

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS FROM THE ANGLO-ZULU WAR IN THE COLLECTIONS OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

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## ABSTRACT

Following the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, Stone Age artefacts were collected by officers in the British Army from several localities in KwaZulu-Natal and later acquired by the British Museum. These collections are described and their significance for what they can reveal about the history of antiquarian collecting in nineteenth century southern Africa is discussed. They form part of a wider pattern in which much nineteenth century archaeological activity in the sub-continent was conducted by professional individuals with a wide range of intellectual interests, who were often linked by a range of personal ties and who took an active part in the growth of palaeolithic archaeology in Britain itself.

## INTRODUCTION

The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 was one of the defining political events of nineteenth century South African history. It resulted in the conquest, and eventual annexation, by Britain of the largest and most powerful independent African state south of the Limpopo (Morris 1965). The archaeological record of this conflict has recently been considered by Webley (1993), who has excavated the remains of the mission station at Rorke's Drift and of Fort Bromhead, which was built on the site immediately after the battle fought there on January 22nd 1879. In the course of these excavations Middle Stone Age artifacts were found in basal gravels beneath the historic period material (Webley 1992:32). As part of a study of the British Museum's collections of Stone Age artefacts from southern Africa (Mitchell in press), several artefact assemblages have been identified that were collected by officers of the British Army immediately before and after the War. These artefacts come not only from Rorke's Drift, but also from Buffalo River, Escourt, Isandhlwana, Newcastle and Pietermaritzburg, as well as elsewhere in KwaZulu-Natal (Fig. 1). This paper describes these artefacts and places them within the broader context of nineteenth century antiquarian activity in South Africa.

## THE COLLECTORS

Three individuals were involved in acquiring Stone Age collections from KwaZulu-Natal around the time of the Anglo-Zulu War. The most significant, in terms of the

range of sites from which he collected, was Colonel Henry W. Feilden (1838-1921), who was stationed in KwaZulu-Natal during the First Boer Anglo War of 1881. Feilden had what can only be described as a varied military career that also took him to India (the Indian Mutiny of 1857-1858), China (the Second Opium War, 1860) and North America, where he fought on the Confederate side (1862-1865). Most of his collections from South Africa were made in 1881 (Feilden 1883), but when sent back to South Africa during the Second Anglo Boer War he took advantage of his posting in Cape Town to collect further artefacts from the Cape Flats and the area around Stellenbosch. He subsequently travelled in both the Northern Cape and Zimbabwe, collecting more artefacts in the gravels of the Zambezi River above and below Victoria Falls (Feilden 1905).

The breadth of his interests are indicated by the fact that he served as a naturalist on the British Polar Expedition of 1875-1876 and also travelled widely in the Arctic (Revere 1988). Indeed, while in KwaZulu-Natal he also wrote to the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew asking if he would be interested in acquiring a collection of lichens from the slopes of the Drakensberg Mountains (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Director's Correspondence, South Africa. Vol. 189 No. 561).

Feilden (1883:171) was one of several antiquarians of the 1870s and 1880s to record that Bushmen used the glass of abandoned soda water bottles to make arrowheads (*cf.* Bowker 1872; Frere 1881). Interestingly, he also foreshadowed the recent suggestion that quartz crystals found in Stone Age deposits may have formed part of shamanistic paraphernalia (Wadley 1987) by



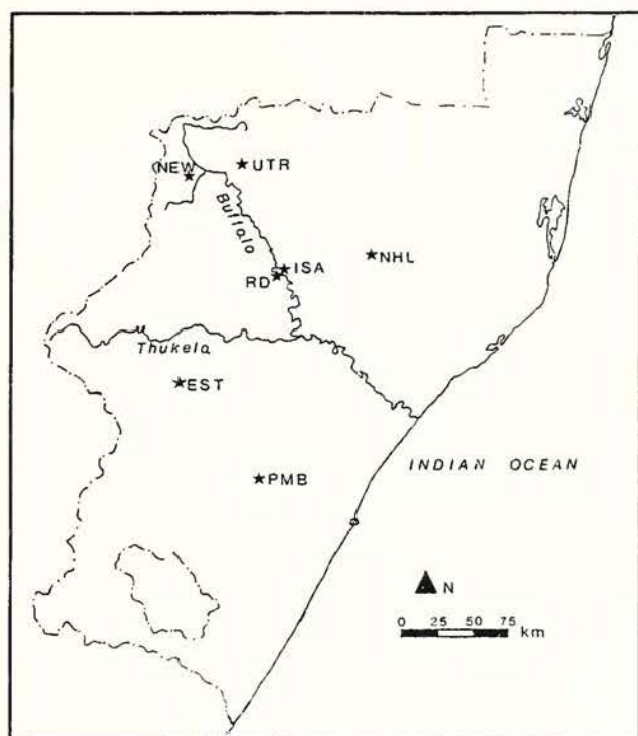


Fig. 1. KwaZulu-Natal showing sites mentioned in the text. EST Estcourt; ISA Isandhlwana; NEW Newcastle; NHL Nhlazatshe; PMB Pietermaritzburg; RD Rorke's Drift; UTR Utrecht.

suggesting that 'stone-age people had carried these crystals either as charms or ornaments' (Feilden 1883-169) and by citing their use on a Zulu 'necklace of charms' in support of his argument.

Colonel J.H. Bowker (1822-1900) also took advantage of his presence in Zululand to collect artefacts that he subsequently donated to the British Museum. James Bowker shared with his brother Thomas a broad range of scientific interests, including Stone Age archaeology, and like him was both an officer in the military forces of the Cape Colony and a colonial administrator. Having held various appointments, he was, for example, made High Commissioner for Basutoland on its annexation to the Cape Colony in 1868 (Hockly 1966). A keen botanist and entomologist, J H Bowker donated and sold specimens of plants to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew from at least as early as 1853. It was to the Director of the Gardens, Sir Joseph Hooker, that he sent artefacts from his excavations in rock shelters in western Lesotho (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Director's Correspondence, South Africa Vol. 189, No. 388: letter dated May 20th, 1867; Gooch 1881:153). While there he also reported that the Maluti San were still using stone arrowheads (Bowker 1872), while Gooch (1881) records that he collected Stone Age artefacts in the Maputo and Inhambane areas of Mozambique and the East London area of the Eastern Cape Province.

The third individual discussed was ultimately responsible for the presence of both Feilden and Bowker in KwaZulu-Natal since, as British High Commissioner in South Africa, it was Sir Bartle Frere (1815-1884) who

took the decision to invade Zululand at the beginning of 1879. A grandson of John Frere, one of the first people to recognise the true importance of associations between stone artefacts and the bones of extinct animal species (Daniel 1975), Frere entered the Indian Civil Service in 1834, becoming Governor of Bombay between 1862 and 1867 (Dictionary of National Biography, first edition, pp. 697-706). He first entered the African political scene when sent to Zanzibar in 1873; Frere was appointed Governor of the Cape Colony and British High Commissioner in South Africa in 1877, charged by the Colonial Office with the task of uniting the British colonies and the independent Boer republics within a British controlled federation. Partly to acquire Boer support for this idea, he provoked the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879. In large part because of the disasters suffered by the British forces at the outset of the War, Frere was recalled to London in 1880. He had wide-ranging anthropological and archaeological interests (Frere 1881) and before moving to South Africa held the Presidency of the Asiatic Society in 1872 and that of the Geographical Society in 1873. Many of his collections were donated to the British Museum by his son in 1910. Most are ethnographic specimens and are held in the British Museum's Department of Ethnography, but an Early Stone Age handaxe provenanced to the 'Kalahari' is also present in the collection. His daughter subsequently donated several further Stone Age artefacts collected by her mother around 1880 from the 'Kalahari' and the Eastern Cape Province (Mitchell in press).

### THE FEILDEN COLLECTION

Feilden exhibited the artefacts that he collected from what is now KwaZulu-Natal, as well as a few others from the Rustenburg area of the North West Province, to a meeting of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland on May 22nd 1883 (Feilden 1883). The Rustenburg specimens appear to have been the first lithic artefacts published from the former Transvaal. Some of the artefacts displayed at this meeting were then donated to the British Museum on October 5th 1883, the majority being acquired for the Museum's Christy Collection, which had originally been created by the banker and antiquarian Henry Christy (J. Cook, pers. comm.). The remainder of the Feilden artefacts in the British Museum form part of the Sturge Collection. W.A. Sturge collected and purchased over 100 000 artefacts during his lifetime, bequeathing much of his collection to the British Museum in 1919. Other artefacts collected by Feilden in KwaZulu-Natal now form part of the collections of other museums in the United Kingdom. Artefacts from Estcourt form part of the collection of the Liverpool Museum and the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. Artefacts provenanced merely to 'Natal' form part of the collections of Oxford University's Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers Museums, as well as those of the Liverpool Museum and The Natural History Museum. However, by far the largest number of artefacts collected by Feilden in South Africa were donated to Norwich Museum, from which



they were transferred to Liverpool Museum, and to Cambridge University's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Mitchell in press).

### 1. Buffalo River

#### *Christy Collection, ex Feilden, +7841*

This single hornfels scraper forms part of a much larger collection from the valley of the Buffalo River, then the border between Zululand and the British colony of Natal, that are provenanced simply to 'Natal' (see below). It is culturally undiagnostic and in a slightly rolled physical condition.

### 2. Estcourt

#### *Christy Collection, ex Feilden, +7843 - +7846*

Estcourt was an important British military base in the middle of what is now KwaZulu-Natal in the mid-nineteenth century and these four unmodified hornfels Middle Stone Age (MSA) artefacts were collected there in February 1881. Feilden (1884:268) locates them specifically to a point about 200 m below a bridge on the right bank of the Bushmans River. Two are flakes and two flake-blades. One of the flakes has a faceted platform and the other is much more heavily patinated than the other artefacts.

### 3. Isandhlwana

#### *Christy Collection, ex Feilden, +7836 - +7837*

Isandhlwana, the first major battle of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, was one of the worst British military disasters of the nineteenth century; over 1300 troops were killed (Morris 1965). British forces remained in the area after the conclusion of the War and Feilden collected four artefacts here in July and August 1881 from near the centre of the former British camp. (Feilden 1883:168). In a letter to Mr Reeve of the Norwich Museum he commented on what he termed "the curious conjunction of Palaeoliths with fragments of modern arms of precision, broken assegais and skeletons of Kafirs (*sic*)!"

Two of the artefacts that Feilden collected at Isandhlwana, both of them made in hornfels, form part of the British Museum collection (Fig. 2). Both are unmodified, heavily patinated and in a rolled condition. The flake has a faceted platform and the flake-blade has lost both its tip and its butt. The artefacts are provenanced in the British Museum's Christy Collection Slip Catalogue to 'Isandulana', an older spelling of Isandhlwana. Both are of MSA origin.

### 4. Natal, between Newcastle and Rorke's Drift

#### *Christy Collection, ex Feilden, +7847 - +7859 - +7866*

Feilden's (1883) account of the material that he collected in South Africa in the aftermath of the Anglo-Zulu War strongly suggests that all the artefacts in his collection in the British Museum that are provenanced merely to 'Natal' come from along his line of march

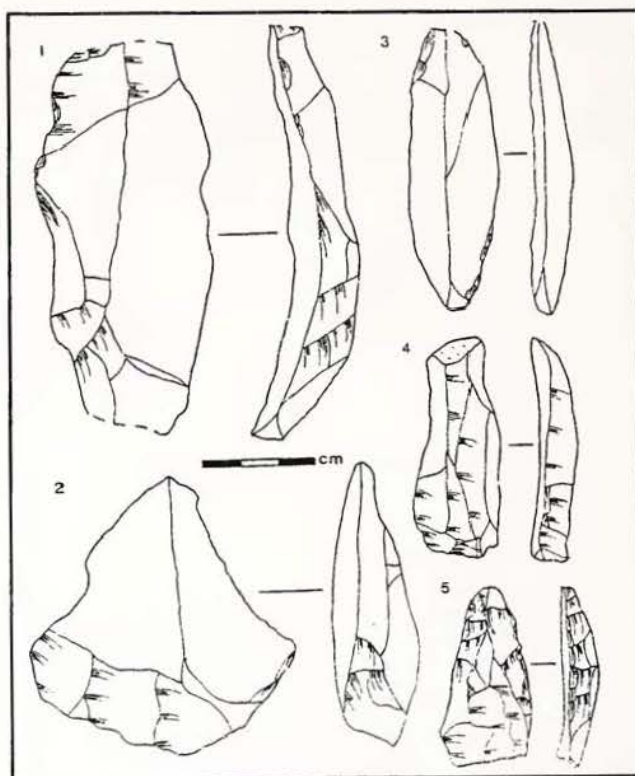


Fig. 2. Middle Stone Age artefacts in the Christy Collection, ex Feilden, from Isandhlwana and Natal, No Further Provenance. 1-2 Isandhlwana: 1 unmodified flake-blade, 2 unmodified flake; 3-5 Natal, No Further Provenance: 3-4 unmodified flake-blades; 5 bilaterally retouched point. All artefacts are made in hornfels.

between Newcastle and Rorke's Drift. Indeed, he states that he "took advantage of every opportunity that arose for leaving the line of march and examining the 'dongas' and denuded surfaces that lay contiguous to this route" (Feilden 1883:165). Some of the artefacts (Fig. 2) form part of the Christy Collection of the British Museum, while others form part of the Sturge Collection.

Seven of the 76 artefacts in the Christy Collection are marked with one of two dates (8.viii.81 and 18.vi.81), presumably the dates on which Feilden collected them. The presence of several flake-blades and the large number of retouched points and knives suggests that the group as a whole is almost entirely of MSA origin (Table 1). However, the opaline scraper, as well as one of those in hornfels which has adze-like lateral retouch, are both of Later Stone Age (LSA) origin. The other artefacts display considerable variation in their physical condition, from fresh to quite rolled, suggesting they are not all of the same age and/or have had the same depositional history.

#### *Sturge Collection, ex Feilden, unnumbered*

This group of 26 artefacts and 18 unworked pieces of stone was found stored with the Christy Collection, ex Feilden, from Natal. No Further Provenance. Most of the artefacts are of MSA origin. These two features suggest that they have a similar origin and this possibility is strengthened by the fact that the same system of dating



Table 1. The Christy Collection, *ex* Feilden, from Natal, No Further Provenance.

	Hornfels	Sandstone	Opaline	Quartz	Tuff	Dolerite	Quartzite	Siltstone/mudstone	Total
Irregular-cores	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Flakes	13	4	2	2	-	-	1	-	22
Flake-blades	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	6
Proximal sections (of flake-blades)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Utilised flakes	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Scrapers	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5
Knives - unilateral	11	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	13
Points	16	3	-	1	1	-	-	1	22
Unifacial points	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total	53	8	4	4	3	1	1	1	76

Table 2. The Sturge Collection, *ex* Feilden, No Further Provenance.

	Hornfels	Sandstone	Opaline	Quartz	Quartzite	Total
Core-reduced pieces	1	-	-	-	-	1
Flakes	9	1	1	1	1	13
Flake-blades	3	-	-	-	-	3
Scrapers	-	-	1	-	-	1
Knives - unilateral	2	-	-	-	-	2
Points	1	1	-	-	-	2
Total	16	2	2	1	1	22

has been used to mark some of these artefacts as was employed by the Feilden artefacts in the Christy Collection. However, the bulk of the artefacts are unmarked.

The four dated artefacts are all made in hornfels and comprise an unmodified flake (marked 1.v.81), a further unmodified flake and an unmodified flake-blade (both marked 18.vi.81) and a retouched point (marked 8.viii.81). The totally unmarked artefacts (Table 2) show great variation in their physical condition from fresh to quite rolled and the hornfels artefacts are variably patinated (from not at all to quite thickly). Both these features suggest that the artefacts have a varied age and/or depositional history. The single scraper, however, has adze-like lateral retouch and is thus almost certainly a LSA piece (Deacon 1984).

## 5. Newcastle

*Christy Collection, ex Feilden, +7842.*

Feilden (1883:163-164) records that the bulk of his collections were made while he was quartered in the Newcastle area of what is now north western KwaZulu-Natal. He exhibited five of these artefacts (described as 'two spear-heads, two arrow-heads' and what was obviously a bored stone) to the Royal Anthropological Institute, but only one is present in the collections of the

British Museum. It is an unmodified MSA flake with a faceted platform and is made in dolerite.

## 6. Pietermaritzburg

*Sturge Collection, ex Feilden, unnumbered*

Pietermaritzburg was known as a source of stone artefacts from at least the time of the first publication on the archaeology of KwaZulu-Natal (Sanderson 1878). Feilden (1883:169) collected from several localities and records finding artefacts close to or on the surface to the south, east and west of the city, as well as in the gravels of the Msunduze River. The Feilden artefacts from Pietermaritzburg consist of four unmodified flakes, three of which are dated 1882, 26.3.1882 and 1.4.1882, presumably the dates on which they were collected. Three are made in hornfels and one in siltstone/mudstone. The latter, as well as one of the two patinated hornfels flakes, have faceted platforms, which suggests that the collection is of MSA origin.

## 7. Zululand, between Utrecht and 'Inlazatche mountain'

*Christy Collection, ex Feilden, ex Curtis and Pennefather, +7838 - +7840*

Feilden (1883: 168) records that two of his military



colleagues, Colonel Curtis and Captain Pennefather of the Inniskilling Dragoons, gathered a total of 12 artefacts along the line of their march from near Utrecht to 'Inlazatche mountain'. This is almost certainly modern Nhlazatshe, which lies to the northwest of Ulundi and only a few kilometres north of the White Mfolozi River. At the time of Curtis and Pennefather's march Nhlazatshe was the headquarters of Melmoth Osborn, the second British Resident in Zululand (Laband 1997). Pennefather himself remained in Zululand until at least 1888, taking part in further military operations there at that time with the Inniskilling Dragoons (Laband 1997).

Ten of the artefacts mentioned by Feilden (1883) form part of the British Museum collections. Two - a sandstone flake and a hornfels point - are marked 'Sept. 1881 H.W. F.', which may be the date on which they were collected by, or given to, Feilden. The formal tools and the faceting of the platform on the quartz flake suggest that the entire collection is of MSA origin. It consists of four unmodified flakes (one each in hornfels, vein quartz, opaline and sandstone), one crested blade (*lame à crête*) made in sandstone, one unmodified hornfels flake-blade, one hornfels retouched point and one hornfels unilaterally retouched knife.

### THE BOWKER COLLECTION

#### 1. Rorke's Drift

*Christy Collection, ex Bowker, +7539 - +7570, +7572 - +7580*

Col. J H Bowker was a member of the expedition to the site of the Prince Imperial's death. In an account published in the *Natal Witness* on April 17th, 1880 he refers to the presence of prehistoric artefacts "in the dongas and hollows near Rorke's Drift and Isandhlwana", some of which were found while excavating the foundations of the Queen's Cross Memorial (Gooch 1881:175). It is some of these artefacts (Fig. 3) that he sent to Sir Joseph Hooker, who donated them to the British Museum in August 1880 (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Director's Correspondence, South Africa Vol. 189 Nos. 400-412; Christy Collection Slip Catalogue, British Museum). Bowker commented in his *Natal Witness* article that the artefacts he had found at Rorke's Drift and Isandhlwana "differ but little from those I have found in Cape, Griqualand West, Free State etc. No polished ones were found, all of the ordinary type and some carefully chipped from agate, spar, sandstone and fossil wood. The usual core and flakes struck off, together with old pointless weapons were met with, in greater numbers than the perfect weapons, which vary in size..." This is, as far as it goes, a not wholly inaccurate description of the artefacts present in the British Museum collection.

Of the 42 artefacts present in the Christy, ex Bowker, Collection in the British Museum, a rolled dolerite handaxe is clearly of Early Stone Age origin, while a single spokeshave in much fresher condition than any of the other hornfels artefacts probably belongs to a Later Stone Age industry of the second half of the Holocene.

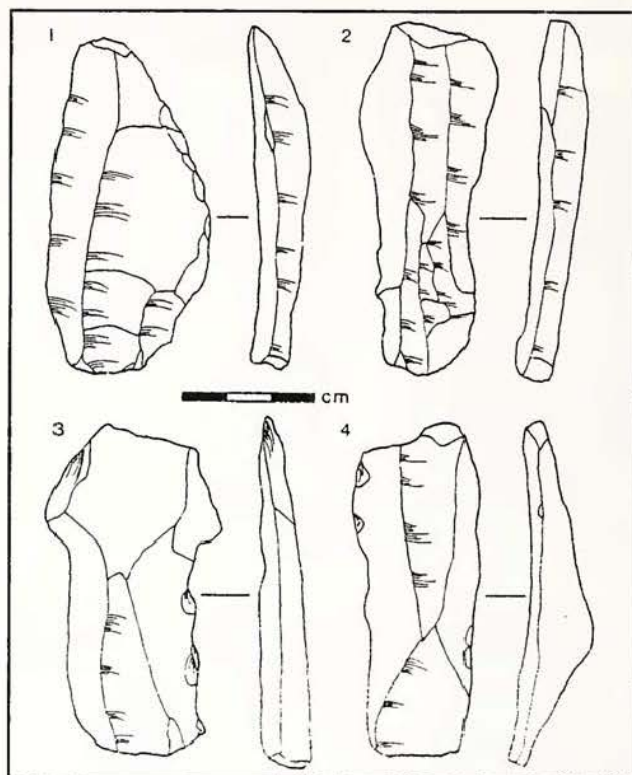


Fig. 3. Middle Stone Age artefacts in the Christy Collection, ex Bowker, from Rorke's Drift. 1-4 unmodified flake-blades, all in hornfels.

The rest of the collection is of MSA origin, as is indicated by both the flake-blades and the formal tools present. The hornfels artefacts are variably patinated and rolled, which may indicate that not all of them have had the same depositional history and/or that they are not all of the same age. One of the quartz flakes and the opaline flake are also both in fresh condition and may thus be more recent than the remaining artefacts listed in Table 3.

### THE FRERE COLLECTION

#### 1. Kaffirland (*sic*), No Further Provenance.

*Frere Collection, 1910.10-5.89-90*

The word 'Kaffir' (for most of the twentieth century a racist term of abuse for Black South Africans) was employed in the nineteenth century principally to refer to the IsiXhosa-speaking communities of the Eastern Cape, although it was also used more widely with reference to other Nguni-speaking peoples, including the Zulu. Since the two artefacts discussed here were donated as part of Sir Bartle Frere's much larger ethnographic collection from Zululand, it seems likely that they were also obtained from there, presumably from north of the Thukela River, which formed the then boundary between the British colony of Natal and the Zulu kingdom. The date of November 20th 1878 on one of the artefacts supports this hypothesis for their origin as Frere had been in Natal for some two months by this time (Laband 1997).



Table 3. The Christy Collection, ex J.H. Bowker, from Rorke's Drift.

	Hornfels	Quartz	Sandstone	Opaline	Total
Irregular cores	2	-	-	-	2
Flakes	9	2	2	1	14
Flake-blades	6	-	1	-	7
Proximal sections (flake-blades)	3	-	-	-	3
Mesial sections (flake-blades)	1	1	-	-	2
Distal sections (flake-blades)	1	-	-	-	1
Utilised flake-blades	1	-	-	-	1
Scrapers	1	-	-	-	1
Knives - unilateral	1	-	-	-	1
Knives - bilateral	1	-	-	-	1
Points	4	-	1	-	5
Bifacial points	2	-	-	-	2
Total	32	3	4	1	40

The collection comprises two Middle Stone Age hornfels unmodified artefacts, one a flake, the other a flake-blade. The flake has a now partially illegible label on its ventral surface, on which only the date 20.11.78 can still be read. This may be the date on which the artefact was found or acquired by Sir Bartle, less than two months before the commencement of the British invasion of Zululand, which he had orchestrated, in January 1879.

### DISCUSSION

All together 168 stone artefacts in the British Museum collections were acquired before and immediately after the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. This represents almost one-third of the total number of artefacts from KwaZulu-Natal in the British Museum's Department of Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities and ten out of a total of 18 individual collections from this province (Mitchell in press). They thus form a significant component of the British Museum Stone Age collections from South Africa, although their small number and the fact that one come from primary, stratified contexts obviously renders them of limited value to the modern researcher. Where they are of importance, however, is in what they and the manner of their discovery and publication reveal about the history of nineteenth century antiquarian activity in southern Africa.

Both Feilden and Bowker were in KwaZulu-Natal in 1880-81 because they were officers in the British Army. The same was true, in a sense of Frere two years before, as that army's local commander-in-chief. That all three took time out from their official duties to pursue an interest in archaeology is impressive, but not, in fact, as remarkable as it might first seem. Analysis of the background of the collectors represented in the British Museum collections from southern Africa shows a repeated involvement by British military officers and colonial administrators in collecting stone artefacts, not

only in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, but also in the First and Second Anglo-Boer Wars and the 1884 Bechuanaland Expedition, as well as when passing through the Cape Colony en route to or from Britain (Mitchell in press). In fact, very few of the artefacts collected from South Africa during the nineteenth century and donated to the British Museum can be said to have been collected by individuals professionally involved in the academic or museum worlds. Langham Dale (*Dictionary of South African Biography* 1:201-204) and Hugh Exton (*Dictionary of South African Biography* 3:282) are notable exceptions, but the overwhelming majority of these collections were, in the nineteenth century, the work of men who, while interested in archaeology, also encountered Stone Age artefacts in the course of their professional work as geologists, engineers, surveyors, soldiers *etc.* (Mitchell in press).

That Feilden, in particular, felt it important to bring the results of his collecting in South Africa to the attention of archaeologists and anthropologists in Britain is also part of a much wider pattern. From the very beginning of archaeological activity in South Africa in the 1850s, South African-based antiquarians were at pains to communicate their research to an international public. Given that both the Cape of Good Hope and Natal were British colonies and that many collectors were either British or of British origin, they sought to do so by sending papers, often accompanied by the artefacts those papers described, to colleagues in Britain. The Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland and its predecessors was a favoured place for their exhibition and many of the artefacts discussed at its meetings were subsequently acquired through donation or purchase by the British Museum. Feilden (1883:163) was himself very aware of this and notes the publication in the institute's journal of two early synthetic papers, those of Sanderson (1878) on the archaeology of Natal and of Gooch (1881) on the Stone Age of South Africa as a whole. Frere (1881) too used the journal to publish a paper on the



relations between white settlers and native Africans in South Africa. The comments of both the authors and the discussants of such papers show a keen desire to relate new finds from South Africa with the picture then beginning to emerge in European palaeolithic archaeology (e.g. Gooch 1881; Feilden 1883:173-174). Indeed, this continued a trend initiated in the late 1860s when a series of papers by Sir John Lubbock (1869, 1870a, 1870b, 1871) mentioning artefacts collected by Langham Dale and C.J. Busk on the Cape Flats were used as 'ammunition' (Goodwin 1935: 295) in his struggle with Thomas Huxley for a dominant position in the newly forming Anthropological Institute. Elected its first President in 1871, it was partly under Lubbock's patronage that southern African artefacts continued to be exhibited at the institute through the rest of the nineteenth century, though they also reached a wider audience when put on show in such contexts as the Colonial Exhibition of 1886 (Hamy 1899).

Contacts such as these with developments in Europe, as well as the growth of archaeology within South Africa itself, were helped by the personal relationships between many of the key players in both continents. This is particularly evident in the case of J.H. Bowker and his relatives. Bowker's correspondence with Sir Joseph Hooker, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens and at one time President of the Royal Society, was with an individual centrally located within the mid-nineteenth century British scientific elite and, moreover, someone who was a personal friend of figures such as Sir Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin. Lyell himself donated to the British Museum artefacts collected at Grahamstown by Andrew Geddes Bain (Mitchell in press) and appears to have asked other contacts in South Africa, among them Mrs Frances Colenso, wife of the Bishop of Natal, to collect further artefacts (Rees 1958:103). James Bowker's brother, Thomas, stayed with the Colensos before the outbreak of the Anglo-Zulu War, while both Bowkers were related by marriage to Dr (W.G.?) Atherstone, another contributor to the British Museum's collections from the Eastern Cape Province and first President of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science (Hockly 1966). James Bowker's entomological interests were shared with Daniel Kannemeyer (1890), another leading figure in the development of archaeology in the Eastern Cape, and the two may have served together in the Cape Mounted Rifles' campaign against Chief Moorosi in Lesotho in 1879. Though not exhaustive of the personal and family connections of the Bowker brothers, this does give some idea of the nexus of scientifically interested individuals of which they formed an important part.

### CONCLUSION

Although less than 200 in number the artefacts described here exemplify several important trends in the early history of archaeology in South Africa. Collected during and immediately after the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, they point to the importance of such large scale political

events in spurring on the collection of Stone Age artefacts. That the collections on which I have focused in this paper were the work of individuals serving in the British military or colonial government exemplifies a more general pattern in the history of not only the British Museum collections from southern Africa, but also those in other British museums (Mitchell in press). Feilden's (1883) presentation of his finds to a meeting of the Royal Anthropological Institute is also typical of other South African-based collectors in the second half of the nineteenth century, many of whom published reports of their activities in British-based journals. Both the initial collecting and later publication were facilitated by ties of friendship and professional contacts between the individuals concerned; Bowker's links to Lyell and Hooker, as well as to Atherstone, Kannemeyer and others, illustrate this point. The British Museum collections from the Anglo-Zulu War, as well as from other areas of southern Africa, therefore show that the collectors involved in their formation were part of wide-ranging intellectual networks, both within the sub-continent and extending to the scientific elite of contemporary Britain. Right from its earliest days, southern African prehistory has never been peripheral to developments in the wider fields of palaeolithic and hunter-gatherer research.

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