

TWO FINE AND VERY RARE 90TH FOOT ZULU WAR BATTLEFIELD PICKUP ZULU IWISA KNOBKERRY STYLE STICKS, CARVED WITH THE SOLDIERS NAME, UNIT AND 'ZUNGUINNECK 24 JAN', 'KAMBULA 29 MARCH', 'ULUNDI 4 JULY 1879'



STICK 1

Overall length 32.5 inches, the club end 2.5 x 1.7 inches and is more likely an iwisa knobkerry style stick, as opposed a purely fighting knobkerry, though the length and head are within parameters for a knobkerry. These sticks were carried much like swagger sticks and could be used as a weapon as needs be. The head is unusual as it is more of a hammer shape that the more commonly round head.

It is finely carved with the words 'KAMBULA 29 MARCH', 'ULUNDI 4 JULY 1879', 'C. WARD. XC.L.I. With carving designs to two sides.



Below the inscriptions are Scottish thistles design which wraps around the shaft for about 5.5 inches. The carvings themselves extend 12.5 inches.

There is only one C. Ward who served with the 90th Foot during the Zulu War, this being 732 Private C Ward, who was entitled to the medal and 1877-8-9 clasp.

A little age cracking along shaft but nothing of issue and the shaft retains a good shape. There are a several of small spots of white paint that need to be removed (see pics) but this is beyond myself. Stick has a lovely old age patina overall.





STICK 2

Overall length 35.8 inches, the club end 1.9 inches. It is finely carved in the same style as stick 1, with the words 'ZUNGUINNECK 24 JANU', 'KAMBULA 29 MARCH', 'ULUNDI 4 JULY 1879', 'D. CONNELL. XC.L.I. round the whole shaft of the stick.



Below the inscriptions are Scottish thistles design which wraps around the shaft for about 5.5 inches. The carvings themselves extend 12.5 inches.

This example has been lengthened at a later date to be used as a walking stick, though clearly this was done contemporarily. The original Zulu weapon extends to a length of 21 inches where a brass band has been attached and a similar length of stick measuring 12.2 inches has been inserted. This shorter length is of a slightly different grain. The brass band has been painted with a rough brown paint so the join is less noticeable (this chipping off) and a brass cap has been added to the end of the stick to protect it during use. Unlike stick , this stick has been varnished to protect it.



As with stick 1, this more likely an iwisa knoberry style stick, as opposed a purely fighting knoberry, though the length and head are within parameters for a knoberry. These sticks were carried much like swagger sticks and could be used as a weapon as needs be. The head is unusual as it is more of a hammer shape that the more commonly round head.

Unlike stick one named to Private Ward, no 'D. O'Connell has been found on the medal roll for the 90th, so it is not immediately clear how this soldier was.



CARVED STICKS TO THE 90TH FOOT

Very similar other Zulu bring back weapons have been seen with the same style of carving to Officers and men of the 90th and it seems likely these were done by someone with carving skills in the regiment, either in Zululand itself or on the voyage home. A near identically carved example to another soldier was sold several years ago here:

<https://ianknightzulugallery.com/collections/sold-item-archive/products/interesting-rare-zulu-knobkerry-from-battle-of-khambula>



NOTE: Stick 2 to O'Connell appears a much lighter shade than stick 1 in the close up photos. Its is a lighter but appears lighter than it is in reality under a spotlight required for photography

Two fine and rarely seen and attributable Zulu war pick up weapons