

A GOOD SOUTH AFRICA 1877-9 TO A GUNNER, OF N/5 BATTERY ROYAL ARTILLERY WHO SERVED IN BOTH THE ZULU AND 1ST ANGLO BOER WARS



SOUTH AFRICA 1877-9, CLASP 1879 '3992. GUNR. M. CONROY, 5TH BDE. R.A.'

Michael Conroy, age 24 from Barnsley, Yorkshire, enlisted into the 5th Brigade Royal Artillery in London on 27 June 1878. Appointed Gunner a day later, his service papers note he served in South Africa from 2 December 1878, taking part in the Zulu War of 1879. Conroy was tried for drunkenness on 3 April 1879 and sentenced to 25 lashes and fined £1 but continued to serve in South Africa until 31 January 1882, thereby also taking part in the 1st Boer War. He transferred to the Army Reserve on 30 June 1886 and was finally discharged on 27 June 1890. Conroy's service papers note under Campaigns; 'Zulu 1879, Transvaal 1880-1 Natal Field Force'

He was entitled to the South Africa Medal with clasp 1879 only

N/5 BATTERY DURING THE ZULU AND 1ST BOER WARS

Lieut. Col. Harness's N/5 Battery Royal Artillery saw more action in South Africa during the conflicts of 1877-81. Initially taking part in the Frontier War of 1878 in support of the 24th Foot, the battery formed part of Glyn's Column during the invasion of Zululand in January 1879. At the time of its entry into Zululand, of 130 all ranks, with six guns, 73 horses, 36 mules, and six mule-carts, with transport wagons. In the disastrous encounter with the enemy at Isandlwana, the battery lost Bt. Major Stuart Smith, 61 non-com. Officers and men, two guns, 24 horses, 30 mules, and 534 rounds of ammunition, beside the whole of the camp equipment.

The battery re-crossed the Buffalo River with the remains of the Column on the 23rd Jan., remained at Rorke's Drift post until the 25th, and then proceeded to Helpmakaar, where it remained until the 17th April. During the second invasion of Zululand, the battery formed part of Newdigate's 2nd Division, with the battery, minus 2 guns, taking part in the battle of Ulundi. The battery subsequently formed part of Baker Russell's Column and took part in search for the Zulu King.

On the conclusion of the Zulu War, the battery proceeded to the Transvaal and was still present at the outbreak of the 1st Boer War. During this conflict, in which they played a leading role, the battery was split up with 2 gun divisions taking part in the disastrous battles of Laing's Nek and Ingogo River and a further two guns taking part in the heroic siege of Potchesfroom.



Condition GVF. Sold with copy service papers. Ex Spink 2018 (Terry Sole collection) A fine South Africa medal to the most desirable Royal Artillery unit due to their service in both the Zulu and 1st Boer Wars