

Book Reviews and Notices

THE LAST ZULU WARRIOR

By DAVID CLAMMER. Purnell & Sons, 1977.

The publisher's blurb on the dust cover of this magnificently produced book ends with the observation "*The Last Zulu Warrior* is a unique publication of Africana and an important contribution to the historical record of Victorian South Africa." Insofar as it publishes the collection of contemporary magic lantern slides belonging to the late Lal Harraway of Port Elizabeth one must agree, for these slides form the thread around which Clammer's story of the Zulu War is woven. As far as being "an important contribution to the historical record", the book leaves something to be desired.

In terms of its technical production the book is certainly impressive. The type, the layout and the lavish illustrations make it a most desirable collector's item. The illuminated lettering and the pen and ink drawings at the beginning of each chapter are most appealing and add to the quality "feel" of the book, as does the Butler painting of Rorke's Drift on the box and the jacket illustration "Zulu Outpost" which is also reproduced on pages 132-133. While interesting in themselves, I found the Harraway lantern slides to be rather garish, and often copies of contemporary photographs.

As far as the book's contribution to the historical record is concerned, Clammer neglects certain items. He has chosen to avoid scattering diacritical marks and numerals around the text to indicate footnotes or references, probably to avoid breaking the continuity of the story. This would seem to indicate that he intends the book to be read as an account of the Zulu War rather than as a history. This would negate somewhat the comment on the dust jacket.

The bibliography given by Clammer at the back of the book omits certain works which are worth including. Judging by other books on the same subject, one wonders how much reading went into the preparation of this volume, and the extent of his comparison of primary sources. Certainly little comment is given on the opinions of various Zulu War commentators, although Clammer does identify his own opinion of controversial events and topics. There can be no doubt that the defeat at Isandhlwana and the death of the Prince Imperial were highly controversial and the subject of much discussion for years afterwards.

Nevertheless, the text is very readable, and if Clammer's purpose was to produce a readable account of the Zulu War rather than "an important contribution to the historical record of Victorian South Africa", then he has succeeded, and succeeded very well.

He has failed, however, to check his Zulu orthography and we find variations in the spelling of several Zulu words. Nkobamakosi appears on page 62 while Ngobamakosi appears on page 77, 79 and 176. Similarly Nbonambi and Mbonambi also appear at different places in the text.

Although standard works on Zulu orthography exist, one would be satisfied if one spelling was selected and maintained. Variety is merely irritating, as are printing errors, of which there are sufficient to call into question the quality of proof reading.

It is almost certain that there will be a considerable demand for *The Last Zulu Warrior* in the light of the coming centenary of the Zulu War and the attendant publicity. It is the sort of book one would like to own, although it is too bulky to be read in bed. The technical production is excellent, making it a desirable collector's item, in spite of its high price.

A. S. C. HOOPER

THE ZULU WAR JOURNAL OF COLONEL HENRY HARFORD, C.B.

Edited by DAPHNE CHILD.

(Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1978).

Colonel Henry Harford's *Zulu War Journal* cannot be described as a work of major historical importance, in that it does not offer any startling new information on the subject with which it is concerned. It tells us nothing of the underlying motivation of the war, nor does it offer any insights into the military strategy with which the British campaign was prosecuted. It is an essentially personal narrative, at times anecdotal, rather than a dispassionate analysis of the Zululand invasion. Yet it is, as the editor is at pains to point out, "a young man's description of, and commentary on, events as they happened, not an old man's reminiscences of things long past." As such it does contribute, in a fresh and engaging style, towards a more detailed picture of the momentous events which took place in Zululand during 1879.

Born in 1852, Henry Harford emigrated with his parents to Natal in 1864 and spent the rest of his boyhood here, before returning in 1870 to Britain in pursuit of a military career. In 1878 he resigned his position as Adjutant of the 99th Foot (Duke of Edinburgh's Regiment) and, with the war in Zululand imminent, successfully applied for secondment to Her Majesty's forces in Natal. Like numerous other professional soldiers, Harford saw an obvious opportunity for experience and advancement in the impending conflict. Not surprisingly, his *Journal* gives no indication of any personal misgivings as to the justification for the war itself. Back in the Colony, he was appointed Staff Officer to Commandant Lonsdale of the Third Regiment, *Natal Native Contingent*, in which capacity his knowledge of spoken Zulu, acquired during his boyhood, was doubtless an advantage. In January 1879, Harford joined the *Native Contingent* in forming part of the (Central) Column of British forces, which invaded Zululand from the vicinity of Rorke's Drift and which subsequently suffered the disaster at isAndlwana. He remained with the *Native Contingent* through various vicissitudes until mid-1879, when he resumed the Adjutancy of the 99th Regiment which, in the interim, had been ordered to Zululand and formed part of the Right (Coastal) Column of invading forces.

Consequently, largely by dint of good fortune, Harford found himself in close attendance on some of the most memorable episodes of that tragic conflict and was able to record his impressions in fine detail. These include the scene at the isAndlwana camp shortly after the battle, which Harford

himself avoided only by being sent out to reconnoitre shortly before the Zulu attack. There is a description of the Rorke's Drift outpost on the morning after its successful defence and an account of the recovery of the Queen's Colour belonging to the First Battalion, 24th Regiment, and of the discovery of the bodies of Lieutenants Melvill and Coghill, who had heroically attempted to preserve this symbol of regimental honour. There is the dramatic story of the return of the Colours to the Regiment and of the privilege accorded to Harford on that occasion for his part in their recovery. Included also is a description of the hunt for Cetshwayo (for hunt it was) after the Ulundi battle and of the competitive spirit which prevailed among the various search parties engaged in that activity. There is the subsequent arrival of the captured Zulu monarch in camp where, for two days, Harford was placed in personal charge of the royal prisoner and his retinue, and there is the eventual capture of the evasive Zibhebhu.

Unwittingly, Harford's narrative also provides an interesting commentary on the sometimes contradictory attitudes of a mid-Victorian British officer towards the indigenous black population. He openly declares his contempt for the fighting qualities of the Natal 'native' levies, while conceding that they were "full of buoyant spirits and chaff, excellent fellows to work with." He sings the praises of his faithful servant 'Jim' and points to examples of "what a good fellow" emerges from the kraal, yet he decries "the barbarous customs practised by the Zulus." Through it all there emerges, from a soldier of obvious personal courage, an unstinting respect for "the splendid spirit in which the Zulus fought us" and for their "sheer love of a good fight in which the courage of both sides could be tested." Evident also is Harford's admiration for the Zulu King himself, "a magnificent specimen of his race and every inch a warrior." Indeed, there is a tone of affection in the concluding paragraphs of the *Zulu War Journal*, in which he records his re-acquaintance with Cetshwayo in 1881, when the King was still in exile on the Cape Flats and Harford's regiment was temporarily encamped at Wynberg.

One of the most valuable features of this book, as the editor observes, "from the point of view of a collector of Africana," is the use which has been made of Harford's own pencil-sketches. These were completed while he was on active service and most of them have never been reproduced before. They serve to illustrate the text in a uniquely personal manner and are, in themselves, an important record of the events therein described.

In editing this treasured possession of the Local History Museum in Durban, Daphne Child has made a worthwhile addition to her own growing list of publications and to the flood of material which has found its way into print on the occasion of the centenary of the Anglo-Zulu War. It is to be hoped, under the circumstances, that it enjoys the response from the book-buying and reading public which it deserves.

W. R. GUEST

THE RED SOLDIER

Letters from the Zulu War, 1879.

By FRANK EMERY (Hodder and Stoughton, 1977).

This book has been based primarily on extracts from soldiers' letters

painstakingly collected from a variety of sources, carefully annotated, and presented within a narrative which is both comprehensive and lucid. The events of 1879 in Natal and Zululand come to light with a surprising degree of vividness because the letters are edited in such a way that they tell their own story. Or, as the editor of one of the papers in which these letters were printed at the time of the Zulu War put it, they "narrate their own sad tale of mingled reverse, pluck and British valour." (p. 97)

Not only are there detailed eye-witness accounts of the battles of the war of which Isandhlwana, Rorke's Drift and Ulundi are the best known, but there are also descriptions of the various aspects of the campaign of 1879 as well as perceptive observations on the terrain and climate, both of which added to the difficulties of the military operations. The readers of these letters, both then and now, are made aware of the great hardships suffered by the troops, who were confronted with conditions so different from those of their native land. As the author says, "*The Red Soldier* creates a picture of fluctuating fortunes as experienced by the ordinary soldier in action." (p. 17)

A unique feature of the material included in the book is the intrinsic quality of the letters themselves. These soldiers certainly knew how to write, and they gave accurate and often deeply moving accounts of "life and death in a battle zone." (p. 19)

The book is well illustrated. There are pictures not only of the military personalities involved, both great and small, but there are also contemporary drawings of various scenes as well as those of dramatic incidents which occurred during the course of the campaign itself. Furthermore, the reader can follow the descriptions of the battles more easily because clearly-drawn and informative maps and diagrams have been included.

The author has added useful appendices in the form of a Chronology of the Zulu War and a List of the Sources. In addition to the Bibliography, a very comprehensive and useful Index has been provided.

This is a very well-produced volume which is a valuable addition to the works on the subject, primarily because of the original way in which the material has been presented. It is a book which can be highly recommended, adding, as it does, a new and fuller dimension to the existing studies on this topic. It is one which will be read with absorbing interest, particularly at this time when the centenary of the Zulu War is about to be commemorated.

J. M. SELLERS

THE EARLY ANNALS OF KOKSTAD AND GRIQUALAND EAST
By WILLIAM DOWER.

Facsimile reproduction, with an Introduction, Notes and Index, by
CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS.

Published jointly by the University of Natal Press and the Killie Campbell
Africana Library (Reprint Series Number 2), 1978.

The recent incorporation of East Griqualand into the province of Natal has brought about a renewed interest in the history of the former. Although

the Griquas did not like what Dower had to say about them there was no one better informed to chronicle the early years of the newest addition to Natal. Dower came as a missionary to East Griqualand in May 1870 and remained based there for two full decades. He came originally as a worker for the London Missionary Society but in 1877 severed his connections with that organisation.

Dower wrote his "Annals" two years after leaving East Griqualand and confined himself to an account of events in the territory before the revolt of 1880-1881, leaving this latter part of the history to come from other pens. In his book he set out to prove the very simple point that the Griquas did, in fact, have a history and that some of the events in which they were concerned had a most important bearing on the history of South Africa as a whole. He sought to prove that the Griquas as a nation had been "victimised by the vacillations of Imperial policies."

The annals of William Dower trace the reasons why the Griquas decided to leave their Free State home, how they sought a new home for themselves and how "Nomansland" to the south of Natal came to be occupied by them. In the early years of this occupation William Dower played a significant role in the settlement of Adam Kok and his people.

In his book William Dower portrays the events of the early years and comments on these events and the people that made them.

Despite its shortcomings as a definitive historical work, this book contains a great deal of value to the historian and the University of Natal Press (in conjunction with the Killie Campbell Africana Library) is to be congratulated on its initiative in reprinting this valuable piece of Africana.

B. J. T. LEVERTON

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Editor: J. A. BENYON.

(Published by University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg. 1978. 297 p.).

This book is a more-or-less verbatim account of a three-day conference held at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, in February 1978, convened by the Vice-Principal (Pietermaritzburg) Professor G. D. L. Schreiner. Its editor, Professor J. A. Benyon, has made a truly valiant effort to do justice to the enormous theme of constitutional change in the Republic of South Africa. The papers delivered and the ensuing discussions, as well as a synthesising introduction, have been presented here in a most praiseworthy fashion. Indeed, it would be churlish to cavil at the extraneous bits and pieces added which tend to detract from the main theme since the spirit of the conference seems to have been captured. Not an easy thing to do when academics, politicians, businessmen, civil servants and laymen of all races have the floor for three exhaustive and exhausting days of declamation, discussion and debate.

If a criticism can be laid, it is really at the door of the academics taking part who on the whole seemed to take a somewhat instrumental view of constitution-making and function. The names of the great theoretical constitutionalists of the past, K. C. Wheare, C. H. McIlwain and Aristotle, seem

to be missing from the inspiration of the legal and other thinkers who contribute to this book. Your reviewer ventures to suggest that this purely instrumental view of the constitution will not have the effect, in the words of the ancient Greeks, "of affecting the goodness of the citizens by the goodness of the constitution". It is, however, not part of a reviewer's task to say what was not in the work under review but to stick to discussing what was present.

Professor van der Vyver of Potchefstroom University writes on the flexibility of constitutions, surely one of the great strengths of the American and the British fundamental-law documents. The South African constitution at present is also flexible, enough to make it possible to change it completely, as is suggested by the present government. In fact, Dr D. Worrall's contribution deals precisely with that very proposal: the notion of replacing the Westminster form of government with a completely new revolutionary model of a three-tier structure. The details are described, not fully because, as Dr Worrall says, not all the details are known. But sufficient is said to enable the reader to obtain a reasonably clear picture of these proposals. And what revolutionary proposals they are. A kind of "racial federalism" — not, your reviewer hastens to add, a term actually used — indeed, some of the sociological-political jargon in the book seems to be designed to mystify rather than clarify, which one could sum up as "conflict regulation" and "proportionality".

Economics also occupies an important place in the book. Economic growth and fiscal structures, with their social implications, are dealt with at some length.

What interested your reviewer particularly was a hitherto largely unstated problem resulting from governmental plans for the balkanisation of the Republic; namely that of the security of the land borders of the future as well as of those existing at present. Deon Fourie and John Barratt of the University of South Africa and the South African Institute of International Affairs respectively contribute an interesting and provocative chapter on the security implications of future constitutional arrangements of that order in South Africa. In an attempt to look at the roots of potential conflict from a viewpoint other than that of the socio-economic, Fourie says that *inter alia*, perception of change by the population groups in a country such as this one is not really open to accurate prediction in the future. The political culture determined by the institutions and the ethos of nations will be an important factor in the security of the state, any state. He goes on to give a series of hypothetical examples (which he calls models) and develops the theme of a security problem accentuated by the "Homelands patchwork". In the latter half of the twentieth century, terrorism and guerilla activity is and will remain a fairly constant factor in the security of the state which cannot be overlooked. Even stable democracies long established have found to their cost that negligence in this field is dangerous to their continued existence. How much more then is the danger likely to be intensified in an unstable continent such as Africa and with the "liberation" of South Africa as a platform for the activities of the extreme left in the rest of the world. Fourie gives a dispassionate appraisal of the problems of frontiers and of the availability of trained military manpower. It is his view that a security force of all races under certain kinds of constitutional

provisions might very well deprive subversive movements and some terrorist groups of a considerable part of their *raison d'être*.

It is evident that enormous problems will follow constitutional change either of an evolutionary or revolutionary type; the latter perhaps more than the former. Perceived revolutionary goals it is suggested, might be substituted by evolutionary means and the same results obtained. This perhaps is not clearly understood and the book could very well go some way to informing the assiduous reader on the subject. It is a large book in many ways, dealing with a large subject — our mutual future — and deserves a serious public discussion of its main theme. Its appearance on the scene at this time is welcome, its contents and the opinions and views of its many authors, as well as the skilful editing, will repay careful consideration and study.

F. M. CLIFFORD-VAUGHAN

INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Edited by F. McA. CLIFFORD-VAUGHAN.

(Published by Oxford University Press, 1978.)

The six essays in this collection, edited and introduced by Frederick Clifford-Vaughan, were delivered as papers at a symposium held in August 1977 at the University of Natal in Durban, under the auspices of the Department of History and Political Science, and the South African Institute of International Affairs. Despite the lapse of time the papers have lost little of their topicality and none of their interest. The issues—and the questions—are with us still and unhappily grow ever more acute.

The publishers rightly aver that this volume “will be of great interest to political scientists and historians”, but its appeal is much wider than this would suggest. These papers should be of interest to every thinking person—and (since the terms are not always synonymous) to every person thinking about the nature of international pressure and the possible responses to it within South Africa.

While these papers reflect the specialised knowledge of political scientists, an historian, and a sociologist, they themselves are of general rather than specialised interest. They are mercifully free of jargon, and should present no difficulties to the reasonably well-informed general reader, with the possible exception of certain passages in the papers by Johnston and Moorcraft which touch variously on questions of methodology, and the applicability of explanatory and predictive concepts.

The immediate interest lies, however, in the direct discussion of South Africa's position in an era where domestic politics have become inextricably interlinked with foreign affairs. The papers are arranged in a helpful sequence which facilitates a developing appreciation of the problems involved: a praiseworthy achievement, since a collection of this kind can all too easily appear merely heterogeneous.

Johnston's paper sets the scene by examining the transformation of world politics since 1945 which has made international pressure so familiar, so disturbing, and so inescapable a fact of political life. This is followed in

Duminy's paper by an interesting exercise in applied history, taking a backward look at pressures and responses leading to the Anglo-Boer war, with some pessimistic albeit persuasive reflections on the contemporary scene. It is of course no longer Britain but the U.S.A. which is in a position today to apply enormous pressure to South Africa, and the following two papers by Baker and Schrire explore aspects of this topic, with the former looking at American perspectives on change in South Africa and the latter looking at the leverage available. (Schrire's paper, it must be said, is the very model of lucidity.) These papers are complemented by Schlemmer's very interesting discussion of attitudes towards foreign pressure and internal change within South Africa, on the part of the Government and the White electorate. And finally, Moorcraft raises any number of interesting questions about the future, though his general drift is summed up in his paper's title, "Towards the garrison state". This, alas, is the general consensus, though some contributors hope against hope, and Schrire even allows us a measure of cautious optimism.

While the discussion clearly ranges over a number of crucially important issues, it may be felt that there are some important omissions. For a more comprehensive view of the terrain, it would have been desirable for instance to have a fuller treatment of Britain's relationship to South Africa; of the possible future role of the Soviet Union and its allies or surrogates—as well as a more detailed analysis of the various modes of relevant pressure, and their likely consequences. There is indeed room for a further symposium—though few may feel inclined to eat, drink and be merry.

A notable feature of these papers is that they provide few answers but raise many questions. In this they reflect not only the social scientist's reluctance to venture into prediction, but the South African condition itself. Among the crucial questions posed are the following:

- Can the western powers pursue a 'revolutionary' statecraft in southern Africa without generating ruinous instability?
- Is western policy contributing not to peaceful change but to polarisation and conflict?
- How does the U.S.A. perceive South Africa in relation to its own interests?
- Is western policy based on a misunderstanding of the probable South African response?
- Can the western powers define their demands in a way which could gain acceptance by the White electorate? Does the West have the diplomatic courage to spell out demands of such a kind?
- What effective leverage does the West—especially the U.S.A.—really possess?
- What will be the role of force?
- Is South Africa foredoomed to become a garrison state?
- Is there any feasible internal settlement short of radical partition? Would even that be viable?

While these questions may be answered in various ways, the contributors agree in one thing: the pressures on South Africa will persist and intensify. This volume is a useful addition to a growing body of literature which enables us to understand the nature of that pressure and, hopefully, respond to it in a creative way.

D. McK. IRVINE

JOURNAL OF NATAL AND ZULU HISTORY

In *Natalia* No. 7, reference was made to the imminent publication of this new journal which, in fact, appeared in June, 1978. Its auspicious advent is a welcome addition to the list of journals dealing with South African history and, in this case, with Natal and Zulu history in particular. Not only does it contain scholarly articles dealing with a variety of historical topics but it also has a number of book reviews written by eminent scholars in their particular fields. Its Editors are Professor A. H. Duminy and Dr. P. R. Maylam of the Department of History at the University of Natal, to whom contributions may be sent. We wish this new publication a long and fruitful life because it will not only provide young scholars with a forum for their ideas, but it will also serve to disseminate more widely knowledge of the latest trends in historical research in this particular field.