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# Zulu Dawn

By Cy Endfield

1.SCRIPT APPEARS ON BLACK SCREEN:

One hundred years ago the British Colony of Natal in Southern Africa was surrounded by a vast and independent Zulu Kingdom. In 1879, a battle took place that was forever to alter the course of colonial history:

**I SANDHLWANA:**

2 EXT. DAWN.

Four Zulu's are seen in silhouette herding cattle up a hill.

3.LONG SHOT - Two Zulu's are seen in silhouette high on a precipice.

4.Seven Zulu's are seen walking in silhouette against the sunrise.

5.The sun fills the screen as the sound of many running feet and Zulu drums are heard.

6.EXT. ZULU KRAAL. DAY.

A large regiment of Zulu warriors carrying shields and assegais (stabbing spears) are seen running into the Kraal whilst the sound of tribal singing, chanting and drum beating escalates.

7.Inside the camp a group of Zulu's are seen grappling with a bull as they struggle to bring the animal to the ground. They are watched by a vast circle of warriors all shouting encouragement.

8.An elaborate tribal dance ensues. It appears to be some sort of Fertility Rite. The females stand opposite the men in rows, chanting as they move in closer.

9.CETSHWAYO, the great Zulu King emerges into the throng. He is tall, beautifully fat, with a big intelligent face and superb dignity. He surveys his subjects with interest as they stand unanimous, thrusting their assegais into the air whilst shouting their allegiance.

10.EXT. HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIDENCE, PIETERMARITZBURG, NATAL. NIGHT.

BARTLE FRERE (V.O.)

Reading aloud the letter he has just written.

Cetshwayo 's Zulu army to disband and the warriors permitted to return

to their homes.

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11.SWITCH TO INTERIOR. FRERE is seated at his desk whilst LORD CHELMSFORD is seen in the background standing on the veranda.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

He continues to read aloud:

Present military system to be abandoned. New regulations concerning

the defence of the realm worked out.

CHELMSFORD enters the room, sits and studies two sheets of paper.

**FRERE continues:**

All who do not submit will be dealt with as enemies of the Crown. We

will not permit the arbitrary killing and

FRERE pauses as he underlines a certain word:

and unjust oppression which the Zulu people have suffered from their

own King Cetshwayo

Pausing, FRERE looks up as if to meet his comrade's gaze.

CHELMSFORD,

however, continues to read, turning the page.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

You 'll see from the letter that this ultimatum is our decision alone. Her

Majesty's government seems to prefer a negotiated settlement

12.CLOSE UP of CHELMSFORD's letter:

Her Majesty's government confidentially hope that by the exercise of prudence

and by meeting of the Zulus in a spirit of forbearance and reasonable

compromise it will be possible to avert the very serious evil of a war with

**Cetshwayo:**

13.Return to BARTLE FRERE. As he melts some sealing wax over a

**silver burner:**

**BARTLE FRERE:**

(Referring to the letter he has just completed)

Does this do what we both know to be right Frederick?

**CHELMSFORD:**

It does Sir Henry (He folds the papers neatly in half) excellently.

The pair exchange glances as BARTLE FRERE applies the wax to his letter.

14.CLOSE UP of stamped seal.

15.EXT. CHELMSFORD'S CAMP PIETERMARITZBURG. DAY

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Activity everywhere, the incessant movement of an army in the final stages of its

formation. Huge ox-wagons are being hauled into the camp.

16.CHELMSFORD and CREALOCK are on horseback in full regalia as they ride into

the centre of the Camp.

17.Squads of Basuto-infantry - tall, rangy bodies, naked except for a loincloth and neck

ornaments - are being drilled by foul mouthed, bullying European NCO's.

18.LT. MELVILL, young, dapper, inspects the Martini Henry rifles of a company of

REDCOATS who are lined up near the BASUTOS. A CSM (SOT. WILLIAMS)

stalks behind MELVILL.

ONE REDCOAT, young, thin, gangling, turns his head slightly to peek at the

Basutos, and the swift eye of SOT. WILLIAMS detects the disaffection. The young

redcoat (PTE. WILLIAMS) turns, guilty at being caught out of the 'Attention'

position. The CSM (SOT. WILLIAMS) leans forward until his face is one inch

from that of his quavering prey.

SGT. WILLIAMS (Shouting)

You moved (With more restraint) You moved go and tell the NCO of that black shambles that you love 'im more than you love me(Shouting) NOW'

19.PTE. WILLIAMS blinks, swallows then runs over to the Basuto's NCO.

NCO (Addressing the Basutos)

You're not fit to be in the British army you different coloured articles.

STRAIGHTEN UP! You're like a load of bloody herd boys! (He

suddenly becomes aware of PTE. WILLIAMS' presence).

PTE. WILLIAMS

I'm to tell you Corporal, that I love you more than my Colour Sergeant

The Basuto's NCO walks up to PTE. WILLIAMS.

**NCO:**

That's frightening... Get out of my bloody sight lad. And put your rifle

over your head and double round this field (shouting) until you drop

bloody dead. Now move, get on with it, at the double.

The Basutos, laughing, raise their shields into the air in general amusement as

PRIVATE WILLIAMS runs past.

**NCO:**

Shut up! Get back in the ranks you shower of animals.

20.CHELMSFORD, still on horseback, surveys the encampment. He salutes to SOT.

WILLIAMS. CREALOCK, as always, is in attendance.

21.

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SGT. WILLIAMS

Facing the ranks:

Company Shoulder arms.... (LT. MELVILL joins SOT.

WILLIAMS) Present arms.

LT. MELVILL turns standing to attention, saluting as CHELMSFORD passes.

22.Two BOERS ride into the camp, passing two SUTLERS wagons. We see SOT.

WILLIAMS' dismissed COMPANY hurriedly crowding round one of the SUTLER'S wagons, shouting for cigars and gin.

23.The two BOERS, one an elderly man, one a boy of sixteen, have dismounted. SOT.

WILLIAMS strides over to them.

You passing through?

SGT. WILLIAMS

**ELDERLY BOER:**

We 've come to fight the Zulu.

SGT. WILLIAMS

We aren't at war yet Referring to the boy: Bit young 'in' he?

**ELDERLY BOER:**

He's my nephew... he can shoot, track and speak Zulu and fight like

hell... he's got Assegai marks to prove it...

He gestures to the boy to show SOT. WILLIAMS. The YOUNG BOER pulls

up his shin, showing an horrendous white scar across his stomach.

SOT. WILLIAMS stares in amazement. Coming to, commanding the attention

of a BOY-PULLEN in the ranks:

You!

Sir. (Running over)

SGT. WILLIAMS

BOY-PULLEN

SGT. WILLIAMS

Take 'em to the orderly officer. (SOT. WILLIAMS departs).

BOY-PULLEN

(Standing to attention). Colour Sergeant Addressing the BOERS:

This

way.

24.The BOERS follow as the PTE. Leads of

25.A TROOP OF SIKALI HORSE under the command of COL. DURNFORD ride

into the camp. He is a tall, thin-haired man with handsome sunburnt features,

intelligent and sensitive eyes and an over-length moustache. He has only the use of

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one arm, his left arm being completely paralyzed and held immobile, tucked into a

special pocket he has sewn into his tunic. COL. DURNFORD and SOT. MA3OR

KAMBULA (A powerful and intelligent African radiating authority.) pull up as the troop ride by.

26.With the SIKALI in the foreground, PTE. WILLIAMS is seen in the background,

still running, his rifle above his head.

27.The same NCO seen previously addresses the BASUTOS:

**NCO:**

Company.... 'Shun!

(The BASUTOS comply).

Move yourselves.

28.SIKALI are seen cantering as if a pre-ordained manoeuvre is about to commence.

29.DURNFORD and S.M. KAMBULA are surveying their troops.

S.M. KAMBULA

Shall I give the order Sir?

COL. DURNFORD

Alright, Sergeant

30.S.M. KAMBULA rides offscreen.

31. The SIKALI gather together. S.M. KAMBULA's voice is heard above the throng:

S.M. KAMBULA

Sikali Horse Forward!

32.The SIKALI ride full pelt, charging at the BASUTOS.

The troop continues almost into the first line of the BASUTOS, which consists of

their European NCO's.

The European NCO's of the BASUTOS stare at the SIKALI troop as they wheel

and once again come galloping at them.

33.COL. PULLEINE, LT. MELVILL & LT. COGHILL are seen outside the Officer's

Mess amused at the commotion.

34.CLOSE UP. COL. DURNFORD laughing.

35.The NCO's edge away, unsure, prepared to take to their heels. The BASUTO infantry watch, admiring, clapping.

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The troop skilfully turns their horses, as if on a penny, inches from the BASUTO

NCO's then ride away, whooping, in high spirits.

LORD CHELMSFORD & COL. CREALOCK, having watched this exhibition, ride forward to meet COL. DURNFORD.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Splendid horsemanship Who are they?

**DURNFORD:**

Sikali Horse, My Lord. Christians all I know each one by name.

**CHELMSFORD:**

They come well recommended do they?

**DURNFORD:**

My Lord, they rode for me at Bushman '5 Pass.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Oh... indeed. Crealock, we should see that Colonel Dumford has an Officer for his hard riders. Perhaps a subaltern from the Twenty Fourth.

**DURNFORD:**

I thought it might be more effective to find someone who speaks Zulu.  
CHELMSFORD & CREALOCK exchange glances.

**CREALOCK:**

Yes. I see you've issued each of them with a Martini Henry Carbine.  
Our quota for Native contingencies: one rifle to ten men and only five rounds per rifle.

**CHELMSFORD:**

But will they make good use of them?

**DURNEORD:**

They're as good marksmen as horsemen.

**CHELMSFORD:**

There's no doubting their horsemanship Colonel Durnford.  
CHELMSFORD & DURNFORD salute.

**DURNFORD:**

Mr. Crealock.  
CREALOCK nods.  
DURNFORD exits offscreen.

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**CHELMSFORD:**

We must think how to make best use of Colonel Durnford's African knowledge.  
36.Through the smoke of the field kitchens enters the Honourable WILLIAM VEREKER, aristocratically aloof on a fine stallion, his servant following on an equally fine horse. He rides purposely towards COL. DURNFORD as if he has



been seeking him.

**VEREKER:**

Colonel Durnford... William Vereker. I hear you 've been seeking Officers?

**DURNFORD:**

Good ones, yes, Mr Vereker. Gentlemen who can ride and shoot  
DURNFORD waits for a reaction. VEREKER, cool, looks into  
DURNFORD's

face and takes out his rifle.

Cantering some distance away, VEREKER turns, spurs his horse  
vigorously and,

on reaching DURNFORD, throws his rifle up into the aim. He  
fires one-handed

at the half carcass of a cow being hung up near the field  
kitchens without veering

his galloping horse. The half carcass judders under the impact  
of the heavy  
bullet.

37.PTE. WILLIAMS has been jogging wretchedly on. On hearing the  
bullet he throws

himself to the ground believing he has been shot. Two of the  
kitchen hands help

him to his feet.

38.CLOSE UP of SOT. WILLIAMS.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Shouting across the field:

Private Williams. You've stopped.

39.PTE. WILLIAMS regains his composure and, once more lifting  
his rifle above his

head, continues to jog. SGT. WILLIAMS looks on with smug  
satisfaction.

40.As VEREKER approaches, DURNFORD commands the attention of

**LT. RAW:**

**DURNFORD:**

Mr. Raw. Take Mr. Vereker to the Store and see he '5 issued the  
necessary equipment And then show him to the Mess and explain  
to him

how an Officer is expected to behave.

RAW salutes and leads VEREKER off left, as DURNFORD watches  
their

departure.

41.INT. OFFICERS' MESS TENT. DAY

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CLOSE UP. A scorpion is being removed from a specimen jar with a pair of

tweezers. It is lifted out of shot to be examined under a magnifying glass revealing

LIEUTENANTS COGHILL & MELVILL seated at an impressive green baize table.

There are African servants, white-jacketed. SERGEANT MURPHY, a short, broad

humorous, coarse-faced man, supervises the servants.

CHELMSFORD sits alone at a corner table reading his newspaper.

Other Officers are seated around the main table drinking claret and smoking the

obligatory cigars. COLONEL PULLEINE is writing a letter whilst LT. HARFORD

sits with his tins around him classifying his specimens.

As SOT. MURPHY refills their glasses COGHILL & MELVILL gossip covertly in

half whispers so that their voices don't carry to the table of their commander.

**MELVILL:**

Lighting COGHILL' 5 cigar:

Our good Colonel Dumford scored quite a coup with the Sikali Horse.

**COGHILL:**

Um. There are rumours that my Lord Chelmsford intends to make Durnford Second in Command.

**MELVILL:**

Well that's typical of Her Majesty's army. Appoint an engineer to do a soldier's work.

**PULLEINE:**

He continues writing without looking up:

Now, now Mr. Melvill, less of your spleen.

COGHILL & MELVILL smile at one another before their attention is drawn to

LT. RAW and VEREKER entering the Mess.

**RAW:**

Addressing the Mess:

Stranger in the Mess. Gentlemen. (To CHELMSFORD) My LorJ  
The officers and Vereker survey each other.

**RAW:**

**To VEREKER:**

VEREKER spots CHELMSFORD in the corner.

**VEREKER:**

Good day Frederick.

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**CHELMSFORD:**

Good day William. (Folding his newspaper, he stands to shake  
hands).

Pleased you could join us.

The OFFICERS turn, a bit startled, to look at this newcomer who  
is somehow on  
first-name terms with the Lord General.

**VEREKER:**

It was either that, or join the Zulu.

**CHELMSFORD:**

(Removing his glasses).

Join the Zulu? Oh yes, you're right in the thick of it aren't  
you? Talked to  
your father before we sailed.. he said you 'd taken to farming  
near Zulu land.

Sent his regards.. Should I meet up with you.

VEREKER (Wryly)

That was nice of the old boy.

**CHELMSFORD:**

I think you 'd better call out who you are.

VEREKER turns to address the Mess. CHELMSFORD sits.

**VEREKER:**

William Vereker.

Sergeant Murphy.

**RAW:**

**MURPHY:**

Sir?

**RAW:**

Bring drinks for the stranger. Allow me to introduce the Mess: Colonel Pulleine. Messers. Melvill, Coghill...

With the exception of PULLEINE & MAJOR RUSSELL the Officers stand as they are introduced.

**COGHILL:**

Morning.

During the introductions, SOT. MURPHY selects a large, silver, chalice-like receptacle from a trophy table in another corner. He takes it to the head of the table.

**RAW:**

Jackson, Milne, Major Russel4 Stevenson, .  
I0

**STEVENSON:**

How do you do?

**RAW:**

Haiford. . and Haiford's best friend  
HARFORD raises a glass jar containing one of his prized specimens in acknowledgement.  
Meanwhile MURPHY has collected a bottle of claret from a tray brought by another black servant. He pours the contents into the trophy.

**RUSSELL:**

Don 't leave your gin around, Vereker, or Harford will have it full of preserved butteifties. A damned waste, if you ask me.  
HARFORD chuckles as he replaces the lid on his jar.

**VEREKER:**

Oh I doubt if I'll leave much of that around. There's quite a shortage

where I've been.

**COGHILL:**

Puffing on his cigar:

They fight with spears don 't they? I mean it doesn't seem quite fair  
against the Martini Henry.

**MELVILL:**

You didn't really have to chose between your country and the Zulu did you?

**VEREKER:**

Um. And a damn close thing it was too.

**RAW:**

Taking the freshly filled trophy from MURPHY.  
Ah, well done Murphy. (He presents it to VEREKER).

**HARFORD:**

Stranger's Cup. (The Officers sit.) Down it in one and we where share  
your Mess bill for a week.

**VEREKER:**

And {fI don't?

**RAW:**

Then a bottle of good claret to each member of the Mess is charged to  
your account

**MELVILL:**

if it's too much we can have the bill forwarded to your father... in the  
11  
House of Lords. Oh no offence meant, Vereker.

**VEREKER:**

No offence taken, Melvill. (Taking the trophy from RAW).  
To men who aren 't afraid to speak their minds.

**RAW:**

Good luck, Sir

VEREKER begins to drink. Gradually, the officers join in with cheers of

encouragement until the entire Mess is chanting "Down, down, down". They

bang their fists on the table in time with the chants.

Gulping back the liquid, VEREKER stops as if he has accomplished his task.

The Officers applaud. General ad. lib. "Well done". Etc.

VEREKER (Expressionless)

Not quite.

Turning the trophy upside-down, he pours a small amount of liquid onto the

floor. Appearing slightly intoxicated, his lips stained red with the wine, he

**smiles:**

The bottles of claret, are on me Gentlemen.

General calls of "Here, here".

**RAW:**

Standing, he raises his glass to propose a toast:

The Regiment

**OFFICERS:**

The Regiment

**VEREKER:**

Still smiling, he wipes the remaining wine from the corners of his moustache.

The Regiment.

42.EXT. ZULUKRAAL. DAY

A tall, bald imposing Zulu named MANTSHONGA enters the camp. He makes

his way through a large regiment of young Zulu braves and older

**INDUNAS:**

(officers). They surround two young Zulu warriors who are tautly circling.

Their shields are held at the defensive, their assegais poised for underhand

thrust.

43. CLOSE SHOT - The two warriors fighting.

44. LONG SHOT - The vast crowd encircling the warriors.

45. The crowd cheers as CHIEF CETSHWAYO watches from his throne.

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46. MANTSHONGA, spotting CETSHWAYO, walks purposefully towards him.

**MANTSHONGA:**

I bring greetings from your friends, the British, and from the Great Lord Chelmsford

**CETSHWAYO:**

Still watching the fighting Zulus;  
And what do your Masters say?

**MANTSHONGA:**

They are angry and send these demands. They say you rule in old ways that are wrong, that you kill your people without trial. The Great White Queen herself cannot kill her lowliest subject though she rules forty lands, each greater than all of Zululand

**BAYELE:**

Kill the Traitor, Father'

**CETSHWAYO:**

Gesturing to his son to calm down:  
I do kill, under the customs of the Zulu, and I shall not depart from that  
Do I go to the country of the white man and tell him to change his laws and customs?

**MANTSHONGA:**

The British say your armies grow larger and they demand that you disband your Impis of War

**CETSHWAYO:**

Tell the British I will not cross the river which divides our lands. But ask Lord Chelmsford if he would disarm his warriors in the face of such threats.

47.CLOSE UP. The two Zulus are now in ferocious combat.

48.SWITCH back to alternate CLOSE shots of CETSHWAYO &

**MANTSHONGA:**

**MANTSHONGA:**

I will ask him but his answer will be to start war against your 30,000 warriors.

**CETSHWAYO:**

My armies will defend this land

49.General uproar as one of the fighting Zulus falls to the ground. Standing,

CETSHWAYO gives the signal to kill. The triumphant Zulu drives his assegai into

the other's heart. A group of warriors converge upon the body as MANTSHONGA

turns and EXITS.

13

50.EXT. GARDEN. DIOCESAN MANSION. DAY.

A garden party is in full swing. There are tables and chairs dotted about a

spacious garden. Stringed music is playing and there is an air of English civility.

There are ladies with parasols, children playing and Officers present.

51.FANNY COLENZO -25, her cheeks aflame, her manner excitable, is engaged in a

sedate' game of cricket with some children and officers. She bats the ball some

distance away near COL. DURNFORD.

**FANNY:**

Anthony (Shouting)... Anthony

COL. DURNFORD, engaged in conversation with an Officer and a lady, turns

on hearing his name. He spots the ball.

COL. DURNFORD (Handing his hat to the Officer)

Hold this.

Picking up the ball, he gives it to a little girl who has run to collect it.

(Smiling at FANNY) Well batted Well batteJ

FANNY curtsies in mock recognition. Her eyes flash to his and



we sense their  
secret feeling for each other.

52.VEREKER & two other officers ride along the drive to the  
mansion. Dismounting  
VEREKER hands the reigns of his horse to a well-dressed black  
groomsman and  
steps forward extending his hand in greeting to the black  
butler.

**VEREKER:**

Joseph, how are all the Colenso girls?

**JOSEPH:**

They are all in the garden, Sir And they will be glad to see  
you, I'm  
sure.

VEREKER walks down the slope of the lawn, past a young girl on  
a swing, her  
maid is in attendance. Removing his hat, he spots FANNY being  
bowled to by

LT. MILNE. Creeping up behind her, VEREKER indicates to MILNE  
to bowl  
high.

VEREKER (catching the ball MILNE has just bowled)  
You tipped id Youtippedit! Out! Out!

**FANNY:**

I did not (Turning) William. (Hugging him) You cheat, you.

**VEREKER:**

Me cheat? Same old Fanny. (He kisses her on the cheek).  
14

**FANNY:**

With genuine affection: Welcome. Welcome back.

Taking his arm, FANNY & VEREKER walk across the lawn. VEREKER  
throws the ball back to the cricketers.

53.DURNFORD, still engaged in conversation, turns smiling. His  
smile fades as he  
spots FANNY with VEREKER.

**DURNFORD:**

Excuse me, Ladies. Leaving them, he makes towards FANNY &  
VEREKER.

54.FANNY

Did you get your farm going?

Yes, I did.

Oh.How was it?

I've never been so happy.

**VEREKER:**

**FANNY:**

**VEREKER:**

**FANNY:**

Stopping, FANNY addresses him earnestly: I'm sorry you had to leave.

55.DURNFORD approaches them.

**DURNFORD:**

You 've met the... Honourable William Vereker, I believe.

**FANNY:**

Yes Anthony, we were childhood friends.

**DURNFORD:**

Your childhood friend shot a dead cow at the gallop the other day.

(FANNY laughs). He wasn 't impressed.

56.SWITCH TO MANSION VERANDA.

CHELMSFORD watches the threesome as BARTLE FRERE approaches him, puffing on a cigar.

**CHELMSFORD:**

There is a Mrs. Dumford, is there?

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**BARTLE FRERE:**

She exists.. .but er. . .nothing '5 been heard of her, the eight years

Durnford's been in Africa.

**CREALOCK:**

Although much is spoken of her now, My Lord.

These three walk along the veranda.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

I, er, recommended him to you.. .because he knows Africa so well.

**CREALOCK:**

Oh indeed. His ability to recruit native contingents is proving invaluable to His Lordship.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

How do you rate him as a soldier?

**CREALOCK:**

It is widely held that he has great courage and he's an excellent engineer

**BARTLE FRERE:**

(Walking down the veranda steps). Shall we join the guests?  
57.The DEWITT sisters, both in their whites, are seen playing a game of tennis. They are being watched by LTS. MELVILL & COGHILL (They are both seated). One of the ladies moves off court to fetch the ball that has gone out of play. She glances up at COGHILL.

**COGHILL:**

Do you think she might be interested in someone?

**MELVILL:**

Which one?

**COGHILL:**

Well that one. The one who keeps looking at me.

**MELVILL:**

It could be you flatter yourself Coghill It's that odd eye.  
LT. RAW approaches  
RAW (Tongue-in-cheek)  
They must have locked all the good ones up.  
58.BARTLE FRERE, CHELMSFORD & CREALOCK have now joined a selection of the guests at some tables on the lawn for afternoon tea.

MRS. DEWITT

Ah, General. (She curtsies. CHELMSFORD acknowledges). Do you find our Border Country congenial, My Lord?

CHELMSFORD (Sitting)

The landscape, most congenial Ma'am but the Border, vulnerable.

MRS. PRETORIOUS (Also sitting)

Do you really think Cetshwayo will attack us?

DURNSFORD, VEREKER & FANNY have also joined the party.

**CHELMSFORD:**

The intention of the Zulu Impis and their King concern me deeply,  
Ma 'am.

**FANNY:**

Cetshwayo has no intention of attacking Natal, Mrs. Pretorious. Unless

he 's given no option. He has no quarrel with us. (She sits).

BARTLE FRERE (Sitting next to FANNY)

It's very rare to meet a young lady interested in tactical matters, Miss

Colenso. Is it not, Sir Henry, most rare?

MR. PRETORIOUS

You are talking of a violent and murdering barbarian who commands an army of 30,000 warriors just across the river

**FANNY:**

My father has known and lived with the Zulus for many years.

MR. PRETORIOUS

Cetshwayo massacred 20,000 of his own people to make himself King.

**COLENZO:**

The English Tudor Kings did no less. Much later in our nation 's history,

I might add, and the French much more recently.

**CHELMSFORD:**

That may well be, Your Grace, but be that as it may, my duty is clear

The defence of all this (indicating the surroundings) Natal

**COLENZO:**

Yes, well, it's difficult to stand against that position. if  
you speak only  
of . (Leaning forward & looking him in the eye).. defence.

MR. PRETORIOUS

And what does our good Colonel Durnford think?

17

DURNFORD (Walking around the tables to join VEREKER)  
if the people of Natal wish to feel safe, let them persuade  
their husbands  
and sons to volunteer We need both Officers and men.

**CHELMSFORD:**

We do Colonel, good point.

**COLENZO:**

I cannot be brought to believe that Cetshwayo wants a war with  
Britain.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

Every Zulu is raised to be a warrior Without a war there 'd be  
no Zulu  
nation.

MRS. DEWITT

Nobody is really safe, are they Your Excellency?

JOSEPH has appeared at BARTLE FRERE's side. He whispers  
something into  
his ear.

**LADY FRERE:**

Mrs. Dewitt has four daughters, Henry, and Ifear she feels for  
them all

59.VEREKER has wandered away from the tables. He is watching  
MELVILL &

COGHILL chatting to the two DEWITT girls who were previously  
playing  
tennis.

**VEREKER:**

Your daughters may indeed be in some danger Mrs. Dewitt, but  
not at

the moment from the Zulus, Ifear

60.The parties' attention is drawn to the four on the lawn.

61.CLOSE UP of MRS. DEWITT as she laughs politely.

62.As the camera swings back to the four on the lawn we see MANTSHONGA in the background. The camera follows him ending in CLOSE UP as he strides forward to meet BARTLE FRERE. BARTLE FRERE looks grave as if he is already aware of the news he is about to hear.

63.SWITCH, LONG SHOT to where BARTLE FRERE, CHELMSFORD, CREALOCK & MANTSHONGA are now standing. BARTLE FRERE addresses the entire garden party.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

Ladies and gentlemen, your attention, please.

64.LONG SHOT of lawn. The guests move forward.

65.The camera closes in on the four on the veranda. With one arm behind his back, a cigar in his other hand, BARTLE FRERE continues:

18  
BARTLE FRERE (Slowly and deliberately)  
I think I should inform you that I am obliged to issue a state of war

between Her Majesty's Government and the Zulu King, Cetshwayo

66.SWITCH to CLOSE UP of VEREKER & COLENSO. General background noises of dismay as BARTLE FRERE carries on.

67.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

on his non compliance with the ultimatum made on him urging reformation...

68.CLOSE UP of FANNY & DURNFORD. He drops his head, averting her gaze.

69.CLOSE UP of BARTLE FRERE. He continues:

**BARTLE FRERE:**

and redress for violations of British Sovereignty.

The guests applaud as CHELMSFORD & BARTLE FRERE shake hands.

70.CLOSE UP of FANNY & DURNFORD.

**FANNY:**

why? Why do men think of nothing but killing? (She touches his disabled arm lovingly).

Tucking his hat under his arm, he looks into her eyes and kisses her hand.

Walking away, he replaces his hat and reaching the top of the veranda steps,

turns. They exchange desperate, painful glances.

71. CLOSE UP of COLENSO

COLENSO (To himself)

This wonderful land we are privileged to share. (Removing his glasses.)

Dear God (hanging his head) there should be room for all of us.

72. EXT. CHELMSFORD'S CAMP. PIETERMARITZBURG. NIGHT

ASSORTED CLOSE SHOTS TO COVER THE MOVE TO RORKE'S DRIFT - WAGON WHEELS CREAKING AS THEY TAKE THE FIRST STRAIN OF MOVEMENT, OXEN HOOVES STARTING FORWARD ON RUTTED DIRT SURFACES, WAGONEERS FLICKING WHIPS, PACKS GOING ONTO BACKS OF SOLDIERS, BARE FEET OF NATIVE LEVIES, OFFICERS MOUNTING, THEN SIMILAR DETAILS TO SHOW RHYTHMIC FORWARD PROGRESS, MARCHING, ROLLING DARK SILHOUETTED FORMS. TORCHES.

73. THREE OFFICERS stand watching:

19

**OFFICER:**

There goes Number Two Company.

74. Q.S.M. BLOOMFIELD CUTS ACROSS SHOT he is studying a list attached to a clipboard. He is about to walk past a tent when he hears a call of "I'll see yer" coming from within. Suspecting gambling, he moves to investigate.

75. Pulling back the tent flap reveals a group, including BOY-PULLEN playing a game of cards.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Do I believe what me eyes see? The whole bleedin' Army movin' off to meet the murderin' heathen and what goes on in 'ere? A game of Brag.

(Sternly) Brag?

BOY-PULLEN (Standing)

I'm sorry, Quartermaster

**BLOOMFIELD:**

You'll be more sorrier still when the Zulu ask Lad.. "What 'ave you got

to offer me not to slit your gut?" and you say (Pointing to the cards in

BOY-PULLEN's hand) ah, the Knave of Hearts, Sir, the Knave of Hearts.

The rest of the group chuckle.

Offering BOY-PULLEN a coin, BLOOMFIELD gives the order "Move!"

Taking the coin BOY-PULLEN leaves the tent.

76.SWITCH to BANDSTAND. A band is playing "Men Of Harlech".

CHELMSFORD & BARTLE FRERE move into CLOSE UP in foreground.

**CHELMSFORD:**

For a savage as to a child, chastisement is sometimes a kindness.

**BARTLE FRERE:**

Let us hope then, that this will be the final solution to the Zulu problem.

77.EXT. COLUMN ON THE MOVE. NIGHT

BOY-PULLEN moves against the traffic towards the back of the moving

column. He passes squads of torchlighted marchers, artillery units, riders,

wagons, until he comes to the SUTLER'S wagon.

78.THREE SOLDIERS ENTER SHOT and surreptitiously help themselves out of the

back of the moving wagon. Noticing, BOY-PULLEN seizes his chance and

grabbing a bottle out one of the soldier's hands, makes a dash for it.

**SOLDIER:**

'Ere! Come back 'ere you thievin' little beggar~

20

79.MOVING SHOT. CHELMSFORD, on foot salutes an officer as

**DURNFORD:**

approaches from behind on horseback.

DURNFORD (Calling)

My Lord. (CHELMSFORD turns.) I've prepared a list of ideas for you

to see. (He removes a paper from his tunic).

**CHELMSFORD:**

Excellent. Thank you. (He continues to walk away) Give them to



Crealock, would you?

**DURNFORD:**

My Lord. (CHELMSFORD turns again) This list was prepared for you. I don 't think another can understand its true value.

CHELMSFORD (Taking the list)

Thank you Colonel Durnford. (He exits as DURNFORD looks on).

80.CHELMSFORD joins his group of officers. He mounts his horse and then addresses

**them:**

**CHELMSFORD:**

Gentlemen, within ten days we shall cross the Buffalo River and British

soldiers will then be in Zululand. Colonel Durnford will remain down

river

81.CLOSE UP of DURNFORD. He looks agitated by this remark.

82.Undeterred, CHELMSFORD continues:

**CHELMSFORD:**

where he will be responsible for the defence of the Natal border

Turning his horse and without looking at DURNFORD he leads his Party off

83.BLOOMFIELD is joined by BOY-PULLEN

BOY-PULLEN

Will you hear "Last Post", Sir?

**BLOOMFIELD:**

I listened extra careful to your "Stand To" this mornin', Boy. ft was

peifecL I couldn't 've done it better meseif, not even when I was Bugler

to The Duke Of Wellington.. .now tell me, where did you get that black

eye?

BOY-PULLEN

From the Cook, Sir They saw me dip your shaving tin in the tea-water

this morning, made their tea taste of Lifebuoy toilet soap, they saij

Handing him the bottle of gin he purloined earlier.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

So, you got it in the line of dooty.. (Taking a swig from the bottle &

handing it back to BOY-PULLEN)... point taken.

BLOOMFIELD gets up onto a wagon as BOY-PULLEN gulps from the bottle.

BOY-PULLEN

Will we be fighting the Zulus soo~, Quartermaster? (Joining BLOOMFIELD, he jumps up onto the front of the wagon).

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Could be. (He shouts for the wagon to move out) Across the river into

Zululand. (They share the bottle of gin). They might just be waiting

there for us to show up... .them stabbing assegais pointing right at our

bellies!....

BOY-PULLEN

You afeared of the Zulus then, Quartermaster?

**BLOOMFIELD:**

One Zulu is only one man.. ..and I'm afeared of no one man... but the

Zulu, they come in the thousands.... like a black wave of death.... in the

thousands.... and them assegais.... stabbing!

The BOY-PULLEN doesn't answer. He stares into the darkness, contemplating

the prospect of the morning as described by BLOOMFIELD.

84.Back in the centre of the camp, VEREKER rides past the bandstand to meet

DURNFORD.

**DURNFORD:**

Your orders, Mr Vereker?

**VEREKER:**

I'm to take the Sikali with the main column to the river

**DURNFORD:**

Lord Chelmsford seems to want me to stay back with my Basutos.

**VEREKER:**

I think Chelmsford wants a good man on the border Why he fears a flanking attack and requires a steady Commander in reserve.

DURNFORD (Angrily)

The wrong side of the river! The wrong place! (DURNFORD glares at

VEREKER, who realizes he has hit a raw nerve.) Does he wish me to

fight the Zulu, or merely observe their natural habitat?

Sensing his cue to exit, VEREKER salutes and saying "Sir" turns his horse to

join the Sikali who are leaving the camp.

22

85.DURNFORD walks his horse a few paces forward as he watches the troop leave.

DURNFORD (With sincerity)

God go with you, Mr Vereker (He turns his horse about as the band

music swells to its conclusion).

86. THE CAMP AT RORKE'S DRIFT. THE BORDER WITH ZULULAND. DAY. TRAVELLING P.O.V.

THE THREAT OF THE BACKLIGHTED LANDSCAPE BEFORE THEM, THE SUN GLARE MAKING CLARITY OF VISION DIFFICULT. CAMERA PANS UP RIVER. THE MOUNTED INFANTRY CROSS TO THE FAR BACK, THE UNION JACK HELD PROUDLY ALOFT.

87. RIVER BANK.

Two punts, carrying redcoated soldiers are being hauled across the water by

rows of Basutos on the opposite bank.

As they unload, the soldiers immediately form into columns.

88.The first ox-wagon is driven out of the river, with much shouting and

encouragement from the drover and watching soldiers. There is general activity

everywhere.

89.LOW SHOT. The wheels of the wagons and the Basuto's feet are seen trudging

through the slop of mud.

90.LONG SHOT OF CAMP. A column of Basutos is seen walking towards the camp.

The white tents are dominant in the background.

91.SWITCH to CHELMSFORD, seen mounted on horseback. He surveys the

proceedings through a pair of binoculars.

92.CAMERA PANS to discover VEREKER, on horseback, leading the troop of

SIKALI HORSE across the river.

93.CAMERA PICKS UP a calm LT. RAW as he crosses amidst the multitude.

94.CLOSE UP of VEREKER. With gritted determination he spurs his horse onward

up the bank.

95.SOT. WILLIAMS is seen seated upon a covered wagon about to enter the water.

PTE. WILLIAMS is on foot trying to instruct the animals.

PTE. WILLIAMS (Pushing one of the animals from the rear)

Come on ox.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Out! Not the ox's arse, you bloody idiot

(PTE. WILLIAMS returns to pushing the side of the wagon).

23

Get 'em in line!

(PTE. WILLIAMS loses his footing, slipping into the water. He is fully

immersed).

PTE. WILLIAMS

Serg' ah, I'm drowning Sergeant.

(He stands and we see that the water only comes up to his knee).

SGT. WILLIAMS

Williams, what the bloody 'ell do you mean by 'aving the sante name

as me?

PTE. WILLIAMS

Sorry Serg' (He struggles onward through the water).

96.COGHILL & MELVILL are seen crossing.

97.More oxen cross.

98.A column of redcoats carrying rifles are seen striding onward. The SIKALI

HORSE ride past in the foreground.

99.WIDE ANGLE. Both sides of the river are seen. Redcoats climb the hill in the

foreground. Everywhere seems more settled.

100.CAMERA again picks up the SIKALI HORSE. They ride across screen in

CLOSE FOREGROUND to reveal a stationary VEREKER on horseback.

NORRIS-NEWMAN rides towards him. He has a red

claret-and-port-drinker's  
face and is wearing civilian bush-clothes including a huge  
bush-hat.

NORRIS-NEWMAN

Do you think Cetshwayo will send a party to greet you, Mr  
Vereker?

VEREKER (Calmly stroking his horse)

Oh they're here alright. We just have to make sure they don't  
get back

to announce us.

NORRIS-NEWMAN

You mean you've seen them?

Without answering, VEREKER turns his horse towards the hills.

Breaking into

a gallop, he shouts the command:

**VEREKER:**

Forward Sikali!

NORRIS-NEWMAN watches through his binoculars, then turns his  
horse back

towards the camp.

24

101.EXT. RIVERBANK OPPOSITE RORKE'S DRIFT. DAY

CLOSE UP of CHELMSFORD. We see the view through his binoculars.

He is watching NORRIS-NEWMAN enter the camp.

CREALOCK approaches on horseback. They exchange salutes.

**CHELMSFORD:**

What's that strange name the newspaper chap's called?

**CREALOCK:**

Er, called Noggs, Sir Actual name is Norris-Newman. He presented  
credentials from "The Standard".

**CHELMSFORD:**

Our runners bare his dispatches, do they not?

CREALOCK (Smiling)

Of course, Sir

They exchange knowing looks and turn their horses about towards  
camp.

102.EXT. SWITCH TO RIVER. CLOSE TO CAMP - RORKE'S DRIFT. DAY.

A long line of NATAL NATIVE COMPANY is transporting wooden  
boxes of

ammunition on their shoulders across the river. V.O. of a

brusque NCO is

**heard:**

**NCO:**

Come on lads, it's only a river! (The NCO is seen in CLOSE UP in the foreground).

103. LIEUTENANT COLONEL HAMILTON-BROWN, a rough kishman, and old campaigner joins in:

HAMILTON-BROWN

104.

105.

Come on you piss-arse lot, get these bastards across. It's only water

Come along you idle scum, let's 'ave yer

HAMILTON-BROWN rides away as we see a native fall into the water under his burden.

CHELMSFORD and his Company cross the river.

NATAL NATIVE COMPANY is seen again, still struggling across the river.

The NCO's VOICE is heard:

**NCO:**

I'll 'ave your guts fer garters!

25

106. On the far bank CHELMSFORD and his Company are seen riding to meet

NORRIS-NEWMAN.

**CHELMSFORD:**

An historical moment, Gentlemen.

NORRIS-NEWMAN

Excuse me, My Lord. (Introducing himself) Norris-Newman, of "The Standard", My Lord.

**CHELMSFORD:**

I saw you lead our Cavalry sir

NORRIS-NEWMAN

Indeed I did, My Lord. It was one of the first to cross.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Were they in good heart as they entered enemy territory?

NORRIS-NEWMAN

They spurred onto high ground, My Lord, full of spirit and looking for the Zulu. Full of sport they were, My Lord.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Tell what you see. Write it well, Sir, and make sure you get it right

NORRIS-NEWMAN

If I've got it right, My Lord, you lead an invasion into Zululand, for I see it all around me, but "why?" is the question my readers will ask.  
"why?"

**CHELMSFORD:**

Do not confuse yourself. Why? We must strike a heavy blow. This cannot be a war of manoeuvre.

NORRIS-NEWMAN

So attack is your defence. Well let's hope Cetshwayo will offer his Impis full destruction.

**CHELMSFORD:**

My only fear is that the Zulu will avoid the engagement. He turns his horse about and his Company follow as

NORRIS-NEWMAN looks on in amazement.

107. CAMERA PANS to follow CHELMSFORD and his Company as they ride to the foot of the hills.

108. We see the view through CHELMSFORD's binoculars. He spots

**VEREKER:**

with the SIKALI HORSE.

26

109. NORRIS-NEWMAN has caught up with CHELMSFORD:

NORRIS-NEWMAN

I have it, My Lord, we attack for sport - or is it reputations? CHELMSFORD (Lowering his binoculars) Enough of your politicking, Noggs.

NORRIS-NEWMAN

I know your views on the usefulness of the Press, My Lord, but the

Englishman back home wants to know what his Regiments are doing.

CHELMSFORD (Resuming his gaze through the binoculars)

Then I trust you will tell him exactly what you have observed  
110.QM BLOOMFIELD pulls a drowned Basuto from the river onto the bank. He

removes the man's ammunition belt.

LT. HARFORD approaches. He is on horseback.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Look at that waste. Five rounds ruined Mr Harford. Each round has to be accounted for.

LT. HARFORD (Referring to the BASUTO)

It's terrible. Quite dreadful. Something must be done.

BLOOMFIELD (Standing)

If they'd been put back in their boxes (moving towards Harford). Boxes

banded and screwed down proper like, as His Lordship ordered, nothing

would have happened to them, Sir

LT. HARFORD

I'm talking about our drowned Natives, Quartermaster!

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Natives is not on my invoices, Mr Harford. . ammunition is, and 'as

to be accounted for. and the brass cartridge cases returned.

111.In disgust, LT. HARFORD turns his horse about. He meets HAMILTON-

BROWN at the top of the bank.

LT. HARFORD

Several of our Natives went under. Shouldn't we have a Roll call Colonel?

HAMILTON-BROWN

Not practical, lad.. .we haven't had time to make up the rolls yet

Besides, I'm not sure how many we had before the crossing.

HAMILTON-BROWN canters away.

27

LT. HARFORD follows reluctantly, not enthralled by this show of callousness.

112.A Zulu reconnaissance party is seen atop the ridge. They view the scene below.



113.VEREKER and the SIKALI HORSE ascend the ridge.  
114.The infantry - the Twenty Fourth Foot --fan out in sections, alert to possible attack, and make for the high ground.  
115.CHELMSFORD's party rides by below.  
116.One of the Zulu's fires a warning shot into the air.  
117.VEREKER halts his company, as does CHELMSFORD.  
118.The guilty Zulu's voice booms out from above:  
why do you come to the land of the Zulu?  
119.LT. MELVILL turns about in his saddle to address CHELMSFORD.

**MELVILL:**

May I answer, Sir?

**CHELMSFORD:**

By all means, Mr. Melvill.

MELVILL (Moving his horse forward a few paces, he bellows a reply)

We come here by the Orders of the Great Queen Victoria. Queen of all

Africa.

There is a moment of silence:

VEREKER (Gives the order)

Forward!

120.MELVILL turns to face his Redcoats.

**MELVILL:**

Company, advance!

121.Turning to a member of his party:

**CHELMSFORD:**

Major, send the troops.

122.There is a steady advance up the hill. The Zulus turn, scrambling through the undergrowth.

28

123.The SIKALI approach. One of the Zulus turns and stands his ground. He thrusts his assegai at his foe dismounting the SIKALI from his horse. In a second the Zulu jumps astride the horse but his escape is prevented by an offending shot from another SIKALI.

124. More SIKALI advance. They bring down several more Zulus.  
125. A group of four Zulus converge on one SIKALI. They pull him off his horse into a crop of rocks. One Zulu manages to mount the horse and rides away encouraged by the others.

VEREKER notices this. Slowly and deliberately he removes his rifle from his saddle, takes aim and then fires. The dead warrior falls to the ground.

126. A group of LANCERS track one ZULU. The lead LANCER approaches, guiding his horse expertly. He feints with the downstroke of his lance.

The ZULU lowers his shield.

The LANCER, on the ZULU now, uses the up-stroke to impale the ZULU to a tree.

NOGGS rides near the incident.

127. CHELMSFORD has surveyed the incident through his binoculars.

128.

MELVILL (to Noggs)

Well done, Sir.. did you see, that Noggs? He deceived him with the up and took him with the down.

NOGGS (Studying the deceased Zulu from his horse)

Well, well this one's a grandfather at least if he'd been a Zulu in his prime, I'd have given odds against your Lancer, Mr Melvill

129. CHELMSFORD returns his binoculars to their case.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Welt, Gentlemen, first blood to us and a rousing good report in the newspapers to satisfy the politicians, eh?

130. EXT. CAMPATROCKE'S DRIFT. DUSK.

Camp-fires are seen and the sound of neighing horses are heard as the

CAMERA follows a small troop of horsemen and wagon cross the river. The

CAMERA pans towards the sunset as the "Last Post" is heard.

131. EXT. CETSHWAYO'S KRAAL. FIRST DAWN

29

The ROYAL IMPIS squat as they listen to their King. Huge, powerful, glowering. He holds the royal trident spear in his hand as he strides before them.

**CETSHWAYO:**

My warriors, our people are hungry. We must gather the crops that will feed us through the Winter But first we must defend our lands... from those who would steal the fruits of our labours. The British have broken their promise.. and crossed the Buffalo River into our home-lands. We must fight to survive. A huge hissing sound comes from the multitudes. Assegais thrust to the sun red sky. CETSHWAYO points westward.

**CETSHWAYO:**

We must kill!

**ALL ZULUS:**

Usutu... Usutu... Usutu.. ("Kill")  
132.Black outlines against the rising red sun, assegais and shields rattling, the Zulus hail their King, pledging loyalty to the death.  
133.LONGSHOT. EARLYMORNING.  
The full splendour of the mountain can be seen through the mist. The country, wide-rolling, is beautiful, but empty.  
134.The camp is silent. ALL men's eyes are towards the mountain. CHELMSFORD, seated, views the sight through his telescope.

**CREALOCK:**

& PULLEINE are close by.  
MELVILL approaches on horse-back. He addresses PULLEINE:  
MELVILL (Saluting)  
We 're ready to move out, Colonel  
PULLEINE (Addressing CHELMSFORD)  
My Lord, we're prepared to move armour to er

**CHELMSFORD:**

Your destination, Colonel?

**PULLEINE:**

Um Isil'... (He has difficulty pronouncing the word)  
CREALOCK (With exact pronunciation)  
Isandhlwana. Four miles further than that tallest hill Follow  
the  
track and it will lead us to the slopes of the mountain.

30

PULLEINE (With quiet contemplation)

Isandhlwana. ..yes....

CHELMSFORD (Leaning away from his telescope)

Isandhlwana.

135.THE ARMY PREPARES TO MARCH JNLAND FROM THE RIVER.

136.CHELMSFORD'S army, with ox-wagons seven-abreast, comes to  
life and

proceeds to lumber noisily toward the peak.

137.MELVILL'S company of REDCOATS, guarding the left flank of  
the

wagons, marches, rifles at the ready. Platoons move tactically,  
one section

of each platoon is always in a defensive position.

138.Tension everywhere. Drovers glance anxiously upwards. Empty  
of visible

signs of the enemy, the hills are no less threatening.

139.MELVILL (on horseback) approaches the lead wagon driven by  
BLOOMFIELD & BOY-PULLEN.

**MELVILL:**

I want your wagons in an extended line, Quartermaster, but not  
too  
extended, or my Company can 'tprotect them. No more than fifty  
feet  
between each one.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Sir~

MELVILL returns to the flank

BLOOMFIELD (To BOY-PULLEN)

if they're too close together, the stupid things 'ii walk into  
each other

and you can sit on your arse for a good four hours.

Turning about on his seat he addresses the train under his

**command:**

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Come on lads, keep them wagons moving. No more than fifty feet  
Keep 'em moving. Keep 'em moving.

140. COGHILL, stationary, astride his horse watches the  
movement.

COGHILL (Addressing MELVILL)

There Melvill, there stretched out is my Lord Chelmsford '5  
Army.

(Spurring his horse onward) What a wondrous adventure we  
undertake. What a marvellous spree.

COGHILL & MELVILL break into a canter.

31

141. VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE INCESSANT MOVEMENT FORWARDS.

142. SHOUTS, COMMANDS, THE MOVE INTO ZULULAND has started with  
urgency.

143. EXT. ZULULAND EAST OF ISANDHLWANA. HOT SUNNY DAY.

FANNIN, a short, fat English settler, in his thirties,  
gross-featured, rides

sleepily over sloping terrain. Behind him, on foot, several  
black African

retainers follow desultorily. FANNIN snorts, sweats, appears  
generally

fat and unhealthy. He halts his horse and removes a bottle from  
his saddle-

bag. He takes a large swig from the remaining liquid and  
discards the

bottle.

144. FANNIN reaches the top of an animal track at the top of a  
ridge. Looking

down he spots several ZULUS herding a small group of cattle.

The ZULUS

shout calls of alarm.

145. Turning around to give orders to his retainers, FANNIN  
spots them scrambling

down the slope away from the ZULUS.

146. As FANNIN returns to face front, he gapes as he notices  
that the valley is

black with ZULU IMPIS. They are run-marching towards the west.

No

noise save the disciplined swish of thousands of feet in the  
dust.

147. FANNIN hesitates, realizes he's been spotted, quickly,  
cruelly jerks his

horse's head round and spurs over the ridge into the next valley.

148.UHAMA calls out and MBILINI, BAYELE & another, with UHAMA, sprint up the ridge in pursuit of FANNIN. As they mount the crest, they see FANNIN belting down the far side in search of safety. UHAMA stops the other three momentarily from continuing the chase.

**UHAMA:**

Follow the white Man, let him see you. He will lead you to the soldiers. Then, let the white Soldiers take you. When they think they have broken you tell them that the Impis are in the East  
149.EXT. ZULULAND NEAR ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

The three Zulus set off in pursuit of FANNIN.

Riding desperately, FANNIN, his mouth open in fear and his shoulders heaving with effort, drives his tired horse over the rough country.

FANNIN peers about. Huge pistol in his hand, he spots MBILINI and fires.

MBILINI 'dies' dramatically, but when FANNIN rides on, MBILINI comes to life, grinning and joins the others to track FANNIN.

32

150.VEREKER and SIKALI appear beyond the next ridge. Spotting FANNIN, VEREKER gives the signal to advance.

151.FANNIN reaches VEREKER's party.

**FANNIN:**

Zulu Zulu!

FANNIN droops in his saddle, too tired to talk. He manages to dismount.

VEREKER (Offering a drink from his hip-flask)  
Here.

**FANNIN:**

I'm ill.. dozens of Zulus followed me. I must have shot five, six, ten,

I lost count. They just kept coming. Blood curdling swine.

152.VEREKER looks down the slope at the three Zulus who have now been

apprehended by the SIKALI. FANNIN drinks again. His avid, greedy behaviour does not enamour his rescuers.

**VEREKER:**

Why did they attack you?

**FANNIN:**

I discovered their Army, Your Honour a valley full of them and beyondt

**VEREKER:**

Army? what Army?

**FANNIN:**

Beyond them hills, Sir and coming this way.

VEREKER surveys the area. The terrain is empty.

153.A concealed Zulu scout watches stolidly at the distance reduced figures below.

**ST:**

154.THE CAMP AT ISANDHLWANA. 21 JANUARY. 6.OOPM

CHELMSFORD's party ride into camp.

155.PULLEINE is seated at a table outside his tent. He is smoking and studying a

document as SGT. MURPHY pours red wine into his tankard. VEREKER crosses in front of the table.

**PULLEINE:**

Officer Vereker, er, would you mind me asking you to take a look at this map?

33

VEREKER (Returning to the table)

By all means, ColoneL

**PULLEINE:**

You see

156.The ELDERLY & YOUNG BOER seen earlier approach PULLEINE ELDERLY floER

Your wagons, Colonel

**PULLEINE:**

What about my wagons?

**ELDERLY BOER:**

On an open slope like this, you must bring your wagons round and form them into a laager and do it immediately  
157.CHELMSFORD and his lancers arrive at PULLEINE's tent.

**CHELMSFORD:**

dismounts and addresses PULLEINE.

**CHELMSFORD:**

I hear you have prisoners, Colonel, well done. (To Vereker) Good evening, William.

**PULLEINE:**

Thank you, Sir

**VEREKER:**

Good evening, Frederick. I think you should hear this. (To elderly Boer) You were saying your brother didn 't laager his camp right?

**ELDERLY BOER:**

They had seventy-three in their party. We found seventy-three skeletons six months later  
CHELMSFORD (After a moment's reflection)  
Boers require to laager with only a few wagons, we have many. An unassailable square of British firepower is a defence which can be  
Jbrmed in a moment  
The BOERS start to move away.

**CHELMSFORD:**

You're leaving us Master Boer?  
The ELDERLY BOER turns

**ELDERLY BOER:**

I'm going to camp among the rocks over there.

34

The BOERS exit.

PULLEINE (Addressing Chelmsford)

My Lord, Mr Fannin, er (Picking up and referring to the map) claims to have seen the Zulu Impis, some few thousand or so, in this valley.



CLOSE UP of map location.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Unlikely (Using his riding crop as a pointer) most unlikely. It would

mean taking 24,000 men over mountain tops. This is not helpful

Have the prisoners brought to my camp.

158.EXT. BATTLEFIELD ISANDHLWANA. EVENING.

The three Zulu prisoners are tied to two wagons. A CORPORAL is administering a serious beating to BAYELE.

VEREKER approaches.

VEREKER (Indicating to cease the punishment)

Alright Corporal Anything?

**CORPORAL:**

No sir, no.

VEREKER turns to the prisoner at the other wagon.

**VEREKER:**

Be sensible man, tell us.

The prisoner maintains his silence as VEREKER walks away in dismay.

159.REDCOATS and NATAL NATIVE SOLDIERS, in their separate quarters,

clean their rifles, carefully oiling the barrels and working.

**VEREKER:**

passes RUSSELL busy oiling the elevating mechanisms on his rocket tubes.

RUSSELL (To Vereker)

Good evening. (Referring to the job in hand) Dirty work, eh?

VEREKER (In reply)

Very dirty. (To himself) Very dirty.

160.INT. CHELMSFORD'S TENT.

CHELMSFORD is seated. PULLEINE and CREALOCK stand behind him.

FANNIN is standing to one side beside the desk. VEREKER

converses with

two of the prisoners in Zulu.

35

**PULLEINE:**

What did they say?

**VEREKER:**

Claim they're deserters from the main Impis in the East.  
Followed this  
way so they could give themselves up, go home.

**PULLEINE:**

Do you believe that?

**VEREKER:**

Oh their bodies are well oiled. They 're fed regularly, but  
it's unlikely  
they're the fugitives they say.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Have them questioned further  
VEREKER exits with the prisoners.  
CHELMSFORD (Rising to address FANNIN at the desk)  
They claim the Zulu Impis are East towards the Royal Kraal, and  
yet  
this fellow says they are further towards the North. (He picks  
up the  
map).

**FANNIN:**

Wherever they are, Your Worship, there are sixty thousand or  
more

**CHELMSFORD:**

They multiply, Mr Fannin. You do speak the Zulu tongue, do you?  
FANNIN nods.

**CHELMSFORD:**

And tomorrow I intend to find the Zulu Impis, Mr Fannin, and you  
will accompany me.

**FANNIN:**

Er, I'm no soldier, Your Honour, and it 's further into  
Zululand.

**CHELMSFORD:**

You will accompany me, Mr Fannin, or you will be arrested. (He  
gives  
PULLEINE a glance as an indication to dismiss FANNIN)

**PULLEINE:**

This way, Mr Fannin.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Crealock We have scouts out in the direction he claims he saw  
the  
Zulus?  
36

**CREALOCK:**

**CHELMSFORD:**

Of course, Sir.  
And?

**CREALOCK:**

The only reports of enemy activity have come from the direction  
of the  
Royal Kraal, at Ulundi.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Thank you.

CREALOCK exits as CHELMSFORD continues to study the map.  
161.BOY-PULLEN stands on top of a wagon gazing at the sunset.  
BLOOMFIELD is checking stores. BOY-PULLEN clambers down and  
walks  
over to BLOOMFIELD.  
BOY-PULLEN  
Why don 't the Zulus attack?

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Zulu may not wear shoes or trousers and the like but it don 't  
mean to  
say they got no brains. They'll watch us and wait and find our  
weaknesses.  
Studying his clipboard, BLOOMFIELD crosses into foreground.  
BOY-PULLEN  
Have we weaknesses, Quartermaster?  
BLOOMFIELD does not answer. He strides forward out of shot. BOY-  
PULLEN turns, places his bugle to his lips & plays "The Last  
Post".  
162.EXT. ZULULAND EASTOFBUFFALO NIGHT.  
The camp is quiet - but wakeful at the imminence of battle.  
BLACKNESS.

163.PTE. WILLIAMS is on sentry-go. There are men seated around

a camp fire,

PTE. STOREY sits on the back of a wagon, smoking. PTE. WILLIAMS stares into the black night. Insect noises, a horse neighs. He hears something more alarming. His eyes widen, his grip on his rifle tightens. He listens again.

He moves to the front of the wagon, convinced he has heard something.

Returning to the rear he addresses STOREY.

PTE. WILLIAMS

What was that, Storey?

37

STOREY (Leaning forward)

What? Piss off I never heard nothing. (After a moment's reflection)

I don 't think.

PTE. WILLIAMS

Well I did. Stand To. (He positions his rifle at the ready).

Tutting, STOREY throws his cigarette to the ground. He stands, reluctantly.

The others do not move.

PTE. WILLIAMS (In a forced whisper to the others)

Stand To!

Ignoring him, all but one remain seated. One other has lit a torch from the fire.

164.This PTE. proceeds to SGT. WILLIAMS' tent.

PTE.

Stand To, Colour Sergeant.

SGT. WILLIAMS (From within his tent)

Who gave the order?

Private Williams, Sir

PTE.

SGT. WILLIAMS (Emerging from his tent)

I've gotta see this.

165.SGT. WILLIAMS has reached the wagon. PTE. WILLIAMS is still aiming

his rifle into the blackness.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Did you call 'Stand To', Private Williams?

PTE. WILLIAMS nods, still listening.

**STOREY:**

I didn 't hear nothing, Serg'.

SGT. WILLIAMS looks at STOREY. His face shows complete contempt

for

PTE. WILLIAMS. Then he hears something also. It is the  
approaching sound  
of horses hooves.

SGT. WILLIAMS (With sudden urgency)

Well Stand To! damn you!

PTE. WILLIAMS takes out his bayonet and attempts to fix it.

SGT.

38

WILLIAMS lays a hand on his arm as if to replace the bayonet  
back in it's  
scabbard.

SGT. WILLIAMS

No. You've done well fer once. Don 'tpush yer luck!

PTE. WILLIAMS (He continues to attach his bayonet)

Iheard 'em first

SGT. WILLIAMS (With sarcasm)

I'll get you a medal for modesty, Private Williams, would you  
like  
that?

PTE. WILLIAMS

You never would, Colour Sergeant A medal?

166. There are loud noises of advancing bodies coming directly  
towards them.

From the blackness:

DURNFORD (V.O.)

Colonel Durnford here.

SGT. WILLIAMS (To PTE. WILLIAMS)

Easy, lad.

As DURNFORD and his escort of fifty mounted BASUTOS approach,  
SGT.

WILLIAMS salutes.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Just follow the track, Sir, you 'll come to Lord Chelmsford '5  
Head Quarters.

DURNFORD (Spurring his horse onward)

Sergeant

SGT. WILLIAMS

Get down, lads.

The line of sentries relax, unfix their bayonets and most  
proceed to return to  
their sleeping bags.

PTE. WILLIAMS is deflated almost to the point of tears.

SGT. WILLIAMS

You done well Keep it up laJ Keep it up.

A smile reappears upon PTE. WILLIAMS face. He resumes his watch with

renewed enthusiasm.

167.INT. CHELMSFORD'S TENT NIGHT.

39

CHELMSFORD is seated on his bed. DURNFORD stands before him distressed, blinking at his commander's verbal assault.

**CHELMSFORD:**

You intended to bring your reserves across the river?

**DURNFORD:**

I have received intelligence from, sources of my own that the Zulu

Impis are moving North of here and threaten your left.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Intelligence? Sources of your own? Did it not occur to you they may be native rumours? Rumours to draw you off- to leave the whole of Natal open to a possible counter thrust

DURNFORD (After a beat)

Cetshwayo wants a head on battle. A decisive victory, so that his

people can get on with the one battle that is life and death for his

Nation - a delayed harvest

**CHELMSFORD:**

Are you dictating the strategy of this war, Sir?

**DURNFORD:**

I'm explaining my reasons.

CREALOCK enters the tent.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Yes?

**CREALOCK:**

A large party of Zulus have been sighted in the direction of the King's

Kraal

Getting up, CHELMSFORD moves over to look at the map on his desk.

168.CLOSE UP of map as CHELMSFORD picks up a pair of dividers and

measures the distance between Isandhlwana and Ulundi.

169.CHELMSFORD turns to face the two men.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Tomorrow we will continue our advance on Ulundi. Dumford, kindly return to your unit Bring them here immediately to support Pulleine. Mr Vereker will join you as ADC. Do you understand me clearly?

**DURNFORD:**

And the threat of counter invasion no longer exists?

40

170.

171.

Colonel, if on another occasion you flout my direct orders I shall

reluctantly relieve you of your commanJ

DURNFORD exits in silence. CREALOCK walks over to the map.

**CREALOCK:**

Perhaps he has thought to conquer Zululand on his own, My LorJ  
CLOSE UP of CHELMSFORD as he nods in silent agreement.

THE CAMP AT ISANDHLWANA. 22N9 JANUARY. 7.OOAM.

Reveille is heard. CHELMSFORD emerges from his tent with  
VEREKER.

**CHELMSFORD:**

**CHELMSFORD:**

I trust you to keep me well informed of Colonel Durnford and his men

when they arrive William.

**VEREKER:**

Certainly Frederick.

CHELMSFORD mounts his horse.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Gentlemen, we move to find camp and engage the enemy, and my nose

tells me that we may make early contacfl

CHELMSFORD and his party move out. VEREKER looks on.

172.PULLEINE is stationary, astride his horse. MELVILL approaches on horseback.

**PULLEINE:**

Mr Melvill, until the reinforcement arrives we will Stand To.

**MELVILL:**

Sir (Riding off, he addresses a Bugler) You there. Sound "Fall In".

173.As CHELMSFORD'S COLUMN moves out, the camera pans away up to the

hills to reveal a hidden Zulu Scout.

The rear units are half-a-mile from the camp.

174.Below, the camp prepares for immediate battle activity everywhere.

Redcoats line up, buckling on their packs and pouches.

175.PULLEINE, MELVILL & COGHILL, all on horseback, are engaged in conversation.

41

PULLEINE (To COGHILL)

Huge expanse to keep an eye on. (Referring to Nqutu Range) Would you mind riding over to Stuart Smith & asking him to bring his artillery about?

**COGHILL:**

Sir (Riding off)

**PULLEINE:**

Oh, Mr Melvill, kindly send a lookout Tell him to call out the instant he spies Colonel Durnford's Column coming to reinforce us.

MELVILL departs.

176.COGHILL arrives at STUART SMITH's area.

**COGHILL:**

Stuart?

**STUART SMITH:**

Yes.

**COGHILL:**

How quickly can you move your artillery forward?



**STUART SMITH:**

Well, my horses are feeding, as you may observe, Mr Coghill.  
It'll  
take a little while.

**COGHILL:**

Well, fed or hungry, Pulleine wants them in position  
immediately. (He  
departs).

**STUART SMITH:**

Right. (Addressing one of his men) Bombardier, to me please.  
177.CLOSE UP of a concerned looking PULLEINE.  
178.Various shots of CHELMSFORD'S COLUMN moving forward.  
1'79.CLOSE in on CHELMSFORD as he rides to meet NOGGS (NORRIS-  
NEWMAN)

**CHELMSFORD:**

What o'clock is it, Mr Noggs?  
NORRIS-NEWMAN  
Eleven o'clock, My LorJ  
42

**CHELMSFORD:**

Our friend Colonel Dumford will be should be at this minute  
approaching Pulleine. I think we'll eat here. I want to scout  
that  
mountain top and be back with an appetite in one hour. (He turns  
his horse about).

**CREALOCK:**

Sir  
180.DURNFORD'S ARRIVAL AT ISANDHLWANA.  
22ND JANUARY. 1 1.00AM  
DURNFORD'S COLUMN pounds down the slope into the camp. It is  
welcomed with relief, tension everywhere relaxes and smiles are  
seen. There  
is calling and greeting between the forces.  
181.AREA BETWEEN WAGONS.  
BAYELE and the OTHER ZULU CAPTIVE held for questioning are tied  
up  
to wagons in an area somewhat screened from the camp. MBILINI  
is on

the ground, his feet and hands are bound.

TWO SENTRIES guard them. MBILINI lies almost unconscious, tongue lolling, from the ropes that bind him. Evidence of the beating he has

undergone is extensive.

The TWO REDCOAT SENTRIES run forward to see DURNFORD'S COLUMN arrive, momentarily leaving the captives.

BAYELE (To MBILINI with whisper)

My brother We must warn our King. I will call the white soldier back. Can you still move to help me?

MBILINI nods.

BAYELE (Shouting)

Guard. Guard!

The TWO SENTRIES turn. One addresses the other:

**SENTRY:**

I'll fix 'im, Serg'

He starts to walk back to the wagons. BAYELE continues to shout.

**SENTRY:**

Shut that yellin' up, you 'ear me! (He reaches the wagons) Did you

'ear me? Shut up!

43

As he passes MBILINI on the ground, the warrior thrusts his trussed legs

between the SENTRY'S legs. The SENTRY stumbles to the ground, his

head near BAYELE'S feet. He immediately starts to rise but before he can,

BAYELE has lifted his powerful foreleg waist high in stamping position and

brings it down with a sickening crunch onto the SENTRY'S lower neck.

Now all is desperate speed. Under BAYELE'S directions, MBILINI stretches to the unconscious SENTRY and manages to take his bayonet

with his bound feet.

182. INTERCUT WITH SHOTS OF DURNFORD'S ARRIVAL IN CAMP.

183. Cutting the ropes about his neck, MBILINI succeeds in rising to his feet,

managing to get the bayonet blade to BAYELE'S bonds.

Between them the first ropes are cut.

As BAYELE'S hands are freed, the SENTRY on the ground starts to regain consciousness. Taking the bayonet from MBILINI, BAYELE thrusts the weapon into the SENTRY'S back killing him. He removes the bayonet from the SENTRY'S body and also takes a knife from the redcoat's scabbard which he hands to MBILINI. Together they free the third Zulu tied to the other wagon. Making their escape, they edge beyond the wagons. Crouching low, they run up the slope and head for the North. 184. But all British eyes are to the East or on DURNFORD'S column. DURNFORD dismounts, takes in the encampment.

**PULLEINE:**

Exceedingly pleased to greet you, Sir

**DURNFORD:**

Colonel I see you're 'Standing To.' Perhaps the men could eat with their equipment unbuckled.

**PULLEINE:**

Oh yes, of course. Excellent idea, good. Oh, Mr Melvill, order "Stand Down", will you?

**MELVILL:**

Sir~ (He turns his horse about)

**PULLEINE:**

Please. (Indicating that DURNFORD follow him)  
PULLEINE & DURNFORD walk out of shot as MELVILL is seen in the background.

44

**MELVILL:**

Sergeant Stand the men down would you.  
185.8 MWES EAST OF ISANDHLWANA. ROAD TO ULUNDI.  
22ND JANUARY. 1145AM.  
186. CLOSE UP of pencil drawing in progress. The artist is revealed as being

CREALOCK. His composition is of a stationary wagon.  
187.NOGGS observes. Glass of claret in hand, he makes his way  
towards  
CREALOCK.

**NOGGS:**

Crealock, old fellah (Sitting beside him). I'm doing notes for  
my  
dispatch and I need to clear up a few military points. I don 't  
want  
to bother His Lordship. Had it drummed into my thick skull that  
a good Commander never willingly splits his forces, especially  
in  
an enemy's country before knowing their dispositions.  
CREALOCK has continued to sketch throughout Noggs' banter.

**CREALOCK:**

Ah, Yes, if we were facing a European enemy armed with guns I  
think your point would hold, Noggs. Further, may I remind you  
I do not create the strategies you wish to comment on. I am only  
his Lordship's Secretary. (He gives NOOGS a smug smile).

**NOGGS:**

With a slight chuckle he leans closer to CREALOCK.  
I wouldn 't take overly comfort from that Crealock old fellah  
because if-he sinks, then you sink with him.  
NOGUS departs, as CREALOCK looks up for a moment and then  
continues  
with his drawing.

188.EXT. PULLEINE'S H.Q. TENT. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

DURNFORD, VEREKER & PULLEINE are seated. They are dining  
together.

The occasion is incredibly civilised. The table is laid with a  
white linen cloth,  
silver cutlery, condiments and wine glasses containing claret.  
DURNFORD (Toying with the wine in his glass)  
So, you 've been asked to look after me, Lieutenant?

**VEREKER:**

Well I assure you, Sir, I have no desire to create  
difficulties.

45

**DURNFORD:**

And I assure you, you do not In fact I'd be obliged for your best advice. What have your scouts seen?

**VEREKER:**

So far only their scouts. But we have had reports of a small Impi farther north, over there. (He turns to indicate the area to his left)

**PULLEINE:**

His Lordship is of the certain opinion that it 's far too difficult an approach to be chosen by the Zulu command. DURNFORD (Looking to the North) Yes, welt Difficulty never deterred a Zulu commander. (Returning his gaze to VEREKER) How many?

**VEREKER:**

We don 't know.

DURNFORD (After a moment's reflection)

I think it would be wise to picket the hills. Just in case.

VEREKER rises and collecting his hat, exits to carry out

DURNFORD' S

instruction. DURNFORD returns to his meal.

189.EXT. NQUTU PLATEAU DAY

MOVING SHOT. DURNFORD rides out alone.

190.VEREKER, S.M. KAMBULA, OFFICERS and a troop of SIKALI horse ride out of camp into the foreground.

191.CAMERA PANS the vast African countryside. VEREKER' S column is

seen in the distance. CAMERA stops to reveal a ZULU SCOUT in the

foreground. He is hidden by a tree. On spying the soldiers, he turns to

two young ZULU BOYS behind him. He shouts instructions that they draw attention to themselves by moving their herd of cattle.

192.DURNFORD, now with KAMBULA, reaches the top of a rise. He stops

and KAMBULA hands him a pair of binoculars. Surveying the land he

spots VEREKER'S column. Handing the binoculars back to KAMBULA, he

spurs his horse onward.

193.VEREKER'S COLUMN come over a rise to see the cattle being urged to

the lip of the plateau.

RAW (Pointing to the cattle)

There's steak on the hoof Sir.

VEREKER (Pausing for a moment)

Sikal4 forward!

46

Kicking their horses and whooping, the soldiers give chase. The

**ZULUS:**

try to flee but in vain. One soldier, TROOPER JAMES, aims his rifle at

one of the ZULUS and fires.

VEREKER, hearing the shot, rides towards TROOPER JAMES, but stops

when he gets to the ZULU BOY who is lying motionless on the ground.

Dismounting, VEREKER goes over to the body and looks down at the dead boy

with compassion.

194.TROOPER JAMES spurs to the lip, exultant, keen to kill. He reins his horse

abruptly. Holding it still, he stares at the valley before him.

Suddenly all

energy leaves his body. He stares in disbelief. LT. RAW is beside him.

JAMES (Calling, his voice unbelieving)

Mr. Vereker! Mr. Vereker! Come and look at this, Sir!

VEREKER (Riding into shot he addresses JAMES)

You 've just managed to bring down a boy of twelve.

JAMES does not respond. He stares straight ahead. Following his gaze,

VEREKER spots what James has found before him.

195.EXT. WATERHOLE. VALLEY NEAR ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

The valley they overlook is filled with Zulus, Cetshwayo's main Impi.

Close-packed, sitting in silence, covering the whole of the valley floor

and perching on every inch of its rising sides, are twenty thousand warriors.

They have found the long sought main IMPI.

VEREKER (Utter disbelief)

My God, we 've found them.

196.EXT. NQUTUPLATEAU. DAY

**SILENCE:**

VEREKER, RAW & JAMES stare down at the Zulu Impis.

197.EXT. VALLEYNEARISANDHLWANA. DAY.

The Zulus look up. BAYELE, who stands apart, looks first at his warriors,

then up to the English. He shouts the order to advance.

Chanting, the Zulus

rise and start to clamber up towards the plateau.

198.EXT. NQUTU PLATEAU. DAY

VEREKER (Still stunned, he addresses RAW)

Warn the camp. Tell ChelmsforJ Inform His Lordship we 've found what he's looking for.

47

RAW (Turning his horse about)

Yes, Sir.

VEREKER orders his troop to line up facing the Zulu.

**VEREKER:**

Sikali, forward!

The mass of Zulus have started to cover the North strip of the plateau.

**VEREKER:**

Fire!

More and more Zulus mount the crest coming into formation. The troopers

are amazed at the sheer weight of enemy number.

VEREKER'S troop fire volleys steadily, the Zulus now six hundred yards

away. Some Zulus fall but the mass, getting into disciplined ranks,

advance implacably towards them.

VEREKER gives the order to retreat.

**VEREKER:**

Retire! Rerire!

VEREKER'S troop retreat as the ZULU follow.

199.INT. PULLEINE'S H.Q. TENT. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

PULLEINE is seated at his desk. He is writing a letter. He looks up as he

hears distant gunfire.

200.EXT. PULLEINE'S CAMP. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

BLOOMFIELD walks through the kitchen area. He stops and looks to the hills as he too hears gunfire.

201.INT. TENT. ISANDHLWANA. DAY

BOY-PULLEN, STOREY and another are having a game of cards. BOY-PULLEN looks up, alert. He too has heard something. STOREY nudges him.

**STOREY:**

Oy! Goon. What're doin'?

BOY-PULLEN dismisses his concern and continues with the game.

202.INT. MELVILL'S TENT. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

48

MELVILL is seated, relaxed, his feet up on his desk. He is drinking from a tankard. Another officer lies reclined, smoking. On hearing gunshots, MELVILL jumps up, running outside the tent.

**MELVILL:**

Don 't tell me the Zulu managed to get up there after alt

203.EXT. CAMP. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

LT. RAW rides into shot.

**RAW:**

Zulu!

204.MOVING SHOT. CAMERA follows RAW as he rides up to PULLEINE'S tent and dismounts.

**RAW:**

They're here.

PULLEINE emerges from his tent.

**RAW:**

I've sent to Lord Chelmsforct

**PULLEINE:**

Bugler. Sound "The Alert".

BUGLER runs into foreground. CLOSE UP as he sounds "The Alert".

205.PTE. WILLIAMS is feeding the horses. On hearing the "The Alert" he jumps to attention running out of shot. After a beat he returns to collect his helmet



which is positioned on top of one of posts.

206. BOY-PULLEN & STOREY emerge from their tent. There are troops scrambling everywhere. V.O. Fall in! At the double!

Heavy artillery moves into and out of shot.

207.

208.

209.

PULLEINE & MELVILL, both on horseback, watch the proceedings.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

SGT. WILLIAMS is rallying a Company of Redcoats.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Wheel 'em in! wheel 'em in! Wheel 'em in! Come on now. Tighten those ranks!

COGHILL, on horseback surveys the ranks from the rear.

49

210. A young BOY-SOLDIER walks in front of the redcoats. He carries an

armful of markers. With him is STOREY.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Private Storey. Get those markers pegged out at the double.

**STOREY:**

Serg'!

SGT. WILLIAMS

One every 'undred yards

STOREY (To Boy Soldier)

Come on boy, scamper.

SGT. WILLIAMS

and Bugler, make sure he pegs 'em in a straight line - towards the enemy!

211. RUSSELL & his men with a group of Natal natives run forward to position

the rockets.

RUSSELL (Through clenched teeth as he works)

Hold them please God three minutes please hold them!

(With increasing urgency) Come on, come on, come on. Come on men!

212. STOREY is pacing out the markers on the battlefield. The

**BOY SOLDIER:**

follows him.

**STOREY:**

Ninety two, ninety three, ninety four, ninety five, ninety six,

ninety

seven, eighty eight, ninety nine (Coming to a standstill)

What's

next, boy?

BOY SOLDIER stands motionless. He stares towards the horizon.

**STOREY:**

Oy. You useless little bastard. Come 'ere. Scamper.

BOY SOLDIER (Pointing behind Storey)

Look. Look!

STOREY turns to look.

213. Vast masses of Zulus appear over the horizon. They are chanting, menacing

like a fast approaching swarm of bees.

214. Closer shots of the Zulus as they approach. Their assegais poised high

above their heads at the ready.

50

215. CAMERA PANS to the tiny white tents of the camp in the distance. The

small Company of Redcoats is seen before them and for the first time it is

obvious just how outnumbered they are.

216. EXT. ZULULAND EAST OF ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

CHELMSFORD & CREALOCK admire the pleasant surroundings. They walk towards a canopied dining area. Servants have prepared a magnificent

table. Silver dishes, polished beautifully and gleaming in the hot sun, are

carried from a small field kitchen behind a screen.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Splendid site, Crealock, splendil I want to establish Camp here immediately.

**CREALOCK:**

Certainly, Sin

Standing around the table are several officers including

HAMILTON-BROWN,

HARFORD & MILNE. NOGGS is also present. As CHELMSFORD sits, so do

the others.

HAMILTON-BROWN stands apart, drinking uneasily.

**CHELMSFORD:**

After lunch, Brown, I want you to return to Isandhlwana and instruct

Colonel Pulleine to join us here immediately.

HAMILTON-BROWN (Downing the contents of his glass)

If you 'll excuse me, My Lord.

**CHELMSFORD:**

No appetite, Colonel? (He indicates to a nearby servant to refill his glass).

HAMILTON-BROWN

My men haven 't eaten since yesterday and there won 't be any supplies

until I get them back to Isandhlwana.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Well they can start off now and you can join them when you've eaten.

HAMILTON-BROWN

Kind of you, My Lord. But I don't think it would be proper for me to

sit at your table while they're with their bellies stuck to their

backbones.

EXITS.

51

HARFORD (Rising to leave)

Excuse me, Sir.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Learn nothing from that Irishman, HafforJ behave.

**HARFORD:**

Yes, Sir.

Except, how not to

General ad. lib. Smug laughter, banging of cutlery on table and cries of

"Here, here".

217.Solitary SIKALI HORSEMAN approaches Chelmsford's camp.

218.RETURN to dining table. The meal is now over. CHELMSFORD cuts the

end off a cigar with a silver cigar-cutter. NOGGS is peeling an

apple with

a silver fruit knife.

CREALOCK walks into shot. He speaks in CHELMSFORD'S ear.

**CREALOCK:**

A strange message from Vereker, My Lord. It would seem Pulleine has a battle on his hands. No details. No intelligence.

CREALOCK resumes his place at table as CHELMSFORD turns to the others.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Mr. Milne. Kindly take your telescope to a high point Note the events at Isandhlwana.

**MILNE:**

Sir. (He leaves).

CHELMSFORD also rises and leaves the table.

219.CLOSE-UP of CREALOCK, then NOOGS. They both share a sense of foreboding.

220.CHELMSFORD walks slowly and deliberately towards an empty wagon. He

goes to the front and leaning against the front panel, lowers his head. He

wants to be alone.

221.EXT. BATTLEFIELD. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

SHOTS OF THE ZULU ARMY. They stand, chanting, beating their weapons against their shields, ready to attack.

52

222.CAMERA PANS BACK to reveal the vast enormity of the ZULU army in

comparison to the small Company of Redcoats.

223.VARIOUS CLOSE-UPS of kneeling Redcoats, poised, rifles at the ready.

Their faces reveal the terror of the reality before them.

224.There is a uniform, disciplined, victorious shout from the

**ZULU IMPI:**

ZULU iMi'i

Usutu... . Usutu!

Only three hundred yards away, the Zulu Impi advance, vastly outnumbering

their enemy ahead.

225.CLOSE-UP OF PTE. WILLIAMS. Extremely nervous, he looks to SGT.

WILLIAMS for reassurance.

SGT. WILLIAMS removes a ceremonial sash from his inside pocket and places it defiantly over his tunic. He winks at PTE. WILLIAMS who returns to face the Zulu with renewed confidence.

226.DURNFORD leads his column onto the battlefield.

Dismounting, the

Company takes up it's positions and commences to fire a volley.

DURNFORD (Still on horseback)

Steady men. Steady. Steady now.

(Addressing one of his men) Sergeant

SGT.

Yes, Sir.

**DURNFORD:**

Ride to Lord Chelmsford. Ride toward Ulundi. Tell him the battle he

longs for has started and he needs to move here quickly.

Quickly.

Yes, Colonel

SGT.

227.CAVAYE'S AND MOSTYN'S COMPANIES

The last echo of the "Stand To" is heard. RUSSELL'S men fire a rocket and

then another. They sail erratically over the heads of the ZULU IMPI. The

third, however, finds it's target and strikes at the centre of the advancing warriors.

228.STOREY and BOY SOLDIER run forward hurriedly trying to position their markers.

**STOREY:**

All right, this 'll do. (Stopping, he hands BOY SOLDIER his rifle)

Here, grab that.

53

229.The Zulus are now uncomfortably close. BOY SOLDIER stands transfixed.

**BOY SOLDIER:**

Master.

STOREY (Realizing the close proximity of the enemy)  
Oh, bugger that. (He throws the markers to the ground and  
seizing  
BOY SOLDIER'S hand runs back towards their own lines).  
230. Still fifty yards away, STOREY & BOY SOLDIER drop to the  
ground as their  
own Companies fire a series of volleys in their direction.  
As the Zulus begin to drop, STOREY & BOY SOLDIER seize the  
opportunity  
and return to their feet, again running forward.  
As another volley is fired, STOREY & BOY SOLDIER again drop to  
the  
ground.

**STOREY:**

Somebody's not watching our bloody markers. (Getting to his  
feet)  
Come on, Sunshine.  
STOREY attempts to help BOY SOLDIER to his feet. The boy's body  
is  
limp, sprawled and bleeding. He has been shot in the head.

**STOREY:**

Oh no. (Bitterly) Come all this bloody way to get shot by a  
bullet  
from Birmingham. (Shouting to his own lines) Shoot straight, you  
bastards!  
STOREY takes the boy's hat and runs quickly forward as the  
ZULUS advance  
over the inert body.  
231. The ZULU LEFT HORN is close at hand. RUSSELL works with his  
Bombardier and artillery men to set up the rockets, but they  
are losing the race  
with time.

**RUSSELL:**

Fire one. Fire two.  
RUSSELL, recognising the uselessness of his rockets at this  
point of the  
battle, draws his sword. He orders his bombardier and small  
troop of  
artillerymen to line up and face the Zulu. RUSSELL fights  
bravely, as do  
his troop. It is a few dozen men against hundreds. They are

inundated by  
the ZULU tide, which is not checked. Several ZULU fall, but  
RUSSELL and  
his troop are simply overcome and vanish as the LEFT HORN  
continues on its  
way hence, threatening to cut Dumford's column off from the  
camp.

232.PULLEINE, on horseback, spots the onslaught through his  
binoculars from  
the camp. VEREKER rides to meet him.

54

**PULLEINE:**

Reinforcement only. And ride to Stuart Smith. Let his guns cover  
Durnford for a fall back.

**VEREKER:**

Yes Sir. (Shouting) Sikali, follow me.

233.VEREKER and his SIKALI troop leave the camp. PULLEINE  
watches  
before returning to his binoculars.

234.STUART SMITH commands the airning and firing of his seven  
and twelve  
pounders. VEREKER rides up from the background.

**VEREKER:**

You give me some covering fire for Dumford on the right flank.

**STUART SMITH:**

Sir. Whole section RIGHT'

One of the big guns is brought about to fire at the line to the  
south which  
attacks DURNFORD.

**STUART SMITH:**

Fire!

235.CLOSE ON DURNFORD. He watches in appreciation as the  
big shells start to land amongst his attackers causing havoc.

**DURNFORD:**

Fire! (Recognising the hopelessness of the situation) Retreat!

236.The companies wheel about to race back to the relative  
security of a nearby  
donga.

There is sudden turmoil as a group of ZULUS hurtle over the lower edge of the donga. A fierce hand-to-hand, assegai against bayonet battle ensues as warrior after warrior rises from cover to come over the edge.

**DURNFORD:**

rides to make sure that firing against the rear line of ZULUS is maintained to prevent it too from coming forward, to secure the temporary breach.

237.SOLDIERS of CAVAYE'S COMPANY have withdrawn to the camp periphery and now fire in line with MOSTYN'S COMPANY, volley after steady volley.

COGHILL and MELVILL shout orders to the ranks.

**COGHILL:**

Choose your targets men. That's right Watch those markers.  
55

**MELVILL:**

Keep steady. You're the best shots of the Twenty-Fourth. You bunch of heathens, do it

238.CAVAYE'S COMPANY LINES

SOT. WILLIAMS walks calmly behind the front line.

SGT. WILLtAMS

Present, Arms. Watch yer markers. Watch yer markers. Adjust yer sights.

STOREY fires in the line. He searches through his pouches for rounds.

**STOREY:**

I'm running out of bleedin' ammunition. (Calling over his shoulder)

Buglen'

**BUGLER:**

What?

**STOREY:**

More ammunition. Scamper!

**BUGLER:**



I've bin twice already.

**STOREY:**

You can go three times. It won 't do you any 'arm. Go on! Run both ways.

The BUGLER runs towards the ammunition wagon, two hundred yards to

the rear. The line fire in volley, working the levers of their breech-loaders.

COGHILL (Steadying his horse along the line)

Keep shooting.

STOREY (To the soldier next to him)

Soft 'eaded buggers these. (Referring to the ammunition)

Flatten out

against the bone. Smash 'em out

STOREY'S MATE

But bullets run out.. and those bloody spears don 't

239.AMMUNITION WAGON.

BLOOMFIELD is labouring to open another tightly bound and screwed down

ammunition box while BUGLERS wait in a queue, restive.

BLOOMFIELD has to stand over the box and exert great pressure on the

screwdriver to force the oxidised screws out of their sockets.

56

BOY-PULLEN stands at the front of the queue. He is handing out one box of

ammunition at a time to each soldier.

A NATAL NATIVE reaches the head of the queue. As BOY-PULLEN goes to hand him some ammunition, BLOOMFIELD looks up and strides forward.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Pullen! You will not issue ammuntion from this wagon to any but authorised Companies. This lot can have their own. (He snatches the box back from the NATAL NATIVE).

The NATAL NATIVE doesn't understand English but he understands what

BLOOMFIELD means. He voices his objection in Zulu.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Get to your own wagon.

The BUGLER sent by STOREY is waiting impatiently.

BUGLER (Running to the front of the queue)

'ow long we gotta wait, Quartermaster?

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Get back in line, boy. Wait your turn.

**BUGLER:**

But Sir

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Move.

BLOOMFIELD returns to prizing open the boxes. BUGLER goes to return to the end of the queue but turns back to plead with BOY-PULLEN.

**BUGLER:**

Pullen?

BOY-PULLEN

Look it am 't my fault. All the tops are screwed down.

REDCOAT AT FRONT OF QUEUE

Come on. I'm waiting.

BOY-PULLEN gives the REDCOAT one box and then hurriedly hands the other to STOREY'S BUGLER.

240.FRONTLINE.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Present, Arms.

57

STOREY is beginning to panic. The ammunition situation is now becoming desperate.

**STOREY:**

Hurry up with that bloody amo

Increasing numbers are not firing. They glance back with impatience

towards the ammunition wagons, space4 five hundred yards apart, where

queues of BUGLERS and REDCOATS wait for rounds that are distributed too slowly.

241.EXT. ZULULAND. EAST OF ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

CHELMSFORD and his COLUMN move slowly and steadily from their Camp towards the West. MILNE approaches on horseback to meet

them.

**MILNE:**

My Lord, I watched the camp for twenty minutes. The haze obscures much. The tents have not been stuck. The only thing I could distinguish is the wagons have been moved on mass into the camp.

**CHELMSFORD:**

Thank you Mr. Milne. Inform Colonel Crealock, would you?

**MILNE:**

Sir.

242.CAMERA PANS away from CHELMSFORD'S COLUMN as we see an OFFICER'S POV through binoculars. Angle changes as we see a rider enter the camp and approach LT. HARFORD.

243.CHELMSFORD'S HQ.

CREALOCK steps into a wagon. He turns to address MILNE who stands outside.

**CREALOCK:**

Thank you, Milne.

MILNE salutes.

HARFORD approaches urgently. He remains on horseback and talks to

CREALOCK through the open side of the wagon.

HARFORD (Out of breath, agitated)

The camp is under attack from a large force of Zulu. Colonel Pulleine sends for help.

**CREALOCK:**

Calm yourself Mr. Haiford. Where do you come by this intelligence?

58

**HARFORD:**

Durnford's Cavaye himself rode from the camp.

**CREALOCK:**

Very well, go on.

**HARFORD:**

Colonel Harness has already turned with the artillery.

CREALOCK (The severity begins to register)

They have? I see. Ride after Lord Chelmsford and acquaint him with

your intelligence.

HARFORD has started but turns his horse about as CREALOCK

**calls:**

**CREALOCK:**

Mn Haiford. . control your passions. A professional soldier must keep cool and thoughtful in times of stress.

HARFORD looks as if he is going to explode but controls his feelings and

rides after CHELMSFORD.

244.EXT. BATTLEFIELD. ISANDHLWANA. DAY

VEREKER gallops hard as do his troop of BASUTO HORSEMEN.

CAMERA TRACKS FORWARD, following them to the donga which

DURNFORD'S COMPANIES are defending. Horses are in the donga.

The troops are firing from the outer lip of the donga.

VEREKER'S MEN provide the much needed backup.

**DURNFORD:**

Good work, Mn Vereker.

DURNFORD spurs his horse forward. The situation is still desperate.

DURNFORD (Shouting to his troops)

Prepare to fall back.

Line after line of ZULUS run forward to join the assault.

**DURNFORD:**

Move the horses!

CLOSE ON DURNFORD. He signals the next tactic as he rides across the

donga. Commands are issued down the line. The men now disengage and

run in the opposite direction from the ZULUS, leaping into the donga to find

their horses and swinging onto saddles to scramble up the far side, galloping

400 yards close to the camp to form a new defence line.

59

"The Retreat" is sounded. There is hand-to-hand, bayonets,

spears, hunting  
knives and ZULUS trying to assegai the horses.  
245.A handful of REDCOATS await the ZULU as they clamber over  
the  
ridge. Realization of the vast Zulu numbers suddenly dawns as  
their NCO  
shouts in desperation:

**NCO:**

Take the high ground  
The REDCOATS are completely overwhelmed and are soon lost  
amidst the  
ZULU onslaught.  
246.DURNFORD'S COMPANIES ride into camp. There are wounded  
lying everywhere.

**DURNFORD:**

Speed up the ammunition flow, Vereker. I'll try to hold the  
road to  
Rorke '5 Drift.  
VEREKER complies.  
247.Like a huge tidal wave, the ZULUS plough their way through  
the lines of  
REDCOATS defending the outer perimeter of the camp.  
DURNFORD (Addressing S.M. KAMBULA)  
Sergeant, come with me.  
DURNFORD and S.M. KAMBULA depart as ZULU mercilessly stab at the  
wounded already on the ground.  
248.SOT. WILLIAMS' MEN are under serious attack.  
249.The ZULUS are among the NATAL NATIVES, stabbing, stabbing,  
stabbing.  
250.The ZULU LOIN is sitting some three hundred yards from the  
battle, facing  
away from it. The ZULU LOIN, two IMPIS of seasoned warriors,  
start to  
run towards the gap through which the NATAL NATIVES, ZULUS and  
SMITH'S GUNS are streaming.  
251.Both lines of REDCOATS are attacked from the back, and the  
lines try to  
fight enemy in front and behind.  
SGT. WILLIAMS  
Fire. Fire. Close ranks. Retreat!  
SOT. WILLIAMS, pistol in hand, sees the danger to the guns.  
SGT. WILLIAMS

Save those guns.

60

SOT. WILLIAMS grabs a passing ZULU by the throat. He throws him to the ground and beats him to death. Reaching the top of a ridge, he bayonets a ZULU scrambling up the ridge towards him. Withdrawing the blade, he turns just in time to bayonet another ZULU attacking from the rear.

SGT. WILLIAMS (Shouting & looking around desperately)  
Private Williams!

PTE. WILLIAMS (From just below the ridge)

Sgt. Williams!

SGT. WILLIAMS

Come 'ere. Get yourself up 'ere. (He grabs PTE. WILLIAMS' jacket pulling him up onto the higher ground).

PTE. WILLIAMS (Struggling)

Sir.. .Ah!.. . Ah!

SGT. WILLIAMS

Comeon. Getup!

252.SMITH'S GUNS are driven away.

SGT. WILLIAMS (Helping PTE. WILLIAMS to his feet)

You 'll get a medal yet, Private Williams.

At this point SOT. WILLIAMS falls to his knees. He has been assegaied

in the back. PTE. WILLIAMS thrusts his bayonet over SOT.

**WILLIAMS:**

head, killing the offending ZULU. He turns and bayonets another running towards him.

SGT. WILLIAMS

Behind you, lad! Ah no... (He is struck again)

But it is too late. A single assegai penetrates PTE. WILLIAMS' back.

Both Sergeant and Private die together.

253.CLOSE IN on BAYELE as he leads the ZULUS onward.

254.CAMERA FOLLOWS THREE SIKALI HORSEMEN as they gallop towards BLOOMFIELD'S ammunition wagon. Another GROUP OF REDCOATS surrounds the wagon. BLOOMFIELD and BOY-PULLEN serve them with ammunition which is fired with discipline at a rapid rate.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

Wait your bloody turn. Wait your bloody turn and get in line.

(Handing a box to a young private) There you are, boy.

255.LONG SHOT of the ZULUS streaming across the plain.

61

256.Many of the REDCOATS have turned and are running for their lives. The

battleground is awash with red tunics. As the CAMERA passes over the

dead, one body suddenly leaps to his feet. It is PTE. STOREY.

He has

been playing 'dead'. Running, he makes for cover beneath a wagon. He

searches beyond the mass of ZULUS for a target. He sees the distant

INDUNAS, he aims carefully and fires.

STOREY, satisfied with the result, now kneels to the corpse of a fallen man

beside him. He finds LT. CAVAYE dead. He bends to search him for ammunition. STOREY finds one cartridge, spitting on it for

luck, he loads,

aims and fires.

A huge line of ZULUS run forward and engulf him.

257.CLOSE UP of STOREY'S torso beneath the wagon. An assegai protrudes

from his chest.

258.SWEEPING SHOT. The ZULU LOIN is streaming into the camp through the

gaps in the north and north-east corner. The end is near.

259.VEREKER and a trooper gallop towards BLOOMFIELD'S AMMUNITION WAGON.

VEREKER (To BLOOMFIELD)

Over here. Quickly.

BLOOMFIELD hands VEREKER a whole case of ammunition which he passes to the TROOPER beside him.

**VEREKER:**

Quickly, Trooper.

260.VEREKER & TROOPER approach DURNFORD'S LINES with the ammunition.

**DURNFORD:**

Well done, Vereker. Now goodbye, lad.

The pair exchange glances.

**DURNFORD:**

Go on.

After a beat, VEREKER turns his horse about and rides away.

**DURNFORD:**

Sergeant

The Sergeant takes DURNFORD'S HORSE by the bit as DURNFORD dismounts.

62

261.CLOSE UP of the ammunition case as the men frantically try to open it

with their bayonets and rifle butts.

262.CLOSE UP of DURNFORD. He is firing his pistol.

263.CAMERA finds ELDER BOER in crowd as he is assegaied in the back.

The fighting is hand-to-hand, with a few REDCOATS having rounds which

they fire with discipline under the command of DURNFORD.

264.COGHILL and MELVILL command the squad of REDCOATS who form an approximate ring around PULLEINE'S tent. Some wagons have been

pulled forward to form a partial barricade. PULLEINE stands in the centre.

A BUGLER BOY holding the Regimental Colours is close by.

COGHILL & MELVILL ride up to PULLEINE.

**PULLEINE:**

Well fought, Gentlemen. It's time to save the Colours. Get to Rorke '5 Drift. You must warn them. (To BUGLER BOY) The Colours.

PULLEINE takes the Colours from the BUGLER BOY and hands them to MELVILL.

**PULLEINE:**

Carry them to safety Mr. Melvill

**MELVILL:**

Sir.

COGHILL and MELVILL take the Colours, spur through the ZULUS and head to the gullies and ravines that lead to the river.

**PULLEINE:**

watches, moves back into his tent.



265.CLOSE UP of DURNFORD. He looks over his shoulder and then back to the ZULU before him. He makes a decision and moves away from the front line.

DURNFORD (To S.M. KAMBULA)

Sergeant! Sergeant! Take my horse. Up you go.

S.M. KAMBULA is helped up into the saddle.

**DURNFORD:**

Sergeant, you're to ride back to Natal. When you see the Bishop tell him (He pauses momentarily) that is, tell his daughter, I was obliged to remain here with my infantry. Now go. God go with you.

63

S.M. KAMBULA

I leave God Jesus with you.

He leaves as CAMERA closes in on DURNFORD'S face.

266.SMITH'S guns, at full gallop, sweep through the camp.

267.VARIOUS SHOTS of the battle. The battlefield is covered with dead

ZULU and REDCOAT bodies.

268.BLOOMFIELD'S AMMUNITION WAGON.

Some of the ZULUS have picked up burning brands from the cooking fires and

are setting the wagons on fire.

BLOOMFIELD & BOY-PULLEN jump down from their wagon, taking some cases of ammunition with them.

Move it!

I'm trying.

**BLOOMFIELD:**

BOY-PULLEN

They are only ten yards away when there is a massive explosion.

The wagon

has burst into flames and the ammunition continues to explode.

269.CLOSE UP of BLOOMFIELD. He is lying face down on the ground in a

state of shock. He slowly turns his head and we see the bloody corpse of

BOY-PULLEN. BLOOMFIELD'S face grimaces as he is stabbed in the back

by an unseen assailant. His face falls into the dirt.

270.INT. PULLEINE'SH.Q.TENT. DAY.

PULLEINE is sitting inside his tent. He is writing a letter to his wife. There is a pistol on the table.

BAYELE enters the tent. PULLEINE immediately picks up his pistol and aims at BAYELE. There is a moment's hesitation from both.

**PULLEINE:**

drops his pistol to one side inviting BAYELE to kill him.

BAYELE seizes

the moment and with one forward fatal thrust, stabs PULLEINE in the heart.

PULLEINE slumps onto the desk as BAYELE leaves without remorse.

271.LONG PAN SHOT of MELVILL & COGHILL as they take the Colours out of the camp.

272.VEREKER is nearby as a ZULU leaps out, bringing MELVILL & his horse

to the ground.

64

VEREKER shoots the ZULU.

MELVILL gets up, hands the Colours to COGHILL and gets back up onto

his horse.

MELVILL (To COGHILL, indicating the Colours)

Give them to me. (COGHILL does so) Come on. Come on!

They spur onward, COGHILL using his t)istol as they do so.

273.MOVING SHOT. A gun carriage charges over the slope. As it does so,

the rear gunner is shot and the gun itself becomes disengaged from the rest

of the carriage tumbling down the slope.

274.GUN CARRIAGE IN FOREGROUND. VEREKER, COGHILL &

MELVILL ride over this obstacle (SLOW MOTION) the Colours aloft.

275.EXT. BATTLEFIELD. ISANDHLWANA. DAY.

HIGH VIEW. DURNFORD'S South-East defence position. ZOOM forward to show the first refugees behind from the camp breaking out on the South,

crossing into the ravine; their line of exit the same as the guns, defended by

DURNFORD' S troops.

276.CLOSE UP of DURNFORD. He loads his pistol and turning full circle,

realizes that he and his troops are surrounded. Jumping up onto an ammunition wagon, he starts to target the approaching ZULUS, now only ten yards away. He uses all six shots, throws his pistol to one side and picks up a discarded assegai from the wagon. As he frantically tries to batter a ZULU warrior, another ZULU aims a rifle straight at him. There is a single shot. DURNFORD, claspng the shoulder of his disabled left arm, falls off the ammunition wagon and tumbles down the ravine, landing at the bottom with a painful thud. Out of breath, he struggles to sit upright, his back against the muddy bank of the ravine. A ZULU appears at the top of the ravine. Standing on top of the ammunition wagon, he throws his assegai down at the body below. It finds it's target, piercing DURNFORD in the chest. Short of breath, he makes a vain attempt at removing the weapon but his efforts are futile. He draws his last breath and dies.

277.EXT. FUGITIVE'S RAVINE. DAY.

COGHILL, MELVILL & VEREKER desperately fighting to control their horses scrambling down the hazardous rocky terrain - quarry to the pursuing relentless ZULUS behind them. REDCOATS on foot are overtaken and dispatched with stabbing assegais.

278.EXT. RIVER BANK OPPOSITE RORKE'S DRIFT.

65

COGHILL, MELVILL & VEREKER urge their horses onward, galloping into the river.

Several ZULUS remain on the bank, shooting rifles and throwing assegais into the water.

One ZULU jumps into the water and attempts to swim after them. VEREKER is the first to reach the opposite bank. The other two have

become separated from their horses. VEREKER'S is close by.

Scrambling

up the bank, VEREKER turns to COGHILL & MELVILL who are still

in the  
water.

**VEREKER:**

For God's sake, hold them back! I'll get the horses.  
COGHILL is the next to reach the bank. He turns back to MELVILL  
who is  
struggling in the water with the Colours.

**COGHILL:**

It's alright It's alright.  
He helps MELVILL up onto the bank as VEREKER mounts his horse.  
VEREKER rides off in pursuit of the other two horses.  
There is a single rifle shot, which brings VEREKER'S horse to  
the ground.  
In the background we see a vast number of ZULUS engulf COGHILL  
&  
MELVILL. MELVILL attempts to fight with his sword but he is  
overwhelmed.  
There is an awful piercing scream and the two men disappear.  
279.INTERCUT BETWEEN VEREKER & GROUP OF ZULUS.  
VEREKER lies on the ground, his left leg trapped beneath the  
body of his  
horse. He sees the ZULUS take up the Colours as they run up to  
the high  
ground, revealing COGHILL & MELVILL' S dead bodies in the  
FOREGROUND.  
VEREKER is breathing uneasily. He watches with amazement as the

**ZULUS:**

hold the Colours aloft mockingly. Some ZULUS are wearing their  
purloined  
Redcoat uniforms, they whoop and wail exultantly.  
VEREKER takes his time. He aims his rifle at the ZULU carrying  
the  
Colours.  
The shot kills the ZULU and the Colours fall (SLOW MOTION)  
down, down  
into the river.  
Relieved, VEREKER' S head falls to the sandy bank.  
280.The Colours float into CLOSE UP.  
66  
281.EXT. PULLEINE'S CAMP. ISANDHLWANA. DUSK.  
CHELMSFORD and his ESCORT ride into the camp. The air is full

of smoke

and the crackling of fire can still be heard. A dead soldier who has been tied to a post and disembowelled is CENTRE SCREEN.

The wind begins to howl as CAMERA follows CHELMSFORD into the centre of the camp. He dismounts. Very slowly he removes his helmet.

CLOSE UP of HARFORD. A solitary tear trickles down his cheek as he

surveys the area with disbelief.

Stationary, CHELMSFORD looks around him. Then very slowly and deliberately he walks forward towards the CAMERA.

CAMERA PANS to reveal CREALOCK, still on horseback, in the background. He rides into focus.

**CREALOCK:**

Excuse me, My LorJ There '5 something I must convey to you. I rode a little way along the track to Rorke '5 Drift. The sky above

is red with fire (Pause). Your Orders, My Lord? Do we move to the

Drift?

CHELMSFORD does not answer. He continues to walk forward, expressionless.

TIGHT CLOSE UP. CHELMSFORD lowers his head, his eyes still front.

282.CROSS FADE to blood red sunset. Script is superimposed: The Battle of Isandhlwana was recorded in history as the worst defeat ever inflicted on a modern army by native troops.

In Parliament, upon the downfall of his government, British Prime Minister, Benjamin

Disraeli, asked the question:

"Who are these Zulus, who are these remarkable people who defeat our generals,

convert our bishops and who on this day have put an end to a great dynasty?"

ZULU singing and chanting crescendos.

**THE END:**