

Hlobane: A new perspective

On 28 March 1879, the British were roundly defeated as they tried to take cattle belonging to the Qulusi from the plateau of Hlobane. On the following day, the main Zulu *impi* attacked the British laager at Khambula and was decisively repulsed, a victory which overshadowed the earlier débâcle. This paper sets the action at Hlobane in its geographical and historical context using a previously unnoticed source to clarify the movements of the British and Zulu forces, illuminate the relationship between colonial units and imperial officers and illustrate the intrigues initiated by the latter to cover their mistakes.

The rugged country where the Mfolozi Mhlope (White Mfolozi), Mfolozi Mnyama (Black Mfolozi) and Mkhuze Rivers have their headwaters has for long been the cockpit of south-eastern Africa. In the late eighteenth century when it was occupied by the Ngwane of Masumpha Zondo and a less cohesive grouping of Zwane and Mazibuko peoples known as the Ngwe, the Ndwandwe and Mtetwa vied for control. The Ngwane under Matiwane kaMasumpha were forced out and in consequence caused the Hlubi polity centred on the rolling landscape between the Ncome and Mzinyathi Rivers temporarily to disintegrate. As the Ndwandwe defensive zone roughly drawn along the middle reaches of the Mfolozi Mhlope crumbled under the probing of the Mtetwa, a small group of Khumalo under Mzilikazi Khumalo was prompted to plunder its smaller neighbours to the west under Nyoka Zwane before coming into further conflict with the groups locked into the kloofs of a massive spur of the Khahlamba dominated on its southern side by Ngcaka Mountain overlooking the upper Phongolo River. Here the Nyawo, Shabalala and Kubheka peoples, who looked for stability towards the related Ngwane Dlamini polity north of the river, were plundered and quietened. Not many years later, Ndwandwe refugees followed the same route on to the upper highveld, ejected by forces now controlled by Shaka kaSenzengakhona Zulu. Attempting a return in 1826, they were met at Ndololwane on the western edge of the area and dispersed. As the larger refugee groups rolled through, the original small groupings largely survived, the craggy landscape providing shelter from the military and political attentions of the increasingly dominant Zulu polity to the south.

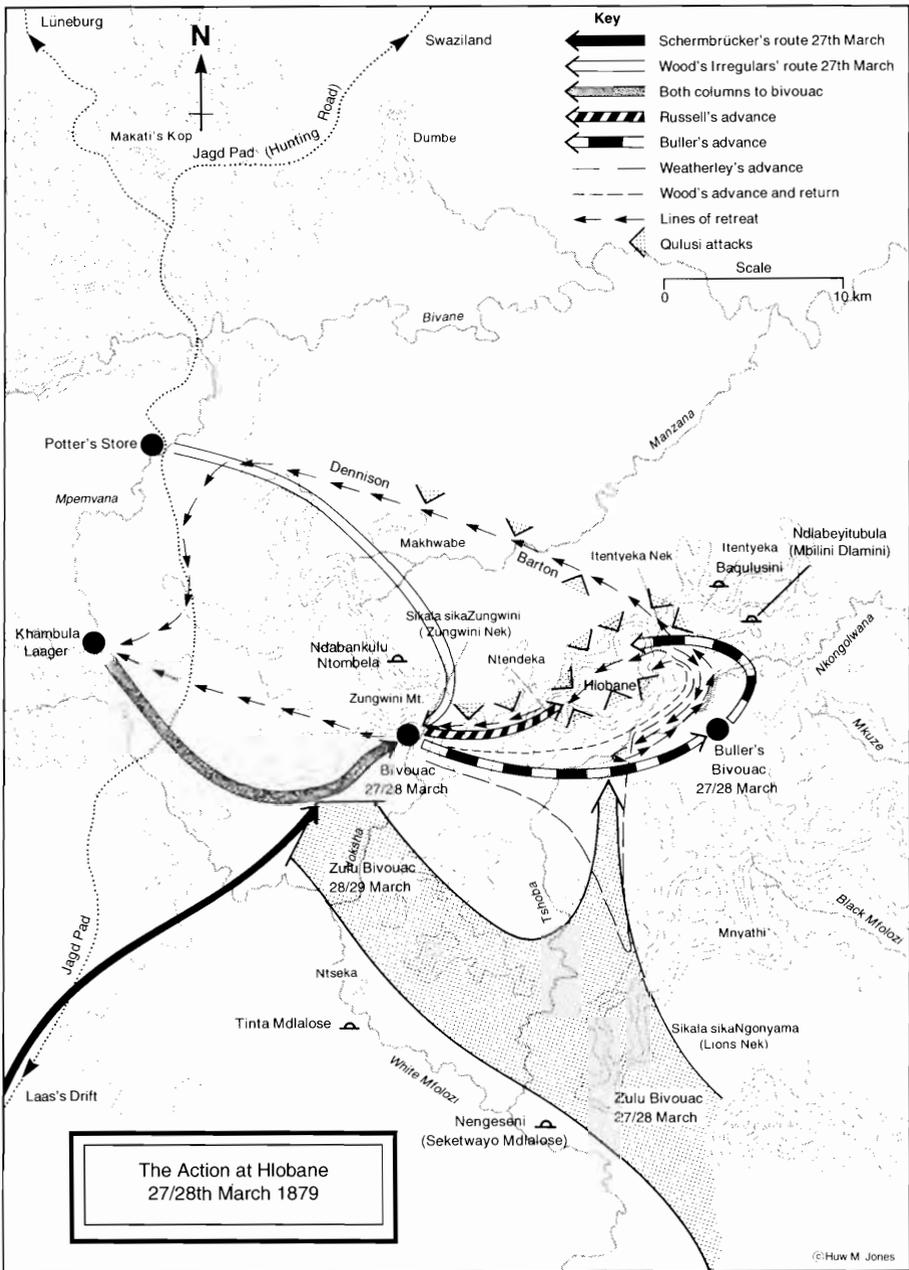
For many years the area remained relatively isolated, the western end of a border zone between the Zulu and Ngwane Dlamini now becoming better known as the Swazi. Refugees who sought sanctuary with the Zulu were placed on the edge of this *cordon sanitaire*; rebel Swazi princes were settled at Bhadzeni near the Dumbe Mountain in 1847 by Mpande kaSenzengakhona Zulu. Mpande had viewed with apprehension the return of the Hlubi under Langalibalele kaMthimkulu and the

need to keep them as well as others, such as the Mazibuko and the people of Nyamayenja waSobhuza Dlamini, aware of the potential of Zulu power even though he acknowledged they were not his subjects. Continuing requests for land from trekboers arriving west of the Mzinyathi River were also cause for disquiet. Mpande responded by placing important groups and reliable *izinduna* in localities of strategic importance, strengthening the north-western border area by moving the Ntombela under Lukwazi kaMazwana into the eastern foothills of the Zungwini Range south of the Bivane River and the Mdlalose under Sekethwayo kaNhlaka into the lands along the upper Mfolozi Mhlope. Immediately to their rear, in the deep kloofs of the linking series of plateaux running north-westwards from Ntendeka in the west through Hlobane and Ityenteka to Mashongololo, Mpande moved the Qulusi homestead, Baqulusini, which had become his responsibility on the death of Mnkabayi kaJama Zulu. This was the focus for a group of refugees of royal origin who came under Zulu protection, but retained their privileged status and to this homestead the Swazi were attached.

Tensions lead to war

As politics consolidated and border zones shrank to boundaries more precisely defined, potential for conflict increased. This is not the place to rehearse the causes of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, save to note that, for several years previously, the area had been marked by tensions which became more obvious as the British upset the balance of political power by annexing the South African Republic (ZAR) in 1877, taking control of the upper Phongolo area from its burghers. On the other side of the boundary, the situation also changed with the arrival in 1866 of another Swazi refugee, Mbilini waMswati Dlamini, the first-born son of Ngwenyama Mswati. He settled in the hills north of the confluence of the Ntombe and Phongolo Rivers immediately establishing a close personal relationship with Mpande's heir, Cetshwayo Zulu, who had assumed a dominant position in Zulu politics. After spending three years at Ulundi, in 1878 Mbilini established another homestead, Ndlabeyitubula, on the south-eastern slopes of Mashongololo. From here he raided the south-western borders of the Swazi country as well as the districts of Utrecht and Wakkerstroom.

Even as the British appeared magisterially to resolve border problems, their relations with the Zulu deteriorated to the point when, in late 1878, it became obvious to Cetshwayo that war was inevitable. Mbilini was still the dominant personality in the area and Cetshwayo was content to allow him to assume military control. Through his spies and mounted scouts who regularly patrolled as far north as the Mkhondvo River, Mbilini was aware of British troop movements. Most obvious were the continuous wagon trains from Newcastle through Utrecht carrying supplies for a forward commissary at Balte's Spruit. The arrival of the administrator of the Transvaal, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, in Utrecht at Christmas 1878 would not have gone unnoticed. Africans living on farms in Utrecht and Wakkerstroom districts were pressed into service and drafted to Utrecht to be kitted out with arms. Since his surrender was one of the conditions of the British ultimatum to the Zulu, Mbilini left his homestead above the Ntombe and moved to Ndlabeyitubula. On 1 January 1879 the wagon route to Balte's Spruit was choked with troops. Clearly



visible from the Zungwini Range, was the British camp at Conference Hill, not far from the banks of the Ncome, as were attempts by the troops to ford what was assumed by their commanders to be the Zulu boundary; they were finally successful on 6 January, five days before the ultimatum was due to expire. Mbilini did nothing to impede the progress of this force, No.4 Column under Brevet Col H.E. Wood, 90th (Perthshire Volunteers) Light Infantry, attempting only, albeit unsuccessfully, to deter waverers such as Tinta Mdlalose and the border *induna* Mbemba from defecting with their people, cattle and weapons. Instead he took control of the Qulusi and of the Ntombela, now led by Mabamba kaLukwazi and his principal *induna* Ndabankulu Ntombela, as well as the Kubheka under Manyonyoba kaMagonondo who lived in the Ntombe valley north of the Phongolo. Mbilini's defensive strategy was that in which he had been sedulously trained in the Swazi polity: given the obvious military superiority of the enemy, offer as little resistance as possible and withdraw to prepared positions in the mountains. By early March, homesteads had been cleared of people and cattle; men were trained and drilled in the use of captured weapons. For his central defensive position, Mbilini selected the series of plateaux stretching from Ntendeka to Mashongololo above Baqulusini. Here on the flat plateau of Hlobane, the Qulusi ranged their cattle from temporary homesteads built on the terraces around its precipitous sides.

When circumstances were opportune, Mbilini struck with ferocity in the sudden dawn raids that were a feature of Swazi offensive tactics. A British convoy from the hamlet of Derby bound for Lüneburg became bogged down during the heavy rains of early March and several wagons were looted. The remaining wagons were collected at the drift across the Ntombe, but the convoy was inadequately guarded and Mbilini attacked at dawn on 12 March, killing 79 soldiers and civilians and seizing arms and ammunition. By the time reinforcements arrived from Lüneburg, the Qulusi had disappeared. Stung by the defeat at Ntombe Drift and lured by reports of thousands of cattle grazing on Hlobane, Wood was pressured into an assault on this plateau which he incorrectly believed to be the main locus of Qulusi opposition. Poorly crafted plans, based on inadequate intelligence and compounded by inept soldiering, marked the British defeat in the action at Hlobane on 27/28 March 1879.

Wood's accounts

Accounts of the action have relied heavily on Wood's autobiography published in 1906¹. He used his official despatch written on 30 March 1879 of which there are, in fact, two versions². That published officially contains two important sections omitted from the abbreviated version which received wide publicity in the newspapers of southern Africa and Britain. One gave Wood's reasons for proceeding against the Qulusi, setting out why he thought a Zulu *impi* from Ulundi would not reach him before the action took place, and a second covered his order to Local Lt-Col J.C. Russell, 12th (Prince of Wales' Royal) Lancers, and his assertion that Russell went to the wrong location; a footnote commending the courage of Major W.K. Leet, 13th (Somerset) Light Infantry, was also omitted. In addition to being released to the press, the abbreviated version was used by Norris-Newman in his account of the Anglo-Zulu War compiled in Pietermaritzburg in 1880³ and by Williams in his biography of Wood published in 1892⁴. Certain aspects of the action

were described by Wood and published as articles in *Pearson's Magazine* in 1895⁵. In *British Battles on Land and Sea*, edited by Wood for publication in 1915, his autobiography was the principal source of a description of Hlobane with changes introduced to counter some of the criticisms of his command expressed, *albeit sotto voce*, since shortly after the action was fought⁶.

Wood's despatch is essentially a description of his own movements with commendation for certain individuals, not an overall report based on those of the unit commanders. It is incomplete because Wood adopted the role of interested spectator, taking no part in either the main assault on Hlobane plateau commanded by Brevet Lt-Col R.H. Buller, 60th Rifles, and the repulse from there or in Russell's advance on to and retirement from the lower plateau of Ntendeka. In a brief memorandum reporting his actions, Wood elided the events at Hlobane and Khambula so as to mask the severity of defeat and elaborate the decisiveness of victory and both versions of the despatch are internally inconsistent and vague in certain important aspects. Subsequent commentators have accepted Wood's accounts without demur, but as Maj-Gen M.W.E. Gossett pointed out in 1906: 'By a fluke he [Wood] rec'd information of the enemy's advance on Kambula (*sic*) & he dovetailed the two actions in his report, so as to show himself to the best advantage'⁷.

Releasing the news

By 7pm on 29 March, immediately after the Zulu had been driven from Khambula, Wood wrote a short memorandum on the events of the previous two days⁸ as well as a somewhat incoherent letter to the high commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, fortuitously then in nearby Newcastle:

Your two kind letters were put into my hands as 20,000 were attacking us. We have lost about 7 officers and 70 men killed and wounded, but entirely defeated the enemy who suffered severely. This makes up for yesterday when we successfully assaulted the Inhlobane army but being caught up by the Ulundi army suffered considerable loss. Please spread the news of our fight today. To our grief Piet Uys was killed yesterday. I will write further particulars later. My horse was killed yesterday falling on me. Poor Ronald Campbell, Lord Cawdor's son, [?killed] when behaving most gallantly. The Zulus came on from 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm⁹.

On the following day he completed his despatches on Hlobane, accompanied by the reports of the unit commanders and other statements relating to Russell's conduct, and on Khambula. Utrecht had no telegraph at this time and the line of communication was through Newcastle. Frere, despondent at the news of 'reverses suffered by Buller's Patrol to the Hlobane Mtn', was writing to Wood when the latter's note arrived. 'Most heartily', responded Frere, 'do I thank God & congratulate you, on what from your brief account seems to have been so very brilliant & decisive a victory'¹⁰. He was also quick to respond to Wood's plea 'to spread the news'; on 31 March he sent a letter to Col. W.O. Lanyon, now Administrator of the Transvaal, forwarding 'extracts from despatches received from Colonel Wood VC, CB reporting the result of an attack on his camp at Kambula, by



“Northern aspect of Inhlobane Mountain” showing “Great Inhlobane”, “Little Inhlobane” and “Zunge” (Zungwini).
A sketch by Colonel Evelyn Wood’s military secretary, Major Thomas Fraser R.E. (Pietermaritzburg Archive Repository A598)

a force of Zulus, estimated at 20,000 men, comprising regiments which were the élite of [the] Zulu army'; as Frere congratulated Chelmsford on 'this decisive victory', there was no mention of Hlobane, only a condolence on the death of P.L. Uys, leader of the Burgher Force. Lanyon had Frere's letter and its enclosures published in Pretoria in a *Government Gazette Extraordinary* on 3 April in English and Dutch. The memorandum and despatch were published in full, duly attested as true copies by T.S. Hutchinson, landdrost of Wakkerstroom, and Capt R.A. Knox, 4th (The King's Own) Regiment, commanding the troops at Newcastle. The Hlobane despatch appeared in the abbreviated version with Knox attesting only that it was a 'correct copy, but not verified'; the postscript referring to Leet somehow became attached to the English copy of the Khambula despatch, although it was correctly placed at the end of the Dutch translation¹¹.

Rumours that Wood had suffered a very serious reverse began to circulate in Pietermaritzburg on the evening of Monday 31 March, Government House admitting only that Wood had seen a force of some 20,000 Zulu whilst on patrol. So serious were they that the correspondent of *The Cape Mercury* cabled his office that he 'dare not wire, except officially confirmed'¹². Wood's memorandum had been telegraphed by the resident magistrate in Ladysmith to the colonial secretary in Pietermaritzburg at 9.30 am on 1 April and the news began to circulate there immediately. In Durban, *The Natal Mercury* announced at its office at 2 pm that day that 'the Zlobane (*sic*) mountain was attacked on the 28th, and taken, but 20,000 Zulus surrounded it and recaptured the cattle, after great loss on our side.' followed by a report that Khambula had been attacked and the Zulu driven off. This appeared in the issue of that paper on 2 April with a statement released earlier that day by the DAG, Col W. Bellairs, Army headquarters being then in Durban. In Pietermaritzburg, *The Times of Natal* also carried Wood's memorandum on 2 April with a postscript from a letter transmitted through Ladysmith that Captain Ronald Campbell, Llewellyn Lloyd and Piet Uys had been killed. On the same day, Bellairs also released Wood's official Khambula despatch and it was printed in *The Natal Mercury* on the next day, 3 April.

To those in Natal waiting for news, the situation was confused; on 5 April, the 'special commissioner' for *The Cape Times* reported from Durban that he had no details of the Hlobane action, but there was no doubt that Buller's force 'was surrounded and that those who saved their lives did so by cutting through the ranks of the enemy'¹³. Not until a one page 'Extra' to *The Natal Mercury* appeared about 6 April with a report from the correspondent of *The Times of Natal* by-lined 'Kambula Hill, March 29, 1879 and March 30, 1879', as well as a list of those killed issued by Bellairs on 5 April, was there any firm information of what had happened at Hlobane. In Pietermaritzburg, *The Times of Natal* provided news from 'the authorities' on 4 April quoting a reliable source at Khambula giving some details of the attack on the laager, followed by even fewer about Hlobane; it also published Wood's despatch on Khambula. Only on 11 April did *The Times of Natal* publish Wood's Hlobane despatch, copied from *De Volksstem* of 4 April and prefaced by the note:

It appears by some accident not to have been transmitted with Brigadier-General Wood's report of the attack on the camp, which it seems it accompanied.

In Cape Town, the despatch covering the action at Khambula was published in *The Cape Argus* and *The Cape Times* on 2 and 3 April and speculation about what had happened at Hlobane was rife. On 3 April a leading article in *The Cape Times* considered that the Zulu army's strength had been underestimated and that it was possible that the 20,000 who had surrounded Wood were Swazi commanded by Mbilini. Further consideration on the next day led to the thought that Hlobane had been a repeat of the Uys 'experimental patrol' carried out in February and that Wood had possibly 'remained in defence of the camp'. A telegram from Cape Town dated 15 April reported that 'no details are yet at hand concerning the disaster at Zlobane (*sic*) Mountain'¹⁴. Not until 17 April was Wood's Hlobane despatch published in *The Cape Times*, to be followed the next day by pæans of praise for Wood and the astounding conclusion that:

The attack upon the Inhlobane Mountain, so modestly described by Colonel Wood, was one of the most daring feats in the annals of modern warfare. It was daring, we fear, unto rashness, but the feature on which we would lay the most stress is that the "fighting column" has made up in personal bravery for paucity in numbers. ... The siege of the Inthlobane (*sic*) Mountain and the attack upon the Khambula camp may almost be regarded as one engagement; and whilst we have to mourn over the loss of so many brave men we have also to rejoice over an undoubted victory¹⁵.

The Cape Times followed this with more adulatory references to Wood and by early May contended with its rival paper in Cape Town that no blame had been or could be attached to anyone for the Hlobane defeat.

It is clear, however, that Wood's Hlobane despatch and attachments were with Bellairs in Durban at least by 5 April. That day he telegraphed the news of Hlobane and Khambula to the secretary of state for war quoting from Wood's despatches and adding telegrams from Chelmsford about the action at Gingindlovu¹⁶. In Chelmsford's absence with the column he had taken to relieve Eshowe, Bellairs decided to send the despatches to London immediately. On 5 April, he formally forwarded them to the War Office, having made arrangements on his own initiative to arrange for the mail steamer to leave Cape Town a day earlier than advertised and for it to call at S. Vicente in the Cape Verde Islands instead of Madeira so that the telegram could reach London earlier. The *Dublin Castle*, scheduled to sail from Cape Town on 8 April, was ordered to leave with despatches at 9.20 pm the previous evening. At 11.20 pm on 22 April, the ship reached S. Vicente from where the news was telegraphed to Britain¹⁷. *The Times* carried the news on the following day that Wood had successfully attacked the enemy position on Hlobane mountain:

Unfortunately in bringing off the large number of cattle captured, he was delayed owing to the extreme difficulty of the ground, and assailed in his turn by a large body of the enemy estimated at 20,000 strong, who endeavoured to cut off his retreat. That the safety of Colonel Wood's detachment was imperilled

is evident, and they cut their way through with heavy loss, losing Captains the Hon R.E. Campbell and R.J. Barton of the Coldstream Guards, both special service officers, besides a long roll of colonial officers and men whom we can ill spare.

There followed the description of the success at Khambula, thus following a scenario which could only mislead and confuse. Wood's Khambula despatch was published in *The Times* on Friday 2 May and the abbreviated Hlobane despatch followed a day later. A staff writer on *The Times* reflecting on the Hlobane despatch over the weekend commented on the following Monday that it 'lacks clearness'. 'We are left in ignorance' he wrote 'of the reasons which led to the attack on the Zlobani (*sic*) mountain. According to one account, it was for the purpose of directing attention from Lord Chelmsford's advance on Ekowe (*sic*); but there is good reason to believe it was with a view to clearing Lunenburg district, which for months past has been infested by Umbelini's men ...'¹⁸ On 17 May *The Times* published an account of 'The Battle of Zlobane' by its own correspondent who had taken part; significantly it was written after the action at Khambula on 30 March and prefaced by the statement that 'After two days' severe fighting, Colonel Wood has gained a complete victory ...'¹⁹ By this time, Bellairs' memorandum of 5 April with Wood's complete despatches and attachments had been published on 7 May in a supplement to *The London Gazette*, that relating to Hlobane first²⁰.

Managing the news

The staff writer of *The Times* was not the only one to puzzle over the abbreviated Hlobane despatch. Strangely, Lord Chelmsford himself, having returned to Durban on 9 April, commented to the secretary of state for war that he had 'not observed in Colonel Wood's despatch any reference to the reason why he considered it desirable to attack on the 28th'²¹. Yet in the full version of his despatch Wood wrote that 'I considered that the great importance of creating a diversion of the Ekowe (*sic*) Relief Column justified me in making a reconnaissance in force, and moreover ... it was improbable that Cetewayo's army could leave Undi (*sic*) till the 27th inst.' Could the commander-in-chief have been reading the abbreviated version and why and by whom had this been prepared?

According to Lanyon, the omissions in the Hlobane despatch as published in the *Transvaal Government Gazette* were made on the instructions of Frere through whom the accounts had been received in Pretoria. On receiving his copy of the gazette in Khambula, Wood had immediately protested to C.E. Steele, acting colonial secretary of the Transvaal, that a paragraph had been omitted without anything to show that it had been left out. 'By this omission', wrote Wood, 'not only is undue prominence given to my personal action, on the 28th, but an injustice is done to the arrangements I made, for conducting the retreat in an orderly manner'. In response Lanyon had a letter sent to the Transvaal press emphasising 'that what was published was only an extract from Wood's official despatch' and he published a notice, No. 48 of 1879, to this effect in a subsequent gazette²². This was the only omission to which Wood objected and, as far as is known, he made no further protests. The paragraph omitted contained his instruction to Russell to withdraw to

Zungwini Nek and Wood's pointed contention that in moving to the wrong place Russell failed to cover Buller's withdrawal and was responsible for the deaths of some 80 of Hamu's people. Laying the blame on Russell was one of Wood's manoeuvres to shift responsibility for the disaster at Hlobane from himself to others; this first move failed, but he was soon to have Russell disgraced.

In camp at Khambula, little was said about Hlobane. On 15 April a general parade was held to read a letter from Lord Chelmsford at which Wood thanked everyone for their part in the action on 29 March. As one correspondent noted, however, 'In allusion to the Hlobane matter very little was said. He [Wood] spoke of it feelingly enough and in deploring our heavy loss of 28th instant (*sic*) stated that no fault could be attributed to anyone but himself, if anyone was to blame for the untoward occurrence.'²³ 'Manliness' was one description of Wood's reticence in speaking of the reverse at Hlobane²⁴.

It could be said that despatches written close to the events they describe are inevitably uneven. And in the circumstances of Hlobane, the loss of Campbell was not only a severe emotional shock for Wood, but that of a staff officer competent in preparing reports. Maj-Gen Sir Archibald Alison, head of army intelligence, described the despatches at the time as gibberish, Lt-Col J.N. Crealock, military secretary to Chelmsford, attributing this to the loss of Campbell²⁵. In the light of subsequent events and detailed analysis, however, it is difficult to attribute Wood's ambiguous memorandum and despatch solely to his mental state or written competence which was not, in fact, inconsiderable.

It could also be said that, given the hitherto lamentable sequence of campaign disasters, affecting Wood's column no less than others, the desire to laud the rout of the Zulu at Khambula is fully understandable. But there are certain aspects of the content of his despatch which lead one to suspect that Wood's motives were not that simple, that he knew of matters best left unsaid.

Another account

The task of unravelling the consequences of the action at Hlobane, let alone its course, is by no means complete. Some of the inconsistencies in Wood's accounts have been noted in a recent article²⁶. But the information in a source which has never, as far as I am aware, been consulted with reference to the Anglo-Zulu War provides a different perspective on three assertions made in Wood's version of events — that Wood knew of the presence of the Zulu *impi* only on his return westwards at 10.30 am on 28 March, that the Border Horse was marching away from the action when encountered by Wood, and that it displayed cowardice in the face of the enemy. The memoir of C.G. Dennison who took part in the action at Hlobane as second-in-command of the Border Horse and the only officer in that unit to survive, throws new light on these assertions²⁷. Written shortly after the end of the second Anglo-Boer War, it comprises 170 pages of typed text covering Dennison's career to the end of the first Anglo-Boer War. This period is barely summarized in Dennison's book, *A Fight to a Finish*, published in London in 1904, which deals with his experiences during the second Anglo-Boer War²⁸. His experiences at Hlobane are totally omitted, probably because, however much Dennison suggested otherwise, it implicitly blamed Wood for the fiasco and Wood

was by then Field Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood, VC, GCB, GCMG commanding 2nd Army Corps²⁹. The memoir provides answers to several questions (imagination and supposition having hitherto sufficed), brings to light the major mistake which Wood made and demonstrates how he manipulated the record of events.

Dennison was born at Cradock in the Cape Colony and brought up in Grahamstown before moving to the Orange Free State with his family whilst still a small boy. Both his father and a brother were killed in action during the Frontier Wars³⁰. In 1865 he served under Capt E.S. Hanger as a trooper with the Bloemfontein Mounted Rangers, a voluntary burgher corps, taking part in the Second Basuto War (1865-1866)³¹. About 1869, he moved with his wife and family to Rustenburg in the western ZAR and on its formation in 1871 joined the Rustenburg Schutzen Corps; by 1877 he was a lieutenant, one of the only two officers, the other being the commandant³². When a commando against the Pedi was raised in May 1876, Dennison commanded the President's Bodyguard and Lt-Col F.A. Weatherley and his family came over from Eersteling to join President T.F. Burgers and watch the proceedings. It was probably on this occasion that Dennison first met Weatherley who asked him in 1878 to be second-in-command of a volunteer force he expected to lead, and later that year Weatherley raised a unit generally known as the Border Horse. Towards the end of January 1879, 55 men comprising A troop were ready to march to Eersteling in the Zoutpansberg under Dennison's command, but the day before he was due to leave, Dennison heard that his wife was seriously ill in Rustenburg and he left Pretoria to look after her; the troop marched without him³³. Towards the end of January 1879, Weatherley received a letter from Col. H. Rowlands VC, commanding both imperial and local forces in the Transvaal and then at Derby near the Swazi border, asking him to march as soon as he could with as many men as possible for Makati's Kop³⁴ in the direction of Lüneburg³⁵. On 30 January Weatherley issued orders to B troop to parade that morning 'in full marching order for active service and ... proceed to Luneberg (*sic*) to join the Transvaal Column'. Alerted the previous day, Dennison hastened back to Pretoria and left with the troop as second-in-command to Weatherley. Before following B troop of the Border Horse to Hlobane, it is necessary to have a closer look at its commanding officer, now Cmdt Weatherley, whom Wood described as a 'rebel' — 'or said to have been'³⁶.

Weatherley's career

Commenting immediately after its printing of Wood's Hlobane despatch, *The Cape Times* noted that:

It seems to us as a singular omission that in Colonel Wood's despatch the death of Colonel Weatherley finds no place. We are perfectly sure that it was an omission and nothing more and that the brave soldier's memory will have justice done to it.³⁷

But this was a deliberate omission designed by Wood to preserve his reputation; in Dennison's forgotten memoir, Wood's negligence in the field, followed by a deliberate cover-up and the vilification of a dead officer with no next-of-kin able to support his memory, can now be clearly identified. Weatherley was the perfect

candidate for the role of scapegoat; not only was he dead, but his life had been recently marked by scandal and intemperate behaviour. Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1830, he was the son of Ilderton Weatherley, a ship owner. Educated for four years at the military academy in Dresden³⁸, family influence secured for him a commission as a lieutenant in the 4th Austrian Imperial Tuscan Dragoons quartered in Italy³⁹. Here he was engaged in clearing the Apennines of brigands and disbanded soldiery from the 1848 war⁴⁰. Returning to Britain, Weatherley commanded a troop as a captain in the Tower Hamlets Militia and made personal representations for a cornetcy in the Light Dragoon regiment then serving in the Crimea, the war there having broken out in September 1854. At the age of 24, he was somewhat old for a commission of this nature, but the nomination of the Earl of Cardigan was sufficient to secure a cornetcy without purchase in the 4th (The Queen's Own) regiment of Light Dragoons on 30 March 1855⁴¹. Very shortly afterwards, Weatherley obtained his lieutenancy in the regiment by purchase on 26 June 1855⁴². Arriving in the Crimea with his regiment on 13 August 1855, he was present at the battle of Tchernaya and the siege and fall of Sevastopol. In dramatic circumstances, Weatherley ran away with a rich heiress, Maria Louisa Martyn, daughter of Lt-Col Francis Mountjoy Martyn, 2nd Life Guards, and on 5 January 1857 they were married in Windsor⁴³. Four months later, the Sepoy Mutiny erupted in India and Weatherley, possibly because of the circumstances of his marriage, exchanged on 5 June 1857 into the 6th regiment of Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers) then stationed in Meerut⁴⁴. In India he was involved in operations in the Rohilkhand and Awadh. By late 1861, prospects for promotion in the Carabiniers were limited and on his behalf Lord Raglan asked the commander-in-chief 'to be good enough to favor (*sic*) his views if it lies in your power?' It did, and at a cost of £1 100, H.R.H. Prince George sanctioned the purchase of a troop by Weatherley with a captaincy in the 6th (Inniskilling) regiment of Dragoons on 28 January 1862 and he served for a further six years before retiring in April 1868 by the sale of his commission⁴⁵. Retiring to Brighton, he was appointed on 31 March 1875 to command a corps of the Sussex Artillery Volunteers with the rank of lieutenant-colonel; he was subsequently promoted to command the brigade of four corps of artillery⁴⁶.

Weatherley and southern Africa

In mid-1871, Edward Button, a Durban butcher, discovered gold on the farm Eersteling in the Zoutpansberg initiating the first gold rush in the ZAR. He formed The Transvaal Gold Mining Company Limited in Britain in August 1872 with a nominal capital of £50 000 'to purchase the estate called Eersteling' and among the seven initial subscribers who took ten £10 shares each was Weatherley who became a director⁴⁷. On the death of his father-in-law in January 1874, Weatherley was left £42 000 which he invested unwisely. Much went to finance a 12-stamp battery and an engineer sent from Britain, but the Eersteling mine did not flourish and the prospectors and miners soon left for the fields near Lydenburg. In mid-1875, one of the directors, A.R. Roche, went out to inspect the property, but he became ill and although he reached Eersteling, was forced to return and shortly died⁴⁸. These adverse circumstances, and a need to economise because of his poor investments,

were the reason for Weatherley's departure early in 1876 to become managing director at Eersteling at a monthly salary of £45⁴⁹.

Relationships between the ZAR and the neighbouring Pedi polity under Sekhukhune waSekwati had deteriorated to the point when in May 1876 President T.F. Burgers led a commando against him into the mountainous country south of the Olifants River. The Republic was in such parlous financial straits that Burgers asked the management of the Eersteling company for their spare arms and ammunition which were duly provided. Weatherley offered his services and joined Burgers' commando. The campaign was a failure, but in payment for the arms and ammunition, Weatherley obtained a concession from the president granting the company mineral rights over most of the government land in the Zoutpansberg. The fortunes of the ZAR declined further when Sir Theophilus Shepstone crossed its border on 4 January 1877 intending to annex it to the British Crown. Taking up residence in Pretoria, Shepstone sounded public opinion and among those most active in furthering annexation was Weatherley. Labour and transport difficulties had contributed to the failure of the Natalia Mine at Eersteling and Weatherley, disenchanted with the prospect of living in the remote and unsettled Zoutpansberg, had established himself in Pretoria. Prominent in public life, he became commandant of the Pretoria Mutual Protection Association formed on 7 April from British residents anxious lest annexation should be forcibly opposed⁵⁰. He was there to greet the arrival of the 13th (Somerset) Light Infantry on 4 May, calling for three cheers in its honour⁵¹ and was a steward at the first race meeting held in the Republic⁵².

The establishment of a British administration in April, however, was not the fillip to his fortunes that Weatherley anticipated. Due to be ratified by the Volksraad at its sitting in February 1877, the threat of annexation took precedence in the debates and ratification of his concession was held over for the next session — which never took place. Repeated representations to Shepstone, now British administrator, to confirm the concession went unheeded and in Weatherley's difficult financial position this was a bitter disappointment. If Weatherley had a fault, it was the gullibility of the vain. On 1 August 1877 heading the signatures to a memorial to Shepstone praising the efforts of Weatherley 'in saving the town from any serious consequence' was the adjutant of the Pretoria Mutual Protection Association, one Gunn of Gunn, later to play a significant role in Weatherley's downfall⁵³. Weatherley believed that his considerable military experience was to be made use of by the new British administration. Lt-Col E. Brooke RE of Shepstone's staff and Weatherley became close colleagues on the military commission considering defence. Raising an African police corps, often referred to as the 'Zulu Battalion', in the Transvaal (as the Republic was now known) was discussed and Weatherley confidently expected to become its first commandant. He had prepared all the details for Brooke and understood from both Brooke and Captain Sir Morrison Barlow, special commissioner in the Waterberg and Zoutpansberg based at Eersteling, that Shepstone had approved the appointment. So confident was he that he resigned his commission in the Sussex Artillery Volunteers, losing significant benefits⁵⁴. When Weatherley called on Shepstone to thank him for the appointment, to his amazement Shepstone denied asking Brooke to let Weatherley

know that the appointment had been made. A bitter correspondence followed, Weatherley asserting that his honour had been seriously compromised. Barlow described it as a 'monstrous misunderstanding' and, although he denied that Brooke had ever told Weatherley that he did have the command, said that he had thought it a *fait accompli* since there had been much discussion in Pretoria to this effect⁵⁵. A public meeting called on 4 December to consider the question of a volunteer force resolved to serve under Weatherley and no-one else⁵⁶. Frere, W.C. Sargeant (a senior civil servant in the Crown Agents sent from London to ascertain the financial probity of the Transvaal and who had been colonial secretary in Natal from 1853 to 1857), the commanding officer and officers of the 13th (Somerset) Light Infantry and eventually the secretary of state for the colonies all became involved⁵⁷. Piqued by Shepstone's refusal to ratify his concession or to appoint him to command a volunteer force, Weatherley offered his services and those of 500 men from the Transvaal in January 1878 to help the Cape government in its wars on the frontier; his offer was sarcastically declined⁵⁸.

Weatherley's animosity against Shepstone now became used by the administrator's political opponents, typified by J.F. Celliers, editor of *De Volksstem*, and others with more personal motives such as the charlatan Charles Stewart, commonly known as the Gunn of Gunn⁵⁹. As Shepstone himself wrote 'Weatherley was thrown into the arms of and made champion of the Disaffected party'⁶⁰. Two petitions to replace Shepstone as administrator with Weatherley were prepared and presented to the government; they carried 3 883 signatures, of which only 16 were proved to be genuine with a further five in doubt⁶¹. Weatherley flatly denied involvement and he was supported by the testimony of J.W. Glynn who protested during Stewart's trial on charges of fraud, conspiracy and forgery, at the attempt by the prosecution to connect Weatherley personally with the petitions. Glynn emphatically denied Weatherley's 'having been connected with this matter in any way'⁶², the latter having seen the first petition only after it was circulated and the second possibly not at all, since he had left for Cape Town before it was printed.

Fulminating against 'the apathy and neglect displayed by the present situation', Weatherley visited Cape Town in mid-May 1878 to see Frere, not about the petitions, but the apparent slight on his honour by Shepstone's actions. It was now, however, that the real reason for his problems surfaced. His marriage, never a happy one, had been dominated by the temper of his wife. He determined to leave southern Africa and asked his wife to sell their house in Pretoria and join him in Cape Town with the children. She replied that, as Stewart was now in prison on charges connected with the forged petitions, it would be quite wrong to abandon him. How plucky, thought Weatherley, and returned to Pretoria, only to find from his sons, Poulett aged 18 and Rupert aged 13, that their mother's support for Stewart had clearly gone beyond the bounds of propriety. For some time Weatherley continued to believe in his wife's honour, even though he now had serious doubts about Stewart's assumed identity; he was a man who had always sought the peaceful option in his troubled marriage. The liaison, however, continued to flourish and became even more flagrant to the point that Weatherley left the marital home and brought an action for divorce against Mrs. Weatherley; in addition to pleas referring to property, additional pleas were filed — of connivance: that Weatherley had allowed

the liaison to flourish; of condonation: that a confession of guilt had been secured using undue influence; and collusion: that Weatherley and his lawyer had made arrangements with Mrs. Weatherley for a divorce. And so in November 1878, the case came to court, Maria Louisa Weatherley accused of adultery on various occasions between June and October 1878 with Charles Grant Murray Somerset Seymour Stuart Gunn. Weatherley realised by now that he had been duped and on 26 October 1878 wrote a fulsome letter of apology to Shepstone saying that 'he had been led into all sorts of errors by designing people, of which I am now heartily ashamed'. In a subsequent letter explaining his situation, Weatherley thought that Shepstone would accuse him of weakness 'but I don't think' he wrote 'you can imagine without having tried it, the sort of life I have led, and how a man will do anything for peace'⁶³.

The Border Horse

With Shepstone's acceptance of his apology, Weatherley once again considered leading a volunteer force. British forces were being withdrawn from the Pedi country and the Zoutpansberg became exposed to the possibility of hostile raids. With the concurrence of Col H. Rowlands VC, commanding both imperial and local forces in the Transvaal, it was decided to station a volunteer force at Weatherley's company property at Eersteling, Barlow's headquarters⁶⁴. As Weatherley was dragged into the divorce court, he asked Lord Chelmsford for employment and was immediately appointed commandant of a volunteer unit, Shepstone sanctioning the recruitment of 150 volunteers for Weatherley's Border Lances⁶⁵ for service in the Zoutpansberg or elsewhere for six months from 18 November 1878⁶⁶. Each volunteer with a horse would be paid 8/-, each volunteer provided with a government horse 5/-, both receiving free rations and forage; until they reached the front, pay was to be 3/- per day in lieu of rations. Their uniform was a blue 'jumper', cord breeches, red sash, riding boots and a white hat; they carried Martini-Henri rifles⁶⁷. Weatherley's knowledge of continental armies and fluency in their languages attracted many French and German volunteers to what became generally known as the Border Horse. As we have seen, A troop of the Border Horse left for Eersteling in mid January 1879 and B troop left Pretoria for Lüneburg on 30 January.

Soon after the troop arrived in Lüneburg a combined patrol was made on 25 February to the caves of the Kubheka in the Ntombe valley with the Swazi Police under Lt W.F. Fairlie. Rowlands' Transvaal Column having been amalgamated with Wood's No.4 Column, the Border Horse was ordered to move to Wood's camp at Khambula where it arrived on 2 March. The first two weeks of March were marked by heavy rains which severely curtailed the raiding and patrolling activities of the column. Not until 14 March was the Border Horse involved in any offensive activity when it formed part of the column commanded by Buller which left Khambula for Nhlangwine to bring in followers of Hamu kaNzibe Zulu who had just defected to the British. Out for two nights, this patrol met with no opposition. The troop did not take part in the three days' patrol to the Ntombe valley from 24 to 26 March.

Losing the way to Hlobane

On 26 March, however, regimental orders were issued by Lt V.H. Lys RN⁶⁸ for a 'reconnaissance' to Hlobane; all available men were to parade at 8 am the following day with 70 rounds of ammunition, a blanket and rations for two days. The troop was the last unit to leave Khambula in Buller's column which was to carry out the main assault on Hlobane from the east. There was thick mist that morning, but the men were cheerful and looking forward to their first action against the enemy. Buller arrived at the designated bivouac under the southern face of Zungwini Mountain at noon followed by the Border Horse half an hour later. He told Weatherley where he should unsaddle and added that he would give him the order when to move on. Having breakfasted, the men snoozed and relaxed. About 4 pm a bugle sounded and Dennison asked Weatherley whether they should respond to the call 'boot and saddle', but the latter said that it was not necessary as Buller had said that he would send the order when to move. As the column moved off, Dennison again questioned whether the troop should move, but Weatherley still refused to move without a direct order from Buller, emphasising that it was Buller who was in command. As time went by, the men became increasingly restive until Weatherley was roused to order them to upsaddle. Dennison places the blame squarely on Weatherley for this misunderstanding, noting that Buller had originally spoken only with kind intent and had not sent an order since the troop was resting only a few hundred yards from the main column. Dennison's memoir agrees with his report written after the action noting that the circumstances why the Border Horse were not with the column 'arose through our Col. not having received orders to march from our first camping ground'⁶⁹. Buller himself wrote that he could not understand why 'he [Weatherley] waited for individual orders and did not saddle up when he heard the trumpet sound "Horses in" '⁷⁰. It should be remembered that Weatherley was a former cavalry officer with considerable campaign experience and eight years older than Buller; it is entirely likely that he viewed Buller's actions as the deference due to one of his age and experience and was waiting for another kind gesture in recognition.

The Zulu impi

In his Hlobane despatch, Wood relates how he met Weatherley on the morning of 28 March 'coming westward, having lost his way the previous night' and directed him to turn about and join Buller's column which could be seen near the summit. As Dennison tells the story, the sun was setting as the troop set off from the Zungwini Nek bivouac on the previous evening in the tracks of the main column, but soon a misty rain began to fall and only the fires of Buller's second bivouac guided their march. On cresting a ridge, however, the lights disappeared and the troop rode on in drizzling rain for a further two hours. Suddenly, cresting yet another ridge, Weatherley saw what appeared to be stars and thought that the weather was breaking. Dennison identified the lights as camp fires, probably those of a Zulu impi. Taking L/Cpl E. Bernhardt and Trooper L. Barth, both Germans from British Kaffraria, Dennison went forward on foot and ascertained that it was indeed a Zulu impi and bound for Khambula. Returning to Weatherley, Dennison reported his

findings and suggested that, as the troop was quite lost, it should remain where it was until the direction in which Hlobane lay could be ascertained. Before daybreak, flashes presumed to be those of firearms were seen to the north and the troop mounted quietly and moved off. As dawn broke Hlobane loomed to the front and loud and continual firing was heard. Just under the foot of the mountain the troop caught up with a group of men galloping across their front — Wood with his personal staff and escort. Weatherley reported the position of the *impi* to Wood, Dennison adding that he judged that it was a strong force. But Wood retorted that the report was nonsense — as he had sent out a patrol the day before and there was no *impi* about, Weatherley and Dennison were mistaken.

Here we not only have a glimpse of Wood's arrogance, but evidence to refute the deliberately misleading assertion in his despatch and autobiography that he met Weatherley and the Border Horse moving westwards away from Hlobane. The troop was coming from the south and not, as Wood wanted others to infer, from the east and away from the action which was by this time evident. His innuendo that the Border Horse was running away from the action has successfully persisted. Selby, for example, asserted that 'The unit was made up for the most part of English settlers in the Transvaal, who were no great warriors, and they still showed reluctance to join the fight, so Wood rode on ahead with his escort to show them the way'⁷¹.

Wood laid the blame for his reverse at Hlobane on the sudden and unexpected arrival of the main Zulu *impi* from Ulundi. In his memorandum after the action, he claimed that 'We assaulted the Inhlobane successfully yesterday, and took some thousands of cattle, but while on top, about 20,000 Zulus, coming from Ulundi, attacked us, and we suffered considerable losses, the enemy retaking the captured cattle.'⁷² In his despatch, however, Wood noted that it was Mtonga kaMpande Zulu who first saw the *impi* advancing in the 'normal attack formation', but in contradiction of his memorandum 'exhausted by its rapid march, did not close on Colonel Buller, who descended after Uhamu's people the western point of the mountain'. By 1915, Wood made it clear that it was he who had sent Mtonga 'as a matter of precaution ... up the height to the south'⁷³. Although it is clear that the Zulu *impi* played no significant role in the action, according to Wood its arrival encouraged the Qulusi who 'emerged from their caves and harassed the retreat', 'the main Zulu Army being exhausted by their (*sic*) march, halted near where Vryheid now stands'⁷⁴. As *The Times* writer observed, the despatch lacked clarity, one of the ambiguous claims being that the Zulu *impi*, having surrounded the retiring British troops, did not attack because it was tired and hungry from its forced march from Ulundi. The evidence of Troopers C. Hewitt and G. Mossop, both of the Frontier Light Horse (FLH), that Zulu were found dead at Khambula taking mealie meal from the camp pots and the information obtained later that the *impi* had had no food for three days has been used to support Wood's contention that its energy was nearly spent by the time it arrived at Khambula laager⁷⁵. As Laband has suggested, however, the *impi* was without food only on the morning of 29 March⁷⁶. Supporting this position, Dennison's evidence suggests that it rested and had food on the night of 27/28 March probably between Ntabankhulu and the range running westwards from Mnyathi mountain of which Sikala sikaNgonyama (Lion's Neck or Leeuwnek)

is the principal feature. There is also evidence that during the march it fed reasonably well since Mnyamana Buthelezi, who was in command, took 100 head of cattle from Hamu kaNzibe Zulu's herds for this impi⁷⁷.

Cowardice

Wood states that the Border Horse 'got off the track' and implies that they were moving so slowly that he and his escort had to go ahead. Nearing the scree and kranzes marking the edge of the plateau, they came under heavy fire. Wood's political assistant, L.H. Lloyd, was fatally wounded by his side and Wood's horse which he was leading, quite irrationally when the others had been left behind because of the difficult ground, was killed. Wood then directed Campbell to order Weatherley 'to dislodge one or two Zulus who were causing us most of the loss'⁷⁸. Since the Border Horse did not advance as rapidly as Campbell wanted, he and others of Wood's personal escort jumped from cover and dashed into the rocks where Campbell was immediately shot dead. Wood wasted little time in relaying this story since P.L. Uys, Junior, (Vaal Piet) having been heavily involved in the desperate fighting at what became known as 'Devil's Pass' and having left Khambula laager at 5 pm on 28 March, was able to tell H.C. Shepstone on the following day in Utrecht that Wood had ordered a couple of men to dislodge some Zulus who had killed four horses and that they had refused; there followed in his statement an account of the death of Campbell and Lloyd⁷⁹. Thus Wood prepared the scene for his demolition of Weatherley's reputation in order to draw attention away from his own mismanagement of the situation. The staff writer of *The Times* took up Wood's innuendo and although noting 'Colonel Weatherley, a colonist of distinction' who 'fell gallantly fighting to the last, cutting down Zulus with his right hand while grasping his son, a young lad, with the other', wrote that his 'men showed some disinclination to face the enemy'⁸⁰.

Two years later, after revisiting the site, Wood wrote another account with the intention of recommending two of his personal staff and escort, Lt H. Lysons and Pte E. Fowler (both 90th Light Infantry, Wood's own regiment), for the Victoria Cross and the accompanying letter noted that in his original despatch the incident in which Campbell had been killed had been written 'in language calculated to spare the reputation of another dead man'. Although even now he did not mention Weatherley by name, he directly accused him of cowardice in the face of the enemy:

I observed to Captain Campbell that all the fatal shots came from one rock, and directed him to order an officer to take some men and turn the Zulus out. He received the order three times, but would not leave the cover where he was sheltering close to where my second pony was — the one I rode had been shot — and about ten feet below me and on my left. Captain Campbell called out 'Damn him! he's a coward. I'll turn them out', and ran forward. Mr. Lysons called out 'May I go?' I shouted 'Yes! Forward the Personal Escort', and of the eight which composed it, all who were disengaged, some four in number, went on. His Royal Highness will, I hope, understand my reluctance to tell all this. The man whose heart failed had been unfortunate, which kept me silent, and,

moreover, I was averse to write about myself, which I could not fail to do if I explained all the circumstances.⁸¹

For Wood this was a traumatic experience; he had become 'greatly attached' to Campbell since he had joined his staff at Utrecht shortly before Christmas 1878⁸². In a letter to Crealock written in February, Wood said that he had been ill, but 'Campbell nursed me tenderly'⁸³ and in the letter quoted above Wood wrote that if Campbell had lived he would have been the first to be recommended for the award of the Victoria Cross. Wood never mentioned Weatherley by name in his article in *Pearson's Magazine* eulogising Campbell, always referring to 'the Irregulars' and the 'officer in command'⁸⁴. At this stage of Wood's retelling of the events, Weatherley was said to have told Campbell that 'it was impossible to force the passage through the rocks'. This opinion, Wood said, he rejected as several wounded men were exposed to Zulu fire and he then repeated the order only to be met with renewed objections whereupon Campbell, 'determined to secure the safe removal of the wounded', ran up to the entrance of the cave formed by the boulders and was killed. After Lloyd and Campbell had been buried lower down the mountain, Weatherley, according to Wood, sought and received permission to follow Buller's track, having lost, in Wood's words, 'only six men killed and seven wounded, in the half hour that it was under fire'⁸⁵.

According to Dennison, however, after Wood had dismissed their report about the Zulu *impi*, Weatherley and Dennison then discussed the best way to ascend the mountain — place piquets on a nearby hill commanding the ascent and advance on foot until the order could be given to bring the horses. This was countermanded by Wood who insisted that as the rest of the column had taken their horses the Border Horse should do the same. The Border Horse with Dennison in the lead then followed the direct route to the path which Buller had taken earlier and which was 'shewing red on the summit'. Wood, however, directed the unit to the left towards a horseshoe krantz of great height with huge boulders at its foot in which there were clearly a large number of the enemy. They headed towards a stone *isibaya* with a large number of cattle, Dennison remarking with some point 'whether they gave rise to the order or not I cannot say'⁸⁶. Here, from the concentrated fire which came from the rocks at the base of the horseshoe, Bernhardt and Barth were killed and several others wounded including Sgt-Maj J.S. Fisher and Dennison's batman, Trooper J. Cameron. As the Border Horse worked forward from rock to rock, Dennison was called back to Weatherley standing with his son Rupert a little way from Wood who was attending to the dead body of Lloyd. He was told that Wood had ordered a charge and although amazed at such a senseless order in a place where the only way to progress was 'baboon fashion' went forward to relay the order to the troop. As he did so Campbell rushed forward calling 'Forward Boys!' and immediately had the top of his skull blown off. His body was recovered by men of the Border Horse assisted by Lysons and Fowler who were later awarded the VC on Wood's recommendation. In his own dramatic account, Wood makes out that he and his escort were in front and that the Border Horse were '200 yards behind us' and 'taking cover under rocks below us', a situation which makes little sense in a military context unless one is intent on drawing attention to 'Campbell's difficulty

in inducing the men to advance⁸⁷. Not unnaturally, Dennison resented Wood's slur that the Border Horse hesitated to move forward. The *Cape Argus* correspondent's report supports Dennison's narrative, relating how 'Colonel Wood gave the order to Colonel Weatherley to send men and clear the rocks. The call for volunteers was promptly met, and Lieutenants Poole (*sic*) and H. Parminter, of Weatherley's corps, along with Captain Campbell, rushed forward leading the men on.'⁸⁸ Ashe and Wyatt-Edgell's account also supports the fact that the Border Horse were performing well and attributes any delay in responding to Campbell's order to the fact that its troopers 'were engaged with several Zulus at close quarters'⁸⁹.

Cut off

Dennison's memoir also provides detail, hitherto missing, on the fate of the Border Horse and a troop of the FLH which became cut off. On Campbell's death, Wood retired with his personal escort and a wounded trooper of the Border Horse, Andrew Hammond, leaving, according to Dennison, no orders for the volunteers who found their own way on to Hlobane plateau. Here they halted whilst Weatherley went to look for Buller and receive orders. Shortly after he left, a hatless trooper of the FLH rode up looking for him and gave Dennison the message that, as they were surrounded by a large Zulu *impi*, the Border Horse were to return to camp. This, it should be noted, was not the main Zulu *impi*, but the Qulusi who had sprung the trap by emerging from the edges of the plateau and had also brought substantial reinforcements from the Ityenteka plateau to the east. On Weatherley's return, the unit fought its way down without casualties and at the foot of the mountain halted to make a stretcher for Fisher. Here they were overtaken by Barton and a troop of FLH with the message not to delay as 'the mountain is surrounded'. As they began to move, the FLH were now about one kilometre ahead. Rounding the shoulder of the mountain, Dennison's description confirms that they were riding along the foot of the mountain with the right flank of the main Zulu *impi* by this time along the ridge north of Nyembe Hill with only the valley of the stream between them. Ahead, Barton and the FLH rode directly between two stone homesteads where Zulu hidden in ambush fired into them at point blank range. Here, in the vicinity of modern Boomlaer, many of the FLH were killed in the confusion and the survivors turned round to retreat eastwards. Again the *Cape Argus* correspondent supports Dennison's account, recording that Weatherley was ordered down the mountain to cover the return by that route and that Barton and his troop of FLH went down to join Weatherley⁹⁰.

As they reached the Border Horse, Barton brought his men under control and both units retired together in good order firing controlled volleys although their horses were now blown and very weak. Weatherley, Dennison, Lt W. Pool and supernumary Lt H.W. Parminter rode behind their men cutting their blanket straps to lighten their loads. Several men were unable to continue and were caught and killed by the pursuing Zulu. Trumpeter W. Reilly dismounted from his 'knocked up horse', fired on the enemy close by and then shot himself. By now, few men had any ammunition left and so it was not possible to turn and make a stand, although Barton suggested doing so as Ityenteka Nek was reached and they saw Qulusi lining the heights on either side of the nek. As the men reached the nek they scattered and

immediately Dennison saw the reason — the descent on the other side was precipitously steep and panic set in. Some men disappeared whilst about 20 obeyed the order to keep together. On the right of the nek forward progress was blocked and Dennison led by jumping his horse down. It was here that Parminter was killed. The others led their horses down, Barton and four men close by with Weatherley not far behind leading his horse with the bridle rein linked in his arm, one hand helping his son and the other holding his drawn sword. As they reached the foot of the mountain, Dennison turned with two men to help Weatherley and his son, but they were too late. The pursuing Zulu had caught up with the survivors and, as Weatherley's sword flashed, Rupert with a piercing wail fell dead on his father. Wielding his carbine as a club to good effect, Dennison managed to mount with Barton close at hand. Firing his carbine with its smashed stock from the hand, Dennison broke the Zulu cordon to his front and caught up with some 27 men, mostly FLH with RSM B. Winterfelt strongly urging them on. As they rode north-westwards towards Potter's Store on the Mpemvana River, Trooper P. Martin panicked and was killed. Here Sgt C. Brown and Cpl J. Archer of the Border Horse saved one of the unhorsed troopers of the FLH as he was about to be overtaken and killed. Eventually the survivors were pursued by only three Zulu who were waylaid and shot. Just before sundown, a drenching rain set in, but the lights of the camp fires at Khambula gave them the direction. Delayed by the outer piquets, the survivors eventually reached camp where Dennison got out of his wet clothes and between the blankets to be brought a hot drink and food by the Indian mess cook.

Dennison's account conforms with his original report, providing further circumstantial evidence that the two columns retired from Hlobane around the south side of Zungwini Mountain and not through the re-entrant west of the present Zungwini station. From the north side of Ityenteka Nek, even in the desperate confusion, British troops moving along the eastern edge of the Zungwini range would have been visible and a clear objective in the desperate ride to get away from the Zulu and Qulusi. But Dennison and the others thought that their best chance of reaching Khambula was by way of Potter's Store and the Jagd Pad (Hunting Road). Buller's patrol to bring in stragglers that night did not include Dennison and the survivors of the Border Horse and certainly not Weatherley's elder son, Lt C.P.M. Weatherley, who took no part in the action⁹¹.

After a restless night, Dennison was unable to face the breakfast table, where the cook had laid just one place, and he ordered breakfast in his tent. Afterwards, he went with one of the surviving NCOs to Weatherley's tent to make out the casualty return and as he did so Buller came in, shaking his hand and congratulating him on his escape. Buller asked how he had fared and told him not to bother with the return as Cetshwayo's *impi* was expected at Khambula about noon. When Buller commented that it was a pity they had not known about it in time the previous day, Dennison replied that they had, and told Buller what had been seen and reported to Wood. Buller responded saying 'I believe you, Dennison. What a sad mistake, but say nothing for the present, lie low' and they walked together to Wood's tent where Buller left and Dennison then reported what had happened after they parted the previous day. When Wood asked why Weatherley had not returned to camp when ordered by him to do so, Dennison replied that he had not heard such an order and

did not think that Weatherley had heard it either. Dennison suggests that Wood was so upset by Campbell's death that he may have intended to give the order, but had forgotten to do so. Wood was uneasy and did not respond to Dennison's reference to having seen the Zulu *impi*. That morning, on Buller's instructions, Dennison prepared a report for him. Noting only that the Border Horse had missed the main column during the night and been ordered by Wood to join the main point of the attack on Hlobane Mountain, the report makes the point that Weatherley received an order to return the way he had come, and describes the chaos of the retreat. A final sentence, clearly added on instructions, gave the reason why the Border Horse were not with the main column. Dennison's report was appended as Annexure A to Buller's report with the retort that:

I never knew where Col. Weatherley was on the 28th and never sent him any order whatever. His orders on the 27th were to conform to the General Movements of the leading troop in the Column but to march independently. He was fully aware of what we were going to do and I cannot understand why he waited for individual orders & did not saddle up when he heard the trumpet sound "Horses in".⁹²

Shortly after the attack on Khambula, Dennison was ordered to Pretoria to report to Rowlands. On arrival, he was given command of the Border Horse and saw immediate service in the ongoing campaign against the Pedi.

Dennison's veracity

It is pertinent to ask whether Dennison's recollections of Hlobane are at all accurate or whether he simply interpreted the situation from the point of view of a colonial officer piqued by the distrust and condescension shown by an imperial officer. Certainly Dennison suggests that Wood gave no credence to his report on the immediate presence of the Zulu *impi* because Dennison was a colonial officer and that officers such as Wood had a 'false idea of their superiority over men of no Sandhurst training but of a lifelong practical experience.'⁹³ In the introduction to his book, Dennison notes that 'it is written by "only a Colonial" '; my story is plain history of facts that defies contradiction'. He was clearly irked by the superiority assumed by imperial officers regardless of their military experience, but made no effort to expose Wood. This one can only attribute to the mores of the day, to the realisation that 'influence not service counts most' as he wrote in his book⁹⁴. Dennison goes so far as to say 'I do not consider that Colonel Wood was to blame but acted as no doubt half the generals in the British army would have done under the same circumstances.'; in fact, he blames Buller, Uys and others for pushing Wood into action after the disastrous losses at the Ntombe drift on 12 March engineered by Mbilini waMswati, their adversary at Hlobane⁹⁵. There is a clear correlation between the detail provided by Dennison and that of other sources.

Dennison was not, of course, alone in either his compliant attitude to authority or his assertion that serious mistakes had been made at Hlobane. The staff writer of *The Times* went only so far as to say 'For once Colonel Wood's brilliant good luck appears to have deserted him'. R.O.G. Lys, the nephew of the adjutant of the Border Horse killed at Hlobane, was serving with No.4 Column as an intelligence officer

and 'soon came to the conclusion', however, 'that this British officer [Wood] possessed too nervous a temperament ever to make a successful leader of men; and lacked that calm and resolute judgement which is so essential in a country like South Africa where one is constantly surprised by unforeseen circumstances'⁹⁶. Whilst Wood went on to have honours and rewards heaped upon him, Weatherley's only surviving son, Cecil Poulett Mountjoy Weatherley, attested as a private in the Middlesex Regiment on 19 January 1883⁹⁷.

Envoy

Only the Zulu *impi* assaulted Khambula laager⁹⁸. That day, although suffering from a superficial flesh wound in the chest, Mbilini carried on with his previously prepared plans and led the Qulusi forces up the Bivane valley, raiding homesteads and farms in the upper Phongolo valley and collecting huge herds of cattle numbering some 3 000 head on the way⁹⁹. On the night of 4 April two companies of the 2nd battalion of the 4th (The King's Own) Regiment, on their way from Utrecht to relieve the garrison at Lüneburg, laagered for the night at J. Alcock's farm fearing attack by the Qulusi *impi*. Mbilini judged the detachment too strong to assault and continued rustling cattle and horses. Alerted to the plight of the incoming detachment, a patrol of six mounted men was sent from Lüneburg under Capt J.E.H. Prior, 80th (South Staffordshire) Regiment, on 5 April. Coming upon a group of six men driving some 20 horses eastwards along the right bank of the Phongolo River, Prior recaptured the horses and pursued the men. Two got away, but after a furious chase one was unhorsed and killed, whilst a second, although seriously wounded by an African auxiliary called Sinakwe, managed to escape. The latter was Mbilini who managed to ride back to his homestead above the Ntombe River and was then carried to Ndlabeyitubula, but died before reaching there¹⁰⁰. Effectively, co-ordination and drive drained from the resistance he had generated and organised, particularly after the death of Mabamba Ntombela that winter. The Kubheka put up sporadic defiance from their homesteads above the Ntombe, but many of the Qulusi, including Memezi waMswati, Mbilini's brother, withdrew to the Ngwagwa Hills¹⁰¹ north of the Phongolo which had been for some years the home of Ndida kaMlokotwa, a Qulusi *induna*. Although a hard core of resistance held out on the Ityenteka plateau under Mcwayo Zwane, Seketwayo Mdlalose surrendered on 25 August at Fort Cambridge, near the confluence of the Mfolozi Mhlope and Nsengeni¹⁰² Rivers. The Qulusi *izinduna* Msebe kaMadaka and Mahubulwane Mdlalose surrendered at Ntseka Hill to Lt-Col B.C. Russell, 13th Hussars, on 1 September. Not until 22 September was Manyonyoba Kubheka finally forced into submission and, with some of his people, exiled to the Batshe valley.

Whilst surveying the boundaries of the new political units into which the Zulu country was to be divided, Lt-Col the Hon G. Villiers climbed Hlobane on 25 September, finding most of the homesteads in the area deserted¹⁰³. Having had his authority and territory extensively enlarged by the British, Hamu Zulu began a systematic campaign against the Qulusi and those who had fought under Mbilini's overall command. The action at Hlobane was to be the last defiant gesture of the inhabitants of this mountainous upland before they were brushed aside by a new

dispensation and most traces of their occupation obliterated as the face of the country assumed new patterns of settlement.

NOTES

N.B. Since these notes were written, the name of the Natal Archives has been changed to the Pietermaritzburg Archive Repository. In some of the following references the older spelling of 'Kambula' has been retained. The article itself uses 'Khambula' throughout.

1. Wood, Evelyn, *From Midshipman to Field Marshal*, London, 1906, vol.2, chapter XXX, pp.48–56.
2. Public Record Office (PRO) London WO 32/7726, From Col Evelyn Wood Comg. No.4 Column, To the Deputy Adjutant General, Camp Kambula, Zululand, 30th March 1879. This despatch was printed in the Supplement to *The London Gazette of Tuesday 6th May 1879*, 24719, published on 7 May 1879. There are also three copies in the National Army Museum (NAM), London, the Chelmsford Papers, 6807-386-14-13, two of which carry the notation 'A correct copy but not verified E.W.'
3. Norris-Newman, Charles L., In Zululand With The British Throughout The War of 1879, London, 1880, pp.156–159.
4. Williams, Charles, *The Life of Lieut.-General Sir Henry Evelyn Wood*, London, 1892, pp.87–93.
5. NAM 8412-46-1 and 2, Dr. P.H. Butterfield, 'The Minor Writings of Sir Evelyn Wood', a typescript of two articles by Wood published in Pearson's Magazine, 1896.
6. Wood, Sir Evelyn (ed.), *British Battles on Land and Sea*, London, 1915, pp.754–761. I am grateful to M.J. Everett, archivist of The South Wales Borders and Monmouthshire Regimental Museum of the Royal Regiment of Wales, Brecon, for bringing this work to my attention.
7. NAM 6807-386-14, the Chelmsford Papers, an editorial annotation; Gossett served on Lord Chelmsford's staff in 1878–1879.
8. NAM 6807-386-14-10, memorandum dated 29 March 1879, 7 pm, to Lord Chelmsford and others; NAM 6807-386-14-23, Lord Chelmsford to the secretary of state for war, Durban, 14 April 1879.
9. NAM 6807-386-14-20, Wood to Frere, Kambula Hill, Zululand, 29 March 1879.
10. Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg, Evelyn Wood Papers, II/2/4, Frere to Wood, Newcastle, 30 March 1879.
11. Transvaal Archives, Pretoria: Transvaal Government Gazette Extraordinary, Vol. III No. 111, Pretoria, Transvaal, Thursday, April 3, 1879; Government Notice No. 38, 1879. The letter and the abbreviated Hlobane despatch were published in *The Cape Times* on Thursday, 17 April 1879.
12. *The Cape Mercury*, King William's Town, Wednesday 2 April 1879.
13. *The Cape Times*, Cape Town, 10 April 1879.
14. *The Daily Chronicle*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 3 May 1879.
15. *The Cape Times*, Friday 18 April 1879.
16. PRO WO 32/7724, telegram via St. Vincent [S. Vicente] from Col W. Bellairs to the secretary of state for war, Durban, 5 April 1879.
17. *The Times*, Tuesday 22 April 1879.
18. *The Times*, Monday 5 May 1879.
19. The correspondent was Lt A.J. Bigge, RA, who commanded a mounted rocket detachment in Russell's column at Hlobane. Clarke, Sonia (ed.), *Invasion of Zululand 1879*, p.109; letter from Brevet Lt-Col A. Harness to his sister Caroline, Helpmekaar, 9 April 1879.
20. Supplement to *The London Gazette* of Tuesday 6th of May, No. 24719, published Wednesday 7 May 1879. The text is complete with the exception of one sentence in Buller's report on Hlobane dated 29 March 1879. In the copy in the PRO, WO32/7726, the order 'Omit this from Gazette' is side-lined against the sentence 'By right I meant the north side of the mountain but Capt. Barton must have understood me to mean the south side and to my careless expression must I fear be attributed the greater part of our heavy loss that day'.
21. NAM 6807-386-14-23, Lord Chelmsford to the secretary of state for war, Durban, 14 April 1879.
22. Transvaal Archives, Pretoria: ATC, A1/45 Despatches Administrator Transvaal to High Commissioner, January 1878–February 1879; SS1278/79 Wood to acting Colonial Secretary Transvaal, Kambula Hill, 12 April 1879 and Lanyon's minute to Secretary to Government of 17 April.
23. *The Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette*, supplement, April 1879; report from Camp Kambula dated 17 April; the correspondent was probably an officer in the 13th Light Infantry.
24. *The Times of Natal*, Pietermaritzburg, 28 April 1879.
25. Clarke, Sonia (ed.), *Zululand At War, 1879*, Houghton, 1984, p.205; letter from Lt-Col J.N. Crealock to Gen Sir Archibald Alison, Camp Upoko River, 10 June 1879.

26. Jones, Huw M., 'Blood on the Painted Mountain; Zulu Victory and Defeat, Hlobane and Kambula, 1879: A Review Article', *Soldiers of the Queen*, No.84, pp.20–29, March 1996.
27. Transvaal Archives, Pretoria, manuscript A1889, chapter 5; hereafter Dennison MSS. I am grateful to Lionel Wulfsohn of Rustenburg for first drawing my attention to this manuscript and to the archives staff for their help in locating and copying the chapter on Hlobane. There is no information as to when it was written, but it was probably completed in 1903.
28. Dennison, Major C.G., DSO, *A Fight to a Finish*, London, 1904.
29. There are, unfortunately, no records in the Longmans collection in the University of Reading library which shed any light on how Dennison's manuscript was handled for publication. I am grateful to Frances Miller for her assistance.
30. *The Independent*, South African Diamond Fields, Thursday 17 April 1879, and Dennison MSS.
31. Dennison, *A Fight to a Finish*; *Dictionary of South African Biography*, Pretoria, 1987, vol. V, p.324.
32. Wulfsohn, Lionel, *Rustenburg At War*, Rustenburg, second revised edition, 1992, p.9; Fred Jeppe, *Transvaal Book Almanac and Directory*, Pietermaritzburg, 1877, p.62.
33. Dennison MSS, p.67.
34. Or Makateoskop, Eloya or Ronde Kop. It probably takes its name from Makhatha Shabalala, a Hlubi induna of the iziYendane regiment posted in this area.
35. PRO CO 291/2, enclosure No.5 in Transvaal No.3 to the high commissioner, Pietermaritzburg; M. Osborn, secretary to government, Pretoria, to Shepstone, 29 January 1879.
36. NAM 6807-386-9-112, Wood to Crealock, Kambula Hill, 18 March 1879.
37. *The Cape Times*, Cape Town, 17 April 1879.
38. PRO WO 31/1077 F.A. Weatherley to Maj-Gen Sir Charles Yorke, military secretary, Horse Guards, s.d., but received 12 March 1855; *The Graphic*, 24 May 1879, p.502 was incorrect.
39. Weatherley's uncle, Captain J.D. Weatherley, 60th Rifles, was a Peninsular veteran, whilst another relative of that generation, H.O. Weatherley, had been private secretary to Prince Esterhazy, the Austrian ambassador in London; Richard Welford, *Men of Mark* 'Twixt Tyne and Tweed, vol.III, pp.589–595. I am grateful for this reference to Barbara Heathcote, local studies librarian of the central library, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
40. *The Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette*, Pretoria, 8 December 1877.
41. PRO WO31/1077, Commander-in Chief's Memoranda.
42. PRO WO 31/1087 Commander-in Chief's Memoranda.
43. *The Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette*, Pretoria, Wednesday 27 November 1878. I am grateful to the State Library, Pretoria, for providing a copy of this edition.
44. PRO WO 31/1142, Commander-in Chief's Memoranda.
45. PRO WO 31/1087, Commander-in Chief's Memoranda; Lord Raglan to H.R.H. the General, Commander-in-Chief, from Madresfield Court, Great Malvern, 22 and 23 October 1861; *Hart's Army List* 1868.
46. PRO CO 291/1, F.A. Weatherley to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Pretoria, 29 October 1878; *Army List* 1875.
47. Baines, Thomas, *The Gold Regions of South Eastern Africa*, London, 1877, p.96.
48. Roche, Harriet A., *On Trek in the Transvaal*, London, 1878. A.R. Roche, her husband, was also one of the initial subscribers to the Eersteling project; Baines op. cit., p.96.
49. *The Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette*, Pretoria, Wednesday 27 November 1878.
50. S.P. Engelbrecht, *Thomas François Burgers: A Biography*, Pretoria and Cape Town, 1946, p.274.
51. McToy, E.D., *A Brief History of the 13th Regiment (P.A.L.I.) in South Africa during the Transvaal and Zulu Difficulties*, Devonport, 1880, p. 5.
52. Newnham-Davis, N., *The Transvaal Under The Queen*, London, 1900, p.30.
53. PRO CO 291/1, Sir Theophilus Shepstone to Lord Carnarvon, Government House Pretoria, No.38 dated 1 August 1877 enclosing a copy of a memorial from the officers and men of the Pretoria Mutual Protection Association.
54. PRO CO 292/1 F.A. Weatherley to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Pretoria, 30 October 1878 enclosing District Order, Dover, 1 August 1877 announcing Weatherley's resignation because he 'has a military command in South Africa'.
55. PRO CO 291/1, Barlow to Brooke from Eersteling, 8 December 1877.
56. *The Transvaal Argus and Commercial Gazette*, Pretoria, 8 December 1877.
57. PRO CO 291/1, Sir Theophilus Shepstone to the secretary of state for the colonies, Government House, Pretoria, No.50 dated 15 May 1878.
58. *De Volksstem*, Pretoria, Tuesday 29 January 1878.
59. Although Weatherley has been ridiculed for being taken in by Stewart, Stewart was a plausible rogue. During his trial, *The Cape Times* wrote of him that 'Most persons who know Gunn, have a kindly

- feeling for him, and the essential harmlessness of his character appears in the signature "Gunn of Gunn" to his letter addressed to the Governor of the colony"; *The Cape Times*, Monday 29 July 1878.
60. PRO CO 291/1, Sir Theophilus Shepstone to the secretary of state for the colonies, Government House, Pretoria, No.50 dated 15 May 1878.
 61. Transvaal Archives, Pretoria, A1/45, General Letter Book H.M. Special Commissioner to Transvaal; 2/11 1876-9/12 1878, p.472, Shepstone to Frere, No. 49, Government House, Pretoria, 20 August 1878.
 62. *The Cape Times*, Monday 5 August 1878.
 63. PRO CO 291/1, F.A. Weatherley to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Pretoria, 26 and 29 October 1878.
 64. Smith, Kenneth Wyndham, 'The Campaigns against the Bapedi of Sekhukhune, 1877-1879', Archives Year Book for South African History, 1967, Vol. II p.36.
 65. And not 'Lancers, as used, for example, in Weatherley's obituary in *The Graphic*, 24 May 1879, p.502, and perpetuated by others, most recently Ron Lock, *Blood on the Painted Mountain, Zulu Victory and Defeat: Hlobane and Kambula, 1879*, London, 1995, p.116.
 66. NAM 6807-386-18-9 and 11, F.A. Weatherley to Lord Chelmsford, Pretoria, 2 and 15 November 1878.
 67. PRO CO 291/2 Annual Return of Armed Land Forces - Transvaal: year ending 31 December 1878.
 68. Lys, the brother of J.R. Lys, a well known Pretoria merchant and member of the Volksraad, had seniority as second master of H.M.S. Rifleman from 27 August 1862 and retired in 1871 as navigating lieutenant on H.M.S. Seringapatam, a hulk used as a receiving ship at the Cape of Good Hope; various Navy Lists. He was an accomplished surveyor; *The Independent*, South African Diamond Fields, 17 April 1879.
 69. PRO WO 32/7726, Capt C.G. Dennison to Colonel Buller, Kambula, 29 March 1879, written on Buller's orders on 'the disaster at Ihlabana (sic)'.
70. PRO WO 32/7726, Buller's report, Camp Kambula, 29 March 1879.
 71. Selby, John, *Shaka's Heirs*, London, 1971, p.106; it has been further elaborated in the latest description of Hlobane by Lock, *op. cit.*, p.134 where the Border Horse is described as 'not prepared to risk their lives in a frontal attack on a strongly held natural fortress'.
 72. Williams, *op. cit.*, p.92.
 73. Wood, Sir Evelyn, *British Battles on Land and Sea*, p.757.
 74. Wood, Sir Evelyn, *From Midshipman to Field Marshal*, Vol. II, pp.52 and 53.
 75. Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban, document KCM 65234, letter from Charles Hewitt to his sister Annie dated 3 January 1920, pp.21 and 22 (I am grateful to Mrs. J.M. Simpson, librarian, for drawing my attention to this manuscript.); George Mossop, *Running The Gauntlet*, London, 1937, p.74.
 76. Laband, John, 'The Battle of Khambula, 29 March 1879; A Re-examination from the Zulu Perspective' in *There Will be An Awful Row At Home About This*, Victorian Military Society, Shoreham-by-sea, 1987, p.21.
 77. British Parliamentary Paper Cmd 3182, 1882, Correspondence re Affairs of Natal and Zululand, p. 49.
 78. Wood's Hlobane despatch dated 30 March 1879, cf. Note 2 above.
 79. Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg, Shepstone Papers, Volume 39, addendum to statement made by Piet Uys, Junior, to H.C. Shepstone, at Utrecht, 29 March 1879.
 80. *The Times*, Monday 5 May 1879. The account by *The Times* own correspondent written on 30 March and published on 17 May follows Wood's account, but notes only that before daybreak he met Weatherley who was ordered to follow Wood.
 81. PRO WO 32/7834 Maj-Gen Sir Evelyn Wood to the military secretary, Horse Guards, from Government House, Pietermaritzburg, 15 October 1881; also published in Frank Emery, *The Red Soldier*, London 1977, p.177.
 82. *Pearson's Magazine*, February 1896 Vol.I, No.9, p.129.
 83. NAM, 6307-386-9-103, Wood to Crealock, Kambula Hill, Sunday 16 February 1879.
 84. Butterfield, *op. cit.* (Note 5 above).
 85. Wood, Sir Evelyn, *British Battles on Land and Sea*, p.756.
 86. In a previous paper, I have suggested that the primary reason for the assault on Hlobane was to collect cattle. In addition to the evidence presented there, and Dennison's comment, it is interesting to note that the correspondent of *The Cape Argus* wrote that 'Colonel Wood had already descended with his escort and returned to camp, thinking, no doubt, all was well, and that an immense take of cattle would be the day's result.'; Jones, *op. cit.*, and D.C.F. Moodie, *Moodie's Zulu War*, Constantia, 1988, p.122.
 87. Wood, Sir Evelyn, *From Midshipman to Field-Marshal*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp.48 and 50.
 88. Moodie, *op. cit.*, p.122.

89. Ashe, Major, and Captain E.V. Wyatt-Edgell, *The Story of the Zulu Campaign*, reprint, Constantia, 1989, p.124.
90. Moodie, op. cit., pp.122 and 123.
91. Lock, op. cit., p.179. Poulet Weatherley arrived at Khambula after the action at Hlobane and returned to Pretoria on Tuesday 7 April; *De Volksstem*, Friday 11 April 1879.
92. PRO WO 32/7726, Lt- Col R.H. Buller's report, Camp Kambula, 29 March 1879.
93. Dennison MSS, p.88.
94. Dennison, *A Fight to a Finish*, p.8.
95. Dennison MSS, p.94.
96. Macdonald, William, *Romance of the Golden Rand*, London, 1933, p.230.
97. It should be added that he was later commissioned as a lieutenant in the 80th (South Staffordshire) Regiment and saw service in the Sudan and Upper Nile campaigns; PRO WO 76/97.f.77 and WO 76/99 f.20.
98. *The Cape Times*, Cape Town, 5 May 1879.
99. NAM 6302-48, W.F. Fairlie's diary.
100. Among other sources, BPP Cmd 2318, p.160, Wood to military secretary, 22 April 1879; the entry for 17 April 1879 in Captain E.R.P. Woodgate's diary (I am grateful to Dr. G. Kemble Woodgate for sight of the diaries covering this period); and *The Cape Times*, Cape Town, 5 May 1879.
101. Or Ngogo or Pypklipberg.
102. Or Sandspruit.
103. NAM 7411-8, *The Diary of the Zululand Boundary Commission*.

HUW M. JONES