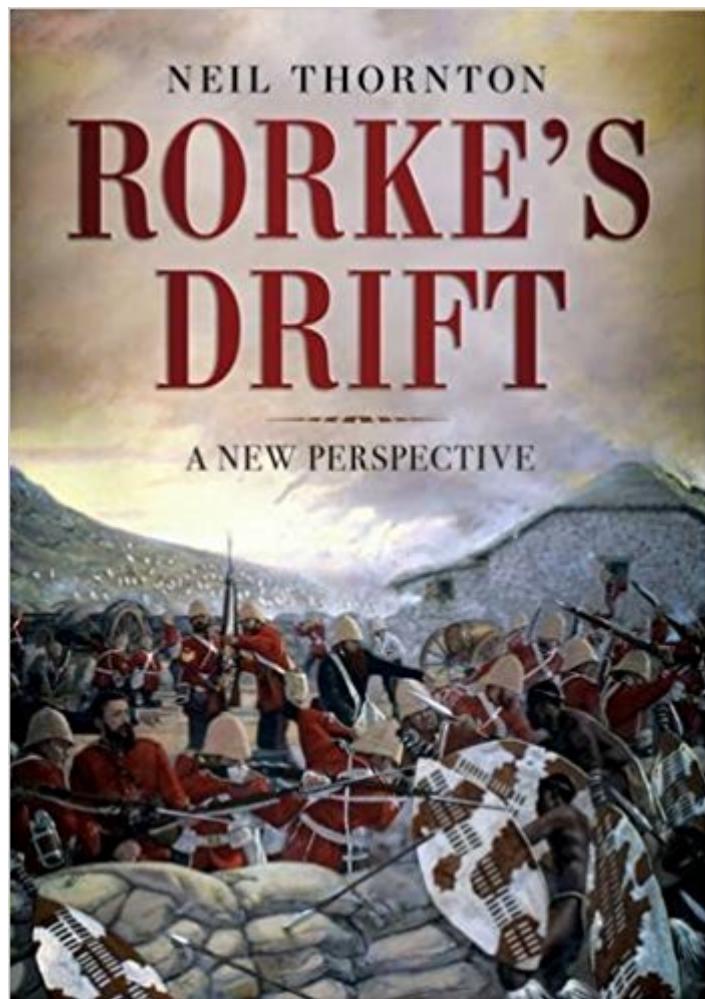


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Rorke's Drift: A New Perspective



Synopsis

The battle of Rorke's Drift is established in history as one of Britain's most incredible actions where approximately 155 defenders held off a Zulu force of over 4,000 warriors, in a savage, bloody conflict with no quarter given by either side. The battle led to a display of incredible fortitude, courage and tenacity resulting in mutual respect between British red coat and Zulu warrior. Using a vast array of primary accounts, including lesser known, and previously unpublished examples, the author describes the battle in vivid detail. The actions of each of the 11 Victoria Cross recipients are looked at in detail, together with those men who were awarded the DCM. Illustrated with previously unpublished artwork, "Rorke's Drift: A New Perspective" is a gripping account, which questions what is commonly believed to be the true interpretation of the hospital fighting. A truly compelling read, packed with numerous footnotes and sources, appealing to both the casual reader and the serious historian.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This book is highly recommended for its reliance on documentation and first-hand accounts, for the author's captivating writing style, and for the excellent illustrations that help the reader to better picture the fighting in and around the compound." (IPMS/USA)
"Thornton's vivid narrative is complemented by illustrations, including some said to be previously unpublished. This hardcover book should hold appeal to anyone from casual readers to serious historians or collectors interested in recreating the valiant defense of Rorke's Drift in miniature." (Toy Soldier & Model Figure)

Through his research, Neil Thornton has contributed to various military publications. He has written articles on a diverse range of British military history and holds workshops for schools, historical groups and the Armed Forces. Neil also involves himself in a variety of military projects. He was born in 1979 and lives in Runcorn, Cheshire with his wife and daughter. He works in the chemical industry.

Mr. Thornton offers a new, well-written and exciting retelling of a small British detachment's successful defense against thousands of Zulu warriors. In addition , the author makes a new appraisal of some of the participants. He particularly thinks Lieutenants Chard and Bromhead have been underrated. Mr. Thornton's opinions deserve consideration, but they are not compelling. For example, he notes there is evidence that Bromhead was prepared to meet the Zulus in the open! Nevertheless, this little book is too exciting to miss.

Great book on subject, and I have read them all

I understand that this 19th century military engagement has been written about so many times that one might be forgiven for a "ho hum" response to another telling of Rorke's Drift, Natal Province 1879. Do so at personal loss as this is really a "New Perspective" as claimed by author, Neil Thornton. This history boasts a solid bibliography including period newspapers and journals. Even more admirable, the footnotes are annotated. Eschewing footnotes, indicates an author is satisfied attracting "general readers"only and not including those with a more than casual interest in the subject. There are included handsome color plates featuring contemporary portrayals of the battle and most importantly, computer generated views of inside the compound and hospital. The author's well constructed conclusions concerning the hospital defense are sound. There is a detailed chapter devoted to the gallantry recipients not only including VC winners but also those awarded the DCM. Beyond this there are well told incidents of bravery and sacrifice. One sees a gallant Zulu inDuna with a plume headdress leading a charge three times into the hail of fire. There is Reverend George "Ammunition" Smith while handing out ammunition to his "charges" shouting, "Don't swear men don't swear.. but shoot them boys,shoot them." The author's chapter "Defender Accounts", includes from The Natal Witness, dated January 21st 1961, an amusing conversation with one Private Thomas Buckley. This old Irish soldier of B Company the 2/24th Warwickshire must have surely been one of the last of the surviving "Braves" that wore the "Red Coat" on January 22-23. This

volume I highly recommend Bill McVey

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