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The Mhlwazini Cave faunal sample therefore reflects an assemblage that has all the characteristics of severe post-depositional attrition. This is reflected in the skeletal parts representation and can be largely attributed to the high percentage of burnt bone, which is very friable, and to trampling.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A glimpse of colonial life through Zulu eyes: 19th century engraved

cattle horns from Natal

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ABSTRACT

Nineteenth century engravings on cattle horns are described for the first ttme. They in clude some of

the earliest known narrative representational work by Zulu artists who thus give us a g limpse of the

alien and dominant colonial way of life.

INTRODUCTION

The growing interest in the achievement of Black artists in southern Africa has, among other things, caused a renewal of interest in local ethnological collections. Following this trend, the present paper describes material accessioned a century ago and on display at the Natal Museum for decades but which remained unpublished and therefore known only to a relatively small public.

By contrast with earlier views, Nettleton (1988 1989) and Klopper (1989) have recently argued that there was little if any figurative work among the Zulu before the impact of the colonial economic system during the nineteenth century. Be that as it may, figurative items, attributed to the Zulu began to reach museums in Europe and later South Africa from about the 1870s. However these items, mainly of wood and carved in the round, tend to be stereotypical representations (Nettleton 1989) which do not reflect the individual artistsâ\200\231 point of view. The

gravings described below are therefore of particular interest. Indeed the only comparable item of 19th century Zulu workmanship that I have been able to trace is a gourd snuff-box said to have been engraved by one of King Dingane a^200^231s (1828-1840) officials who visited Cape Town, to give the King an idea of colonial life there (Davison 1988).

After communication with a number of other museums I have been unable to trace any other engraved Zulu items of the period. The horns together with the gourd therefore appear to be the earliest, and perhaps the only surviving items

from the 19th century, depicting colonial life as seen from a Zulu viewpoint.

PROVENANCE

Most collections of the last century are woefully short on documentation and this certainly applies in the present instance. There are a total of five horns, four of which comprise two pairs that are fitted on to their original horn cores and bosses, though they can readily be removed. The fifth is a single horn without core (Fig. 1).

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Fig. 1. ia horns assembled. Catalogue numbers from the top 176A, 176, 177. Length of 17 6 is 32m

Natal Museum catalogue information is as follows:

For the two pairs: Nos 176 and 176A. $\hat{a}200\230$ Native engraving on horns of Africander Ox, Natal. $\hat{a}200\231$ Source $\hat{a}200\230$ Mr Wyndham 1901 $\hat{a}200\231$.

For the single horn: No 177. \hat{a} 00\230Native engraved horn, Natal. \hat{a} 200\231 Source \hat{a} \200\230Sir. T. Shepstone 1901 \hat{a} \200\231.

Characteristically of the period, more attention is given to the donors, in these cases both prominent officials of the Natal Colony, than to the artists, who remain anonymous. The only specific information concerning 176 and 176A, that they are horns of Africander oxen, is probably incorrect as 176A shows the $\hat{a}\200\230$ lyre $\hat{a}\200\231$ shape typical of Nguni cattle (Fig. 1).

In an attempt to obtain further provenance information we looked into the origin of the Natal Museum collection. The museum itself was opened in 1904 and so apparently was the Ethnology catalogue. The first 323 items are either undated or have a mixture of dates varying from 1884 to 1904. Thereafter items are in chronological order starting from a block-dated 1904. What then is the significance of the 1901 date for the horns?

On its establishment the Natal Museum inherited substantial collections from its progenitor, the Natal Society, founded in 1851. The horns are included in a list of specimens mentioned in the Museumâ\200\231s first annual report, that for 1904, with the same information given above. It therefore seems virtually certain that the

horns were part of the Natal Society collection, although no proof of this has been found.

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Further clues as to the age of the horns can be gleaned from the owner $\hat{a}\200\231s$ names. Sir T. Shepstone, Secretary for Native Affairs from 1856 to 1876 died in 1893. It is unlikely that this donation would have reached the collection much after this date, while it may well have been made during his lifetime.

The â\200\230Mr Wyndhamâ\200\231 is surely A. S. Windham (sometimes misspelt as Wyndham), another-prominent Natal official who, amongst other things, was a judge, and the first officer to command the Greytown (later Umvoti) Mounted Rifles, established 1864 (Verbeek 1987). As an acting judge of the Natal Native High Court 1879-1883 he would certainly have known Shepstone well. But more significantly he served on the Natal Society Museum Committee 1883-1890 (Natal Society a) for a time as Chairman (Natal Society b), and also as Vice-President of the Society itself (Natal Society c). His last mention in the minute book is for January 1890-and it is about this time that he returned to live in Britain where he died in 1909. His horns donation, as with others he made that are mentioned in the surviving records, would surely have been made during his term of service to the Natal Society and certainly before his return to Britain.

It is therefore probable that all five horns reached the Natal Society collection by the late 1880s or early 1890s if not earlier. The catalogue date 1901 is probably misleading, it could refer to some stage of the transfer process from Natal Society to Natal Museum.

THE ENGRAVINGS

Some of the horns (176A and 177) had been treated with a varnish which had

darkened to the extent of partly obscuring the designs. This was successfully removed with small swabs of cotton wool soaked in 75 % alcohol. The remaining pair of horns (176) did not respond to cleaning and therefore these engravings do not show up as clearly.

The artists evidently prepared the horns by scraping them to a fairly smooth shiny surface. Striations and chatter marks from this process are still visible. The engraving must have been done with a fine sharp blade following which a black substance, probably soot, was applied to bring out the engraved lines. The artists were remarkably sure-handed and there are few errors. Some of the fine detail really needs magnification to be appreciated.

Despite the link between Shepstone and Windham, as mentioned above, it seems that two different artists were involved. Some reasons for this conclusion are the different patterns of composition $200\224$ Shepstone $200\231$ S essentially parallel and

Windhamâ\200\231s perpendicular to the hornsâ\200\231 axesâ\200\224and detailed differences in the en-

graving technique and style of certain items, for example the shields. The subject matter, as described below, also suggests two different artists.

The composition of Catalogue Number 177, the Shepstone donation, divides the horn in two, parallel to the axis. In order to see the whole work it is necessary to have the tip of the horn to the left for one side (Fig. 2) and to the right for the other (Fig. 3), to avoid one side being upside down. Two fine lines define the lower rows of composition on each side. Because of the split composition it has been possible to trace the entire engravings in two parts, although there is some

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- Fig. 3. No 177. Tracing of the other half of the engravings.

pa ae in the relative positioning of some of the individual representations igs 2-3).

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The engravings inludefwo chorched numerous Qther buildings, rows of Zulu.

soldiers with shields, men in European dress, some of which are mounted, two cattle, two antelope, fish and a wheel. The emphases seem to be colonial military and Christian. In Fig. 2 the rows of shield-bearing soldiers could represent soldiers of the Zulu Kingdom but their juxtaposition with rows of single storey buildings rather suggests a colonial context. This is evidently the case in Fig. 4 where two European soldiers with rifles are being addressed or perhaps inspected by a bearded European civilian, the group flanked by African soldiers. The scene strongly suggests an African corps with European officers such as the Natal Native Contingent which was raised during the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879.

The elaborate church buildings, one witha fish beside it, hints that the artist was Christian. The taboo against eating fish was strongly held by most Nguni-speaking people in the nineteenth century (Krige 1950). It therefore seems likely that the fish are included as Christian symbols rather than as a potential source of food. Likewise the Black Wildebeest (Fig. 3, far left) was presumably taken from the Natal Colonyâ\200\231s coat of arms, for the animals themselves were rare if not absent from Natal by this time (Sclater/& Thomas 1894, Von Richter 1971).

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Fig. 4. No 177. Detail of Fig. 3 showing the colonial officials and African soldiers.

The two pairs of horns donated by Windham, Nos 176 and 176A, present a rather different aesthetic statement. They were evidently intended to be viewed each as a pair set on the remaining part of the skull (Fig. 1), although in order to see all the detail it is far easier to detach each horn so that it can be individually turned around in the viewerâ\200\231s hands. The composition consists of rows of engraved figures, one above the other, extending right around the horn. To â\200\230readâ

these rows it is therefore necessary to rotate each horn about its long axis (Fig. 5). In most instances the rows of figures stand on a band decorated with horizontal or diagonal blocks; the bands accentuating the pattern of composition.

With the horns in place on their skulls and the whole placed on a flat surface (as in Fig. 1) a particular portion of the composition is readily visible. This consists mainly of repetitive rows of standing or marching British soldiers (Fig. 5). The artist clearly intended it this way although the more interesting and varied engravings are on the sides and under-surface. Did the artist perhaps have in mind the symbolic link between cattle and the classic Zulu military formation?

For a number of reasons it has been impractical to reproduce the whole engraved surface of these horns. Among the reasons are problems of scale, inevitable distortion, and the sheer amount of work involved. They do however contain a great deal of repetition, particularly in the rows of standing soldiers. I have therefore selected for reproduction all the unique panels together with an example of each type of repetitive row. In some cases details are shown by photographs but for the larger or less clear parts drawings are needed. These have been traced at a scale of 150% from a series of photographic negatives and then checked against the original engraving.

Fig. 5. No 176A. Windhamâ\200\231s donation. Four views of the left horn in rotation.

[The subject-matter is almost entirely military, including both actual fighting scenes as well as military displays. The few civilian figures, including women and children, are clearly shown in some or other interaction with the military. The two pairs of horns have a great deal in common and were clearly engraved by the same artist.

Most impressive of the two is the large lyre-shaped pair, No 176A. The left horn of this pair has, as its basal two rows, an artillery theme where the gun and its limber is drawn by three pairs of horses (Figs 5-6). Just above the gun is a rowing boat. Both the oarsmen and the artillerymen are distinguished from all the other British military figures on the two pairs of horns in that they wear navaltype caps. This is of particular interest as it has a bearing on the age of the engravings. For it was during the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 that a Naval Brigade from HMS Active supplied both a detachment of Royal Marines and an artillery battery to supplement the available Royal Artillery in Natal (Hall 1979). It seems that this is what the artist depicted. The Naval Brigade would have been involved with river crossings especially on the Thukela, hence the rowing boat. At no other time during the nineteenth century were there Royal Marines and a naval detachment of artillery campaigning against the Zulu. Therefore the engravings must have been made at this time or at least to depict the Anglo-Zulu War rather than any other period of unrest in the colony.

Immediately above the artillery scene is a typical row of British soldiers with the helmets of the period (Fig. 7). Here as elsewhere the soldiers are shown

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Fig. 6. No 176A left: Artillery-and boaimen apparently depicting the Naval Brigade in the Anglo-

Zulu War of 1879.

Fig. 7. No 176A left. Typical row of helmeted and bearded British infantry.

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Fig. 8. No 176A left. Typical row of Zulu soldiers.

| bearded, a concession which the army allowed the men on campaigns. There are eleven such rows comprising the decoration on one side of the horn (Fig. 5). On the opposite side are rows of Zulu soldiers, typical again of both pairs of horns

(Fig. 8). The Zulu faces and bodies are hatched to denote a darker skin. At either ends of the rows are izinduna (officers) with beards, more elaborate attire and, for those to the right, the married menâ\200\231s isicoco (headring). The latter confront

British soldiers who carry rifles (Fig. 9) or their officers holding swords (Fig. 10).

On the other side of the horn is a more elaborate scene of conflict where the

fallen of both sides lie among their weapons and equipment (Fig. 11). A mounted

eads his prone riflemen, some of whom have their sword bayonets g the end of some of the spears is a puzzle.

The right horn of the 176A pair has a broadly similar composition but with some detailed differences. The two basal rows show another conflict scene (Fig. 12) where, to the left, fallen Zulu are shown between prone British riflemen and Zulu soldiers whose leaders brandish amawisa (knobkerries). To the left two izinduna protect a group of five figures consisting of what appears to be three girls beneath a married woman with isicholo headdress, infant on her back and staff in one hand.

Immediately above is one of the most interesting scenes, a military band apparently on parade (Fig. 13). It is led by an officer on horseback, his sword drawn in the saluting position suggestive of a march past. The band plays clarinets, brass and drums; the bass drummer even has his leopard skin, while an extra drum is

Fig. 9. No 176A left. Zulu induna with isicoco (headring) and British riflemen.

Fig. 10. No 176A left.

Zulu induna and British officer with sword.

Fig. 11.

MAGGS: ENGRAVED CATTLE HORNS

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No 176A left. Conflict between British riflemen, some with fixed bayonets, and Zulu. The leading Zulu have shoulder tassels and unexplained tassels at the butt end of their spe

ars.

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Fig. 13. No 176A right. Military band with mounted officer saluting.

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drawn around the blemish caused by an insect hole in the horn. Several adjacent rows of infantrymen have fixed bayonets and by contrast with the left horn the majority wear the Glengarry caps of the Scottish regiments (Fig. 14). \hat{a}

The upper half of the horn resembles the left horn with the rows of Zulu and British meeting in two scenes of conflict. The same elements occur again but are arranged indifferent ways. The short rifles used by the British (Fig. 15) hint at the carbines tarried by; for example, the mounted infantry. However, long and short $Tiff\tilde{A}@s\hat{a}\200\231Seem$ to be interspersed through the composition, so the length seems

to be more an artistic response to available space. Fig. 16 is equivalent to Fig. 11 on the left horn but it includes the dismembered body of a Zulu soldier, such as was recorded in Anglo-Zulu War sources, as a result of artillery fire.

The remaining pair of horns, No 176, is somewhat simpler, though each has some interesting sections. The left horn, while military in theme has no hint of actual warfare. The mood is rather of military display and even interaction with the ladies of the community. At the base of the horn, and tucked out of sight underneath it when assembled, is a romantic miniature of a British soldier embracing a lady (Fig. 17). Just above and among the marching columns are some equestrian figures: a lady apparently riding side-saddle-and two trick riders, one balancing on his head (Fig. 18). Mounted regiments would hol $a\geq 0$ 0 and a>02 because the local communities at which exuberant exhibition of riding ski ch as those depicted here sometimes led to hospital cases.

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Fig. 14. No 176A right. Typical row of infantry in the Glengarry caps of the Scottish r egiments.

Fig. 15. No 176A right. Another conflic to depict carbines.

t scene; the short rifles may be for artistic reasons rather than

MAGGS: ENGRAVED CATTLE HORNS 157

Fig. 16. No 176A right. Conflict scene in which the dismembered body probably reflects artillery fire as mentioned in contemporary sources.

Occupying the middle section of the horn is another artillery group where the guns are drawn by four pairs.of horses (Fig. 19). Here it seems we are dealing with the Royal Artillery as distinct from the Naval Brigade of Fig. 6. Although

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the guns cannot be identified for certain, th $\tilde{\mathbb{A}}$ could be the standard 9 pr guns which had a foresight and which as muzzle-loaders required a ramrod as held by the man on the gun carriage (Hall 1979). This scene is evidently a public occasion to judge by the two ladies at the top left who are waving their hands. More difficult to explain is the winged female figure, presumably inspired by the Victorian concept of an angel. Among the artillery is a small group of soldiers apparently dancing to a French horn (Fig. 20), the leading figure with a telescope to his eye. The remaining engravings are the typical rows of British infantry.

Finally, the right horn of the 176 pair reverts to the conflict theme for its basal half. Here kneeling British riflemen fire on the standing rows of Zulu, to the right

Fig. 17. No 176 left. Romantic cameo of British soldier and lady.

are Zulu casualties and British officers with swords (Fig. 21). The upper row of this section, though damaged by insects, is of interest in that it shows each of the Zulu soldiers armed with three weapons (Fig. 22). This is probably closer to the true picture than the single weapon shown elsewhere on the horns. The upper half of this horn has the usual rows of British infantry.

DISCUSSION

Since we have no information on the artists we can do little more than speculate as to their relationships with colonial Natal. However, the content of the engravings, as described above, does offer some clues. As already mentioned, it seems likely that the artist of Shepstoneâ\200\231s donation was a Christian, whereas the

other artist gives no such hints, with the possible exception of the $\hat{a}\200\230$ angelâ $\200\231$

(Fig. 19). Both were clearly in a position te bser ape of colonial life including military displays. They would therefor e visited if not lived in one of the Colonyâ\200\231s main towns. It is likely that both were colonial residents and not from $^{\rm m}$

the Zulu kingdom. The artist of Windhamâ $\200\231s$ donation could well have played a part on the Imperial side in the Anglo-Zulu campaign.

The rarity of these engraved items shows that this means of expression was not a part of conventional nineteenth-century Zulu craftwork, which did however embrace the use of horn in other ways. Cattle and other horns were used for a wide variety of artefacts including medical equipment, musical instruments, ornaments, cannabis smoking pipes, snuff-boxes and snuff-spoons (Davison 1976).

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Fig. 18. No 176 left. Lady riding side-saddle and two trick riders as seen at gymkhanas

The two latter items in particular were often finely crafted and decorated and they

were made by specialists. The decoration on snuff-speons frequently took the

form of engraved lines or circles, with a dark substance rubbed in to make the

design stand out, as is the case of the engraved horns. Thus the eee we for the horns were already known to traditional Zulu specialists. o. nl were able to develop this skill into a representational form akin ee naw: s what extent this figurative development was influenced by the abundanc

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Fig. 19. No 176 left. Royal Artillery as distinct from the Naval Brigade of Fig. 6, overlooked by ladies and an a^200^230 angela 200^231 .

Fig. 20. No 176 left. Dancing soldiers with French horn and telescope.

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Fig. 22. No 176 right. The three weapons carried by each soldier in meee te hele enwadn es

torically than the single weapon held by the Zulu figures elsew

graphic representations as part of the culture of colonial Natal, is uncertain. However, the patronage of important colonial officials may well have had an effect in encouraging and influencing it. Likewise the royal Zulu patronage seems to have supplied a stimulus for the engraved gourd (Davison 1988) if the story of its provenance is correct.

While narrative representational work was evidently rare for nineteenth-century Zulu craftsmen, work of a somewhat similar vein has survived from other parts of Africa, including southern Africa, where the local communities were impacted and became dominated by the colonial presence. Such depictions were carved, engraved, burnt or painted on a variety of surfaces, often gourds or sticks

/and even walls. As has been pointed out elsewhere (eg. Davison 1988), the subject-matter often suggests that the artists were striving to come to terms with the alien and dominant colonial culture. There are touches of humour, for

example, over the fussy elaboration of Victorian women $\hat{a} \geq 00 \leq 31$ s attire. But in particular

there is a preoccupation with the trappings of colonial power: soldiers and police in uniform, firearms, horses, wagons, buildings and, in the present case with the ultimate weapon of its time \hat{a} 200\224artillery. It is within this genre of figurative a rt as a

response to the colonial presence that the engraved horns from Natal can best be understood.

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Natal Mus. J. Humanities Vol.2 Pages 163-181

The Methleys of the Natal Midlands: the making of a colonial gentry family

by

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ABSTRACT

i i i i in the

: rovides a case study in which current theories of Rick Theale thine Maule ie deat ot ela ,of one particular Natal settler family; the Methleys. The ris ea. Ete ae cussed in relation to their utilisation of pre-existing ga and r: ae Soe in England a d Natal to establish and sustain their economic activities. The paper a

nabs aoe of the factors which distinguish the rise of ee bid vi i ification i i various writers in o 1 Pica is eae pe Se oF the Methiey Family Papers in the Howick Museum. texts. XN. \setminus

INTRODUCTION

The Methley Family Papers are a priceless source of ae on a o i d on the development of the material cu history of the Natal gentry an ee ea : i lections of private papers t p colonyâ\200\231s white settlers. Col Pee adie, are in the South African context anc Family Papers are more than simply a source of information, they are aaah an in their own right. The Methleys not only have a oe â\200\234 rs ites they were an important family of Natal notables during a ue ~ scsi tuhcte strategically placed landholdings and a oo a i 1 talâ\200\231s eco:

/ be seen as important developments in Na
The tise of the Methleys to social prominence offers a ene eee i i ion i lonial Natal. This process has a in the process of gentrification in co Wie eacoscind eerste

litical development of the colony an See eda dominant role in the politics of responsible government after cae bulk of the Methley Family Papers were a a eae Nocvart in August 1984 of Mr Willou by the family after the death in ! Bird ots i Laidman Methley (hereafter re Methley, the son of Willoughby : a i Erasmus Methley (hereafter ras Willoughby), and grandson of James ee ee ee founder of the Natal Methley family. e olde! ghb) Code letters were donated in 1985 and his as pence ca ick Museum. The author, in co i and subsequently donated to the Howic ee ee ith the staff of the Howick Museum, arranged a : i ae to a classification system based on both archival ai poe principles (Table 1), the technical aspects of which have been descri

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Maree Mies of the Methley Family Papers relate to the activities of James and

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