killed. In addition, most of the great *amakhanda* – the royal homesteads which served as a centre for state administration – were destroyed, together with hundreds of ordinary Zulu homesteads. Nevertheless, we have been able to feature many Zulus who planned and fought to defend their country from the British invasion.

Sadly, many of these Zulus who distinguished themselves in 1879 were slaughtered by their own countrymen during the sacking of oNdini (Ulundi) in the Civil War of 1883, itself the result of divisive tensions unleashed by the Zulu War.

Two examples researched are included in this brief overview of the book.

Lane, Thomas, VC

Thomas Lane was born in May 1836 in Cork, Ireland. He enlisted in the 67th Regiment and took part in the Crimean War and the China expedition of 1860. During the storming of the North Dagu Fort on 21 August 1860, Lane and Lieutenant Nathaniel Burslem of the 67th succeeded in swimming the flooded ditches surrounding the fort and forced their way through an opening in the walls. They were among the first British troops to breach the Chinese position, and both were severely wounded. Lane was awarded the Victoria Cross on 28 February 1863 for his gallantry. Lane later left the 67th and emigrated to South Africa. It is widely rumoured that he served as an NCO in the 3rd Regiment, NNC, during the early stages of the invasion of Zululand, although this cannot be confirmed. Some accounts suggest he was a survivor of Isandlwana; if he was present at all he may equally have been with the main body of the 3rd at Mangeni. He later served as a sergeant in the Natal Horse (which was recruited from – among others – the NCOs of the disbanded 3rd NNC). His VC was later

officially withdrawn; although rumours persist that Lane's crime was bigamy, he was actually court-martialled in 1881 for desertion and for absconding with his horse and weapons. No evidence survives that he returned his VC, although it is now in the collection of the Royal Hampshire Regiment Museum. Lane later applied for a replacement VC – on what grounds is unclear – and was granted it. Although no official record exists of a replacement being issued, an officer purchased a VC engraved with Lane's name in a pawnshop in South Africa in 1909 (it has since been authenticated). Lane died on 13 April 1889 in Kimberley. His VC forfeiture was one of only eight ever recorded; since 1920 forfeiture has been discontinued.

Mkhosana kaSangqana Zungu

Mkhosana was born about 1830, the head of a junior lineage of the Zungu people. He was enrolled in the amaShishi section of the iSanqu regiment, which was formed in 1852. Mkhosana became a personal attendant of King Mpande, and later a leading friend, confidant and adviser of King Cetshwayo. In the closing stages of the Anglo-Zulu War, Mkhosana and his son Maphelu accompanied the king in his flight from oNdini. When Major Marter's Dragoons tracked Cetshwayo to a homestead in the remote Ngome forest on 28 August and surrounded it, it was Mkhosana who attempted to delay them at the gate. He was, however, captured with the rest and accompanied the king into exile at the Cape. Mkhosana Zungu features in a number of photographs of the king's attendants, photographed at that time. In 1881, Bishop Colenso secured permission for Mkhosana to return briefly to Zululand, where he attempted to quell the rising tension between royalist and anti-royalist factions. He returned to join King Cetshwayo for his visit to London in August 1882. When Cetshwayo was restored to part of his former territory in early 1883, Mkhosana again attended him. During the disastrous attack by inkosi Zibhebhu on the rebuilt oNdini complex in July 1883, Mkhosana helped the king to escape. In later life he was regarded as a great authority on Zulu tradition, and in 1914, when King Solomon Nkayishana kaDinuzulu organised a ceremonial cleansing hunt, *ihlambo*, as part of the mourning ceremonies for the late King Dinuzulu, he asked Mkhosana to preside. Mkhosana was by that time so old and frail that he had to be fetched from his home near Mahlabatini by wagon. He died shortly afterwards.

Mkhosana's son Maphelu was born about 1854 and was a member of the uVe regiment. He fought at Isandlwana and followed his father as an ardent royalist; he also had a fierce reputation as a warrior. Maphelu Zungu became a senior adviser to King Dinuzulu; he was also a leading source on Zulu history in the researches carried out by Col. H.C. Lugg.