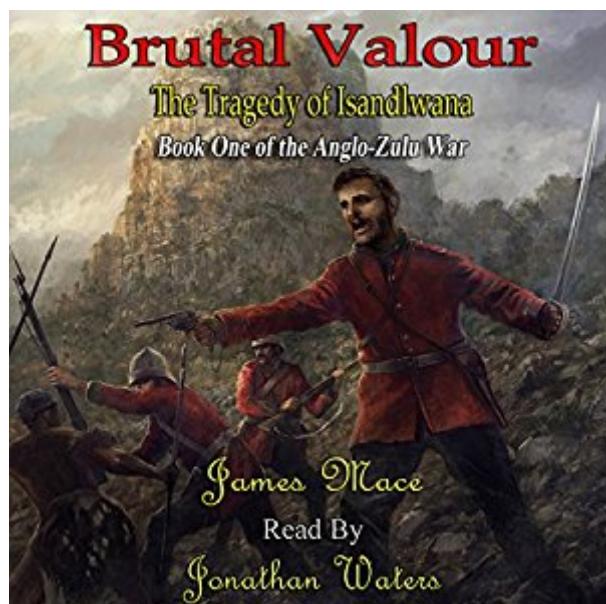


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Brutal Valour: The Tragedy Of Isandlwana: The Anglo-Zulu War, Book 1



Synopsis

It is December 1878, and war looms on the horizon in South Africa. British high commissioner Sir Henry Bartle-Frere seeks to dismantle the powerful neighboring kingdom of the Zulus and uses an incursion along the disputed border as his justification for war. He issues an impossible ultimatum to the Zulu king, Cetshwayo, demanding he disband his armies and pay massive reparations. With a heavy heart, the king prepares his nation for war against their former allies. Leading the invasion is Lieutenant General Sir Frederic Thesiger, Baron Chelmsford, a highly experienced officer fresh off a decisive triumph over the neighboring Xhosa tribes. He and Frere are convinced that a quick victory over the Zulus will negate any repercussions from the home government for launching what is, in essence, an illegal war. Recently arrived to South Africa are newly recruited privates Arthur Wilkinson and Richard Lowe, members of C Company, 1/24th Regiment of Foot under the venerable Captain Reginald Younghusband. Eager for adventure, they are prepared to do their duty both for the empire and for their friends. As Frere's ultimatum expires, the army of British redcoats and allied African auxiliaries crosses the uMzinyathi River at Rorke's Drift into Zululand. Ten days later the British and Zulus will meet their destiny at the base of a mountain called Isandlwana.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This battle has always been of great interest to me so I read whatever I can on the battle and, of course, watch both of the old films, Zulu (1964) and Zulu Dawn (1979), at least yearly (btw great films!). James Mace gives one a education on the battle while also being entertain by his delightful story. It's a true and sad tale of politics and power, empire and arrogance. And, what is more

shameful is the cover up by Queen Victoria and Prime Minister Disraeli afterwards. It was a book that I didn't want to end and wanted to hear more and more details of the people involved. It leaves one with a bad taste for many who should have been recognized such as Capt. Younghusband were not while those that were, for example Coghill and Melvill, received much more than their due and those villains that should have been held responsible, namely Lord Chelmsford...well, nothing happened to him due to his position. It's an excellent read and even 100+ years later the questions and debates continue. You will definitely be entertained...and educated.

James rekindled my long lasting fascination with the Zulu Wars. From the movies "Zulu" and later "Zulu Dawn" the period was always fascinating to me from a military perspective. James attacked the subject with his usual tough and gritty soldiers perspective. Whether you were a Roman Legionary or a Modern Day Soldier, he has a way of capturing the soldiers way. His historical detail is always spot-on. He weaves the story between both sides of the conflict effortlessly. The book was a joy to read and it's now peaked my interest to read further on the subject and to await the next two books in the series. To understand a soldiers life...you have to have been one. From one soldier to another....keep writing these types of books. A great read and highly recommended.

Brutal Valour is a well written book that tells history in the way it actually happened. It is clearly based on careful research that has been enriched with creative story telling. It reminds me of another James whose work I always enjoy — Michener. It is a sad story of an illegal and shameful war that led to terrible loss of life; a disaster brought on by the arrogance and incompetence of a few leaders who squandered the discipline and courage of brave warriors on both sides. Original photographs, maps and drawings throughout the book add an interesting background. On my Kindle version, there was plenty of resolution to zoom in for good detail.

This famous story is told through the eyes of real participants and the fictional guys who tell it down and dirty. Well researched and exciting to read. Those who love stories of British soldiers expanding the empire and fighting to make England have a bigger empire will love this. It is a battle and war that should never have happened, but it did and it makes a great story. James Mace has done it well. It is for history lovers and those who thrive reading about the heroism of other men. I look forward to reading the second book, which is about the famous British Army stand at Rorke's Drift.

This book was a great read first off. If you are a fan of military history it is also alive with realism and facts. I do not always read fiction but James Mace has won a loyal fan who will now add all his works into my reading lists! Hats off! I have been a "student" of the Zulu War since my teens, and this was the book I was hoping was out there for years!

I'm very glad that the historical records are being restored regarding colonialism in Africa. I am equally glad to see the valor of soldiers and warriors portrayed so positively. A cautionary tale of the frequently calamitous intersection of motive and opportunity.

Enjoyed this book, looking forward to the next one in this series. The history of South Africa is fascinating and this battle is an important chapter in the story. If you like military history, you will love this book.

Brutal valor, in a brutal battle, adheres to historical fact. Depicts very well the deployment of the forces, its more accurate and realistic than the movie Zulu Dawn. Awaiting the coming Rourke's Drift . Highly recommended

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