

# Action at Myer's Drift: Umpire brief 1

The game is designed for a group of a dozen young wargamers. It is intended to take about three hours, split into three phases: i) an introduction and planning phase lasting around thirty minutes: ii) about fifteen minutes running through the rules (Taking the Bull by the Horns): iii) playing the game.

## Cast:

### B Company, 2nd Battalion, 80th Regiment.

Captain David Barry Moriarity  
Lieutenant Henry Hollingwood-Harward  
Colour Sergeant Anthony Booth  
Sergeant Thomas White  
Sergeant John Flynn

100 other ranks

One wagon with six oxen carrying tents and reserve ammunition for the company.

### The Zulu's

Mbilini (The Assassin) plus 200 Zulu  
Mpanda, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 200 Zulu  
Mpondo, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 150 Zulu  
Ndwande plus 150 Swazi  
Zwide plus 150 Swazi  
Senzanga plus 150 Swazi

### The Wagon Convoy

11 civilian conductors  
30 native Voorloopers  
16 wagons carrying supplies  
2 wagons carrying ammunition  
42 oxen

Notes on wagons: each wagon needs a minimum of four oxen in dry conditions: in this mud at least six will be required and it will be a very slow and tiring process.

# Action at Myer's Drift: Umpire brief 2

## Chronology

- 5th March Rain starts. Convoy laagers about three miles from drift. A night raid by Swazi had some success due to lack of escort and they stole three wagons containing supplies and 46 oxen.
- 6th March Still raining. Captain Moriarity ordered to take B Company to intercept and escort Wagon Convoy to Luneberg.
- 7th March Still raining. Company marches out to meet Wagon Convoy, takes about two hours to reach drift and finds that the Intombe River is impassable\* because of the heavy rains. Seven wagons are on the opposite bank and the oxen and most of the civilian conductors and Voorloopers have returned to the laager site and are preparing to start moving more of the wagons. It will take the rest of the day to get all the wagons down to the river.
- 8th March Still raining. River continues to rise.
- 9th March Still raining. River now so swollen that impossible to send wagons across on the raft but men can still be transported with some risk.
- 10th March Still raining. River still rising. No crossing possible.
- 11th March Rain stops! By evening river starts to go down.
- 12th March Thick mists in the morning, clearing by about 6 - 7 am.

\* Impassable to men and wagons. Possible to cross using a raft if they think of it: give a hint or two if they don't!

The Zulu's are camped about three miles ENE of the drift and have scouts watching the drift, visibility permitting. It will take them until the evening of the 11th to assemble all their warriors: They know that the river will not be fordable easily for several days after the rain stops and that the early morning mists will be very thick after heavy rain.

# Captain David Moriarity

You are in command of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 80th Regiment, The Staffordshire Volunteers.

Your Battalion Commander is Major Charles Tucker and his HQ is in Luneberg. The total battalion strength is around 500 men with some artillery support.

On 6th March 1879 you received the following orders from Major Tucker:

“You are to take your company along the Derby Road, and intercept and escort the convoy of wagons coming here from Derby. The wagons currently have no escort and last reports were that it consisted of some twenty-one wagons, containing provisions and additional ammunition for this garrison. Please arrange to leave at the earliest opportunity tomorrow.”

You left Luneberg the next morning with the following forces.

## B Company, 2nd Battalion, 80th Regiment.

Yourself

Lieutenant Henry Hollingwood-Harward

Colour Sergeant Anthony Booth

Sergeant Thomas White

Sergeant John Flynn

100 other ranks

One wagon with six oxen carrying tents and reserve ammunition for the company.

After two hours hard marching in the pouring rain you arrive at Myer's Drift. On the opposite side of the swollen Intombe River you see seven wagons and a few drivers and Voorloopers.

What are you going to do?

## **Action at Myer's Drift: British brief**

# Lieutenant Henry Hollingwood-Harward

You are second in command of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 80th Regiment, The Staffordshire Volunteers.

Your Battalion Commander is Major Charles Tucker and his HQ is in Luneberg. The total battalion strength is around 500 men with some artillery support.

On 6th March 1879 Captain Moriarity informed you that he had just received the following orders from Major Tucker:

“You are to take your company along the Derby Road, and intercept and escort the convoy of wagons coming here from Derby. The wagons currently have no escort and last reports were that it consisted of some twenty-one wagons, containing provisions and additional ammunition for this garrison. Please arrange to leave at the earliest opportunity tomorrow.”

You left Luneberg the next morning with the following forces.

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Yourself

Colour Sergeant Anthony Booth

Sergeant Thomas White

Sergeant John Flynn

100 other ranks

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Captain Moriarity is bound to ask you what would you do if you were in charge. What are you going to say?

## **Action at Myer's Drift: British brief**

# Colour Sergeant Anthony Booth

You are the senior NCO of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 80th Regiment, The Staffordshire Volunteers.

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Lieutenant Henry Hollingwood-Harward

Yourself

Sergeant Thomas White

Sergeant John Flynn

100 other ranks

One wagon with six oxen carrying tents and reserve ammunition for the company.

After two hours hard marching in the pouring rain you arrive at Myer's Drift. On the opposite side of the swollen Intombe River you see seven wagons and a few drivers and Voorloopers.

As an old trooper you know what Major Tucker would do if he was in charge. If Captain Moriarity was to ask for advice, what would you suggest he did?

## **Action at Myer's Drift: British brief**

# Sergeant Thomas White

You are the senior sergeant of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 80th Regiment, The Staffordshire Volunteers.

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# Sergeant John Flynn

You are the junior sergeant of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 80th Regiment, The Staffordshire Volunteers.

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As an old trooper you know what Major Tucker would do if he was in charge. If Captain Moriarity was to ask for advice, what would you suggest he did?

## **Action at Myer's Drift: British brief**

# Mbilini (The Assassin)

You are a Zulu and the leader of a combined raiding force of Zulu and Swazi. Your scouts have reported that there is a British wagon convoy held up at Myer's Drift about three miles away on the Intombe River which has been swollen by the recent rains.

This convoy is reported to be very valuable with over forty oxen and possibly great quantities of ammunition, weapons, blankets and other luxury goods.

The convoy is protected by about one hundred British soldiers.

Your raiding force is about one thousand strong, but it will take a few days to gather all the warriors together so there is time to plan the attack carefully.

Mbilini (The Assassin) plus 200 Zulu  
Mpanda, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 200 Zulu  
Mpondo, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 150 Zulu  
Ndwande plus 150 Swazi  
Zwide plus 150 Swazi  
Senzanga plus 150 Swazi

Your home kraal was attacked by the British about three weeks ago: thirty four warriors were killed and many more were injured. The British made off with three hundred cattle and your flocks of sheep and goats. This has been a great insult and a serious blow to your prestige. You must show you have no fear of the invaders and demonstrate your ability to deal out a crushing defeat such as those achieved by your brothers at Ishandlwana, Eshowe and Kwajimbu if you are to remain as leader.

However, not all of your raiding party are Zulu warriors and therefore their fighting ability may not be as good.

You must decide how and when to attack the British. In particular, which leader will form the chest, which the loins and which the right and left horns of the buffalo?

## **Action at Myer's Drift: Zulu brief**

# Mpanda, son of Chief Manyanyoba

You are a Zulu and the leader of two hundred Zulu who form part of a raiding party lead by the great Zulu warrior Mbilini. His scouts have reported that there is a British wagon convoy held up at Myer's Drift about three miles away on the Intombe River which has been swollen by the recent rains.

This convoy is reported to be very valuable with over forty oxen and possibly great quantities of ammunition, weapons, blankets and other luxury goods.

The convoy is protected by about one hundred British soldiers.

The raiding force is about one thousand strong, but it will take a few days to gather all the warriors together so there is time to plan the attack carefully.

Mbilini (The Assassin) plus 200 Zulu  
Yourself plus 200 Zulu  
Mpondo, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 150 Zulu  
Ndwande plus 150 Swazi  
Zwide plus 150 Swazi  
Senzanga plus 150 Swazi

You are an experienced warrior: your aim is to defeat the British invaders wherever they are found. However, you know they can be a deadly enemy and so your preferred tactic is to creep up and attack with the element of surprise whenever possible.

## **Action at Myer's Drift: Zulu brief**

# Mpondo, son of Chief Manyanyoba

You are a Zulu and the leader of one hundred and fifty Zulu who form part of a raiding party lead by the great Zulu warrior Mbilini. His scouts have reported that there is a British wagon convoy held up at Myer's Drift about three miles away on the Intombe River which has been swollen by the recent rains.

This convoy is reported to be very valuable with over forty oxen and possibly great quantities of ammunition, weapons, blankets and other luxury goods.

The convoy is protected by about one hundred British soldiers.

The raiding force is about one thousand strong, but it will take a few days to gather all the warriors together so there is time to plan the attack carefully.

Mbilini (The Assassin) plus 200 Zulu  
Yourself plus 150 Zulu  
Mpanda, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 200 Zulu  
Ndwande plus 150 Swazi  
Zwide plus 150 Swazi  
Senzanga plus 150 Swazi

This is your first real battle against the invaders and you must prove yourself a real man by washing your spear in the Redcoats' blood. Thus your preferred tactic is to confront the enemy headlong.

## **Action at Myer's Drift: Zulu brief**

# Ndwandwe

You are a minor Swazi and the leader of one hundred and fifty Swazi who form part of a raiding party lead by the great Zulu warrior Mbilini. His scouts have reported that there is a British wagon convoy held up at Myer's Drift about three miles away on the Intombe River which has been swollen by the recent rains.

This convoy is reported to be very valuable with over forty oxen and possibly great quantities of ammunition, weapons, blankets and other luxury goods.

The convoy is protected by about one hundred British soldiers.

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Mbilini (The Assassin) plus 200 Zulu  
Yourself plus 150 Swazi  
Mpanda, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 200 Zulu  
Mpondo, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 150 Zulu  
Zwide plus 150 Swazi  
Senzanga plus 150 Swazi

Your aim is to get as much wealth and plunder as possible, by raiding the British wagons or looting. You have already gained several oxen by a daring raid on a laagered wagon convoy, but this has taught you just how deadly the British can be. Mbilini has indicated that there is much loot possible but you do not want to lose all your men so you should try to avoid any serious fighting, especially getting shot at by British redcoats.

**Action at Myer's Drift: Zulu brief**

# Zwide

You are a minor Swazi and the leader of one hundred and fifty Swazi who form part of a raiding party lead by the great Zulu warrior Mbilini. His scouts have reported that there is a British wagon convoy held up at Myer's Drift about three miles away on the Intombe River which has been swollen by the recent rains.

This convoy is reported to be very valuable with over forty oxen and possibly great quantities of ammunition, weapons, blankets and other luxury goods.

The convoy is protected by about one hundred British soldiers.

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Yourself plus 150 Swazi  
Mpanda, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 200 Zulu  
Mpondo, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 150 Zulu  
Ndwandwe plus 150 Swazi  
Senzanga plus 150 Swazi

This is your first real battle against the invaders and you must prove yourself a real man by washing your spear in the Redcoats' blood. Thus your preferred tactic is to confront the enemy headlong. You are keen to prove that the Swazi can fight as well as any Zulu.

## **Action at Myer's Drift: Zulu brief**

# Senzanga

You are a minor Swazi and the leader of one hundred and fifty Swazi who form part of a raiding party lead by the great Zulu warrior Mbilini. His scouts have reported that there is a British wagon convoy held up at Myer's Drift about three miles away on the Intombe River which has been swollen by the recent rains.

This convoy is reported to be very valuable with over forty oxen and possibly great quantities of ammunition, weapons, blankets and other luxury goods.

The convoy is protected by about one hundred British soldiers.

The raiding force is about one thousand strong, but it will take a few days to gather all the warriors together so there is time to plan the attack carefully.

Mbilini (The Assassin) plus 200 Zulu  
Yourself plus 150 Swazi  
Mpanda, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 200 Zulu  
Mpondo, son of Chief Manyanyoba plus 150 Zulu  
Zwide plus 150 Swazi  
Ndwandwe plus 150 Swazi

Your aim is to defeat the British invaders wherever they are found and you are keen to increase the riches of your kraal by taking plunder.

## **Action at Myer's Drift: Zulu brief**