

<b>Archaeological Site Report</b>	<b>SiteNo</b>	9/2/429/0010
	<b>Site Name</b>	Majuba Battlefield, Farm Majuba North 11267,
	<b>Date</b>	Newcastle District
	<b>Project</b>	
	<b>CaseNID</b>	
	<b>Coords</b>	-27.476800, 29.850500

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Site Category: Place

**Directions:**

Entering Newcastle from Ladysmith take Allen Street turn-off from bypass and turn left into Scott St

**SiteComments:**

Archive Import History: Amajuba Mountain is sometimes also referred to as Spitskop or Colley's Kop. It lies to the west of the main road from Newcastle to Volksrust, barely five kilometres south of Charlestown. It can be climbed by a path from the Majuba railway station across the farm Laing's Nek. Great Britain annexed the independent Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek in 1877. At first the Boers were almost paralysed by this high-handed action and aghast at their own impotence, but they gradually built up an irresistible opposition to the British authority. From 8th to 14th December, 1880, about 6 000 burghers met at Paardekraal, reinstated the former Volksraad as the highest legislative authority and resolved to regain their independence by force of arms. So the 'First War of Independence' began. The main threat, as far as the Boers were concerned, came from the British Colony of Natal. From there General Sir George Pomeroy Colley with 1 400 men advanced against the rebellious Boers. Comdt.-Gen. Piet Joubert immediately decided to counter this danger. With a force of 800 men, he advanced towards Natal and at the end of January, 1881, he took up a position at Laing's Nek just south of Volksrust. Colley's camp was then at Mount Prospect, five and a half km further south. On 28th January the Boers beat off a British attack at Schuinshoogte near Ingogo and on 8th February, another at Laing's Nek. Gen. Colley now decided to occupy Amajuba Mountain with a part of his force. The top of this mountain commanded Laing's Nek; from there he would be able to bring artillery fire to bear on the Boer positions and also be in a position to seize the main road over the nek. During the night of 26th February he led a force from his camp at Mount Prospect up the southern side of the mountain. He took 35 officers and 693 men belonging to three companies of the 92nd Highlanders, the 2nd Company of the 58th Regiment, the 2nd Company of the 60th Rifles and 54 Marines from HMS Dido. By daybreak on 27th February the Boers were surprised to observe the British troops on the summit and at about 7 o'clock a few shots were fired at the Boer camp, but there was little heat in the bombardment since Colley apparently thought he was perfectly safe on the mountain. However, Gen. Joubert decided that the British must be dislodged and sent 150 volunteers from all the commandos under command of the burgher officers D. Malan, S. Roos and J. Ferreira up the mountain. The volunteers were both courageous and successful. By eleven o'clock most of the positions on the slope of the mountain were in their hands and by one o'clock the first of the Boers reached the top. The Highlanders defended themselves bravely but could not resist the fierce attack and by three o'clock the engagement was over. Gen. Colley was killed where he stood amongst his men on the summit. The British losses were 92 killed, 134 wounded and 59 captured and those that were left fled down the mountain slope they had ascended the previous night. The Boer losses were two killed and five wounded. Gen. Colley was buried in his camp at Mount Prospect and a monument was afterwards erected at the place where he fell. The Battle of Amajuba resulted in an armistice and led to the peace negotiations that took place in O'Neil's cottage. Proclaimed 1941" Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: