



# Discovering the Battlefields of the Anglo-Zulu War

*Ken Gillings*

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Interest in KwaZulu-Natal's battlefields – especially those of the Anglo-Zulu War – has soared since the film Zulu first screened in 1964, followed by Zulu Dawn in 1979 (the centenary of the Anglo-Zulu War).

During the centenary, the famous battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift were made 'tourist-friendly' by the then Natal Provincial Administration and controls were put in place by the heritage authorities to prevent relics from being plundered. Supported by effective marketing from the Battlefield Route Association and the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Tourism Authority, the battlefields have become a must-see. Indeed, Rorke's Drift has become a tourist icon.

Specialist battlefield guides have been trained and are considered to be among the best in the world. New hotels and lodges have been built with battlefield tourism resulting in the creation of an estimated 7,500 permanent jobs in what is termed the Battlefield Region. There are, of course, many more Anglo-Zulu War sites to be seen: Discovering the Battlefields will enable visitors to find them and to read an account that is not too lengthy yet has sufficient content to bring it to life. GPS coordinates will enable those wishing to undertake a journey of exploration. The book is also a useful training manual for prospective battlefield guides.

Above all, however, the author shares his knowledge gleaned from over 50 years of researching the Anglo-Zulu War. He has blended firsthand accounts passed on from participants on both sides to subsequent generations with official or newly researched information that has become available in recent years. It is written in a style that is neither technical nor dramatic, is extensively illustrated with photographs of personalities and places and includes comprehensive maps of all the battle sites.

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