

10-4-1 Odmund Christian ("Oddy") Oftebro, en offiser av høy rang.

Da Odmund Oftebro døde i 1965 trykket avisen THE ZULULAND TIMES hans nekrolog den 23. desember. Nekrologen gir en kort oversikt over "Oddys" militære karriere.

I den samme avisen refereres det fra hans begravelse som fant sted i KwaMondi-kirken i Eshowe, hvor "Oddy" Oftebro ble æret med militære æresbevisninger.

Vi lar disse artiklene uttrykke vår egen hyllest til denne tapre, sørafrikanske offiseren.

Artiklene foreligger bare på engelsk.

"Obituary to Lt.-Col. O. C. Oftebro, M.C., E.D.

TRIBUTE TO A GREAT ZULULANDER

Sunday, 5th December, saw the passing of a widely respected and greatly loved man in Lt.-Col. O. C. Oftebro, M.C., E.D., known affectionately to his family and friends as "Oddy". Born in Eshowe on 28th March, 1900, Mr. Oftebro started his Civil Service career at a tender age at the Mtunzini Court House in 1917 and then transferred to Eshowe. He also later served on the Eshowe Town Board.

He rose in ranks and later became Magistrate and Native Commissioner in various centres, Kimberley, Harding, Mahlabatini, Melmoth, Eshowe, terminating his services after 38 ½ years at Mtunzini where he was stationed for ?? years.

Mr. Oftebro was an authority on Native Law and Custom and a fluent Bantu linguist. He served for ten years as chairman of the Zulu Chiefs Conference after its inception in 1948 under the Bantu Authorities Act. He was known affectionately to the Zulus as "Ndhavela" which means "eyes that pierce" and was greatly loved and respected by them.

After his voluntary retirement from the Bantu Affairs Department in 1958, Mr. Oftebro moved to Glencoe in Northern Natal where he served as Bantu Affairs Advisor to the Natal Navigation Collieries, later the Trans-Natal group.

Mr. and Mrs. Oftebro lived happily in Northfield until his retirement in March this year, at the age of 65.

Mr. Oftebro enjoyed a long and successful career in the U.M.R. regiment which he joined as a private in 1924, after its resuscitation following World War I. he was commissioned in 1927. As a lieutenant he was in command of the Melmoth Troop and in 1936 was appointed captain and given command of "B" company after the regiment had been converted from Cavalry into Infantry.

The "B" company consisted mainly of Zululand boys, whom he recruited, he himself was the first "Zululand boy" later to become an Officer in command of the regiment.

He commanded "B" Company throughout World War II and with it, was part of the "Jock Column" in the Western Desert. This was known as "Guycol" and operated in the Gazala line.

In a short and sharp skirmish, with two platoons assisted by tanks, this column attacked and captured a complete Italian Battalion with its accompanying transport.

DECORATED



Due to his single handed attack on a strong machine gun nest which was destroyed with a Tommy gun, and which act made the ensuing wholesale attack and captive of 460 prisoners possible, Captain Oftebro was decorated with the immediate award of the Military Cross. Shortly after, he was taken prisoner with rest of the regiment and the 2nd Division in Tobruk.

After World War II he was appointed second in command of the regiment **and in 1947 was awarded the Efficiency Decoration.**

**Lieutenant Colonel
Odmund Christian Oftebro
when he receives
"The Military Cross"**

COMMAND

He was given command of the Regiment in April, 1949 and held that position until his retirement in February the 1st, 1957, during which period the regiment was converted from Infantry into Armour.

On Tuesday, 7th December Mr. Oftebro was buried outside Eshowe at Kwa Mondli Mission which was founded in 1860 by his grandfather the Rev. O. C. Oftebro, whose son Martin was the first European to be born in Zululand at Empangeni in 1856. Both Col. and Mrs. Oftebro's grandparents came to this country from Norway, as Missionaries in approximately 1854.

Mrs. Oftebro is the daughter of the late Rev. Superintendent Lars Martin and Mrs. Titlestad who were at the Ekombe Mission in the Nkandla district for 25 years and at Kwa Mondli from 1920-1925".

“Funeral

His funeral was both a Military one for a retired Officer, honoured by the U.M.R. and a full M.O.T.H. ceremony accorded with the M.O.T.H. salute.

The Rev. Monstad of the N.M.S. and Rev. Wallwork of Eston officiated. The large church at Kwa Mondri was full to capacity with Europeans and Africans who came from far and near to pay their last respects to a gentleman who was loved by all.

The rendering in church, by the Bantu choir of one of Col. Oftebro’s favourite hymns “Abide with me” was beautiful. **At the cemetery they sang their lovely Zulu National Anthem, after which buglers from Greytown sounded the Last Post - so impressive - and the men of the U.M.R. Regiment each in turn saluted their late Commanding Officer.”**



Lt.-Col. O. C. Oftebro



Odmund Christian (Oddy) Oftebros krigsmedaljer.