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(of 8), by Louis Creswicke**

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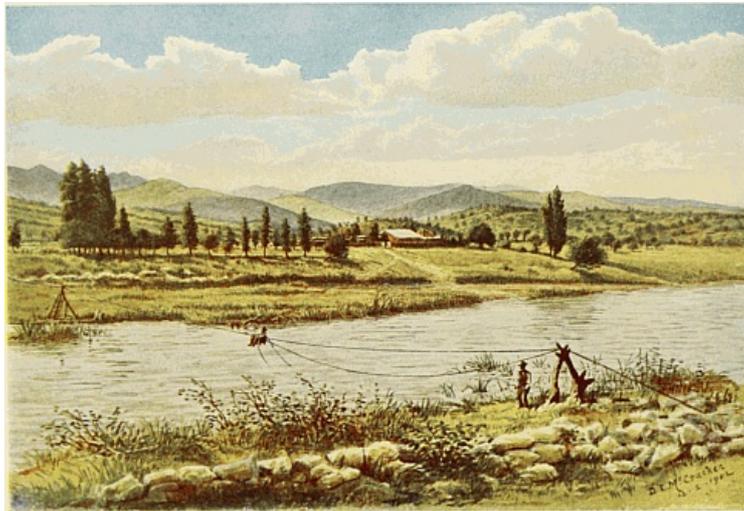
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## **SOUTH AFRICA AND THE TRANSVAAL WAR**



**CROSSING THE KOMATI RIVER.**

Drawing by Donald E. M'Cracken.

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## **SOUTH AFRICA AND THE TRANSVAAL WAR**

BY

LOUIS CRESWICKE

AUTHOR OF "ROXANE," ETC.

**WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS**

VOL. VII.—THE GUERILLA WAR. FROM FEBRUARY 1901 TO THE CONCLUSION OF HOSTILITIES. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS FROM FEBRUARY 23, 1901, TO MAY 31, 1902

MANCHESTER: KENNETH MACLENNAN

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## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—VOL. VII.

### JANUARY 1901.

- 1.—“Call to arms” at Cape Town. General Charles Knox and others continued the pursuit of De Wet.
- 2.—Arrival of Lord Roberts at Osborne. He is created by the Queen an Earl.
- 30.—De Wet breaks through the Bloemfontein-Ladybrand line going south.

### FEBRUARY 1901.

- 1.—General French continued to operate against Botha in the Eastern Transvaal.
- 6.—The War Office decided to reinforce Lord Kitchener by 30,000 mounted troops beyond those already landed in Cape Colony. “Call to arms” at Cape Town.
- 9.—“Call to arms” at Cape Town.
- 10.—“Call to arms” at Cape Town.
- 22.—Extraordinary proclamation signed by Steyn and De Wet published.
- 23.—Accounts of Boer atrocities published. “Call to arms” at Cape Town.  
 Severe defeat of De Wet by General Plumer, who captured two guns, fifty prisoners, and all De Wet's ammunition. De Wet's attempt to invade Cape Colony completely failed.  
 General French gained several victories over Botha in Eastern Transvaal, with capture of guns, ammunition, and waggons.
- 28.—Further great captures from the Boers by General French, and heavy Boer losses.

### MARCH 1901.

- 2.—De Wet was forced over the Orange River with the loss of his guns and convoy.  
 Sir Alfred Milner proceeded north from Cape Town to take up the duties of the Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies.
- 26.—Victory by General Babington over Delarey at Ventersdorp. Nine Boer guns captured.

### APRIL 1901.

- 6.—General French, in his sweeping operations in the Eastern Transvaal, captured all the enemy's guns in that district.

- 8.—Colonel Plumer captured Pietersburg, the terminus of the railway running due north from Pretoria.
- 10.—Civil administration resumed in the Transvaal.
- 15.—Smuts' commando defeated near Klerksdorp. Two guns captured.
- 18.—Sir A. Milner obtained leave of absence on account of the state of his health.
- 19.—Generals Plumer and Walter Kitchener co-operated with General French in clearing the Eastern Transvaal and Lydenburg district.
- 30.—General Blood discovered documents and banknotes of Transvaal Government at Roosenekal, from which place Mr. Schalk Burger fled.

MAY 1901.

- 8.—Municipal Government started in Johannesburg.
- 24.—Sir A. Milner arrived in London and had a peerage conferred upon him by the King.

JUNE 1901.

- 1.—Severe engagement between General Dixon and Delarey at Vlakfontein, in the Magaliesberg. Enemy repulsed with heavy loss. Our casualties also heavy.
- 6.—De Wet severely defeated near Reitz by General Elliot, who made large captures.
- 9.—Lieut.-General Sir John French assumed command of the troops in Cape Colony.
- 12.—General Beatson surprised near Middelburg (Transvaal). Loss of two pom-poms.

JULY 1901.

- 5.—In reply to Botha's inquiries about ending the war, Kruger telegraphed to Botha to continue fighting.
  - 6.—A train wrecked on the Pretoria-Pietersburg line. [Pg vii]
  - 15.—Capture of the so-called "Orange Free State Government" at Reitz. Important Boer papers seized. Steyn alone of the members of his "Government" escaped—in his shirt.
  - 16.—Important success by General French in Cape Colony.
  - 19.—Publication of Lord Kitchener's despatch embodying contents of important documents seized at Reitz.
- Death of Mrs. Kruger.

AUGUST 1901.

- 2.—More murders by Boers officially announced. One of the murdered men was an Imperial Yeoman.
- 8.—Commandant de Villiers and two Field Cornets surrendered at Warmbaths.
- 10.—Lord Kitchener by proclamation called upon the Boer leaders to surrender on or before the 15th of September.
- 13.—Lord Kitchener reported the largest return of Boer losses yet sustained in a week. More than 800 prisoners, 700 waggons, and 33,000 cattle.
- 27.—Lord Kitchener received letters from Steyn and De Wet protesting against his proclamation.
- 28.—Lord Milner arrived at the Cape from England.

SEPTEMBER 1901.

- 2.—Another case of train-wrecking on the Pretoria-Pietersburg railway.
  - 7.—Lotter and his entire commando captured in Cape Colony.
  - 20.—Reverse to Major Gough near Utrecht.
- Severe fighting in Cape Colony.
- 21.—Reverse at Vlakfontein, near Sanna's Post. Two guns lost. (Afterwards recovered.)
  - 23.—The camp of Lovat's Scouts rushed by Kruitzienger near Herschel.
- Koch's commando captured near Edenburg.
- The Carolina commando captured by Colonel Benson.

26.—Ten Boer leaders banished under Lord Kitchener's proclamation.

Attacks on Fort Itala and Fort Prospect. Boers repulsed with very heavy losses at both places.

The attempt of Botha and De Wet to invade Natal foiled.

29.—Proclamation issued in Pretoria providing for the sale of the properties of Boers still in the field, in accordance with Lord Kitchener's proclamation.

30.—Great attack by Delarey and Kemp on Colonel Kekewich's camp near Magato Nek, in the Magaliesberg. Boers repulsed. Severe losses on both sides. The Scottish Horse especially distinguished themselves and sustained severe loss.

#### OCTOBER 1901.

6.—General Walter Kitchener and General Bruce-Hamilton engaged Botha's forces in the south-east of the Transvaal. Botha escaped to the north.

9.—Martial law extended to the whole of Cape Colony.

11.—Commandant Lotter sentenced to death. Death sentence on five members of his commando was commuted to penal servitude for life.

13.—Lieut.-Colonel Hon. J. Byng attacked laager at Jackfontein and captured eighteen prisoners.

15.—Major Damant took prisoner Adjutant Theron. Colonel de Lisle surprised laager at Wilge River and captured fifteen prisoners.

16.—Colonel Rawlinson returned to Standerton with twenty prisoners and many prizes.

21.—Colonel Lukin surprised Vander Venter's laager near New Bethesda.

22.—Colonel Benson captured laager at Klippoortje.

23.—Gallant attack on laager in Pongola Bosch.

24.—Colonel von Donop's brilliant defeat of 1000 Boers at Kleenfontein.

25.—Botha's farm surrounded at Schimmelhoek. His papers captured.

26.—Colonel Benson repulsed attack on his class="hangindent"s rearguard on the Steenkool Spruit.

27.—Colonel Williams' force occupied the Witnek Pass and routed a strong body of Boers from the position.

30.—Attack on Colonel Benson's force at Bakenlaagte. Colonel Benson and Colonel Guinness killed. [Pg viii]

Colonel Kekewich captured a laager at Beestekraal.

#### NOVEMBER 1901.

2.—Patrol under Captain Walker captured twenty-one prisoners near Wolvekop.

7.—Attack on Piquetberg repulsed by garrison under Major Wilson and Town Guard.

General B. Hamilton commenced operations against Botha in the Eastern Transvaal.

8.—Major Wiggin (26th Mounted Infantry) surrounded laager near Mahamba. Fourteen prisoners secured.

9.—Line blown up at Myburg Siding by Fouché.

11.—Major Pack Beresford and detachment of South African Constabulary captured laager at Doornhoek.

13.—Squadron Imperial Yeomanry detached from Hickie's force surprised and surrounded. Rescued by reinforcements.

14.—Rearguard of Colonel Byng's column attacked near Heilbron by 400 of the enemy under De Wet. Boers repulsed. British loss considerable.

16.—Further captures by Major Wiggin within Swaziland border.

18.—Lieutenant Welshman with patrol of West Yorkshire Regiment surprised party of Boers and captured eight prisoners.

20.—Engagement with Buys near Villiersdorp. Major Fisher killed. Buys captured by Colonel Rimington.

Captain Elliot successfully engaged Boers in Griqualand. Captain Elliot killed. Three officers wounded.

24.—General Dartnell, with Highland Light Infantry, engaged Boers near Harrismith. Captured

twelve and killed two.

Offer of Canadian Government to raise 600 more troops for service in South Africa accepted.

25.—General Dartnell's force surprised Boers near Bethlehem and took twelve prisoners.

26.—Lord Basing engaged Joubert in Orange River Colony. Joubert wounded and captured.

Major Pack Beresford attacked convoy near Paardeberg.

27.—Imperial Light Horse under Colonel Mackenzie took twenty-four prisoners, &c.

Attack on Colonel Rimington's rearguard by De Wet repulsed. Many prisoners taken.

28.—Van Rensburg and thirteen burghers captured by Colonel Lowry Cole in Wepener district.

#### DECEMBER 1901.

1.—General Elliot reached Kroonstad with 15 prisoners, 114 waggons, 89 carts, 2470 cattle, and 1280 horses.

3.—Colonel Colenbrander broke up Badenhorst's commando, and took fifteen prisoners and all the waggons.

4.—Laager surprised at Oshoek (twenty miles from Ermelo) by Spens' and Rawlinson's columns. Ninety-three prisoners taken.

7.—Colonel C. Mackenzie, in night march towards Watervaal (Eastern Transvaal), took sixteen prisoners.

Colonel Holland surprised Brand's laager and took six Boers.

11.—Badenhorst and twenty-two burghers secured by Colonels Colenbrander and Dawkins, near Zandriverspoort.

13.—Brilliant surprise of Boers by General B. Hamilton at Witkraus. Laager broken up. One of Benson's guns recovered.

15.—Secretary of State for War congratulated General Bruce-Hamilton on his brilliant achievements.

16.—Haasbroek killed in encounter with Colonel Barker's men in the Doornberg.

Capture of Kruitziuger by Colonel Dorans' and Lord Charles Bentinck's columns.

18.—Colonel Steele, with South African Constabulary, captured thirty-six Boers in the region of the Magaliesberg.

Four hours' fighting between De Wet and General Dartnell. Boers driven off.

Lord Methuen reported capture of thirty-two Boers.

19.—Colonel Allenby captured thirty-two of the enemy near Heidelberg.

[Pg ix]

20.—Colonel Damant attacked by 800 Boers. Two officers killed, three wounded. Boers repulsed.

21.—Capture of Smuts' convoy, near Bothwell, by Colonel Mackenzie.

22.—Seven hundred Cape raiders attacked columns of Colonels Wyndham and Crabbe. Were driven off with loss of five killed and twenty wounded.

23.—Successful attack on Grobelaar's laager by General B. Hamilton.

24.—Colonel Du Moulin surprised laager near Jagersfontein. Captured two Field-Cornets and twenty other Boers.

25.—Colonel Firman's camp at Tweefontein rushed by huge force under De Wet.

28.—Successful engagement near Burghersdorp by Colonel Price. Field-Cornet Jan Venter killed.

#### JANUARY 1902.

3.—Capture of General Erasmus by General Bruce-Hamilton.

10.—Surprise of laager near Ermelo by Colonel Wing and capture of forty-two prisoners.

12.—More captures by General B. Hamilton.

13.—Fight for a convoy by De Villiers. Gallant charge of Munster Fusiliers.

16.—Capture of laager and twenty-four prisoners by Lord Methuen.

18.—Execution of Scheepers on various charges of murder at Graaff Reinet.

Night expedition to Witbank. General Hamilton secured more prisoners.

- 21.—Colonels Park and Urmston engaged party of Boers under Muller and Trichardt, occasioning stampede of Boer Government from Houtenbek.
- 24.—Important captures by General Plumer's troops. Thirty burghers secured by Colonel Fry, West Yorkshire Regiment.  
Attack on Pietersburg repulsed. Volunteer Town Guard distinguished itself.
- 25.—Capture of Viljoen near Kruger's Post by detachment of Royal Irish under Major Orr.
- 26.—Successful engagement on the Modder by Major Driscoll's column.  
Huge laager at Nelspan dispersed by General Bruce-Hamilton's force.
- 27.—Colonel Du Moulin killed in a night attack on his camp. Enemy repulsed by Major Gilbert (Sussex Regiment).
- 30.—Colonel Rawlinson's troops after tremendous march surprised Manie Botha's laager and made valuable captures.
- 31.—Capture of convoy at Groothoop by Colonel Rimington.

#### FEBRUARY 1902.

- 2.—De Wet's commando gallantly charged by New Zealanders, Queensland Imperial Bushmen, and South African Light Horse. Enormous captures.
- 4.—Capture and destruction of British convoy by Boers in Cape Colony. Major Crofton killed.
- 5.—Surprise and capture of Commandant S. Alberts' laager by Scottish Horse under Major Leader.
- 6.—Major Vallancey dispersed Beyers' commando. Gigantic movement to entrap De Wet started.
- 7.—De Wet, by brilliant manoeuvre, ruptured the British cordon and escaped.
- 8.—Big capture from Potgieter's laager by Colonel von Donop's force.
- 13.—Bouvers' laager in Cape Colony rushed by Colonel Kavanagh's men.
- 18.—Capture of Judge Hugo in Cape Colony. Boers cut off and surrounded a portion of squadron of Scots Greys south-east of Springs.
- 20.—Two laagers surprised by Colonel Park's troops; 164 prisoners taken.
- 21.—Capture of laager at Buffelskloof by Colonel E. Williams' column.
- 24.—Some East Griqualand rebels surrendered to Colonel Stanford.
- 25.—Determined attack on Colonel von Donop's convoy by Delarey and Kemp. Waggon lost. Escort, which made gallant defence, overpowered. Five British officers and fifty-three men killed; six officers and 123 men wounded; others taken prisoners.
- 26.—Jacob's laager captured by Colonel Driscoll.
- 27.—Anniversary of Majuba. Combined operations for driving Boers against Harrismith-Van Reenan's blockhouse line. Manie Botha killed; 600 Boers killed, wounded, or prisoners. Splendid defence by New Zealanders under Major Bauchop and New South Wales Mounted Infantry under Colonel Cox. [Pg x]
- 28.—Capture of Boers near Steynsdorp by Captain Holgate (Steinacker's Horse).

#### MARCH 1902.

- 6.—Colonel Ross (Canadian Scouts) made valuable captures in a cave near Tafel Kop.
- 7.—Successful attack by Delarey on Lord Methuen's force at Tweebosch. Lord Methuen seriously wounded and taken prisoner.
- 11.—Close of big drive in Orange River Colony; 127 Boers taken. Commandant Celliers wounded.
- 12.—Many prisoners captured by Colonel Ternan and Colonel Pilcher.
- 13.—Little garrison of fifty men at Fort Edward surrounded by Beyers' commando.
- 15.—Attack on laager near Vryheid by General Bruce-Hamilton. General Cherry Emmett captured.
- 16.—Rebels at Sliphock captured by Captain Bowker.
- 17.—Some of Bezuidenhout commando captured in Cape Colony by Colonel Baillie.
- 18.—Lieutenant Williams, a notorious train-wrecker, captured by National Scouts.
- 21.—Colonel Harrison sent out from Pietersburg small force under Colonel Denny to relief of Fort

Edward. Advance opposed by Boers.

23.—Arrival at Pretoria of so-called Acting Transvaal Government to discuss the terms of peace.

26.—Death of Cecil John Rhodes.

28.—Colonel Colenbrander from Krugersdorp moved to Pietersburg and from thence accomplished relief of Fort Edward.

29.—Total defeat of Beyers and dispersal of investing commando.

30.—Serious railway accident at Barberton.

31.—Delarey defeated in engagement with Colonels Keir and Cookson. R.H.A. Rifles, Canadian Rifles, and 28th Mounted Infantry distinguished themselves.

#### APRIL 1902.

1.—Laager surprised by 2nd Dragoon Guards near Springs. Four officers wounded.

3.—State funeral of the late Mr. Rhodes at Cape Town.

4.—Ookiep invested by Commandant Smuts.

8.—Successful attack on Beyers' laager near Pietersburg by Colonels Colenbrander and Murray.

9.—Conference between Transvaal and Orange Free State leaders at Klerksdorp in regard to negotiations for peace.

10.—Burial of Cecil John Rhodes in the Matoppos.

"They left him alone in his glory."

11.—Meeting of Boer representatives at Klerksdorp in relation to Peace movement. Colonel Kekewich defeated Boers in Western Transvaal and captured two guns and a pom-pom.

12.—Laager at Schweizerreneke surprised by Colonel Rochfort. Fifty-five prisoners taken.

#### MAY 1902.

1.—Relief of Ookiep by British troops under Colonels Cooper and Caldwell.

2.—Lieutenant Murray (District Mounted troops) killed at Tweefontein by Boers in kharki.

6.—Pieter de Wet sentenced by Treason Court to pay a fine of £1000 or undergo two years' imprisonment.

9.—Patrol attacked by Boers near Middelburg, Cape Colony. Captain Hinks killed.

15.—Members of the late Governments met together to discuss Peace proposals.

17.—Surrender of Hinton, the notorious train-wrecker.

20.—Delegates of late Governments arrived at Pretoria to arrange terms of surrender.

27.—Malan mortally wounded and captured by Jansenville District Mounted Horse (under Major Collett), and Lovat's Scouts.

30.—Peace Agreement signed.

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## COMPOSITION OF COLUMNS

COMPOSITION AND STRENGTH OF COLUMNS ENGAGED IN MAJOR-GENERAL BRUCE-HAMILTON'S OPERATIONS IN SOUTHERN ORANGE RIVER COLONY. <sup>[1]</sup>

LIEUT.-COLONEL DU MOULIN'S COLUMN.

30th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (31-32).  
31st Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (153-177).  
39th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"N" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Royal Sussex Regiment (436).

COLONEL ROCHFORT'S COLUMN.

9th Bn., Imperial Yeomanry (302-274).  
17th Mounted Infantry (331-358).

17th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"G" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
28th Co., Army Service Corps (11).

LIEUT.-COLONEL BYNG'S COLUMN.

5th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (129-109).  
23rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (123-75).  
66th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (104-95).  
32nd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (91-93).  
South African Light Horse (503-642).  
17th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
Pompom Section, 1 pompom.  
3rd Brigade Field Hospital (5).  
13th Brigade Field Hospital (11).

LIEUT.-COLONEL W. H. WILLIAMS' COLUMN.

1st Mounted Infantry (203-241), 1 M.G.  
50th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (120-91).  
60th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (121-110).  
43rd Battery, R.F.A., 1 5-inch Howitzer.  
"D" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
20th Bearer Company (8).

COLONEL MONRO'S COLUMN. (Afterwards in Cape Colony.)

Bethune's Mounted Infantry (273-500), 2 M.G.  
56th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (80), 3 M.G.  
57th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (92-95).  
58th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (71-56).  
59th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (77-80).  
39th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"Z" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.

LIEUT.-COLONEL A. MURRAY'S COLUMN. (Afterwards in Cape Colony.)

Lovat's Scouts (152-182).  
"M" Battery, R.H.A., 2 guns.

LIEUT.-COLONEL WHITE'S COLUMN. 28/6/01. (Since broken up.)

16th Lancers (469-329).  
29th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (132-114).  
49th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (141-100).  
39th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"X" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
9th Bearer Company (8).

COLONEL HENRY'S COLUMN.

22nd Mounted Infantry (446-325).  
24th Bn., Imperial Yeomanry (373-270).  
82nd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
Pompom Section, R.F.F., 1 pompom.  
2nd Gloucestershire Regiment (271), 1 M.G.  
23rd Bearer Company (9).

KIMBERLEY COLUMN.

74th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (125-135).  
Kimberley Light Horse (94-99).  
Dennison's Scouts (81-85).  
Mounted Infantry, Royal Welsh Fusiliers (20-24).  
Vol. Northumberland Fusiliers (102).  
3rd Leinster Regiment (100).  
38th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers (38).  
Diamond Field Artillery (13-19), 1 M.G.

COLUMNS ENGAGED IN MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES KNOX'S OPERATIONS IN CENTRAL ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

COLONEL PILCHER'S COLUMN.

7th Corps Mounted Infantry (891-860), 2 M.G.

6th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry (642-582).

MAJOR PINE COFFIN'S COLUMN.

Mounted Infantry, Suffolk Regiment (119-112).  
Mounted Infantry, South Wales Borderers (105-107).  
Mounted Infantry, Berkshire Regiment (88-116).  
Mounted Infantry, West Riding Regiment (114-117).  
"O" Battery, R.H.A., 2 guns.  
14th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"M" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
36th Co. Army Service Corps (37).  
13th Brigade Bearer Company (8).

LIEUT.-COLONEL THORNEYCROFT'S COLUMN.

21st and 22nd Sqds. and 18th Battalion.  
Imperial Yeomanry (740-780).  
Thornycroft's Mounted Infantry (168-339).  
Burmah Mounted Infantry (185-230).  
76th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"X" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
Royal Army Medical Corps (14).

COLONEL HENRY'S COLUMN.

KIMBERLEY COLUMN.

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COLUMNS ENGAGED IN MAJOR-GENERAL ELLIOT'S OPERATIONS IN NORTHERN ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL BROADWOOD'S COLUMN.

7th Dragoon Guards (581-584), 1 M.G.  
6th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (123-126).  
42nd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (29-105).  
44th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (107-122).  
46th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (108-102).  
78th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (59-70).  
Gun Section, Imperial Yeomanry (17-23), 2 M.G.  
82nd Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
20th Brigade Bearer Company (21).  
86th Co., Army Service Corps (17).  
17th Co., Army Service Corps (11).  
Royal Engineers (7).

COLONEL BETHUNE'S COLUMN.

1st Dragoon Guards (384-510), 1 M.G.  
3rd Dragoon Guards (317-390).  
7th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (99-98).  
8th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (99-87).  
28th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (92-90).  
"Q" Battery, R.H.A., 4 guns.  
Elswick Battery, 1 gun.  
"K" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd Somerset Light Infantry (196).  
4th Field Troop, Royal Engineers (39).  
19th Co., Army Service Corps (29).  
Royal Army Medical Corps (19).

LIEUT.-COLONEL COLVILLE'S COLUMN.

2nd Division Mounted Infantry (300-340).  
2nd Johannesburg Mounted Rifles (106-130).  
63rd Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"O" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd East Surrey Regiment (345), 1 M.G.  
No. 1 Auxiliary Co., Army Service Corps (13).  
2nd Brigade Field Hospital (16).  
2nd Brigade Bearer Company (4).

COLONEL RIMINGTON'S COLUMN.

3rd Regiment, 5th Contingent, New South Wales Mounted Rifles (734-854), 4 M.G.  
41st Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (106-113).

77th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (91-96).  
106th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (102-115).  
Prince of Wales Light Horse (501-504), 2 M.G.  
"G" Battery, R.H.A., 4 guns.  
"G" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
"R" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
30th Co., Army Service Corps (14).  
20th Brigade Field Hospital (23).

LIEUT.-COLONEL DE LISLE'S COLUMN.

6th Regiment Mounted Infantry (392-457), 2 M.G.  
South Australians (326-398).  
62nd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"A" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd Co., Army Service Corps (16).

COLONEL E. C. KNOX'S COLUMN.

10th Hussars (566-668), 1 M.G.  
12th Lancers (663-771), 1 M.G.  
21st Bn., Imperial Yeomanry (259-316).  
"A" Battery, Royal Australian Artillery, 4 guns.  
2nd East Surrey Regiment (274).  
"U" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
17th Co., Royal Engineers (7).  
40th Co., Army Service Corps (15).  
4th Brigade Field Hospital (25).

LIEUT.-COLONEL WESTERN'S COLUMN.

No. 1 Co., Royal Irish Rifles Mounted Infantry (103-130).  
No. 2 Co., Royal Irish Rifles Mounted Infantry (99-137).  
Mounted Infantry, Royal West Kent Regiment (61-76).  
Driscoll's Scouts (422-489).  
62nd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"M" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Oxfordshire Light Infantry (120).  
1st Royal Irish Fusiliers (120).  
2nd Division Field Hospital (17).  
17th Co., Army Service Corps (15).

COLUMNS ENGAGED IN LIEUT.-COLONEL WESTERN'S OPERATIONS ON THE VAAL RIVER.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL G. HAMILTON'S COLUMN.

5th Dragoon Guards (373-340), 1 M.G.  
13th Hussars (544-578), 1 M.G.  
"Q" Battery, R.H.A., 2 guns.  
64th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"F" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st East Lancashire (363), 1 M.G.  
7th Co., Army Service Corps (7).  
3rd Field Troop, Royal Engineers (29).  
2nd Brigade Bearer Company (27).

LIEUT.-COLONEL WESTERN'S COLUMN.

COLONEL ALLENBY'S COLUMN.

6th Dragoon Guards (475-488), 3 M.G.  
2nd Dragoons (506-533), 1 M.G.  
"O" Battery, R.H.A., 4 guns.  
83rd Battery, R.F.A., 1 gun.  
87th Battery, R.F.A., 1 5-inch Howitzer.  
"E" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Inniskilling Fusiliers (683), 1 M.G.  
1st Field Troop, Royal Engineers (27).  
6th Field Hospital (10).  
6th Bearer Company (13).

COLONEL HENRY'S COLUMN.

COLUMNS ENGAGED IN CLEARING THE EAST OF THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

MAJOR-GENERAL B. CAMPBELL'S COLUMN.

1st Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (134)}  
2nd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (160)} Total  
3rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (114)} horses,  
4th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (139)} 536.  
2nd Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"T" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd Scots Guards (688).  
1st Leinster Regiment (402).

COLONEL HARLEY'S COLUMN.

36th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (142-153).  
53rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (138-138).  
62nd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (82-35).  
Unallotted Imperial Yeomanry (343-121).  
Mounted Infantry, Manchester Regiment (96-114).  
Tempest's Scouts (38).  
36th, Southern Division, R.G.A., 1 5-inch.  
77th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"T" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st South Staffordshire Regiment (787).  
2nd Manchester Regiment (645).  
2nd Grenadier Guards (62).

COLUMNS ENGAGED IN OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH-WEST TRANSVAAL.

LIEUT.-GENERAL LORD METHUEN'S COLUMN.

13th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (128).  
14th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (130-154).  
15th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (140-162).  
16th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (130-141).  
100th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (36-35).  
101st Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (142-148).  
102nd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (105-116).  
Gun Section, Imperial Yeomanry (15-24), 2 M.G.  
37th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (99-115).  
38th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (96-105).  
39th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (119-124).

MAJOR-GENERAL BABINGTON'S COLUMN.

14th Hussars (98-105).  
Mounted Infantry, Royal Welsh Fusiliers (29-35).  
Imperial Light Horse (162-229).  
4th New Zealand Rifles (216-280).  
6th Imperial Bushmen (193-260).  
103rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (135-144).  
107th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (145-153).  
37th Battery, R.F.A., 1 5-inch Howitzer.  
68th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
Elswick Battery, 1 gun.  
Pompom Section, R.F.F., 2 pompoms.  
Signallers, R.F.F. (7).  
1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers (522).  
11th Co., Royal Engineers (9).  
7th Co., Army Service Corps (21).  
9th Brigade Field Hospital (20).  
12th Bearer Company (11).

COLONEL SIR H. RAWLINSON'S COLUMN.

2nd Mounted Infantry (352-439).  
8th Mounted Infantry (375-428).  
"P" Battery, R.H.A., 2 guns.  
38th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
37th Battery, R.F.A., 1 5-inch Howitzer.  
40th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (95-91), 1 M.G.  
43rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (113-116).  
73rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (105-153).  
51st Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (81-106).  
Mounted Infantry, Bedfordshire Regiment (63-72).  
Bechuanaland Rifles (64-90).

4th Battery, R.F.A., 6 guns.  
37th Battery, R.F.A., 2 5-inch Howitzers.  
R.F.F. Artillery, 2 guns.  
"H" Section Pompoms, 2 pompoms.  
Pompom Section, R.F.F., 2 pompoms.  
1st Northumberland Fusiliers (146).  
1st Loyal North Lancashire (334).  
3rd South Wales Borderers (146).

LIEUT.-COLONEL HICKIE'S COLUMN.

"P" Battery, R.H.A., 2 guns.  
78th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
Pompom Section, 2 pompoms.  
103rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (108-113).  
107th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (99-109).  
Kitchener's Horse (29-51).  
Roberts' Horse (114-118).  
Imperial Light Horse (369-439).  
2nd Cheshire Regiment (182), 1 M.G.  
11th Field Troop, Royal Engineers (7).  
7th Co., Army Service Corps (24).  
29th Co., Army Service Corps (6).  
9th Brigade Field Hospital (14).  
12th Bearer Company (10).

BRIGADIER-GENERAL DIXON'S COLUMN.

7th Bn., Imperial Yeomanry (151-164).  
1st Scottish Horse (451-543).  
8th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
28th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
37th Battery, R.F.A., 1 5-inch Howitzer.  
"G" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st King's Own Scottish Borderers (469), 1 M.G.  
1st Derby Regiment (411), 1 M.G.  
"B" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
"Z" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd Cheshire Regiment (179).  
2nd Field Troop, Royal Engineers (14).

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LIEUT.-COLONEL E. C. WILLIAMS' COLUMN.

2nd New South Wales Mounted Rifles (526-536).  
3rd New South Wales Bushmen (229-244).  
21st Bn., Mounted Infantry (432-415).  
78th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
Elswick Battery, 1 gun.  
"A" Batt., Royal Australian Artillery, 2 guns.  
"B" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
"D" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd Cheshire Regiment (192).  
Australian Medical Corps (23).  
7th Co., Royal Engineers (7).  
10th Co., Army Service Corps (24).  
12th Field Hospital (32).  
10th Bearer Company (12).  
7th Co., Royal Engineers (4).

BRIGADIER-GENERAL G. HAMILTON'S COLUMN.

COLONEL ALLENBY'S COLUMN.

GENERAL BARTON'S COLUMN.

108th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (100).  
Mounted Infantry (200).  
81st Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
1st Cameron Highlanders (700).

MAJOR G. WILLIAMS' COLUMN.

11th Bn., Mounted Infantry (323-403).

BRIGADIER-GENERAL PLUMER'S COLUMN.

5th Queensland Imperial Bushmen (340-361).  
6th New Zealand Mounted Rifles (419-406).  
18th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"Q" Section Pompoms, 2 pompoms.  
1st Royal Munster Fusiliers (264).  
2nd and 11th Cos., Royal Engineers (37).  
13th Brigade Field Hospital (18).  
14th Brigade Field Hospital (16).  
Elswick Battery, 1 gun.  
2nd Dorset Regiment (500), 1 M.G.  
26th Co., Royal Engineers (20).  
11th Field Hospital (9).  
18th Field Hospital (10).  
20th Co., Army Service Corps (20).  
45th Co., Army Service Corps (16).

LIEUT.-COLONEL GREY'S (afterwards LIEUT.-COLONEL GARRATT'S) COLUMN.

6th Queenslanders (307-302).  
7th New Zealanders (489-504), 1 M.G.  
9th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
73rd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"C" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st East Lancashire (309).  
15th Field Hospital (22).  
91st Co., Army Service Corps (22).

MAJOR-GENERAL W. KITCHENER'S COLUMN.

5th West Australian Mounted Infantry (160-194).  
6th West Australian Mounted Infantry (195-186).

BRIGADIER-GENERAL BULLOCK'S COLUMN.

5th Corps, Mounted Infantry (758-894).  
Gough's Mounted Infantry (590-742), 3 M.G.  
Johannesburg Mounted Rifles (318-366).  
Commander-in-Chief's Bodyguard (182-310), 2 guns and 1 pompom.  
74th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"J" Battery, R.H.A., 6 guns.  
"F" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd Imperial Light Horse (138-170), 1 M.G.  
53rd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
16th Southern Division, R.G.A., 1 5-inch.  
10th Mountain Battery, R.G.A., 1 gun.  
"S" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Devonshire Regiment (833), 2 M.G.  
24th Bearer Company and Field Hospital (9).  
23rd Co., Royal Engineers (10).

LIEUT.-COLONEL PULTENEY'S COLUMN.

1st Royal Dragoons (345-349), 1 M.G.  
6th Inniskilling Dragoons (370-400), 2 M.G.  
66th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"P" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Scots Guards (854), 1 M.G.  
Royal Engineers (48).  
11th Field Hospital (19).  
9th Bearer Company (21).

COLONEL RIMINGTON'S COLUMN.

COLONEL ALLENBY'S COLUMN.

COLONEL E. C. KNOX'S COLUMN.

COLUMNS ENGAGED IN BRIGADIER-GENERAL PLUMER'S OPERATIONS IN SOUTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL PLUMER'S COLUMN.

COLONEL E. C. KNOX'S COLUMN.

COLONEL RIMINGTON'S COLUMN.

MAJOR-GENERAL BEATSON'S OPERATIONS.

MAJOR-GENERAL BEATSON'S COLUMN.

5th Victorian Mounted Rifles (740-721).  
9th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
2nd Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (366).  
2nd Seaforth Highlanders (178).  
26th Co., Royal Engineers (23).  
20th Field Hospital (26).  
84th Co., A.S.C. (18).

COLUMNS ENGAGED IN LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR BINDON BLOOD'S OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN  
TRANSVAAL.

MAJOR-GENERAL BABINGTON'S COLUMN.

19th Hussars (279-268), 1 M.G.  
83rd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
10th Mountain Battery, R.G.A., 1 gun.  
"J" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st King's Royal Rifle Corps (637), 1 M.G.  
43rd Co., Army Service Corps (16).  
12th Field Hospital (21).  
9th Co., Royal Engineers (12).

LIEUT.-COLONEL BENSON'S (R.A.) COLUMN.

18th Mounted Infantry (466-513).  
19th Mounted Infantry (362-430).  
2nd Scottish Horse (503-647).  
21st Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
81st Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
61st Battery, R.F.A., 1 5-inch Howitzer.  
10th Mountain Battery, R.G.A., 1 gun.  
"C" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
"R" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (724).  
23rd Co., Royal Engineers (23).  
8th Bearer Company (22).  
31st Co., Army Service Corps (19).

BRIGADIER-GENERAL SPENS' COLUMN.

5th Lancers (153-132).  
4th Mounted Infantry (457-534).  
4th Mountain Battery, R.G.A., 2 2.5-inch.  
10th Mountain Battery, R.G.A., 1 12-pr.  
"S" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
2nd Royal Berkshire Regiment (570), 3 M.G.  
19th Co., Royal Engineers (23).  
19th Bearer Co. (29).

COLONEL CAMPBELL'S COLUMN.

18th Hussars (543-470).  
53rd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
14th Southern Division, R.G.A., 1 5-inch.  
Pontoon Troop, R.E. (10).  
2nd Rifle Brigade (587), 1 M.G.  
12th Brigade Field Hospital (30).  
Army Service Corps (10).

COLONEL PARK'S COLUMN.

4th Division Mounted Infantry (123-137),  
1 Krupp gun.  
53rd Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"P" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Royal Irish Regiment (613), 1 M.G.  
40th Co., Army Service Corps (8).  
4th Division Field Hospital (4).

LIEUT.-COLONEL DOUGLAS' COLUMN.

3rd Mounted Infantry (349-446).

84th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"L" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
1st Royal Scots (704), 1 M.G.  
23rd Co., Royal Engineers (17).  
19th Field Hospital (22).  
19th Bearer Company (11).

MAJOR-GENERAL W. KITCHENER'S COLUMN.

LIEUT.-COLONEL PULTENEY'S COLUMN.

MAJOR-GENERAL BEATSON'S COLUMN.

LIEUT.-COLONEL COLVILLE'S COLUMN.

COLONEL GARRATT'S COLUMN.

COLUMNS ENGAGED IN OPERATIONS ON THE PIETERSBURG LINE.

MAJOR McMICKING'S COLUMN.

20th Bn., Mounted Infantry (374-317).  
75th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
2nd Lincoln Rifles (179).

LIEUT.-COLONEL WILSON'S COLUMN.

Kitchener's Fighting Scouts (417-399).  
Bush Veldt Carabineers (21-22).  
12th Mounted Infantry (13-13).  
2nd Gordon Highlanders (104).

LIEUT.-COLONEL GRENFELL'S COLUMN.

Kitchener's Fighting Scouts (364-361).  
12th Mounted Infantry (193-194).  
2nd Wiltshire Rifles (363).  
85th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"A" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.

OPERATIONS IN THE STANDERTON-HEIDELBERG DISTRICT.

LIEUT.-COLONEL COLVILLE'S COLUMN.

LIEUT.-COLONEL GREY'S COLUMN.

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COLUMNS ENGAGED IN OPERATIONS IN CAPE COLONY.

COLONEL DORAN'S COLUMN. (Late LIEUT.-COLONEL HENNIKER'S.)

Warren's Mounted Infantry (181-191).  
11th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (134-131).  
23rd Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (141-148).  
24th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (125-94).  
"M" Battery, R.H.A., 2 guns.  
Cape Colony Cyclists (4).

LIEUT.-COLONEL CRABBE'S COLUMN.

P. A. Guards (193-205).  
Marshall's Horse (120-139).  
99th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (53-63).  
104th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (58-60).  
105th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (53-69).  
111th Sqdn., Imperial Yeomanry (47-53).  
85th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
2nd Royal Fusiliers (78).  
Cape Medical Staff (13).

LIEUT.-COLONEL GORRINGE'S COLUMN.

Cape Defence Force (263).  
Cape Police (212).  
Tasmanian Imperial Bushmen (92).  
5th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"O" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.

Total horses (1401).

LIEUT.-COLONEL CREWE'S COLUMN.

Kaffrarian Rifles (301-374), 2 machine guns.  
Queenstown Volunteer Rifles (78-137).  
44th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"Y" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.

CAPTAIN LUND'S COLUMN.

9th Lancers (132).  
Brabant's Horse (209).  
Imperial Yeomanry (278).  
"A" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
Total horses (828), and 1 machine gun.

LIEUT.-COLONEL SCOBELL'S COLUMN.

9th Lancers (303-332).  
Cape Mounted Rifles (203-356).  
Cape Mounted Royal Artillery, 3 guns.  
Cape Cyclists (9).  
Royal Engineers (2).

LIEUT.-COLONEL WYNDHAM'S COLUMN.

17th Lancers (387-412), 1 machine gun.

LIEUT.-COLONEL HON. A. D. MURRAY'S COLUMN.

COLONEL MONRO'S COLUMN.

NOTE.—Where two figures appear, the first refers to effective men, the second to effective horses.

FORCE EMPLOYED AT VLAKFONTEIN (584) ON MAY 29TH.

(a) Left (afterwards rear), under MAJOR CHANCE, R.A.

28th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
"G" Section Pompoms, 1 pompom.  
7th Bn., Imperial Yeomanry (230).  
1 Co., 1st Derbyshire Regiment.

(b) Centre, under BRIGADE-GENERAL DIXON.

8th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
37th Battery, R.F.A., 1 5-inch Howitzer.  
2 Cos., 1st King's Own Scottish Borderers.  
1 Co., 1st Derbyshire Regiment.

(c) Right, under LIEUT.-COLONEL DUFF.

8th Battery, R.F.A., 2 guns.  
1st Scottish Horse (200).  
2 Cos., 1st King's Own Scottish Borderers.

MAJOR-GENERAL BEATSON'S COLUMN (on 12th June).

5th Victorian Mounted Rifles (780-806).  
9th Battery, R.F.A., 4 guns.  
"B" and "E" Sections Pompoms, 2 pompoms.  
1st Royal Munster Fusiliers (347).  
26th Co., Royal Engineers (23).  
20th Field Hospital (26).  
84th Co., Army Service Corps (20).

Of which the following were detached to Wilmansrust (22) under MAJOR MORRIS, R.F.A.:—

5th Victorian Mounted Rifles (350).  
Pompom Section, 2 pompoms.

**FOOTNOTES:**

[1] This table represents the columns as they were disposed at Midsummer 1901.

## PEACE

“On her knees, before the glory of the Lord,  
Britannia sheathes the lightnings of her sword;  
Once again, to utmost ends  
Of the Red Line it defends,  
She hath peace.”—SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

## THE SITUATION—FEBRUARY 1901

The reign of His Majesty King Edward VII. began in clouds! There was no denying that the last half-year had been one of retrogression. In June 1900, from the Orange River southwards, there had been comparative quietude. The southern and eastern half of the Orange River Colony had become fairly settled, while even in some districts of the Transvaal—towards the south-western area especially—the inhabitants gave indications of a willingness to accept British rule, and of a desire to return to their agricultural and peaceful avocations. But with the end of the year came a deplorable change. The enemy, broken up into a large number of desultory gangs, commenced raiding and wrecking, consequently the British forces, in order to cope with and pursue these vagrant bands, had to be broken up to correspond. The area of hostility and destruction grew larger daily and the difficulty of fighting more extreme. The lack of supplies now drove the Boers, who lived entirely on the country through which they passed, to spend their time in looting, in pouncing on the farms and small villages, and in seizing everything they might need. Stores, clothing, horses, cattle, all were grabbed at the point of the rifle, if not, as in some cases, delivered up on demand. To frustrate the tactics of the enemy, the British forces were compelled to denude the country of every movable thing, and to place whatever could be conveyed there in refuge camps which were established at points along the railway lines. But in this operation great loss was entailed, owing to the difficulty of finding sufficient grass for the number of collected animals, and of keeping them alive *en route*.

The loss of crops and stock became a still more serious matter than even the destruction of farm buildings—a measure which had almost entirely been abandoned. Having regard to the inexpensive character of these structures, this measure, to quote Sir Alfred Milner, was a “comparatively small item” in the total damage caused by the war to the agricultural community. But, he said, the wanton and malicious injury done to the headgear, stamps, and other apparatus of some of the outlying mines by Boer raiders was a form of destruction for which there was no excuse. It was a vandalism unjustified by the requirements of military operations and outside the scope of civilised warfare. Directly or indirectly, all South Africa, including the agricultural population, owes its prosperity to the mines, and, of course, especially to the mines of the Transvaal. To money made in mining it is indebted for such progress, even in agriculture, as it has recently made, and the same source will have to be relied upon for the recuperation of agriculture after the ravages of war. The damage done to the mines Lord Milner estimated was not large “relatively to the vast total amount of the fixed capital sunk in them. The mining area,” he said, “is excessively difficult to guard against purely predatory attacks having no military purpose, because it is, so to speak, ‘all length and no breadth’—one long thin line, stretching across the country from east to west for many miles. Still, garrisoned as Johannesburg now is, it was only possible successfully to attack a few points in it. Of the raids previously made, and they have been fairly numerous, only one has resulted in any serious damage. In that instance the injury done to the single mine attacked amounted to £200,000, and it is estimated that the mine is put out of working for two years. This mine is only one out of a hundred, and is not by any means one of the most important. These facts may afford some indication of the ruin which might have been inflicted, not only on the Transvaal and all South Africa, but on many European interests, if that general destruction of mine works which was contemplated just before our occupation of Johannesburg had been carried out. However serious in some respects may have been the military consequences of our rapid advance to Johannesburg, South Africa owes more than is commonly recognised to that brilliant dash forward, by which the vast mining apparatus, the foundation of all her wealth, was saved from the ruin threatening it.”

The events of the last six months promised to involve a more vast amount of repair and a longer period of recuperation, especially for agriculture, than would have been anticipated at the commencement of hostilities. Still, having regard to the fact that both the Rand and Kimberley were virtually undamaged, and that the main engines of prosperity, when once set going again, would not take very long to get into working order, the economic consequences of the war, though grave, did not appear by any means appalling. The country population it was admitted would need a good deal of help, first to preserve it from starvation, and then, probably, to supply it with a certain amount of capital to make a fresh start. And the great industry of the country would require some little time before it would be able to render any assistance. But, in a young country with great recuperative powers, many years would not elapse before the economic ravages of the war would be effaced.

Still, the moral effect of the recrudescence of the war was lamentable. Everywhere after the

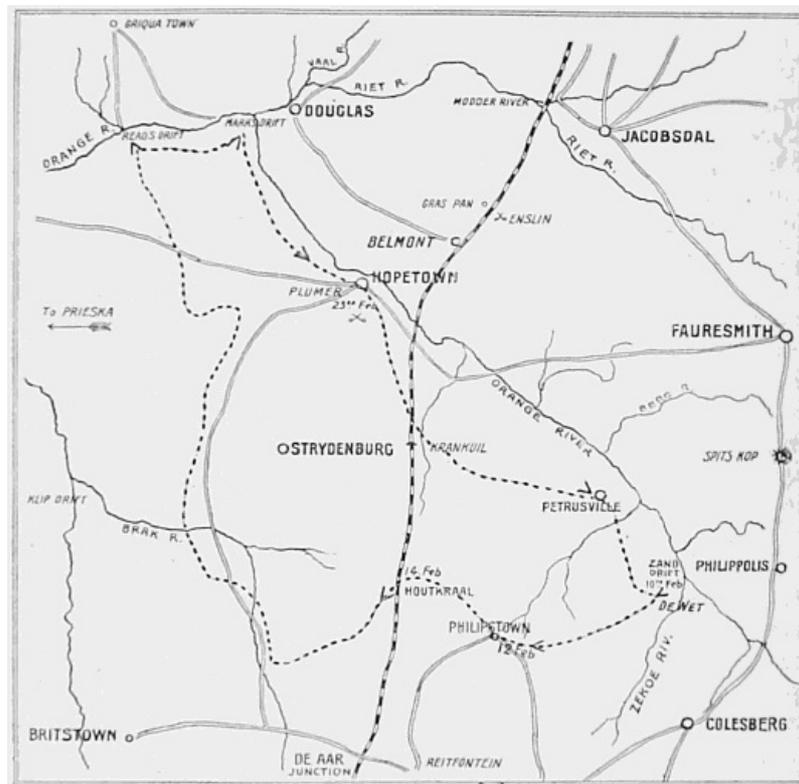
occupation of Pretoria the inhabitants had seemed resigned to the state of affairs—the feeling in the colony had been one of acquiescent relief. The rebellious element was glad of the opportunity to settle down. Had these people been shut off from communication with the enemy they would have maintained their calm, and engaged themselves with their former peaceful pursuits. As it was, while the great advance to Pretoria, and subsequently to Delagoa Bay, demanded the presence of the British troops in the north, the country was left open to raiders, who daily grew more audacious as the small successes of their guerilla leaders appeared to give promise of a turn of fortune's wheel.

And now came the real tug of war. These raiders, both on the brink of the Orange Colony and the Southern Transvaal, kept the peaceable inhabitants of the colony in an unenviable quandary. These, and many others, on taking the oath of neutrality, instead of being made prisoners of war, had been permitted to return to their farms. But under pressure from their old comrades, they now wavered between the obligations of their oath and the calls of friendship—and many of them fell. Men who had been exceptionally well treated were again in arms, sometimes justifying their break of faith by the poor apology that they had not been “preserved from the temptation to commit it.” Naturally, on the return of the troops to again quell a rising in the south, their conduct was not marked by the same leniency which had characterised the original conquest. Still, these parole breakers were not punished with the severity which might have been meted out to them in the same circumstances by other nations. Though we were by the rules of war entitled to shoot men who had broken their parole, we had not availed ourselves of the right.

We remained as humane as the exigence of discipline would permit. Efforts were made to check the general demoralisation by establishing refuge camps for the peaceable along the railway lines, but these camps were mainly tenanted by the women and children of burghers who still determined to flout us.

Lord Milner, in speaking of the situation in the new territories and the Cape Colony, described it as possibly “the most puzzling that we have had to confront since the beginning of the war.” On the one hand there was the outcry for greater severity and for a stricter administration of martial law. On the other hand, there was the expression of the fear that strict measures would only exasperate the people. He himself was in favour of reasonable strictness as the proper attitude in the presence of a grave national danger, and he further affirmed that exceptional regulations for a time of invasion, the necessity of which every man of sense could understand, if clearly explained and firmly adhered to, were not only not incompatible with, but actually conducive to, the avoidance of injustice and cruelty. He went on to say:—

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**DE WET'S RUSH IN CAPE COLONY VIA ZAND DRIFT, 10TH FEBRUARY 1901**

“I am satisfied by experience that the majority of those Dutch inhabitants of the Colony who sympathise with the Republics, however little they may be able to resist giving active expression to that sympathy when the enemy actually appear amongst them, do not desire to see their own districts invaded or to find themselves personally placed in the awkward dilemma of choosing between high treason and an unfriendly attitude to the men of their own race from beyond the border. There are extremists who would like to see the whole of the Cape Colony overrun. But the bulk of the farmers, especially the substantial ones, are not of this mind. They submit readily enough even to stringent regulations having for their object the prevention of the spread of invasion. And not a few of them are, perhaps, secretly glad that the prohibition of seditious

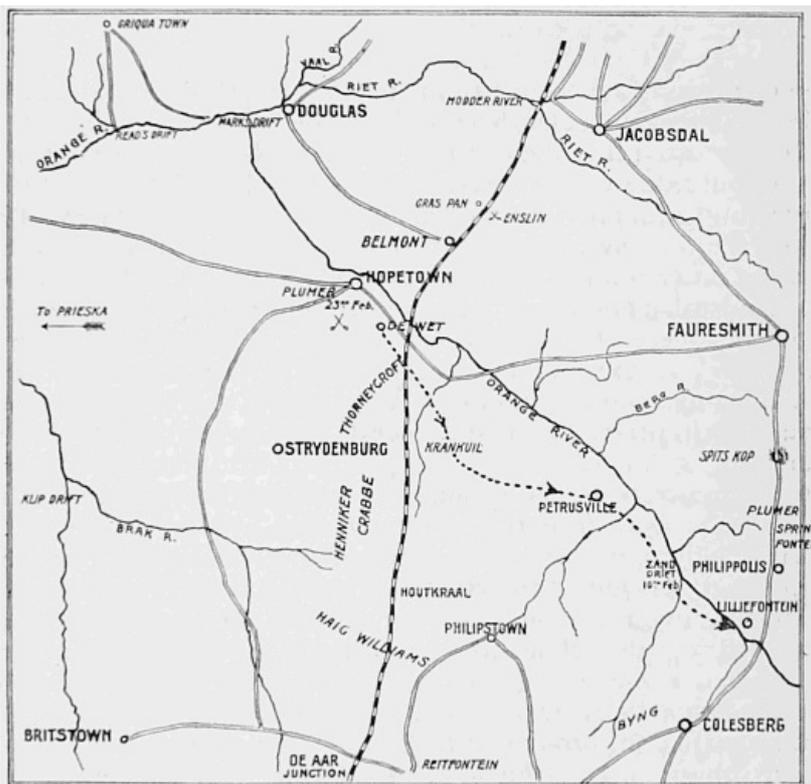
[Pg 5]

speaking and writing, of political meetings, and of the free movement of political firebrands through the country, enables them to keep quiet, without actually themselves taking a strong line against the propaganda, and, to do them justice, they behave reasonably well under the pass and other regulations necessary for that purpose, as long as care is taken not to make these regulations too irksome to them in the conduct of their business, or in their daily lives."

He suggested that the fact that there had been an invasion at all was no doubt due to the weakness of some of the Dutch colonists in tolerating, or supporting, the violent propaganda, which could not but lead the enemy to believe that they had only to come into the Colony in order to meet with general active support. But this had been a miscalculation on the part of the enemy, though a very pardonable one. They knew the vehemence of the agitation in their favour as shown by the speeches in Parliament, the series of public meetings culminating in the Worcester Congress, the writings of the Dutch press, the very general wearing of the Republican colours, the singing of the Volkslied, and so forth, and they regarded these demonstrations as meaning more than they actually did. Three things were forgotten. Firstly, that a great proportion of the Afrikaners in the Colony who really meant business, had slipped away and joined the Republican ranks long ago. Secondly, that the abortive rebellion of a year ago had left the people of the border districts disinclined to repeat the experiment of a revolt. Thirdly, that owing to the precautionary measures of the Government the amount of arms and ammunition in the hands of the country population throughout the greater part of the Colony is not now anything like as large as it usually was, and far smaller than it was at the onset of the war.

In regard to the "call to arms" that took place on the 1st of January, and the vehement response it had met, Lord Milner stated that it had always been admitted, by their friends and foes alike, that the bulk of the Afrikaner population would never take up arms on the side of the British Government in this quarrel, even for local defence. The appeal therefore had been virtually directed to the British population, mostly townspeople, and to a small, but no doubt very strong and courageous, minority of the Afrikaners who have always been loyalists. These classes had been already immensely drawn on by the Cape Police, the regular Volunteer Corps, and the numerous Irregular Mounted Corps which had been called into existence because of the war. There must have been 12,000 Cape colonists under arms before the recent appeal, and as things were going, as many more promised to answer that appeal—a truly remarkable achievement under a purely voluntary system.

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**POSITION OF TROOPS AFTER THE ENGAGEMENT OF 23RD FEBRUARY. DE WET'S ESCAPE FROM THE ENVELOPING CORDON, 28TH FEBRUARY 1901**

How gloriously the system worked throughout the year 1901 has yet to be seen, for peace was still a great way off. All yearned for it, all were fairly sick of carnage and ruin and sacrifice, but, nevertheless, it was agreed that to endure and fight to the bitter end were preferable to an ignoble compromise, which must inevitably bring about a recurrence of the terrible scourge in the future. All were determined that South Africa should become one country under one flag, and that the British; and this once accomplished, they would be ready to bury racial animosities for ever. But, in order to bring about that happy, that inevitable end, all decided that a vigorous prosecution of the war, at whatever cost, was an imperative duty.

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# CHAPTER I

## CONTINUATION OF THE DE WET CHASE, 1ST TO 10TH MARCH—ACROSS THE ORANGE RIVER

On the last day of February, as we know, De Wet and Steyn, with a bedraggled, hungry commando of some fifteen hundred Boers, precipitately crossed the Orange River at Lilliefontein, near Colesberg Bridge. They were seen by some few men of Nesbitt's Horse under Sergeant-Major Surworth, and promptly fired upon as men and horses strove to battle with the current. This unlooked for attack caused considerable dismay, so much so, that many Cape carts and some clothing were left on the south bank, while several fugitives were seen to be galloping off in Garden of Eden attire. Many Boers were left in the neighbourhood of the Zeekoe River, and of these some thirty-three were captured by Captain Dallimore and sixteen Victorian Rifles.

The retirement becoming known to General Lyttelton, who was directing the operations, the pursuing columns were ordered to converge on Philippolis. General Plumer, Colonels Haig and Thorneycroft, entering Orange River by Norval's Pont, operated from Springfontein to the river, while General C. Knox and Colonel Bethune at Orange River Bridge mounted guard there, and threatened such marauders as might retire in their direction. On the arrival of General Plumer at Philippolis, on the 3rd, he discovered that De Wet was fleeing to Fauresmith, and Hertzog, with 500 men, was making for Luckhoff. He therefore, with almost inexhaustible energy, instantly pursued the great raider, and after a rearguard action on the 4th at Zuurfontein, reached Fauresmith on the 5th, only to find the bird flown *viâ* the Petrusburg Road. On and on then went the troops, past Petrusburg—De Wet ever twenty-four hours ahead—till they reached Abraham Kraal Drift on the Modder River. By this time (the 7th) the Boer flock had dispersed over the enormous track of country with which they are so intimate, and De Wet himself vanished, as usual, into "thin air." The 8th was spent in recuperation, replenishing stores, and gaining information. On the following two days the northerly march was continued in search of De Wet, who was reported to have crossed the line (on the night of the 8th) on the way to Senekal. But, as the redoubtable one trekked at the rate of some five miles a day more than the best column, General Plumer gave him up as lost, and marched to Brandfort, and thence proceeded under orders to Winburg. The chase had been far from stimulating, for heavy rain had fallen, causing much inconvenience to man and beast, and hindering transport operations. The veldt, however, soon assumed a rich green garb, which rendered all the English horses independent of the Commissariat Department.

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Meanwhile Colonel Haig, in conjunction, had moved to Philippolis on the 4th, only to learn that General Plumer was on the track of De Wet. He therefore turned his attention to Hertzog, caught him on the 5th at Grootfontein, ten miles north-west of Philippolis, engaged him and forced him westward. He then waited orders at Springfontein lest a more speedy movement by rail might be directed.

Colonel Bethune, in his position near Orange River Bridge, spent this time in fighting and dispersing large bodies of raiders, passing at length *viâ* Petrusburg, on the 6th, to the line Abraham's Kraal, Roodewal, on the 8th. Here he halted. An empty convoy returning from him to Bloemfontein was attacked by the Boers, but the escort tackled the enemy, and, with the assistance of the Prince of Wales' Light Horse, put them to flight.

General C. Knox's columns (Colonels Pilcher and Crewe, moving by way of Kalabas Bridge and Koffyfontein respectively), advanced at the same time, reaching Bloemfontein on the 10th and 11th, the astute Pilcher having captured a Boer laager by the way. He had three killed, eleven wounded, three missing, and his captures included twenty-four prisoners, 1500 horses, and some cattle.

Colonel Crewe engaged in a smart tussle with Brand's commando at Olivenberg (south-west of Petrusburg), and reached his destination *plus* five prisoners, twenty-one waggons and carts with teams complete, and 2000 horses.

During March, Major Goold-Adams, the Deputy-Administrator of the Orange River Colony, in whom the burghers placed much confidence, bent his mind to the organisation of the civil administration of the colony. Mr. Conrad Linder, an ex-official of the late Government, was provisionally appointed registrar. A scheme of education, based on the Canadian principle, was drawn up, and the organisation of the civil police taken in hand. The Imperial authorities were engaged in a scheme for restocking the country after the war by establishing stock depots on the Government farms in both the Transvaal and Orange River.



**MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES KNOX.**

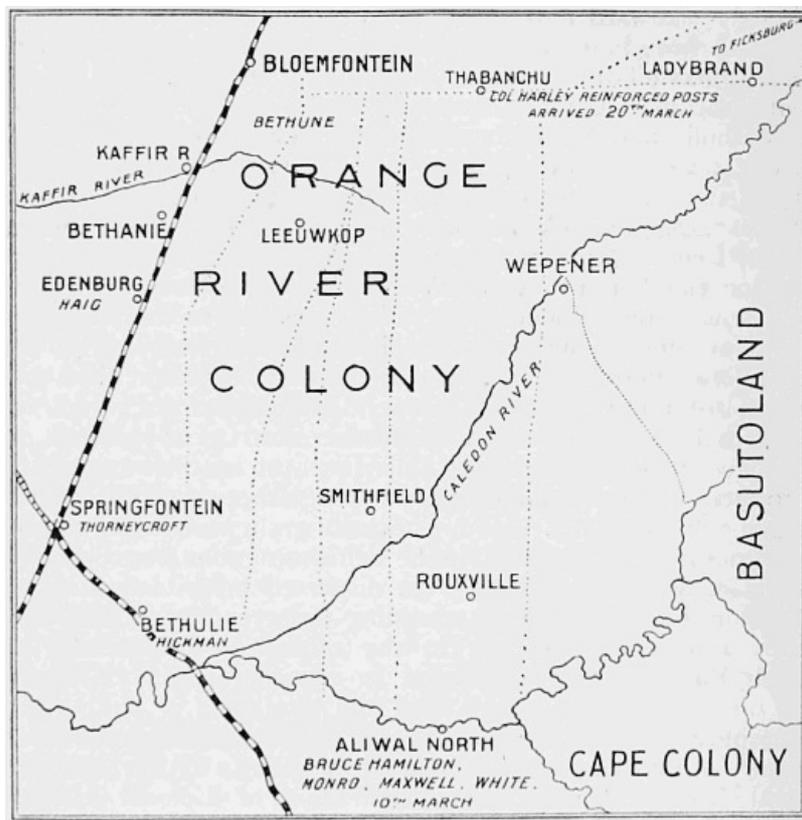
Photo Elliott & Fry, London.

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### **LYTTELTON'S SWEEPING MOVEMENT—10<sup>TH</sup> TO 20<sup>TH</sup> MARCH— THABANCHU LINE**

The enemy, under the direction of Fourie, in many small gangs of from two to four hundred, still hovered in the region between the Orange River and the Thabanchu-Ladybrand line. With the object of sweeping them up, General Lyttelton organised a combined northward movement which began on the 10th of March. General Bruce-Hamilton's columns, under Lieutenant-Colonels Monro, Maxwell, and White pushed up from Aliwal North, Colonel Hickman and Lieutenant-Colonel Thorneycroft moved out from Bethulie and Springfontein respectively, prolonging the line on the left to the railway, while Colonel Haig's troops advanced from Edenburg. Later on, as the columns swept upwards, Colonel Bethune's Brigade took its place in the scheme, filling the gap between Leeuw Kop and Boesman's Kop, with its right flank resting on the Kaffir River. While these were marching up, the line of posts from Bloemfontein *viâ* Thabanchu to the Basutoland border was temporarily reinforced by Colonel Harley, who, with some 200 mounted men, two guns, and a battalion, had been detached from the portion of General Rundle's force which was holding Ficksburg. The road still further north, near Houtnek, was watched by Colonel Pilcher to guard against hostile movement in that region. The combined advance, though there was little fighting, was decidedly successful. Heavy stocks of grain were found, and such as could not be accommodated in the British waggons were destroyed. Though, as usual, the Boers were dispersed in driblets and most of the farms were deserted and the property abandoned, some of their number got caught in the meshes of the military net. Colonel Pilcher's men succeeded in securing some thirty-three Boers and about 3000 horses, and the total haul of the columns on reaching the Thabanchu line on the 20th amounted to 70 prisoners, 4300 horses, and many trek oxen. After this date General Bruce-Hamilton's force and that of Colonel Hickman disposed themselves between Wepener and Dewetsdorp, while Colonel Haig was ordered to keep his eye on rambling raiders from Cape Colony, in the region of the Caledon. Colonel Bethune's Brigade, marching north *viâ* Winburg and Ventersburg, soon swelled the mounted force of some 7000 men, being organised at Kroonstad (under the command of General Elliot), and Colonel Thorneycroft, now under orders of General C. Knox, took up a position at Brandfort. This place at that time was somewhat harassed by meandering marauders, who were in the habit of taking up a nightly post on a hill near by. These were surprised by the mounted infantry and burgher police, and their number considerably thinned.

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**OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH-EAST OF THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY**

From all points the clearance of the Colony was pursued with vigour. On the 24th Colonel White, in the Thabanchu region, surprised parties of Boers, capturing six waggons, thirty-four horses, and some cattle, and on the 25th some smart work was done by a detachment of Lancers, Yeomanry, and Rimington's Guides, who drove off and dispersed various portions of Fourie's commando without loss to themselves. At this time Fourie, Joubert, Pretorius, and Coetzee had been all hanging about the neighbourhood of Dewetsdorp, and on the 25th and 26th some spirited encounters took place between them and Captain Damant, who, with some of Rimington's Scouts, engaged in many perilous excursions. On the 27th General Bruce-Hamilton, with Hickman's column and Rimington's Scouts, moved out with a view to clearing off the snipers that fringed the surrounding hills. The Scouts and the Lancaster Mounted Infantry routed the Boers from one position after another, chasing them for miles as far as Blesbokfontein, where they dispersed. Meanwhile on the left, near Byersberg, our troops had discovered the Boer laager, whereupon Rimington's Scouts rode round the position, driving the enemy, who scampered from their concealment in the ridges, in a south-westerly direction. Owing to the exhaustion of the horses the pursuit could not be continued, but the troops returned to camp with a goodly show of horses, cattle, and Cape carts as a prize for their endurance.

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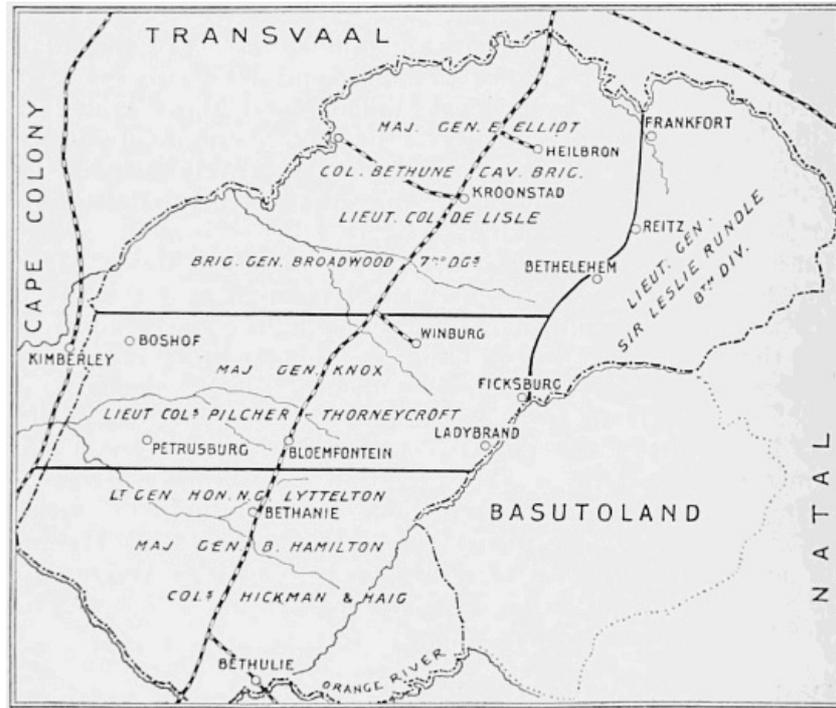
Concurrently with the activities in the south-east of the Orange River Colony, in the region of Winburg and Heilbron, good work had been going forward. Colonel Williams and Major Pine Coffin, working in combination, had cleared the Doornberg, a supply depot, which, owing to De Wet's absence, was but weakly guarded. All stock was removed, and during the operations General P. Botha and seven Boers were killed and many were taken prisoners. Colonel Williams and the combined forces, reinforced by Major Massy's column from Edenburg, now took up a position near the Vet and Zand Rivers, in order to catch De Wet should he break northward. But as this leader was now in hiding, "taking a breather" for fresh nimbleness in future, it was found unnecessary to wait there, and the column moved on towards Heilbron. Here, accompanied by a detachment from the garrison under Major Weston, Colonel Williams continued his work of clearance, fighting betimes, and capturing grain, forage, foodstuffs, and ammunition in great quantities. Colonel Williams then moved to the north of Heilbron, performing the same task of clearance between the Wilge River and the main line of rail. This occupation took him well into April, of which month more anon.

During the middle of March Lord Kitchener engaged himself with the rearrangement of the mobile columns in the Orange River Colony, dividing the place into four military districts. Each district was placed under the control of a General Officer, whose duty it was to deal with any encroachments of the enemy, to prevent the concentration of commandos, and to clear the country of horses and cattle, and any supplies which might stimulate the marauders to new exertion. The southern district, bounded on the south by the Orange River, on the north by the line Petrusburg-Ladybrand, on the west by the Kimberley Railway, on the east by Basutoland, was entrusted to General Lyttelton, his force including the columns of General Bruce-Hamilton and Colonels Hickman and Haig.

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The central district, bounded on the south by General Lyttelton's command, on the north by the Bultfontein-Winburg-Ficksburg line, extending to Boshof, was assigned to General C. Knox, with whom were the columns of Colonels Pilcher and Thorneycroft.

The northern district, including part of Orange River Colony north of General C. Knox's command, bounded on the east by the Frankfort-Reitz-Bethlehem line, was allotted to General Elliot, whose troops consisted of Colonel Bethune's Cavalry Brigade, Colonel de Lisle's Column (withdrawn from Cape Colony), and General Broadwood's Brigade, composed of 7th Dragoon Guards, three battalions Imperial Yeomanry, and six guns.



**REORGANISATION OF TROOPS IN THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY**

The eastern district, as before, remained in charge of General Rundle, who, with the original 8th Division and some Mounted Infantry and Yeomanry, protected the line Frankfort-Reitz-Bethlehem-Ficksburg.

By the end of March recruiting for General Baden-Powell's Police ceased. The work of training, clothing, mounting, and equipping was carried on with all speed, and the recruits who arrived from England promptly displayed their grit and their zeal by withstanding the assaults of the Boers, who invariably attacked such districts as they fancied were in charge of the "raw" element. The new-comers were no fledgelings, however, for the members of the Constabulary were mostly gentlemen or farmers of a high class, selected with a view to making good colonists.

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## CHAPTER II

### CAPE COLONY—PURSUIT OF RAIDERS—MARCH AND APRIL—CHASING KRUITZINGER

While the pursuit of De Wet was going forward, our troops under General Settle, and subsequently under Colonel Douglas Haig (Colonels Henniker, Gorringe, Grenfell, Scobell, and Crewe), worked unceasingly against the Boer raiders who were making themselves obstreperous in various parts of the Colony. Pearston was occupied by seven hundred of the enemy with two guns, who captured sixty rifles and 15,000 rounds of ammunition, in spite of the gallant defence of the tiny garrison. The invaders, a part of Kruitzinger's commando, were promptly swept away by Colonel Gorringe, who reoccupied the place on the 5th, and caused the fugitives to be pursued. Accordingly the commando broke into three parties and fled eastward over the railway.

About the same time one hundred raiders, under Scheepers, made a desperate attack upon the village of Aberdeen—an attack which happily failed owing to the smartness of the garrison. This consisted of a portion of the 4th Derbyshire Militia, Town Guard, and twenty men of the 9th Lancers, under Colonel Priestly. The Boers, however, succeeded in penetrating into the town, and releasing some of their compatriots who were in gaol. They further tried to loot the stores, but were not given the opportunity, so promptly did the Town Guard send them to the right-about. Colonel Parsons arrived on the scene in the afternoon, followed, the next day, by Colonel Scobell and some Colonials, and soon, though not without sharp fighting, the kopjes surrounding the place were purged of the raiders. The sharpshooters of the Imperial Yeomanry under Major Warden were untiring in the energy of their pursuit of the enemy from hill to hill, and the detachment of the 6th Dragoons under Captain Anstice helped in the discomfiture of the foe. These escaped by means of the thick bush and dongas, which afforded them timely cover.

It was now necessary to prevent Scheepers and his Boers from entering Murraysburg. To

circumvent him, Colonel Scobell—commanding a force of Cape Mounted Rifles, Cape Police, Diamond Fields Horse, and Brabant's Horse, with some guns—marched hot foot at the rate of fifty-nine miles in less than twenty-five hours. Meanwhile Captain Colenbrander, commanding the Fighting Scouts, moved promptly from Richmond towards Murraysburg, located Scheepers' hordes in an adjacent village, and attacked them. The enemy were repulsed with the loss of five of their number, while the British party had no casualties.

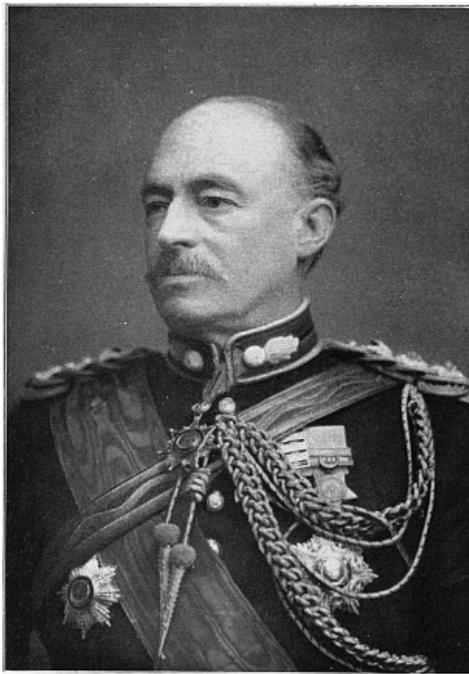
[Pg 15]

Kruitzinger's commando, continuing its depredations, seized Carlisle Bridge with a view to pressing towards Grahamstown, but the activity of Colonels De Lisle and Gorringe frustrated all effort to get to the sea. The invaders gave a vast amount of trouble, however, burning farms and securing horses, and several encounters took place. In one of these, a few miles from Adelaide, Captain Rennie and some of the Bedford detachment of the Colonial Defence Corps gave an excellent account of themselves. The Boers lost one man killed, one taken prisoner, and three wounded, together with six horses.

The raiders were routed from Maraisburg, which was reoccupied by the British on the 8th; but in the interval the magistrate had had a somewhat uncomfortable experience, having been imprisoned in his own house. The enemy reaped a certain reward of their exertions in the form of some horses, saddles, and a revolver. They afterwards broke into small gangs, and were hunted by Colonel Donald's column.

The 15th found Colonels Scobell and Colenbrander's columns still in pursuit of Scheepers, who, having caused some commotion by burning the house of a British scout named Meredith, was now hiding in the mountains around Graf Reinet. Colonel Gorringe at the same time was dodging about the neighbourhood of Kruitzinger (who had abandoned the hope of going south, and was now making for Blinkwater) and keeping him perpetually on the move. Space does not admit of a detailed account of these continuous activities, but in an engagement on the 15th some smart work was done by Captain Stewart, assisted by Gunner Sawyer (5th Field Battery). While the guns were being hauled up a precipitous slope, and most of the gunners were dismounted, they were assailed by a furious fire from the ambushed foe. With admirable presence of mind, Sawyer took in the situation, and, with the assistance of Captain Stewart, unlimbered one of the guns and gave the Boers a *quid pro quo*. This considerably damped their ardour, and afforded time for the rest of the guns to come into action. The position was finally stormed by the Albany defence force under Captain Currie. In the engagement nine Boers were killed and nine wounded. On the 17th, after a sharp action, the Boers, abandoning seventy excellent horses and saddles, besides losing some forty of their number, were driven across Elands River. Kruitzinger got across the Elands River in safety, but, while turning an angle of the main road towards Tarkastad, on the morning of the 18th, he came suddenly in collision with Colonel de Lisle, who, by night, was marching—a memorable march in a terrific storm!—from Magermansberg to Tarkastad. The British force, as surprised at the sudden encounter as that of the Boers, promptly sprang to action, and succeeded in shelling the rearguard, while the Mounted Infantry started off in pursuit. From ridge to ridge went hunted and hunters, the Irish Yeomanry, under Captain Moore, with Mounted Infantry, under Colonel Knight, doing splendid work; but at last the wily quarry, through some of the troops having lost direction, succeeded in getting away through the loophole of Elands Poort. Kruitzinger, still maintaining a north-easterly direction, was next traced across the railway at Hemming Station on the 21st. Scheepers, Fouché, and Malan, who had growing forces, and had been beaten, with the loss of nine killed and seven wounded, by Major Mullins on the 15th, were proceeding east from Marais Siding. Other detached parties gave trouble elsewhere. Some, on the 16th, attacked at Yeefontein, near Steymburg, a patrol of Prince Alfred's Guards under Major Court, but left behind them two killed, three wounded, and three prisoners, while the Guards lost one killed and two seriously wounded. Fighting was taking place in various other places daily. On the 20th and 21st Colonel Scobell's force, increased by Colonel Grenfell's, skirmished in the region north of Jansenville with excellent effect. Kitchener's Fighting Scouts, under Captain Colenbrander, Major Mullins, and Colonel Gorringe converged from their various positions, while the main body made for Blaankrantz. On the 20th, by 9 A.M., a hammer-and-tongs engagement had begun, Captain Doune's two guns being met by a blizzard from the foe in the surrounding ridges. The assailants were, however, rapidly silenced and forced to retire, the British party taking up the vacated position, and "speeding the parting guest" with a salvo from pom-poms, rifles, and field-guns. But the enemy could not be entirely netted, for in ones and twos they squeezed through the bushes and made their escape. Four, however, were left on the veldt, and four were taken prisoners, while about one hundred sound horses came in handy at a time when they were much in demand. The British force lost three killed and four wounded.

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**MAJOR-GENERAL SIR H. H.  
SETTLE.**

Photo Elliott & Fry, London.

Kruitzienger at this time was being gradually pressed towards the Orange River (which was known to be unfordable) by Colonel de Lisle's column, which formed part of a cordon, composed of the columns of Colonels Gorringe, Herbert, and Major Crewe on one side, and Colonels Crabbe, Codrington, and Henniker on the other. Nearly all the commandos which had invaded the Colony were retracing their sorry steps after the failure of their expedition. The fact that they had been able to keep the field so long was attributed to the persistent way in which they avoided fighting, and their mode of hugging the sheltering kopjes and bushes, and never emerging from those beneficent harbours of refuge. According to good authority, the raiders succeeded in gaining certain recruits among the Colonial Dutch, but not nearly so many as they had expected. They were amply supplied with food from the sympathetic rural population, however, and received on all sides timely information of the movements of the pursuing columns, which enabled them to double like hares at the very moment when the pursuers seemed about to pounce on them.

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Train-wrecking continued, and of necessity the running of night trains had to be suspended. Some of the raiders began to drive over the less known drifts of the Orange and disappear, while certain rebels contrived to hide themselves in the mountain fastnesses so as to escape both the Boer bands and the British pursuit. On the 30th of March a skirmish took place between some of Henniker's troops (Victorian Bushmen) and a large force of Boers, during which the Colonials again showed their tenacity and grit. An advanced party of four only, under a splendid fellow, Sergeant Sandford, were set upon by the foe in the vicinity of Zuurberg. The enemy succeeded in wounding a Bushman, who fell beneath his dead horse, and was there pinned. His companions, under a perpetual sleet from the marauders' Mausers, with great coolness engaged in the immensely difficult task of moving the dead animal and drawing out their comrade from his perilous position. They then managed to mount the rescued man on Sergeant Sandford's horse and all got away in safety. Reinforcements arriving now frightened off the Boers, who had lost four of their number.

On the whole, things were progressing wonderfully. At the headquarters of General Baden-Powell's Constabulary at Modderfontein 2000 more recruits were now expected to join the 1000 already on duty there. Australian and Canadian drafts were to follow. The clerical staff of the Rand Mines' Corporation was about to proceed from the Cape to Johannesburg, a sure sign of approaching settlement. A warning to colonists was soon published stating that acts of rebellion committed after April 12 would not be tried under the Special Tribunals Act of last session, but by the old common law, the penalties under which include capital punishment or any term of imprisonment or fine which an ordinary court may impose.

On the 6th of April a post, ten miles north of Aberdeen, consisting of one hundred men of the 5th Lancers, thirty-two Imperial Yeomanry under Captain Bretherton, and Brabant's Horse, was assailed by a horde of 400 Boers. After fighting vigorously from dawn till 11 A.M. the force was overpowered. Twenty-five of the number only escaped—one was killed and six were wounded.

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On the 11th, Colonel Byng surprised a laager near Smithfield, captured thirteen tatterdemalions, who were not loth to rest, and some horses and stores.

Colonel Haig, on the 12th, reached Rosmead and took command of all the columns operating in the midlands, and he soon began the hunting of Scheepers' and Malan's commandos with his flying columns. According to Reuter's correspondent, the Boer forces in the midlands at this date

comprised Scheepers, with 180 men, in the Sneeuwberg; Malan, with forty men, reported to be breaking northward; Swanepoel, with sixty men, near New Bethseda; and Fouché, with a force estimated variously at several hundreds, in the Zuurberg.

On the 14th of April Colonel Gorringe returned to Pretoria after three months' of exceptionally hard work and incessant trekking over some of the worst country in South Africa. His Colonial column had done on an average a daily trek of some thirty-one and a half miles. On one occasion, when rushing to the succour of Pearston<sup>[2]</sup> when it was overpowered by raiders, these hardy troopers, with guns and equipments, covered seventy-four miles in forty hours, crossing the frowning heights of Coelzeeberg by a bridle path.

General MacDonald now proceeded to England in order to take up command of an important post on the Afghan frontier, and General Fitzroy Hart succeeded him in command of the 3rd Brigade. Sir Alfred Milner made preparations to go home on leave.

On the 24th the Dordrecht Volunteer Guard and Wodehouse's Yeomanry gave an excellent account of themselves. They were attacking raiders for the most part of the day, and sent the Dutchmen to the right-about, capturing their horses and forcing them to make good their escape on Shanks' pony.

On the 29th Major Du Moulin's column, accompanied by Lovat's Scouts under Major Murray, arrived at Aliwal North from Orange River Colony, bringing with it 30 prisoners, 60,000 sheep, 6000 head of cattle, 100 waggons, 800 refugees, and 300 horses.

#### FOOTNOTES:

[2] See page 8.

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## CHAPTER III

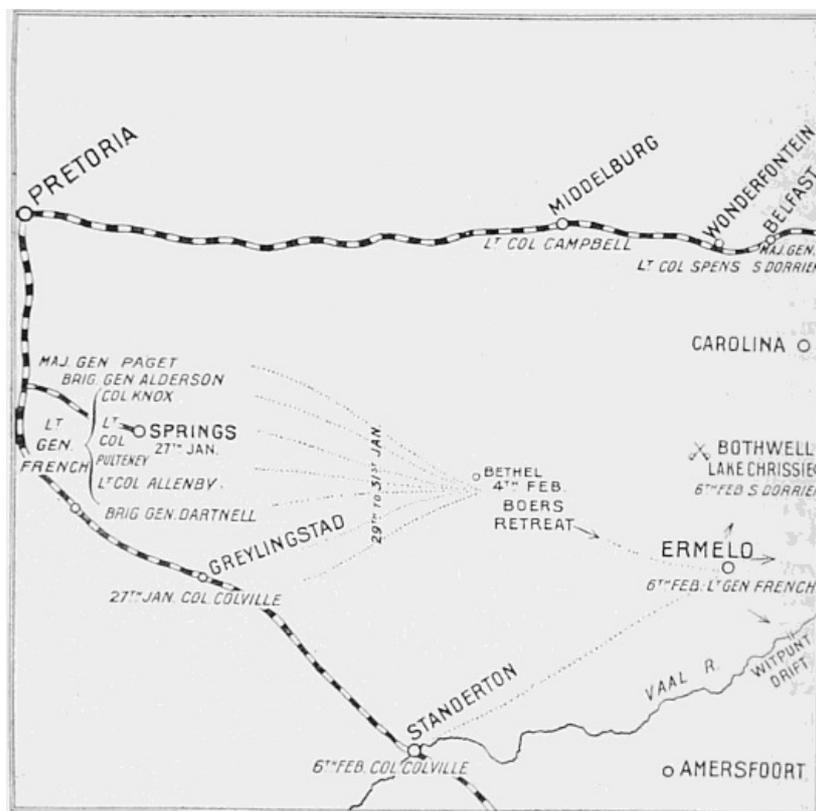
### THE OPERATIONS OF GENERAL FRENCH IN THE EASTERN TRANSVAAL, FROM 27TH JANUARY TO 16TH APRIL 1901

It may be remembered that at the close of 1900 the Boer chiefs, De Wet and Botha, had invented a concerted scheme of some magnitude. They had arranged that Hertzog should enter Cape Colony and proceed to Lambert's Bay to meet a ship which was said to be bringing from Europe mercenaries, guns, and ammunition. De Wet was to follow south *viâ* De Aar, join hands with Hertzog, and together, with renewed munitions of war and a tail of rebels at their heels, attack Cape Town. General Botha at the same time was to keep the British occupied in the Eastern Transvaal and prevent them drawing off troops to the south, and, so soon as the plans of De Wet and Hertzog were being carried out, he was to enter Natal with a picked force of 5000 mounted men and make for Durban.

Having seen how the parent scheme, the invasion of the Cape Colony, was frustrated, it is necessary to turn to scheme two, and follow General French in the remarkable operations which defeated Botha's designs. A considerable concentration of Boers, under the Commandants Louis Botha, Smuts, Spruyt, and Christian Botha, had taken place in Ermelo, Carolina, and Bethel, which districts constituted depôts for the supply of the enemy's forces. The Commander-in-chief therefore decided to sweep the country between the Delagoa and Natal Railway lines, from Johannesburg to the Swazi and Zulu frontiers, and to clear it of supplies and families. With this object in view, on the 28th of January the following columns were concentrated from the meridian of Springs: Major-General Paget, Brigadier Alderson, Colonel E. Knox (18th Hussars), Lieutenant-Colonel Allenby (6th Dragoons), Lieutenant-Colonel Pulteney (Scots Guards), and Brigadier-General Dartnell (Commandant of Volunteers, Natal).

The troops—the southern columns under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir John French—were to form a north and south line between the railway, and thus drive the enemy before them to Ermelo. They were commanded from north to south in the order shown above. While this line was advancing, Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and Lieutenant-Colonel Spens, moving a march south from Middelburg and Wonderfontein, were to act as side stops, while Major-General Smith-Dorrien, with a force 3000 strong, was to advance from Belfast *viâ* Carolina to Lake Chrissie, for the purpose of preventing the Boers from breaking north-east. A weak column, under Lieutenant-Colonel Colville (Rifle Brigade), was to work south of Colonel Dartnell to cover the movement of supplies, first from Greylingstad to the north, and then from Standerton to Ermelo.

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**MAP SHOWING THE OPERATIONS AND DISPOSITIONS OF TROOPS IN THE EASTERN TRANSVAAL**

Eventually, owing to the movements of De Wet, General Paget was recalled from this sphere of action, and his place was taken by Colonel Campbell. General Alderson's and Knox's lines of advance were slightly diverted to the north, and the line between them was filled by Lieutenant-Colonel Pulteney, who originally was to have been held in reserve.

The first two marches took the western troops to a line north of Greylingstad to Vangatfontein, in the valley of the Wilge River, where there was a two days' halt till the 31st. The march was not without excitement, for Beyers was found to be ensconced in a strong and extended position stretching north and south, and covering the approach to the valley of the Wilge River. Bushman's Kop, fourteen miles east of Springs, was strongly held, and the advanced troops of Knox and Allenby were assailed with fierce artillery from the surrounding heights. But when Allenby's mounted men had wheeled round the south of the position, the Boers thought it high time to retreat, leaving behind them two dead. This was on the 29th. Two days were spent in receiving supplies from Greylingstad and sending the emptied waggons full of Boer families to the rail and clearing the country of supplies.

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The Boers, holding a chain of sloping hills some twenty-three miles west of Bethal, were again encountered on the 1st of February. While Colonel Rimington (commanding Colonel Pulteney's mounted troops) worked round the north of the position, Colonel Allenby and the rest of Pulteney's troops held them in front. But the wily Dutchmen, now rapidly becoming demoralised, instantly they found their flank threatened, were off to the east before they could be cut off. The commanders on the right had also met with slight opposition.

The operations of the 2nd of February much resembled those of the previous day, for some 2000 Boers, who had planted themselves about ten miles west of Bethal, ceased their opposition to Colonel Allenby, when they found Pulteney's cavalry sweeping round to their north, and they made such haste to depart that they left behind them an English 15-pounder gun, with damaged breech. The village of Bethal was reached by General French on the 4th, all Boers, save a few women and children, having fled. The troops were now hurriedly pushing forward with a view to surrounding Ermelo. Their position was as follows: Allenby on the south-east; Dartnell on the south and south-west; Pulteney on the west; Knox on the north-west; Anderson and Campbell on the north; and Smith-Dorrien on the north-east and east. The enemy, seeing security at this place thus threatened, split into two factions. Louis Botha, with a following of some 3000 men, scurried to the north toward Komati without impediment, in the form of families and stock, while the rest, protecting their waggons, retreated toward Piet Retief. Botha, while scurrying as aforesaid, discovered on the 5th that Smith-Dorrien's force, about 3000 strong (with a big convoy for his own, Campbell's, and Alderson's columns), had reached Bothwell, north of Lake Chrissie. Here was a fine chance! and the Boer leader speedily availed himself of it. He determined to attack the British column before the troops of Campbell and Alderson, moving from the west, could get in touch with it. Accordingly, dividing his force into three, and rising betimes, in the thick mists of daybreak, on the 6th, he delivered a vigorous semicircular attack upon the camp. This was successfully repulsed.

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The Boers lost heavily, General Spruyt and several field-cornets being among the slain. The British had one officer and twenty-three men killed, three officers and fifty-two men wounded.

Some 300 horses were killed or stampeded during the surprise. The Boers, owing to the heavy fog of the morning, got away to the north. At the moment Botha was making his attack on the camp, the officer bearing orders from General French for General Smith-Dorrien, after an exciting and hazardous ride, reached Bothwell. Owing to the fight these orders—to move on the 6th to a position E.N.E. of Ermelo—could then not be executed. General Smith-Dorrien therefore remained at Bothwell.

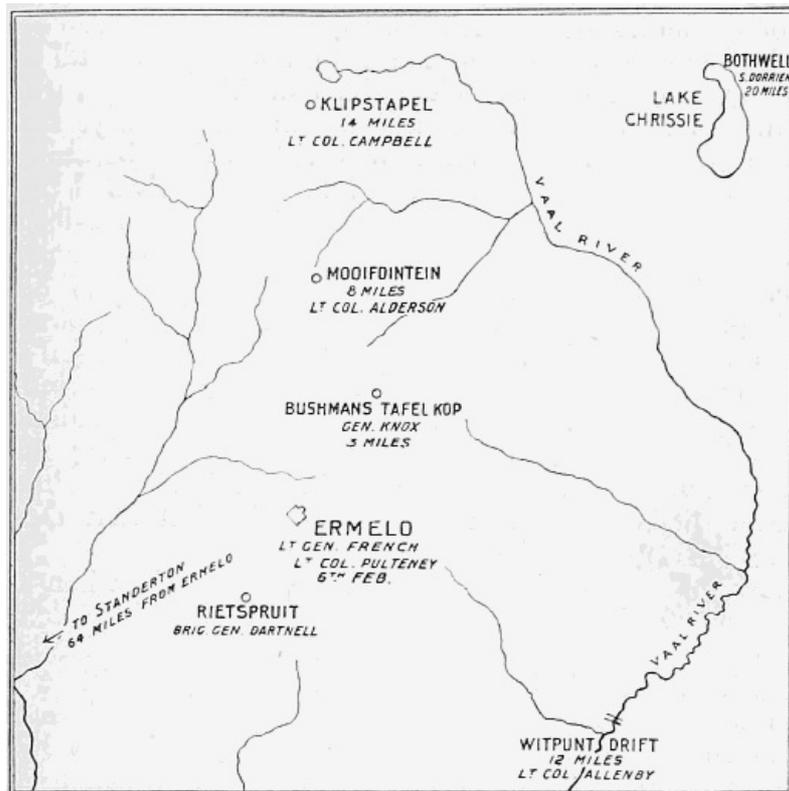
Meanwhile, in the south, fighting went forward. Colonel Allenby, who had been rapidly pushing east, came on the enemy's rearguard, which was occupying a ridge south of Ermelo. With infantry and artillery, and supported by Dartnell's Brigade, he engaged them, holding them on the west while the mounted troops endeavoured to wheel round the southern flank and surround them. But the Boers, who had had a long start, nimbly made good their escape over the Vaal at Witpunt before Allenby's troops could possibly reach that point, and consequently the brilliant attempt to cut off their retreat proved a failure. Ermelo was occupied on the 6th, and thus the first phase of the operations was accomplished.

It was now necessary to sweep the country from Ermelo to the Swazi frontier, which movement occupied from the 9th to the 16th of February. To this end the flanks were immediately opened out again, and the line Bothwell-Ermelo-Amersfoort taken. From this line the force wheeled half-right, the left flank (rationed on reduced scale up to the 20th) beginning to extend east towards Swaziland on the 9th.

The whole force was now so ordered as to form a complete cordon for the purpose of hemming in the enemy and their belongings in the south-eastern corner of the Transvaal. The troops were here to converge on Amsterdam and Piet Retief from north and south-west, and, with the escort to the convoy from Utrecht, were to form a line from Utrecht and the Natal frontier to the Swazi frontier north of Piet Retief. On the 9th General Smith-Dorrien, moving east-north-east, encountered the Boers, and Colonel Mackenzie and his gallant men, with the assistance of the 2nd Imperial Light Horse, succeeded in capturing a convoy and putting twenty-one Boers *hors de combat* by a brilliant charge.

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Affairs were somewhat hampered by lack of supplies, but at last (on the 10th) a convoy from Standerton having come in, the right wing (Dartnell and Allenby) were provided for. On the following day General French moved on, while Colville's emptied waggons started back with a pathetic load of Boer families and prisoners and British sick.



**POSITION OF FORCES AROUND ERMELO**

On the 12th, the Boers offered some opposition to the advancing troops of Pulteney and Allenby, and near Klipfontein they, for a wonder, made a stand, and gave Colonel Rimington and the Inniskilling Dragoons an opportunity for smart work. A dashing charge, magnificently led, cleared the ground, and five dead Boers and some wounded were left to tell the tale of the encounter.

On the 13th Dartnell, who had taken up a position at Amersfoort, moved from thence steadily in line with the whole force, which proceeded with insignificant opposition to clear away stock and destroy supplies.

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Amsterdam was occupied by Smith-Dorrien on the 14th, and on the 16th General French, with

the troops of Knox and Pulteney, made his entry into Piet Retief, where the landdrost at once surrendered. Rains had now made the already almost impassable country into one mighty morass, and the mists, fogs, and torrents rendered the position of the troops a critical one. Great consternation prevailed as to the fate of Colonel Burn-Murdoch, on whom all hopes were set. He had been charged by the General Officer Commanding in Natal with the duty of conveying, from Utrecht, food to the force, and had apparently got lost in the mists and bog, for not a sign of his anxiously awaited convoy could be discovered. This convoy had left Newcastle on the 12th, but it was not till the 27th that its welcome supplies reached the famishing troops, who, from the 20th, had had to subsist entirely on the country, while the horses ate grass only. The rivers had by this time become raging torrents, and the roads, quagmires. The Boer farms had already been cleared out, and only by offering a sovereign for a 200-lb. bag of mealies could the natives be prevailed upon to unearth their buried treasure. The ration during this lean period sounds distinctly unpleasing: three-quarters of a pound of mealie meal (ground in the steam mill at Piet Retief), and an ounce of mealie coffee (an infusion of the same meal roasted and ground), made the sole variation to a diet of saltless meat. The men nevertheless maintained their health and cheeriness, their constant hauls conducing much to their enlivenment, and the number in hospital was abnormally low. Still there was vast annoyance in the fact that they were unable to be up and doing.

A new line of supply was opened on the 28th, when Colonel Bullock started from Volkrust to Piet Retief with a convoy of ninety-one waggons. Though this reached its destination in safety on the 5th of March, it was not till he returned with a second load, on the 21st of March, that sufficient oats could reach Piet Retief to enable the force to move. Despite the inconvenience of delay a tremendous amount of work was carried on, the troops pushing continually into Swaziland and tackling Boers who struggled to slip through the British line, and many captures were made both north and south of the border. The surrounding country was thoroughly cleared, and many guns and much ammunition were brought to light. The Engineers also worked like Trojans, improving the roads and bridging the numerous, now swollen, rivers and spruits that abounded in the district. As an instance of the force of the unceasing floods between the 6th and 13th of March, it may be mentioned that the Assegai, which is normally fordable, averaged 12 feet in depth, and on the 12th rose to 18 feet.



**A NIGHT ATTACK: DEFENDING A TRAIN  
DERAILED BY THE BOERS**

Drawing by Frank Dadd, R.I.

The position of the forces on the 1st of March stood thus:—

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General Smith-Dorrien (who had moved south from Amsterdam on the 25th of February) was now eight miles north of Piet Retief, while his mounted troops, under Colonel Henry, had penetrated into Swaziland. At Piet Retief was General French, with Colonels Knox and Pulteney, some of whose mounted troops, under Colonel Rimington, were covering the road south-west of Luneberg as far as Schihoek, whence Colonel Burn-Murdoch carried on the line to Utrecht. Colonels Campbell and Allenby were twelve and seventeen miles south-east of Piet Retief respectively, Colonel Alderson was at Marienthal, and General Dartnell at Intombi River. Colonel Bullock was at Wakkerstroom.

Soon the Utrecht-Luneberg line was abandoned as a line of supply, and the troops were based on Utrecht. On the 18th of March General Dartnell occupied the village of Paul Pietersburg, and Colonel Rimington seized the stone bridge over the Pivaan River running south of it, while Colonel Alderson built a pontoon bridge over the Pongola River at Yagd Drift.

On the 21st General French, with Colonels Knox and Pulteney, moved on, leaving General Smith-Dorrien in command north of the Pongola. Here the latter, with the columns of Colonels Campbell and Allenby, held a line from Langdraai Drift, in the Lower Pongolo, by Platnek, Mahamba, Zaudbauk, and Piet Retief, to Yagd Drift, so as to prevent Boers from breaking north and north-west.

Colonel Knox now set about clearing the country to the east, between the Pivaan and Pongola Rivers, to prevent the Boers breaking back south of the Pongola, while General French,

continuing his march with the columns of General Dartnell and Colonel Pulteney, moved on Vryheid, where he established his headquarters on the 25th of March. Here General Hildyard had accumulated a large reserve of supplies for the whole force, thus materially facilitating the progress of further operations.

The movement to clear the angle between the Swazi and Zulu frontiers began on the 27th of March and terminated on the 15th of April. General Dartnell, with ten days' supplies, moved east from Vryheid, with Pulteney east-south-east on his right rear, and Alderson (who started two days later from some four miles south of the Pivaan Bridge) on his left rear. Colonel Pulteney speedily came in contact with Grobelaar's commando, drove it north, where it came in collision with General Dartnell, who, after some skirmishing, killed and wounded some twenty Boers. The General was now forced to push on with mounted troops and a few guns only, for the country was impassable for wheeled transport, and therefore it had to be left behind in charge of the infantry. He formed a depôt some thirty miles east-south-east of Vryheid, while Colonel Alderson formed his about twenty-five miles north-east of Vryheid.

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More fighting took place on the 31st between the Boers and General Dartnell some twelve miles north of his depôt, in which engagement four Boers were slain, ten taken prisoners, and waggons, cattle, and sheep were captured. Their pom-pom—previously destroyed to prevent it being of service to us—was thrown over a precipice by the flying foe. The troops moving on east through the low-lying bush veldt came on more Boers on the 2nd, engaged them, cleared the country, returned to Toovernsaarsrust on the 4th, and moved on the 5th and 6th to Vryheid, where General Dartnell for five days took a well-earned rest.

Colonel Alderson had meanwhile taken a prodigious share in the work. He had sped hot foot after a party of Boers that had broken northwards, caught them on the 3rd near the junction of the Pivaan and Pongola Rivers, and succeeded in effecting the capture of their cattle, waggons, and mules. On the following day he rested at Nooitgadacht, a place six miles east of Vryheid. He then (on the 6th) passed Vryheid, and proceeded, in three columns, to sweep the country south of that place, while General Dartnell acted as a stop on the line Vryheid-Toovernsaarsrust. By the 13th Colonel Alderson had fulfilled his mission, and "accomplished all that was feasible." He then returned to Vryheid, and the difficult and fatiguing operations were practically concluded.

The various columns now left from this part of the theatre of war in the following order: Colonel Pulteney, being urgently needed by the Commander-in-Chief for use in the north of Middelburg, left Vryheid on the 1st, and entrained from Glencoe on the 4th. General Dartnell on the 12th, from Vryheid, marched *viâ* Newcastle to Volkrust, there to rest and refit. General Alderson passed through Vryheid on the 13th, reaching the rail at Glencoe on the 16th, and General Smith-Dorrien with his own, Colonel Campbell's, and Colonel Allenby's columns, marched north from Piet Retief on the 14th towards the Delagoa Railway.

The results of the prodigious energy of General French's force during the two and a half months, from the 27th of January to the 16th of April, were amazing. These zealous and untiring warriors had entirely swept the country between the Delagoa and Natal railway lines, from Johannesburg to the Swazi and Zulu frontiers, travelling across the most difficult country, rendered doubly so by tempest and flood, and living almost on starvation fare.

Nevertheless 1332 Boers had been placed *hors de combat* (369 killed and wounded, 233 taken prisoners, 730 surrendered), while an incalculable amount of supplies had been removed or destroyed, including 11 guns, 1280 rifles, 218,249 rounds of ammunition, 2281 waggons and carts, and 272,752 head of stock (7303 horses, 377 mules, 7653 trek oxen, 42,328 cattle, and 215,089 sheep). How much farther the work might have proved successful had it not been for the negotiations between Botha and the Commander-in-Chief which took place during the movement, cannot be stated. Certain it is that General French was much hampered by the palaver which ended in air, for Botha's ruse or so-called negotiations enabled the Boers to slip northwards unmolested. As the pacific nature of the negotiations has been the subject of much comment, it is as well to append the origin and substance of them.

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On February 23 a telegram was received by Sir Alfred Milner from the Commander-in-Chief, Pretoria, which stated, under date of the 22nd February, that Mrs. Botha had come back from meeting her husband, bringing from him an answer to a verbal message from the Commander-in-Chief, that if he desired it, he (General Botha) would meet him as to the means of bringing the war to an end, but on the express understanding that the question of the independence of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony should not be discussed in any way. The meeting would probably take place at Middelburg.

This telegram was sent to Mr. Chamberlain, who replied, February 23:—

"I am glad to hear of Botha's desire to treat, and I hope that it is genuine. He will find us most anxious, in that case, to meet him on all points affecting individual position. We have already made clear the policy we intend to pursue as to future government."

On March 1 Lord Kitchener telegraphed:—

"I have had a long interview with Botha, who showed very good feeling, and seemed anxious to bring about peace. He asked for information on a number of subjects which he said that he should submit to his Government and people, and if they agreed he should visit Orange River Colony and get them to agree. They should all then hand in their arms and finish the war. He told me that they could go on for some time, and that he was not sure of being able to bring about peace without independence. He tried very hard for

some kind of independence, but I declined to discuss such a point, and said that a modified form of independence would be most dangerous and likely to lead to war in the future."

Lord Kitchener then detailed the points upon which Botha required information. These points were noted by the Commander-in-Chief, and his suggestions were embodied in a telegram of March 3 from Sir Alfred Milner to Mr. Chamberlain. The Colonial Secretary replied on March 6, suggesting modifications which his Majesty's Government desired should be made in the letter to Botha. A telegram from Sir Alfred Milner of March 9 reported that he and Lord Kitchener were both opposed to the assistance to burghers being limited to loans, but that the amended message was sent to the Commandant on March 7.

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Lord Kitchener, in a telegram to Mr. Brodrick on March 20, detailed the terms of his letter to Commandant Botha:—

"With reference to our conversation at Middelburg on 28th February, I have the honour to inform you that in the event of a general and complete cessation of hostilities and the surrender of all rifles, ammunition, cannon, and other munitions of war in the hands of the burghers or in Government depôts or elsewhere, his Majesty's Government is prepared to adopt the following measures:—

"His Majesty's Government will at once grant an amnesty in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies for all *bona fide* acts of war committed during the recent hostilities. British subjects belonging to Natal and Cape Colony, while they will not be compelled to return to those colonies, will, if they do so, be liable to be dealt with by the law of those colonies, specially passed to meet the circumstances arising out of the present war. As you are doubtless aware, the special law in the Cape Colony has greatly mitigated the ordinary penalties for high treason in the present cases.

"All prisoners of war now in St. Helena, Ceylon, or elsewhere will, on the completion of the surrender, be brought back to their country as quickly as arrangements can be made for their transport.

"At the earliest practicable date military administration will cease and will be replaced by civil administration in the form of Crown Colony Government. There will therefore be, in the first instance, in each of the new Colonies a Governor and an Executive Council, consisting of a certain number of official members, to whom a nominated unofficial element will be added. But it is the desire of his Majesty's Government, as soon as circumstances permit, to introduce a representative element, and ultimately to concede to the new Colonies the privilege of self-government. Moreover, on the cessation of hostilities a High Court will be established in each of the new Colonies to administer the law of the land, and this court will be independent of the Executive.

"Church property, public trusts, and orphans' funds will be respected. Both the English and Dutch languages will be used and taught in public schools where parents of the children desire it, and allowed in Courts of Law.

"As regards the debts of the late Republican Governments, his Majesty's Government cannot undertake any liability. It is, however, prepared, as an act of grace, to set aside a sum not exceeding £1,000,000 to repay inhabitants of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies for goods requisitioned from them by the late Republican Governments or, subsequent to annexation, by commandants in the field being in a position to enforce such requisitions. But such claims will have to be established to the satisfaction of a Judge or Judicial Commission appointed by the Government to investigate and assess them, and if exceeding in the aggregate £1,000,000, they will be liable to reduction *pro rata*.

"I also beg to inform your Honour that the new Government will take into immediate consideration the possibility of assisting by loan the occupants of farms who will take the oath of allegiance to repair any injury sustained by destruction of buildings or loss of stock during the war, and that no special war tax will be imposed on farmers to defray the expense of the war.

"When burghers require the protection of firearms such will be allowed to them by licence and on due registration, provided they take the oath of allegiance. Licences also will be issued for sporting rifles, guns, &c., but military firearms will only be allowed for means of protection.

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"As regards the extension of the franchise to Kaffirs in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, it is not the intention of his Majesty's Government to give such franchise before representative government is granted to these Colonies, and if then given, it will be so limited as to secure the just predominance of the white races. The legal position of coloured persons will, however, be similar to that which they hold in Cape Colony.

"In conclusion, I must inform your Honour that if the terms now offered are not accepted after a reasonable delay for consideration, they must be regarded as cancelled."

To this Botha replied:—

"I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's letter stating what steps your Excellency's Government is prepared to take in the event of a general and total cessation of hostilities. I have advised my Government of your Excellency's said letter; but, after the mutual exchange of views at our interview at Middelburg on 28th February last, it will certainly not surprise your Excellency to know that I do not feel disposed to recommend that the terms of the said letter shall have the earnest consideration of my Government. I may add, also, that my Government and my chief officers here entirely agree with my views."

Botha's private opinions are to be found in an address to the burghers, which was subsequently discovered among papers captured by Sir Bindon Blood at Roos Senekal. He said:—

"The spirit of Lord Kitchener's letter makes it very plain to you all that the British Government desires nothing else but the destruction of our Afrikander people, and acceptance of the terms contained therein is absolutely out of the question. Virtually, the letter contains nothing more, but rather less, than what the British Government will be obliged to do should our cause go wrong. Notice that they will give us a Legislative Council consisting of their own officials and members nominated by themselves. The voice of the people is thus totally unrecognised.... The more we are aggrieved by the enemy the more steadfastly we

ought to stand for our good and lawful rights. Let us, as Daniel in the lions' den, place our trust in God alone, for in His time and in His way He will certainly give us deliverance."

On April 19th Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to the High Commissioner as follows:—

"As our terms have been refused by Botha, they are of course withdrawn, and his Majesty's Government do not think it advisable that you or Kitchener should reopen negotiations. Should Botha or other leaders make any further suggestions of their own accord Kitchener will, of course, forward them to us without expressing any opinion upon them to those who make them. But neither Mrs. Botha nor any one else should be led to suppose that we could consider terms more favourable to the Boers than those which have been rejected. The Secretary of State for War will send a copy of this to Kitchener."

That the negotiations were looked upon with disfavour by all parties concerned is undoubted. A letter written by one of Reuter's correspondents expresses the very general view taken by the British in the field:— [Pg 30]

"The Parliamentary paper giving particulars of the peace negotiations has been eagerly read by all ranks of the Army. It is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that the British forces now operating in South Africa are profoundly dissatisfied with them. On all hands, and from all ranks, the same complaint is heard, that they are too lenient, and are not calculated to bring permanent peace to South Africa. There is no bitterness against the Boers; that feeling has long ago died out, but when the men came to read the terms of peace proposed by the British Government, they remembered their dead comrades whose graves mark the line of march, and asked themselves: 'Is it for this that they have died?' The Army, which has undergone countless hardships and dangers, is less articulate than a municipal body in England, but surely it should have its say. The regular Army, perhaps, is expected not to think or to express its thought about politics, but to fight, and only to fight; but the South Africans, the Canadians, and the Australians will give expression to their sentiments. They declare that in the terms of peace offered by the British Government there are all the elements of future rebellion and unrest. 'Give the Boers,' they say, 'even more than we have promised them, but let it be as a free gift after surrender, and not as a condition of surrender.' Curiously enough, these sentiments are shared entirely by the Burghers who have surrendered, and who are only waiting for the end of hostilities to take their places as British subjects, determined to do their utmost for the peaceful development of a country which, under British rule, will be as much theirs as anybody else's. One of them, speaking to me the other day, put forward his view of the case. 'If the British grant terms to those burghers now under arms,' he said, 'they at once establish for all time a confession of weakness. We shall tell each other and our children that we have never been beaten, and, as we increase in numbers, the tales of former prowess and invincibility will perpetuate a national feeling. If you allow burghers to carry rifles after surrender you will have petty revolts for the next ten years. There is no need of a Mauser or a Lee-Metford to defend the burgher against the native. Give him a shot-gun or a revolver, and no native will molest him. The demand for the retention of arms is nothing more nor less than the result of a determination on the part of the Boers to use them against you at the very slightest provocation. To give them rifles is suicidal.'"

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## CHAPTER IV

### IN THE WESTERN TRANSVAAL—JANUARY TO MAY

In the early part of the year we find Lord Methuen busily occupied in dealing with an incursion of the enemy from the south-western part of the Transvaal into Griqualand. Operating from Vryburg and Taungs, he, with his mobile columns, performed an incalculable amount of work. He withdrew the garrison from Schweitzer Reneke, routed the Boers that were surrounding Daniel's Knil, provisioned the garrison of Kuruman, and eventually hunted De Villiers' hordes into the Transvaal. That done, he marched in the beginning of February, *viâ* Wolmaranstad, to Klerksdorp, following up and dispersing the aforesaid hordes as he went. At Hartebeestfontein he came very violently into collision with them, and though they made a stout effort to resist his advance, he forced them to give way. His captures during these proceedings amounted to forty prisoners and many thousand head of stock. Lord Methuen reached Klerksdorp on the 19th of February and went on to Potchefstroom, where he commenced co-operating with the sweeping movements of Generals Babington and Cunningham. These officers, on General French's departure from the western side of the Transvaal, held a line from Oliphant's Nek to Ventersdorp and Potchefstroom, and kept an eye on the machinations of Delarey and other malcontents in these regions. In spite of their vigilance a concentration was effected in the Gatsrand on the 31st, and a small force at Modderfontein was overwhelmed by superior numbers before General Cunningham could come to its relief. Two more small columns, the one under Colonel Shekleton, South Lancashire Regiment, the other under Colonel Benson, R.A., were now placed at the disposal of General Cunningham to help in the work of clearing the ground between the western railway line and the Vaal.

At the end of February Lord Methuen's force, together with the small column under Colonel Benson, was actively engaged in hunting bands of marauders in the triangle—Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom, Ventersdorp. On the 4th of March the troops marched from Klerksdorp towards Hoopstad, thence to withdraw the garrison. *En route* they, having left their convoy under strong escort on the road to Commando Drift, made a night descent on Wolmaranstad with the intention of liberating the British and Boer State prisoners who were known to be detained there. But at dawn when they arrived they discovered that the place was deserted! The sole, though not

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unimportant, result of their exertions was the capture of the Landdrost, Pearson, a person who had rendered himself notorious in connection with the cases of Messrs. M'Lachlan and Boyd, who with three burghers were shot at Wolmaranstad. The particulars of the dastardly murder of these men must be recorded, as they serve to show the innate brutality of the Boers, which in the earlier part of the war had been suppressed in hope to seduce the sympathy of the Powers. The news of the execution of five British subjects—so-called rebels—by Delarey's commando was brought to Klerksdorp by Mrs. M'Lachlan, whose husband, father, and brother-in-law had been among the victims. Most of them were burghers who had surrendered or left the country prior to the war, while the others were alleged to have taken up arms. The man Boyd, a British subject, had been detained in jail since July 1900 by the Landdrost, who induced him, with two others, to indite a message to the English praying them to come to their rescue. This was afterwards made the plea for sentencing the three to death. Among others sentenced were two burghers named Theunissen, well-known farmers of Klerksdorp, who had surrendered with General Andreas Cronje's commando in June, and had taken the oath of neutrality and refused to break it. Mrs. M'Lachlan, the daughter of the elder Theunissen, gave an account of her loss, narrating how she had taken coffins to the place of execution to bury the bodies of her father, brother, and husband, to whom she had been married only two years, while another lady made the following statement:—"The Boers have forty of our men prisoners there. Eight or ten have been condemned to be shot. They were tried by the late Landdrost of Klerksdorp, a man named Heethling, in conjunction with other members of the Court. The sentences were confirmed by Generals Smuts and Delarey, who sent men to carry them out. The four who were shot were Mr. Theunissen, his son, his son-in-law, Mr. M'Lachlan, and Mr. Boyd. From first to last they were most brutally treated. The execution was a sad spectacle. The prisoners, on being taken out of jail, grasped one another's hands. They were placed in a row and shot down one by one. Mr. Boyd received three bullets, but was still alive when put into the grave. The Boers then fired again, and all was over. It was nearly being my husband's fate, but, thank God, he escaped. Mr. George Savage was also condemned to be shot, but he has been insane since his trial. His wife has gone with Mrs. Pienaar to try to get the sentence commuted. Mrs. Pienaar being with her may possibly have some influence."

From all accounts it appeared that the man Pearson, who was captured by Lord Methuen, was prime actor in the barbarous drama, and, handcuffed, he was removed to await his trial. [Pg 33]



**CECIL J. RHODES AT GROOTE SCHUUR.**

A Memory.

From "War Impressions" by Mortimer Menpes, by arrangement with Messrs A. & C. Black.

The column while returning to the convoy was attacked by a commando of some 400, under Du Tot and Potgeiter, from the hills, who paid for their presumption by losing eleven killed and wounded to our seven—a price seldom paid by these bands of "artful dodgers." Finding the river impassable at Commando Drift, the troops marched along the right bank of the Vaal in hopes to cross lower down. The drifts, Bloemhof and Christiana, were also not negotiable, and finally the force moved to Fourteen Streams and crossed by the railway bridge. Brigadier-General the Earl of Errol now assumed command of the force, as Lord Methuen was placed on the sick list.

Here it must be noted, that after the departure of Lord Methuen for Hoopstad, Colonel Benson continued to operate to the south of the railway in the Gatsrand, and along the right bank of the Vaal. His small yet active column was ever in touch with the Boers, and many of them had hair-breadth escapes, yet, in spite of all, they secured many prisoners, 1090 head of cattle, and forty-

five waggons. On the 4th of April Colonel Benson left his troops to be merged into the force of General Dixon (who had succeeded General Cunningham in command of the column south of the Magaliesberg), while he assumed a more important command on the eastern line.

To return to Lord Methuen's force. As the Hoopstad garrison had yet to be withdrawn, the troops now under Lord Errol started thither on the 28th of March, a simultaneous movement being made by a mobile column from Kimberley. The object of the expedition was achieved and the garrison removed to Warrenton by the 7th of April, but not without a skirmish on the way with Badenhorst's commando at Steenbokpan. Lord Methuen soon recovered, and on the 23rd of April, resuming command, transferred his force to Mafeking in order to move early in May on Lichtenburg.

This town, at the beginning of March, had been an object of attention to Delarey, Smuts, Celliers, and Vermaas and their bands. The garrison (200 Yeomanry, 300 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, and two guns) commanded by Colonel C. G. Money, had been vigorously attacked on the 3rd, the assault beginning at 3 A.M. and continuing with unabated vigour till midnight. The enemy, numbering some 1500, with one gun, found that there were two sides in the game of annoyance, and that the defenders were ready and willing to give as much as they got. Indeed they gave considerably more, for while our casualties amounted to two officers (Major W. Fletcher and Second-Lieutenant H. D. Hall) and fourteen men killed, and twenty-six wounded, the Boers left behind them sixty killed and wounded and seven prisoners.

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General Babington now marched to the rescue from the north-west of Krugersdorp *viâ* Ventersdorp. Here Colonel Shekleton was to have met him with supplies, but owing to the terrific weather, and the difficulty of moving wheeled transport in an incessant deluge, the arrangements of both forces were delayed and considerable inconvenience caused, and General Babington was unable to reach Lichtenburg till the 17th. By this time the bands of Delarey had, of course, made good their escape. But they were hunted to Hartebeestfontein and deprived of many waggons and teams, while sixty-two prisoners were netted, and eight killed.

Delarey, with 500 men and three guns, on the 22nd attacked a strong patrol of the 1st Imperial Light Horse under Major Briggs at Geduld. The Boers made a sudden swoop on the party and endeavoured to cut them in two, but this gallant 200, with a solitary "pom-pom," fought doggedly for two and a half hours till reinforcements could arrive, when they defeated the Dutchmen absolutely, killing eleven and wounding thirteen. Unfortunately two gallant officers were lost. Commandant Venter was among the Boer slain, and Field-Cornet Wolmarans among the wounded. The report of an eye-witness was as follows:—

"The Imperial Light Horse made another fine performance some time ago, on two successive days, when they knocked the stuffing out of Delarey near Klerksdorp. Delarey tackled a hundred and sixty men of the 1st Light Horse and a "pom-pom" with eight hundred men. Our fellows had a warm time of it, but being well handled by Major Briggs beat off the attack. The following day, reinforcements having come up, they pushed forward, and after a stiff engagement utterly routed Delarey, taking ten guns and his convoy, besides killing and wounding a hundred and sixty-seven Boers and taking a lot of prisoners. This was done almost entirely by Volunteers and the Suffolks. The Boers in the first fight charged right through the Imperial Light Horse, whose ammunition was exhausted, but were driven back by the fire of about twenty-five men who were holding the horses."

General Babington on the 22nd commenced the task of sweeping the enemy to the north, while Colonel Shekleton operated against Delarey's right flank. With mounted troops and guns only the commander dashed after the Boers and overtook their rearguard, which was driven in near Ventersdorp. Again Colonel Grey's New Zealanders and Bushmen distinguished themselves, for on the 25th, while the enemy attempted to take up another position to cover the withdrawal of their convoy, the dashing Colonials, under Major O'Brien, closed in from both flanks and fairly "mopped it up." The result of the exciting march was the capture of 140 prisoners, two 15-pounder guns, one pom-pom, six Maxims, 160 rifles, 320 rounds 15-pounder ammunition, 15,000 rifle ammunition, 53 waggons, and 24 carts. Twenty-two dead and 32 wounded Boers were left on the field, while General Babington's loss was only two killed and seven wounded. These summary actions, in which the officers and men of the Imperial Light Horse, the 4th New Zealand Regiment, and the 6th Imperial Bushmen played so prominent a part, were most disconcerting to the foe, who now, owing to want of horses, guns, and supplies, had their wings clipped, and were unable to evade the pursuing columns. Much of the success of the proceedings was due to the excellent service rendered by Colonel Grey, Major Gossett (Cheshire Regiment), Major Burrows (38th Battery R.F.A.), Major O'Brien (6th Imperial Bushmen), Lieutenant Kinton (Royal Welsh Fusiliers), Captains Walker and Arthur (4th New Zealand Regiment), Lieutenants Thomas and Doyle (6th Imperial Bushmen), Captains Norman, Brierley, and Donaldson, and Lieutenants Dryden and Holbrig (Imperial Light Horse), Captains Stanton, R.A., and Logan, and Major Cookson (I.S.C.).

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From the 2nd to the 6th of April there were more Boer-hunts towards Tafelkop, and many small collisions with Smuts' marauders at Rietpan and elsewhere. General Babington now returned to Ventersdorp, and from thence made for Smuts' main laager at Goedvoortzicht. Marching by night across the swampy country and over the hills, Colonel Rawlinson, with the men of Roberts' and Kitchener's Horse, prepared a little surprise for the slumbering Dutchmen. At daybreak on the 14th April the laager was rushed by the dashing British band, while the enemy in consternation took to their heels. Five or six hundred fled, leaving six killed, ten wounded,

twenty-three prisoners, one 12-pounder gun, one pom-pom, two ammunition waggons, eighteen rounds 12-pounder ammunition, 500 rounds of pom-pom ammunition, 12,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, twelve waggons and carts, and a large number of cattle. Only three of the British party were wounded.

Operations still continued against Delarey, who had concentrated his commando (numbering 2000) in the hilly country around Hartebeestefontein, and from thence proceeded hungrily to pounce on a convoy passing from General Babington's camp at Syferkuil to Klerksdorp. But the escort, admirably handled, succeeded in frustrating the designs of the enemy, whose exploit cost them twelve killed and six wounded.



**COLONEL BENSON**

(Photo by Russell & Sons, London)

Lord Methuen, who had resumed command of his force, now marched from Mafeking to Lichtenberg to co-operate in the movement for surrounding the aggressive commandos that were now rendered abnormally adventurous by famine and ferocity. General Dixon moved from the Krugersdorp district to arrest the rush of them to north-east, while Colonel E. Williams, with a fresh column of mounted Australians, stood in readiness at Klerksdorp to reinforce General Babington. On the 4th of May Generals Methuen and Babington tackled the desperadoes between Kaffir's Kraal and Brakpan, and after a brisk engagement one 12-pounder gun, seven prisoners, and five waggons were captured. The enemy were hunted, till, after their usual custom, they dispersed in ones and twos into the shadow of the hills.

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**CHARGE OF THE BUSHMEN AND NEW ZEALANDERS ON THE BOER GUNS DURING THE ATTACK ON BABINGTON'S CONVOY NEAR KLERKSDORP, MARCH 24, 1901**

Drawing by R. Caton Woodville

An account of the interesting operations was given by a trooper of the 10th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, which regiment had been over a year on service with Lord Methuen, and was now thinking of home:—

“Lord Methuen's advance troops left Mafeking at daybreak on May 1, and the whole column entered Lichtenberg on the 3rd, bringing along with it a huge convoy of supplies. Lichtenberg was not looking so picturesque as it did four months ago. The recent stormy times there, and in the immediate vicinity, had necessitated the removal of a great many trees; moreover, extra trenches had been dug and other strong barricades built. Winter is now upon us, and the parched

and worn herbage as well as the changing tints in the foliage seemed to harmonise, so to speak, with the melancholy surroundings. However, the cheery strains of music which greeted us as we entered the town and rode along a little avenue of weeping willows made us forget our troubles for awhile. It was the fine band of the Northumberland Fusiliers playing in a desolate orchard.

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“At 3 A.M. the following morning two squadrons of Yeomanry marched out as mounted escort to the convoy. The column followed in its wake an hour or so later. It was about an hour after daylight when four men of the 37th, who were riding in advance, had the good fortune to capture two prominent Boers—Messrs. Lemmer and Viljoen. One of them was riding a ‘jibber,’ and in order to get the animal along had tied it to that of his comrade. Consequently, when the gentlemen were taken by surprise, their capture was easy. We saw several Boers scampering away from some farmhouses just before we bivouacked, but, happily, they did not molest our outposts during the day. Next morning the general had his fighting column well on the march quite an hour before daybreak. The convoy left half-an-hour earlier. Smoking was strictly prohibited as long as it was dark. As soon as it grew light the 37th Squadron were sent out in advance. Half-an-hour later the Boers attacked our rearguard, but were repulsed after a short though severe fight, in which Paget’s Horse lost one killed and two wounded. Meanwhile the 37th had pushed forward and gained some kopjes in front. Here they came in touch with General Babington’s column. Thus the two columns practically met, and then Delarey, Smuts, and De Camp drew up the bulk of their forces on highly advantageous ground on Methuen’s right front and Babington’s left. Wheeling his mounted troops round into position, Lord Methuen began to attack the enemy without delay, but the position in front was deemed almost impregnable. I saw swarms of mounted Boers on the hillside, and several rode down to try to draw us on to the attack. The general quickly ordered Colonel Meyrick, who was in command of the Yeomanry, to execute a flank movement on the right, leaving General Babington to take the matter in hand on the other side. Hereabouts the 37th rejoined the main body after a long gallop, and again took up their original position at the head of the regiment. Colonel Meyrick led his men along at a smart pace, and as we breasted a rise in the road we viewed several Boers breaking away across the open. Soon afterwards the brigadier sent the 5th out on the right, whilst he himself led the main body to the left with the idea of driving the enemy from his positions in front. The Boers, however, did not show much inclination to fight.

“All the time Colonel Meyrick was being seconded by Colonel Lawson of the 10th, who now dismounted his men and led them to the attack. A few volleys sufficed, however, for at this moment a pom-pom made its appearance on the scene, and after waiting long enough to receive a few well-directed shells from it the Boers gave way and galloped off in little parties as hard as they could go. In a few minutes the Yeomanry were in hot pursuit of the enemy. ‘Ware hole’ was a constant cry all day long, and casualties occurred from the treacherous state of the ground. Now before us lay a vast plain, beyond which was a long straggling range of kopjes. Thither the Boers had retreated in haste. The 5th were still on our right, and I saw a body of mounted men on our left. All the troops Colonel Meyrick had with him were Colonel Lawson and four broken squadrons of the 10th. But there was no drawing rein. Four men were sent forward to scout the country on the left front and four somewhere else. The remainder galloped to the left flank. Hereabouts some troops were detached from the main body in order to capture some waggons; and a few minutes later two men of the 37th—Nichols and Brown—who had been sent forward to reconnoitre, captured a gun (a twelve-pounder, O Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, lost at Colenso). Three Boers were in charge of it, but one immediately took to his heels and escaped, and the other two—two beardless boys—were too much out of breath with their efforts of whipping up and shouting at the jaded team of mules to do anything but throw up their arms. One of the youngsters burst into tears when he was disarmed.

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“Notwithstanding all this, the two colonels still kept up the pursuit, and came across some more waggons four miles ahead. Here, however, the enemy were in strong numbers, and a few of our men fell foul of some Boers in a mealie field, but miraculously escaped. Soon afterwards the officer commanding received a message from the General recalling him, but it was not till then that Colonel Meyrick led back his scanty followers to escort the plunder into camp. It was a curious procession that wended its way across the veldt. Jolting along in front were several captured waggons with a slender escort. Then came Colonel Meyrick, on his good dun horse, with his injured arm still in a sling, followed by his orderlies. Next in order a pom-pom and the captured gun, which was being driven along by the two ragged Dutch boys; two waggons, a Cape cart, and an ambulance waggon, the officers and the remnant of the 10th bringing up the rear. Just before we reached camp we passed Lord Methuen, sitting on the ground, writing his despatches. The troops bivouacked near Paarde Plaats (where Methuen captured Sellers’s laager a short time ago), after having been in the saddle or on foot for twelve hours.

“Next morning the mounted troops marched as far as Hartebeestefontein, and the men took advantage of a brief halt in the picturesque village to loot oranges, of which there were any quantity in the orchards and gardens, though mostly green ones. Eventually the troops bivouacked about six miles from the village. The General ordered a rest on the next day; but afterwards the men did some very heavy marching in order to keep in touch with the other columns. Although Babington made another big haul and Rawlinson shelled the Boers, Methuen did not get another chance of having a smack at the enemy. The column reached Mafeking on Sunday, 12th inst.—a cold, dusty morning.

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“Lord Methuen’s old yeomen entrained at Mafeking *en route* for the south at 1 P.M. yesterday, 14th inst. The General himself paid his ‘old comrades-in-arms’ the high compliment of coming

down to the station in order to see them off. He met with a splendid ovation, and was carried shoulder-high and safely deposited on a temporary platform amidst rounds of applause. Then every yeoman pressed eagerly forward to shake the outstretched hand of their gallant leader. Lord Methuen seemed deeply impressed with the enthusiastic reception accorded him. But it was the only way we had of expressing our gratitude and admiration. There was no speech."

The above letter describes not only the last operations but the last farewell of the "Old Yeomanry." Before parting with them, some statistics regarding the brave and serviceable men who were leaving the scene of their activities may not be out of place.

According to the official record of the casualties in South Africa during the twelve months ending March 27, the Imperial Yeomanry losses had been 185 killed, 642 wounded, 388 died of disease, 49 died of wounds, 571 invalided; deaths from accidents, 20; missing, 205; prisoners, 497—total, 2557. The majority of the missing had reappeared, and the prisoners were released. At the end of July 1900, the strength of the Yeomanry in South Africa was: 536 officers, 10,195 men—total, 10,731; in February, before the reinforcements had arrived, the strength had been reduced to 495 officers, 7500 men—total, 7995; on May 1 the figures read 800 officers, 22,304 men—total, 23,104. The Imperial Yeomanry Hospitals had also done invaluable work. Both Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener eulogised the scheme, and the most eminent surgeons endorsed the opinions of the military authorities. The movement, it may be remembered, was started by Lady Georgiana Curzon (now Countess Howe), and an influential committee was appointed to carry out the work. The total record of patients treated at Deelfontein, Mackenzie's Farm (now taken over by the Government), Pretoria, and Bloemfontein, and by the Field Hospital up to the middle of May was 17,070. During April, May, and June, the whole of the original force (together with the Australian and New Zealand contingents) was withdrawn from the country and their places, in course of time, were taken by 16,000 new yeomen and new Colonial contingents, but these, though apt and willing, were naturally incapable of filling at once the huge gap made by the loss of these trained and seasoned men.

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To resume. During April, energetic measures were set on foot in Namaqualand by Colonel Smith and Colonel Shelton. Colonel Shelton had now organised a field column to work in the arid district, Bushmanland, the first contingent of sixty men and three officers, commanded by Captain Montagu, having started to reinforce the advance post at Agenthuis, which was held by Lieutenant Rich and a small patrol. These, meanwhile, were attacked by the enemy, and fought with them for five hours. They then had to evacuate the place.

Zeerust was still in a state of siege, but the North Lancashire Regiment and some Yeomen engaged the raiders and gave them a warm day, fighting being pursued with unabated zeal from daylight till dusk. The New Zealanders next shelled the Boers' meeting-place and disturbed their little plans, and showed them that the inconvenience of the besieged might be shared by the besiegers. A party of the North Lancashires surprised the Boers and wounded three of their number, and later, on the 29th, driven desperate by want of sufficient provisions, the scouts made a grand sortie, and captured a plentiful supply of oxen.

Everywhere in the west there was unrest, owing to the damage created by the desperadoes. Belmont Station was attacked and the telegraph instruments damaged, and in the Montzani district Captain Tupper, Liverpool Regiment, and twelve men had an unpleasant time near Taaiboshpan, but gained the day after three hours' fighting. Elsewhere Lieutenant Barton (Bedfordshire Regiment) found himself surrounded in a farm. A day of tussle was spent there, but in the night the British escaped. Colonel Walford thereupon set himself to work to scour and purge the district.

#### **APRIL. ORANGE RIVER COLONY—OPERATIONS OF GENERAL BRUCE-HAMILTON AND GENERAL RUNDLE**

Now that the Boers, in small bands, were being forced northward from Cape Colony and from Kruitziuger's hunting-ground, preparations were made near Bethulie and along the Orange River for their reception. To this end General Lyttelton moved the troops of General Bruce-Hamilton and Colonel Hickman from Dewetsdorp and Wepener, and these—in conjunction with Colonel Haig's columns—were so ranged by the 5th April, as to defeat any great incursion of marauders into the Orange River Colony. But, save for the clever capture by Colonel Munro, with 150 Bethune's Mounted Infantry and a pom-pom, of a convoy and eighty-three prisoners (including Commandant Bester and Lieutenant Lindigne of the Staats Artillery), little took place, and General Bruce-Hamilton was enabled to return to his position at Dewetsdorp. On the 13th of April he succeeded General Lyttelton in his command, as that officer was leaving for England, and Colonel Haig moved to take charge of operations in Cape Colony. On both sides of the river the sweeping up of stores and capture of Boers proceeded apace, and the total result of General Bruce-Hamilton's April activities was the capture of ninety-five prisoners, 300 horses, and an abundance of live stock.

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The raiders, ragged and starving, were continually active. Kruitziuger made an ineffectual effort to cross on the 4th, but was frustrated by finding the troops of General Bruce-Hamilton in possession of the river banks. Colonel White and Colonel Munro so actively scoured round and about Springfontein that such Boers as there were quickly vanished till a more opportune period.

Others tried to sneak across at Oudefontein Drift, but Major Murray's men discovered them in the act and disposed of them. From the region of Brandford came the news of the capture of a laager on the 2nd by the prowess of Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, who, by night, had surrounded the camp of Bester and caught him napping.

On the 7th of April, Colonel Thorneycroft moved towards Winburg to deal with a minor concentration of the enemy in that neighbourhood. The rumour of his approach served to defeat the Boers' object and disperse them, and he consequently returned to Brandfort.

General Sir Leslie Rundle remained indefatigable. In March he was still firmly holding his line—Ficksburg, Harrismith, Bethlehem, and Vrede. But he was minus the mobile column under General Campbell, which had temporarily reinforced the troops under General Wynne, and was furnishing an escort under Colonel Inglefield on the Utrecht-Luneberg line, whence General French (in the important operations which have been described) drew his supplies. General Campbell, after trying experiences (fighting perpetually in marsh and morass, floating waggons across rivers, and crossing on rafts, &c.) which delayed all his undertakings, returned to Harrismith on the 10th of April. Later, General Rundle, finding the Boers had again buzzed about Fouriesburg, left Harrismith for Bethlehem, reaching there on the 24th. The enemy, some 300, dogged his footsteps and hung round his flanks till it was necessary to whisk them off, which was accomplished after four days' fighting. He was then able to move on *viâ* Retief's Nek, which he passed on the 29th, entering Fouriesburg unopposed on the 2nd of May. He afterwards set about scouring the country in its remotest valleys with flying columns, while Colonel Harley from Ficksburg made similar excursions. These united activities were fraught with considerable excitement and corresponding success. On the 31st of May, Colonel Harley left Fouriesburg and seized the Slaapkrantz position without serious opposition, sending the Boers who were fleeing before him into the arms of General Campbell. This officer was moving from the direction of Bethlehem, and by a forced march managed to reach Naauwpoort Nek in time to intercept the enemy's convoy. From this date to the 8th of June, when they joined hands at Elands River Drift, Colonels Harley and Campbell traversed the rugged region north and south of the Roodebergen range, while a small column from Harrismith watched the country to the east of Elands River Drift. The results of these difficult operations and excursions against Prinsloo's, Rautenhach's, and other commandos were as follows: 7 Boers killed, 19 wounded, 101 Krupp shells, 4800 rounds of ammunition, 21 rifles, 43 vehicles, and 1450 horses. Foodstuffs, stores, and forage in great quantities were captured or destroyed. The rest of June was spent in clearing the Langeberg, the only district south of the Harrismith-Bethlehem road which remained to be dealt with in the new scheme of operations. The enemy hung mosquito-wise around the flanks of the scouring columns, but they pursued their work and accounted for 15 Boers killed or wounded, 2770 horses, 56 vehicles, 4000 rounds of ammunition, 7 rifles, and quantities of stores and stock. On the conclusion of these operations, General Rundle returned to Harrismith, where he remained till he started to co-operate with General Elliot's march from Springfield Drift to Frankfort. Of which anon.

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During June, Generals Rundle and Campbell bade farewell to the "Old Yeomanry." The chief took the opportunity to express his especial satisfaction with the excellent work done by them, saying that when they joined he was without cavalry, and did not know what he should have done without them.

An interesting incident, showing that the pluck and value of the Imperial Yeomanry cannot be overrated, may here be quoted. On the 23rd of June, the Harrismith Volunteer Light Horse and a few of the Imperial Yeomanry visited a farm and captured 1500 horses, sheep, and goats. While these were being driven in, Sergeant-Major Reid (11th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry), who with two men was handling a flock, was assailed by a party of twelve Boers. Reid promptly sent on the men with the animals and lay down alone in the open and covered their retreat.

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## CHAPTER V

### COMBINED MOVEMENT FOR THE CLEARANCE OF THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL. —MARCH AND APRIL

Lord Kitchener now engaged himself in preparing a new and immense combined movement for the clearance of the country to the north of Pretoria. The so-called seat of government of the Boers had been removed from Pietersburg to Roos Senekal, and its presence there naturally attracted all the Boers who, in consequence of General French's clearance of the Swaziland border, had been forced into the difficult country of the Tautesberg and Bothaberg. In planning a movement against these bands from the line of Middelburg-Belfast-Lydenburg, precautions had to be taken to prevent the escape of the enemy into the Zoutpansberg and Waterberg districts. It therefore became necessary to hold Pietersburg and the drifts over Olifant's River, and to chase the Boers from their snug retreats in the vicinity.

Accordingly, General Plumer was moved from Orange River Colony and directed to hold Pietersburg, and prepare to co-operate in the combined movement just described.

At this time, 26th March, Pienaars River was the most advanced garrison on the Pietersburg line. For this place General Plumer started, there to be joined by the 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders and "C" Section Pom-Poms.

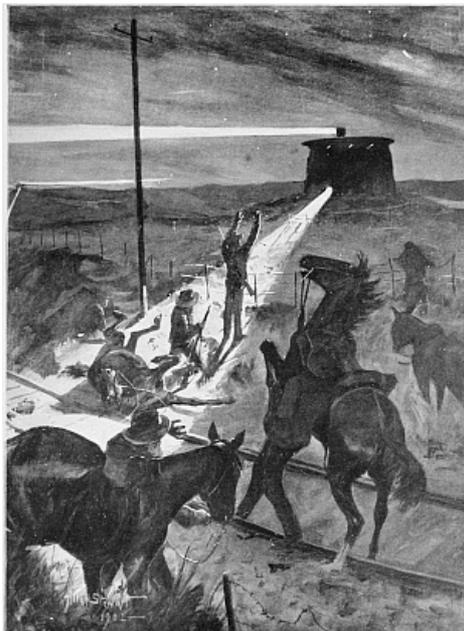
Beyond Pienaars River repairs to the line had to be effected, which caused delay, then the troops advanced from Warmbad, Nylstroom, to Piet Potgietersrust over a clear line. Here the enemy meant mischief, for they had blown up one of the smaller railway bridges, but this was soon repaired, and on the 8th of April the advanced troops reached Pietersburg, the average distance covered being fifteen miles a day. The town had been evacuated in the night. Here provisions, supplies, and remounts had to be collected, in order that the attack, once begun, might be carried on without a hitch, and that the Boers, chased from one quarter, might not be sent trekking into Rhodesia, but be enveloped and swept up *en masse* as they had been at Paardeberg and at Fouriesburg. The projected advance was full of difficulties and the preliminaries were endless. It was impossible to begin till men, horses, and supplies had been deposited at Pietersburg by rail from Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, or Delagoa Bay. It must be remembered that the columns were preparing to march some 150 miles across the veldt, where the greatest of all enemies, the tsetse fly, harassed every inch of the road. In addition to this deadly foe to horses, there were now the wintry nights, following grilling days, to be encountered, and chilly shocks which bring enteric and other diseases in their train.

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At Pietersburg forty-six Boers voluntarily surrendered, and the following captures were made:— one Krupp gun, thirty rifles, 1000 rounds 7-pounder ammunition, 210,000 small-arm ammunition, 8300 lbs. gunpowder, 480 lbs. dynamite. Two truck-loads of ammunition had been blown up by the Boers on their departure. The occupation of the place now made the scheme for the opening of railway communication from the Cape to Cairo (hitherto thought to be a visionary's dream) perfectly feasible. The line from Warmbaths to Pietersburg was now placed in charge of Colonel Hall, the posts being occupied by the Northamptonshire and Wiltshire Regiments, together with the 12th Battalion Mounted Infantry. This left General Plumer's mounted troops free to hold the line of the Olifant's River. Having established an adequate garrison at Pietersburg, General Plumer proceeded to post Major Colvin's column to secure the drift at Bathfontein, while to Colonel Jeffreys was assigned the task of occupying a lower drift at Blaauwbloemje's Kloof. General Plumer himself was at Commissie Drift. Schalk Burger at this time was said to have deposited himself at Tolesburg, west of Middelburg, where he still endeavoured to carry on the parody of government.

Colonel Jeffreys on the 18th, while operating with his mobile column along the Olifant, came on a party of Boers east of Druehoek. He captured eleven and seized their ammunition. Soon after, Lieutenant Reid (Imperial Bushmen) with some twenty Australians, who had been detached from General Plumer's post at Commissie Drift, performed a valiant act. While in charge of his patrol he located a Boer laager some fifteen miles east of the drift. Under cover of night he and his handful of Colonials crept towards the camp, surrounded it, and at dawn on the 24th boldly attacked it. The enemy, doubtless imagining that young Reid's hardihood was backed by a large reserve at his elbow, promptly surrendered, and the gallant British band had the honour of recording a haul of forty-one prisoners, including the commandant, Schroeder, and one excellent Maxim, together with horses, mules, waggons, and ammunition. The Boers, on their side, scored slightly elsewhere. On the day following this brilliant episode, while Major Twyford, with a small escort, was moving from Machadodorp to Lydenburg, there to join the Royal Scots, the enemy lay in ambush near Badfontein, a valley on the Crocodile River. Their plans were successful, for it was not difficult in this shelving and dipping region to surprise a small party moving over a vast tract of difficult country. The tussle that followed was a tough one, the men fighting desperately and refusing to surrender. At last Major Twyford was killed and his band overpowered.

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**DEFEAT OF A NIGHT ATTEMPT  
TO CROSS THE RAILWAY**

The results of General Plumer's operations between the 14th and 28th of April were ninety-one prisoners, twenty surrendered, one Maxim, 20,360 rounds ammunition, twenty-six waggons and carts, and forty-six mules.

## LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR BINDON BLOOD'S OPERATIONS NORTH OF THE LINE MIDDELBURG—BELFAST—LYDENBURG

On the day (14th April) that General Plumer, having garrisoned Pietersburg, left there to seize the drifts on the Olifant River, and thus close the avenues of escape leading towards the north-west, Sir Bindon Blood disposed his force in the following manner. The columns of Colonel Park and General Kitchener occupied Lydenburg, with those of Colonel Douglas at Witklip (south of them). Colonel Pulteney was stationed at Belfast, while at Middelburg were Colonel Benson and General Beatson. The columns of Colonels Pulteney and Benson were commanded by General Fetherstonhaugh.

These columns, admirably placed for the work in hand, now began to move, so that the enemy in this difficult region might no longer plume himself on being secure from attack.

Column One, under Colonel Park, moving round into the Waterval Valley, joined hands with Column Two under General W. Kitchener near Rietfontein. In this region Colonel Park remained, so as to check any attempt on the part of the Boers to move north from Roosenekal, while General Kitchener continued his advance across the Steelpoort River to Fort Weber, which was reached on the 18th of April.

Column Three, under Colonel Douglas, moved to Dullstroom (*viâ* Zwagershoek and Palmietfontein), which was reached on the 17th of April. On the following day Colonel Pulteney, with Column Four, arrived there from Belfast, but pushed on *viâ* Witpoort to occupy Roosenekal. On his approach Mr. Schalk Burger and his Government, in hot haste, bolted to Leydsdorp, leaving papers of the South African Republic and many banknotes behind. Some of the documents captured at Roosenekal by the forces under Sir Bindon Blood consisted of (1) a circular issued by the Boer Commandant-General as to the treatment of burghers who have surrendered; (2) a letter of representatives of the Central Peace Committee, Pretoria, urging surrender; and (3) a certificate of the execution of M. de Kock, a member of that committee. In the letter from the Central Peace Committee, one of the signatories of which was M. de Kock, there occurred, after a reference to the strong position of Lord Kitchener, the following words:—

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“What is submitted to you is a well-meant offer from a powerful man, who is sure of his case, and a person who is willing to do everything to restore peace and prevent further bloodshed and destruction of our dear country, and to remove the sufferings of our wives and children; and when I submit this verbally to you, you will be convinced that this is truly the act of a strong man, who knows his own strength and might, and can thus hold out the olive branch. Oh, I trust that you and your fellow-burghers will accept it as such, and not do as we Afrikanders generally do, when such representations are made to us, to consider it a sign of weakness, because the Lord knows that he (Lord Kitchener) is doing so from pure nobility of soul, and the wish of the British people to prevent further bloodshed.”

The foregoing was evidently issued after M. de Kock had met Lord Kitchener in Pretoria. Then followed a circular by Commandant C. R. de Wet denouncing Lord Kitchener's terms, and a circular issued by Commandant Botha giving his account of the negotiations. De Wet stated:—

“Finally, I wish to observe that if I and our Government were so foolish as to accept the proposals of Lord Kitchener, I am convinced that the great majority of our people, if not all, who are now fighting, would not agree, for to accept those proposals means nothing less than the complete subjection of the Afrikander people, and the subjection of a people is more bitter to think of than the death of every single burgher.”

To Roosenekal Colonel Benson, with Column Five, also directed his steps, marching by Bankfontein and Klupspruit and Blinkwater, clearing the surrounding country as he went. He and Colonel Pulteney having come in touch with each other, they now scoured the valley around Steelpoort, unearthing Boers and capturing burghers innumerable.

General Beatson, with Column Six, was engaged in a prodigious task. Besides sweeping the country—Avontuur, Laatste Drift—through which he marched, to Brakfontein, he was instructed to hold both Wagon and Crocodile Drifts on the Olifant River, and to push out patrols to connect with General Plumer's troops on the lower reaches of the river.

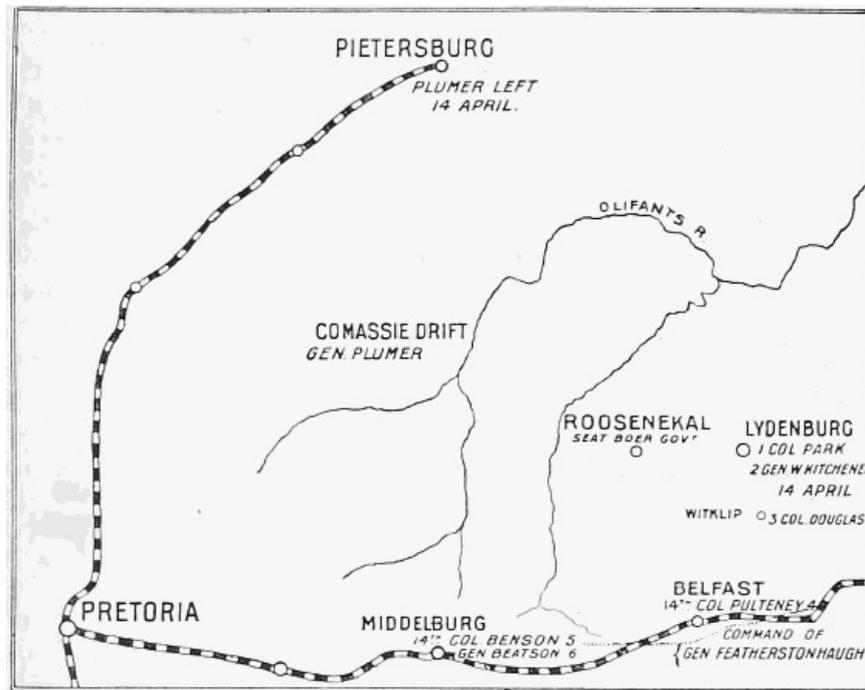
Later, General W. Kitchener, from Fort Weber, moved south to Paardeplaats, in the vicinity of which place he operated for some days making captures of prisoners and stock, and then proceeding farther south to clear the Bothaberg before going to Middelburg.

To Middelburg *viâ* Blinkwater also went Colonel Pulteney from Roosenekal, while Colonels Benson and Douglas (who for some time co-operated at Dullstroom) marched to Belfast.

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Thus the country was completely weeded of the enemy, and though some few effected their escape through the rugged region east of the Steelpoort Valley, 1081 Boers surrendered. Other captures included a 1-pounder quick-firing Krupp gun complete, with one hundred rounds of ammunition, one pom-pom, 540 rifles, 204,450 rounds of ammunition, 247 horses, 611 waggons

and carts. One Long Tom, one 4.7-inch gun (captured at Helvetia), one 15-pounder gun, one 12-pounder Krupp gun, two pom-poms, and two Maxims were blown up by the enemy to avoid capture. Unfortunately a gallant Victorian, Lieutenant Beatty, lost his life.



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE COMBINED MOVEMENT TO CLEAR THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL

The combined operations thus satisfactorily concluded, General Plumer concentrated his troops and marched by the line of Elands and Kameel Rivers to Eerste Fabrieken. General Blood, still cooperating, directed General Beatson to move his force from Wagon Drift along the left bank of the Wilge River to Bronker's Spruit Station. Colonel Allenby (who had returned from assisting General French's operations) moved from Middelburg to Witbank, and thence, in conjunction with General Beatson, began to clear the angle of the Wilge and Olifant Rivers. The enemy was now dispersing in every direction. Only one party driven westward by General Beatson was caught. This, in full flight, was overtaken by a detachment from General Plumer's force. Major Vials and the 3rd Victorian Bushmen, after an exciting chase over the rugged wilds, brought in twenty-seven prisoners, eighteen rifles, thirty waggons, and 1000 head of cattle.

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General Plumer reached his destination (Eerste Fabrieken) on the 4th of May.

### COLONEL GRENFELL AT PIETERSBURG

Concurrently with the activities of General Plumer and Sir Bindon Blood, events of some importance took place near Pietersburg. No sooner had General Plumer turned his back on the place than the Boers, some fifteen miles to the north, began to collect. A reconnaissance conducted by Mounted Infantry scented out a big commando, said to be under the command of Van Rensburg, at Klipdam. Accordingly Colonel Grenfell, with his column (Kitchener's Fighting Scouts), was sent by rail to Pietersburg "to clear up the situation." The clearing up process was highly effective. Moving by night (on the 26th of April), the troops came on the laager at Klipdam a little before dawn, and with the first streak of day delivered their attack. The fight was short, sharp, and brilliant. Seven Boers were killed. Only one of our men was wounded. Forty-one Dutchmen were captured, together with their camp, twenty-six horses, ten mules, waggons multifarious, and 76,000 rounds of ammunition.

This dashing exploit was soon followed by another, less showy but decidedly practical. Report having declared that the last Long Tom of the enemy was ensconced somewhere twenty miles east of Pietersburg, Colonel Grenfell directed his energies towards its capture. He marched hot foot *viâ* Doornhoek—which he reached on the 30th—to Berg Plaats. But the enemy was on the *qui vive*. They determined that Long Tom should show fight till his last gasp, and opened fire at over 10,000 yards range. Still Colonel Grenfell's men pushed on and on, determined to capture their prize, while the horrible weapon snorted derisively. At last, after firing sixteen rounds, and while Kitchener's Fighting Scouts were steadily bearing down on them, the Boers blew it up and scudded to the north-east to save their skins. The great object, therefore, of the splendid rush was defeated, but ten prisoners were secured, together with thirty-five rounds of ammunition for the defunct Long Tom. Two of the British party were wounded. While proceeding to search for further spoil, 100,000 rounds of Martini-Henry ammunition were unearthed at a neighbouring farm and destroyed. Kitchener's Fighting Scouts, under Colonels Colenbrander and Wilson, were now ever on the move, and, working from Bergvlei as a centre, were continually bringing in wandering Boers. A detachment of the 12th Mounted Infantry under Major Thomson, too, did splendid work, and succeeded, in the midst of a dense fog, in capturing Commandant Marais and forty of his followers.

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Beyers, who had fled from Pietersburg on the approach of the British, was still at large, however, and in the Waterberg district was doing his best to intercept such commandos as were on the way to surrender. Munnik, a former landdrost of Pietersburg, and somewhat of a firebrand, together with his son, an ex-state mining engineer, had been captured during General Plumer's march, by Major Kirkwood and the Wiltshire Regiment.

The total "bag" made by Colonel Grenfell, during his move from Pietersburg till his return there on the 6th of May, was 129 prisoners, fifty voluntary surrenders, and 240,000 rounds of ammunition, which were destroyed. Seven Boers were killed.

On 10th May Botha forwarded to Lord Kitchener another letter:—

"As I have already assured your Excellency, I am very desirous of terminating this war and its sad consequences. It is, however, necessary, in order to comply with the Grondwet of this Republic and otherwise, that, before any steps are taken in that direction, the condition of our country and our cause be brought to the notice of his Honour State President Kruger in Europe; and I therefore wish to send two persons to him in order to acquaint him fully with that condition. As speed in this matter is of great consequence to both contending parties, and as such despatch without your Excellency's assistance would take a considerable time, I should like to hear from your Excellency whether your Excellency is prepared to assist me in expediting this matter by allowing such person or persons to journey there and back unhindered, if necessary by the traffic medium within your Excellency's control."

On 16th May Lord Kitchener replied to the application as follows:—

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Honour's letter of the 10th instant, and, in reply, beg to state that I can only deal with you and your superior officers in the field in regard to the cessation of hostilities, and that I do not recognise the official status of any other persons in the late Republics of the Orange River and Transvaal. If, however, your Honour desires, with the object of bringing hostilities to a close, to consult with any person in Europe I will forward any telegram your Honour desires on the subject and let you have the reply. Should, however, your Honour still desire to send messengers, and will inform me of their names and status, I will refer the matter to his Majesty's Government for decision."

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## CHAPTER VI

### GENERAL ELLIOT'S OPERATIONS FROM KROONSTAD

It will be remembered that during the middle of March Lord Kitchener engaged himself with a new scheme of redistribution, and that General Elliot's force was arranged to operate from Kroonstad in the northern district of the Orange River Colony. By the 10th of April this force was ready to take the field. In consequence of a seeming recrudescence of activity of the enemy in the north-west of the Colony, and certain signs of a possible junction between them and their confederates of the south-west of the Transvaal, General Elliot directed his energies to the sweeping of the district about Reitzburg and Parys. Here supplies in some quantities served as an attraction to the hungry commandos. These were satisfactorily disposed of by the 20th of April, when the force returned to Kroonstad.

But it remained not long idle. General Elliot proceeded to scour the districts beyond the Wilge River, where the Dutchmen were again beginning to hoard their goods for further activity. Lord Kitchener's plan was as follows:—A movement was to be made by parallel columns on a wide front eastward beyond Heilbron; the left or northern column, when past that point, was to halt, while the other columns wheeling to the left should clear the country, the right passing east of Frankfort. The whole division, moving north in line, was then to press the Boers and their stock back on the Vaal River.

In order to drive as many dispersed Boers as possible into General Elliot's net, General C. Knox, concurrently with General Elliot's first move, was to send a column towards Reitz. A force was also stationed on the north under Colonel Western, who had succeeded to the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Williams' column on the lower drifts of the Wilge River. At the same time the columns of Colonels E. Knox and Rimington were to move from Heidelberg and Standerton respectively towards the junction of the Vaal and Waterval Rivers.

In accordance with this scheme, General C. Knox occupied Senekal on the 25th of April, sending, as directed, Colonel Pilcher (who had been doing magnificent work at Clocolan, Mequatting's Nek, and the Korannaberg) to Reitz on the 28th. The town was found to have been evacuated on the previous evening, and report spoke to General Elliot's presence on the north of it: consequently, Colonel Pilcher's part in the scheme being accomplished, he rejoined General Knox at Senekal, and with him moved to the railway.

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General Elliot's force at this time was moving east, and by the 7th of May the troops were disposed along the line Villiersdorp-Frankfort-Tafel Kop. On the 9th the General, who was at Cornelia, despatched a force to Vrede, and sent off forty prisoners, 5000 horses, and a large number of waggons and cattle to Standerton. The Boers (since Colonel Western was guarding the Wilge River Drift) were now threatened on all sides. Flying in despair to the hilly cover south of Greylingstad, they jumped into the open arms of Colonels E. Knox and Rimington, who were lying

in wait for them. Those who were smart enough to escape scurried across the river, but 34 prisoners, 4000 cattle, 284 waggons and carts, and 5400 rounds of ammunition were secured, and the haul served as a successful finale to the first phase of these well-directed operations.

Colonel Western's share in the movement being completed, he went from the Wilge River Drifts to Heilbron. Here he became aware that Steenkamp's laagers were situated some seventeen miles to north of him. Quick as lightning he was off again, marching stealthily by night in the direction of the quarry, and rushing the camp at dawn on the 9th of May. It was a splendidly conceived and splendidly executed affair, and thirty-two prisoners, with horses, waggons, and carts, were the prize of the undertaking.

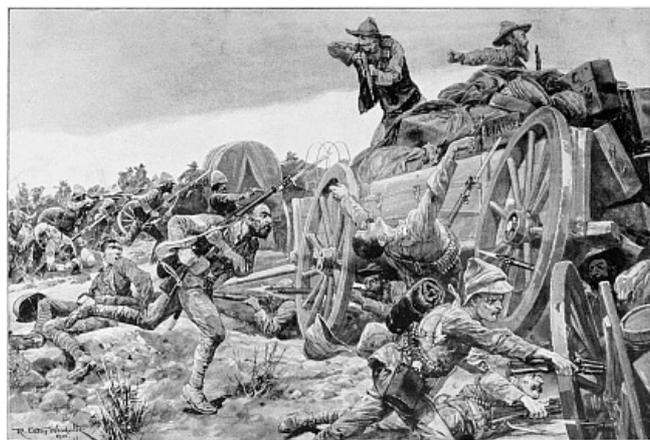
June opened with more dexterous swoops, and after clearing the ground from Vereeniging to Parys, and thoroughly sweeping Venterskroom and Vredefort, the force returned eastward to the rail, bringing with them nine prisoners, 16,000 rounds of ammunition, and many waggons. After refitting at Rhenoster, Colonel Western scoured the country between the junction of the Vaal and Rhenoster Rivers and Coal Mine Drift, but the enemy vanished, having now every reason to reserve their ammunition, or to spend it only on forces inferior to their own in number. They were not in all cases successful in their disappearance, for a convoy was caught on the 23rd of June, and the guerillas had to fight for dear life; six prisoners and all the waggons and stock were captured. Colonel Western then marched to Klerksdorp to replenish his supplies, after which he co-operated with General Gilbert Hamilton and Colonel Allenby—attacked the enemy in the mountain fastnesses of Hartebeestefontein, and captured more prisoners, horses, and rifles. He finished up the month by moving towards Hoopstad to meet Colonel Henry's column, on its way from Christiana, hustling Boers wherever he found them, and then returning to Klerksdorp, plus six prisoners, thirteen rifles, seventy-one horses, fifteen waggons and carts. Two Boers were killed.

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## GENERAL ELLIOT'S OPERATIONS—SECOND PHASE

General Elliot, his left column following the course of the Klip River, his right extended to the south (beyond Vrede), meanwhile marched towards the Natal border. At the same time Colonel Colville's force moved up the right bank of the Klip River on General Elliot's left, searching the country around Verzammelberg. Troops from General Hildyard's force were posted to close Almond's (or Alleman's) Nek and guard Botha's and Muller's Passes. Beyond an engagement with some 300 of the foe, who were found on his right flank some twenty miles below Vrede, General Elliot met with slight opposition. He reached Botha's Pass on the 19th of May, and forwarded to Natal some 2000 horses and stock, the fruits of his labours since leaving the Vaal.

The Boers by this time had found for themselves a new and naturally strong position some twenty-five miles to the south, and from this rugged and honeycombed region it was imperative to rout them. On the 21st they were attacked and without much difficulty driven off, as their resistance was mainly intended to cause a diversion while their convoy got away in safety to the cover of the broken country along the banks of the Wilge River. General Elliot, accompanied by Colonel De Lisle's column, now marched to Harrismith, collecting nearly 2000 horses on the way, and returning afterwards to Vrede. There, at the end of the month, he was met by Colonels Bethune and Lowe, who had remained behind to operate north and west of Witkoppies—the position south of Botha's Pass whence the Boers had been dislodged.



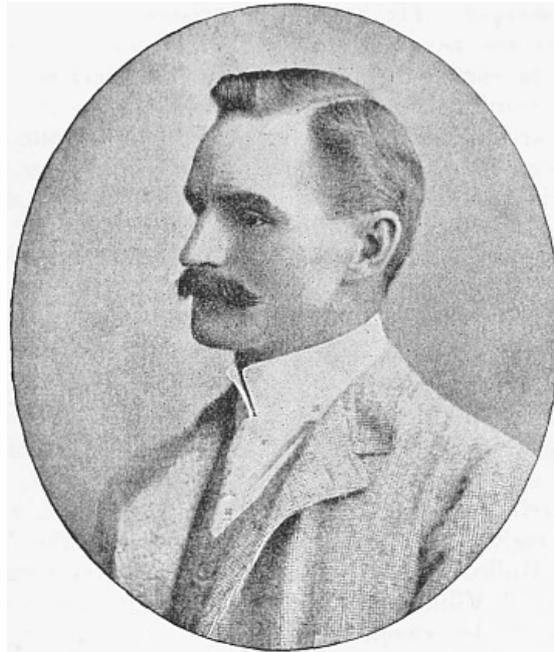
**THE CAPTURE OF DE WET'S CONVOY AT REITZ, JUNE 6, 1901: THE ATTACK UPON THE BOER WAGGONS BY COLONEL DE LISLE'S FORCE**

Drawing by R. Caton Woodville

On the 3rd of June General Elliot, having replenished his supplies from Standerton, moved from Vrede towards Kroonstad *viâ* Reitz and Lindley. It was on the way to Reitz that one of the most exciting conflicts of the march took place. A night swoop on Graspan had been planned for the purpose of intercepting a Boer convoy (said to be De Wet's), which had been located in the neighbourhood. Accordingly, in the small hours of the 6th, Major Sladen, with 400 Mounted

Infantry of Colonel De Lisle's force, made his way to the laager. The movement was executed with the utmost secrecy, and before they knew of the coming of the troops the Boers in their slumbers found themselves surrounded. All that could get away bolted precipitately, but forty-five prisoners were secured. Then Major Sladen, after sending some forty of his party to communicate with Colonel De Lisle, took up a defensive position and awaited reinforcements. During the interval the fleeing Boers had a chance to draw breath; they calculated the smallness of the British party by which they had been attacked, and knew that, weighted with prisoners and waggons, it would be impossible for them to move on. They presently came on Fouché, who was marching in this direction with 500 men, and with him returned to the rescue of their comrades of the laager, and made a vigorous struggle to regain the convoy. The small and fatigued British party remained gallant as ever. Captain Finlay (Bedford Regiment) and Captain Langley (South African Bushmen) and their men met the attack with immense energy, but in the course of the action the Boers succeeded in getting away some of the waggons which were parked outside the position.

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**COLONEL DE LISLE**

(Photo by J. Edwards, London)

They nevertheless (though egged on by De Wet and Delarey, who chanced to be on their way to the Transvaal) failed to make any impression on Major Sladen's superb defence, which was doggedly sustained till 3 P.M. By this time the first reinforcement from De Lisle's force was seen to be advancing, and the enemy in hot haste tore off, taking with them such waggons as they had secured. But they were swiftly pursued. Fighting recommenced with ferocity—hand-to-hand combats on all sides—and the waggons, all but two, were recaptured. Among the deeds of valour which were numerous on this memorable occasion, was the dashing exploit of young Ashburner, who, at the head of a few men, plunged into the thick of the fray, and at point of bayonet effected the recapture of the leading waggons.

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Poor Lieutenant Cameron of the Gordon Highlanders, who had many times before been notable for conspicuous gallantry, was killed. A gallant young officer, White of the Gordon Highlanders, escaped by a marvel. He was taken prisoner during the first fight, and stripped by the Boers; but when the second attack commenced he succeeded in escaping, and, further, managed to run six miles and bring up reinforcements.

But such hard fighting was not carried on without heavy cost—that of 3 officers and 17 men killed, and 1 officer and 24 men wounded. The enemy lost 14 dead, 6 wounded, and 45 taken prisoners, in addition to a number of injured which were carried away in carts. The captures included 10,000 rounds of ammunition, 114 waggons and carts, 4000 cattle, and a quantity of foodstuffs.

More captures were made later, near Lindley, and the force, heavily weighted, arrived at Kroonstad on the 14th and 15th of June. From thence, on the 22nd, they swept eastward, between Lindley and Senekal, towards the line of the Wilge River. On the 2nd of July, at Springfield Drift, some twenty miles north of Harrismith, they received supplies sent out by General Rundle. This officer was now preparing to co-operate with General Elliot, and to march north, on his right, through the country east of the Wilge River, while General Bullock should traverse the country from Standerton to Frankfort *viâ* Villiersdorp, and thus serve as a stop for any Boers who might be swept that way.

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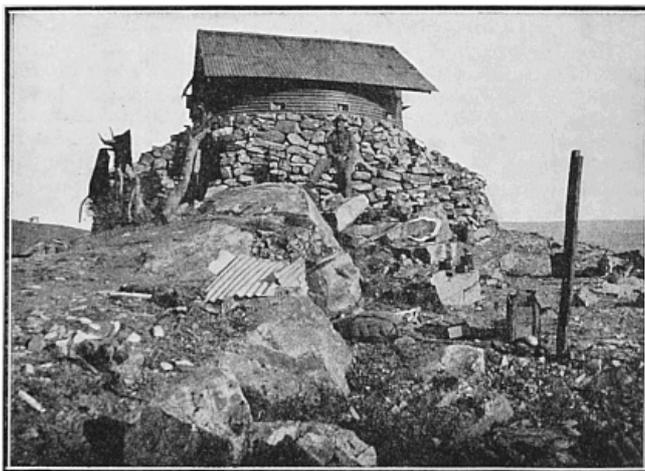
## CHAPTER VII

### GENERAL BRUCE-HAMILTON'S OPERATIONS, ORANGE RIVER COLONY (SOUTH)

General Bruce-Hamilton, as we know, succeeded General Lyttelton in his command on the 13th of April, and proceeded to spend the rest of the month in clearing the Orange River Colony, the Smithfield, Zastron, and Rouxville districts, on the east of the railway. Engaged in this work were Colonels Hickman, Monro, Maxwell, and White. Hearing that the enemy was massing in the hills round Philippolis, he directed Colonel W. Williams to move with three columns from the railway to the western border. From the 10th to the 19th of May was spent in marching through the Philippolis district, mopping up Boers, horses, and stock. Thirty-three prisoners were taken, including Commandant Bothma. About this date a brilliant little piece of work was performed by Major Gogarty and four squadrons of the South African Light Horse. A gang of raiders was known to be hovering in the region of Luckhoff, therefore this officer, with his dashing party, was ordered to surprise and, if possible, seize them. The affair was managed with consummate skill, the troops marching by night and surrounding the marauders. Of these, armed, they captured thirty-one, together with their horses.

Colonel Byng now remained behind to hold Philippolis, while Colonel Williams returned to the railway at Prior Siding. At this time a new system of blockhouses was inaugurated for the defence of the railway, which had the effect of releasing for active operations some six thousand of the troops previously required to guard it. The whole of these blockhouses were constructed of wood and iron. The walls consisted of two skins of corrugated iron (six inches apart) filled with sharp sand. On the *complete* filling of these skins the proof of the blockhouse against rifle fire entirely depended. The filling was done from the inside at the eaves and through holes in the sills of the loopholes, and was kept complete from time to time by order of the officer in charge by working new sand through the holes in the sill by means of a shovel and piece of wood. To prevent blockhouses from being seen through from one loophole to another, screens of blankets or sacking were suspended at right angles to each other crossing the centre of the blockhouse. A barbed wire spiderwebbing and fence surrounded the blockhouse, the entrance to which was firmly closed at night. A 200-gallon bullet-proof cased tank for water (rain water or that brought by water-carts) was kept outside the house, but on emergency water could be obtained by digging a few feet deep within the wired area round most of the houses. These preparations and precautions were none too many, as the Boers were constantly at mischief, and on the 18th they managed to derail a train at America Siding—an incident which cost the life of Major Heath (3rd Battalion South Lancashire Regiment).

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A TYPICAL BLOCKHOUSE

About the 19th of May, owing to the villainous activities of the guerillas in the north of Cape Colony, Colonel Monro moved to join the troops operating near Steynsburg, and subsequently Colonel Murray crossed into the Cape Colony. Colonel Maxwell (R.E.), to the deep regret of his colleagues and of all who knew of his distinguished services as leader of the Colonial Division under General Brabant, succumbed to the serious injuries received by being thrown from his horse. Early in June Colonel White proceeded to Aliwal North to act in combination with Colonel Haig, who was still chasing Krutzinger. At this time, in accordance with General Bruce-Hamilton's plan of scouring the country towards Petrusburg, his force was split into seven small columns. More columns, co-operating, advanced from the line of Kaffir River, Jagersfontein Road, Luckhoff, and Koffyfontein, so as to converge on Petrusburg; while Colonel Henry's force co-operated through Wolvekop (near Luckhoff), and the Kimberley column moved near Koffyfontein. Another force, moving from Bloemfontein, operated westward from Kaffir River Station. To block retreat to the north, the South African Constabulary occupied posts along the line of country between Bloemfontein and Petrusburg; and higher up, the Modder River drifts, between Abraham's Kraal and Paardeberg, were guarded by General Knox's troops. The movement took from the 5th to the 8th of June, during which time many laagers were surprised (one by the Burgher Police under Lieutenant Bayley), and 268 prisoners with various stores and effects secured. These activities were followed by others of a similar nature against roving gangs—under the Commandants Brand, Kolbe, and Joubert—which infested the country east of the railway, between the Caledon River on the south, and the line Edenburg-Reddersburg-

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Dewetsdorp on the north. Fights and skirmishes and snipings continued almost daily, and the columns of Colonels Rochfort, White, and Du Moulin had no reason to complain of lack of excitement. On the west of the railway, Colonels Williams and Byng continued to sweep the districts of Fauresmith, Jacobsdal, and Philippolis.

## **MAJOR-GENERAL C. KNOX, ORANGE RIVER COLONY (CENTRE)**

General Charles Knox, in accordance with the scheme of General Elliot's operations, remained in the Senekal district till the 10th of May, when he arrived on the railway. On the 13th his force was again on the move in the direction of Bothaville, in order to frustrate some parties of Boers who were seeking to evade the troops then operating near Klerksdorp, and to return to the Orange Colony. It was not long before the advance column under Colonel Pilcher came in touch with them. At a place called Allettasdraai, on the Valsch River, they were discovered, dealt with smartly and decisively, and driven south-west towards Zandspruit before Colonel Thorneycroft and his nimble band. After this period General Knox concentrated his force, and marched back to the railway with a view to acting in co-operation with General Bruce-Hamilton's enveloping movement before described. During this movement Colonel Pilcher was continually engaged with either Commandants Jacob or Erasmus, emerging from the various frays with waggons, stock, and prisoners.

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Colonel Henry, who moved his force from Jacobsdal to Christiana at the conclusion of General Bruce-Hamilton's operations, was now placed under General Knox's orders. Together with the Kimberley column he operated in the region between Bloemhof and Hoopstad, with the result that between the 2nd and 7th of July 52 prisoners, 50 horses, 64 vehicles, and over 7000 cattle were captured, 2 Boers were killed, and 55 surrendered.

Colonel Pilcher from Boshof moved to Bultfontein on the 18th of June, Colonel Thorneycroft taking simultaneously the same direction. During the advance Colonel Pilcher came in for hot work. On the 19th, while watering his cattle, he was attacked by 400 Boers, who, under cover of the smoke of a veldt fire, attacked the rearguard. These retired in good order, firing by sections. They were then relieved by the Mounted Infantry, who sent the guerillas flying, leaving seven of their number behind. The next day from a small kopje the fugitives became aggressive, and were charged by a detachment of Yeomen, who routed them, but on the morrow they were again found in some strength near Badenhorst Farm. The East Yorkshire Mounted Infantry, therefore, charged their position and dispersed them.

While Colonel Thorneycroft escorted prisoners and stock to Brandfort, Colonel Pilcher moved on in the direction of Hoopstad. Colonel Thorneycroft then searched the bed of the Vet River (west of Smaldeel), unearthing waggons and cattle which were hidden there. Towards the end of June the columns of both Pilcher and Thorneycroft were concentrated at Brandfort in order to recuperate before fresh undertakings in the easterly direction, which began on the 1st of July.

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## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **LORD METHUEN, TRANSVAAL (SOUTH-WEST)**

The Boers (who had been concentrating for a month at Hartebeestefontein), before the enveloping columns of Lord Methuen and General Mildmay Willson, now left their strong positions and scattered to the west. On the 8th of May some were brought to a stand at Leeuwfontein by General Babington with his smart New Zealanders, Bushmen, and Imperial Light Horse, while others were driven into General Dixon's net at Putfontein. Thus many captures were effected. Besides the fight of the 8th there was another near Korannafontein on the 10th with a detachment of Colonel Williams' force.

Lord Methuen and Sir Henry Rawlinson, after chasing the enemy in the west, moved to Mafeking and Maribogo respectively. General Babington and Colonel Williams by a southerly route returned to Klerksdorp, and General Dixon on the 25th took up his old position at Naauwpoort (south of the Magaliesberg). Seventy prisoners, twenty-six surrenders, 102 vehicles, and much stock were the results of these combined operations.

Attention next turned to Wolmaranstad, where Delarey was reported to be, and which place was now called by the Boers their capital. Rawlinson from the west, and Williams, accompanied by General Fetherstonhaugh (who had relieved General Babington) marched thither from Klerksdorp, while Lord Methuen guarded the exits towards the north. Colonel Rawlinson entered Wolmaranstad without opposition, joined hands with General Fetherstonhaugh, and proceeded towards Klerksdorp, after having marched (since the 6th of May) 387 miles. By way of interlude he captured a small laager near Cyferkuil, thus making his haul consist of 17 prisoners, 3000 head of cattle, 29,000 sheep, and 400 horses. Forty Boers and many families were also brought in. At the same time Lord Methuen, working from Korannafontein, chased a roving commando which was trekking towards Lichtenburg. The fruit of the united activity represented 56 prisoners, 40 horses, and over 100 vehicles, besides stock in abundance. An animated fight took

place on the 23rd, over a convoy moving from Potchefstroom to Ventersdorp. The Potchefstroom convoy got as far as Witpoortje, where it was met by the Ventersdorp section. This section was about to leave Witpoortje on its way to Ventersdorp when it was attacked by 300 Boers, who fought the fight of the famished. Instantly the Potchefstroom section returned to the rescue, and reinforced the Ventersdorp force with fifty men of the Welsh Fusiliers and twenty of the Imperial Light Horse. The Boers driven off, the convoy then proceeded, but again at Rietfontein Drift the guerillas, some 400 of them under Liebenberg, made a desperate rush upon the coveted supplies, three waggons of which had broken down in the scrimmage.

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The escort were hard pressed—losing four men killed and two officers and thirty-one men wounded—but their endurance and gallantry stood every test. The garrison of Ventersdorp sent out fifty men to clear the front of the convoy, and finally brought it back in safety. At one time it seemed as though the convoy was lost, but it was recaptured by dint of hard fighting. Captain Purchas (2nd Battalion South Wales Borderers) especially distinguished himself, Captain Hay (Royal Welsh Fusiliers) was wounded, and Lieutenant Wells (Loyal North Lancashire Regiment), Lieutenant Bankes (Imperial Yeomanry), and Second-Lieutenant Smith (78th Battery R.F.A.), who were in the thick of the fray, had narrow escapes, owing to the prodigious energy with which they tackled the marauders.

The work of clearing the right bank of the Vaal towards Klerksdorp was next undertaken by General Fetherstonhaugh and Colonel Williams. A successful action on the 24th against Van Rensburg's banditti enabled the force to march into Klerksdorp with twenty-four prisoners, 6200 rounds of ammunition, and thirty ox waggons. Thirty-five Burghers surrendered in course of the march.

General Dixon, veering west from Naauwpoort, made a search for guns and ammunition, which had been buried in the neighbourhood. From his camp at Vlakfontein<sup>[3]</sup> he moved on the 29th of May to Waterval, where, on a farm, he found the spot where the guns had been buried. The weapons themselves had been removed. Near here ammunition was found, but it was too late in the day to attempt to unearth it. The enemy was hovering all round the region, and it was deemed advisable to return to camp before making a lunge at them. The camp in the absence of General Dixon was well guarded, and in a good defensible position, and there was no reason to believe that the hovering Boers could quickly mass in any large number.



**THE ENGAGEMENT AT VLAKFONTEIN: THE DERBYSHIRES RE-TAKING THE GUNS AT THE POINT OF THE BAYONET**

Drawing by R. Caton Woodville

As the centre (with which was General Dixon) was crossing the valley towards camp, the firing which had all day been going forward in the direction of the rearguard<sup>[4]</sup> became louder and louder. Then suddenly the hilly ground on which was the rearguard became apparently enveloped in fire, the veldt blazing and smoking, and seeming to impose a flaming curtain between one portion of the force and the other. The rolls of artillery now increased, and presently a messenger from Major Chance reported that he was hard pressed. The Boers, under cover of the smoke, had come up in great numbers, rushed upon and surrounded the guns, killing the gun teams and—after a desperate struggle—most of the section in charge. According to the much-contested statement of Reuter's Correspondent: "A lieutenant and a sergeant-major were made prisoners, and on their refusing to give information as to the working of the guns they were shot. Their gallant conduct undoubtedly saved many lives, for the enemy actually turned the guns on our troops, but the shells failed to explode, as the pins had not been withdrawn." This statement could not be corroborated, as those concerned were dead, but support for it is found in the assertion of a private, who stated: "They asked the officer in charge to surrender, but he replied, 'A British soldier does not know the meaning of surrender, and if you want guns you will need to shoot me and my gunners!' Thereupon the enemy shot the officer and gunners, and captured the two guns, and then turned them on us." At this juncture General Dixon, who had sent off Colonel Duff and his troops to the succour of Major Chance, and himself had been galloping across the valley to the scene of action, came to the rescue. On arrival at the west picket of the camp, he found the situation was critical in the extreme. The two guns and howitzer which had been with him were in action west of the picket, and these, together with the company of the Derbys which

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had been on picket and the details left in camp, were hotly engaged. Some of the enemy were within 800 yards of the picket, while others at 1600 yards range were shelling the British camp and guns. It now became evident that the guns of the rearguard were captured! Colonel Duff, advancing with two guns (8th Battery), 200 Scottish Horse, and two companies of the King's Own Borderers with a Maxim, now hastened across the valley, and a general advance was made. The Derbyshires were ordered to retake the guns, and this was brilliantly accomplished. By successive rushes they swept on and on, till the Boers, hearing the roar and seeing the red flash of bayonets in the firelight, took to their steeds, mounted and galloped off as hard as legs would carry them. The guns were recaptured, but the ground was littered with wounded and dead, some of whom had met their fate at the hands of the Boers after they were stricken helpless on the veldt. A trooper of the Imperial Yeomanry, writing of this, said: "It was an awful affair; I thought every one of us was going to get killed. There were dozens of poor fellows murdered after they were wounded. I expect the newspapers have told all about it. I hope, please God, I shall never see anything like this again. It was an awful sight. We had been on the trek all last month with General Dixon's column.... The night after the fight we had to saddle up in quick time and do a night flit, as the Boers were surrounding our camp. We got away quite safe without the Boers knowing it. We left all the tents standing, so as to make them believe we were still there, but we had to leave our wounded."

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General Dixon marched from Vlakkfontein on the night of May 30 to Naauwpoort, leaving the hospital, which contained many serious cases, to be moved by daylight on May 31 along a good road leading to Krugersdorp.

Several notable acts of gallantry were performed, among them that of Captain Field (Scottish Horse), who went back at the risk of his life to extricate two men who were unable to retire from the flames. It was a day of many heroes—McDougal, a noble fellow who gave his life; West, another splendid officer of Field Artillery; Captain Browne of the Border Regiment; young Manby, who charged with the dashing "Derbys"; and Wilyams of the Imperial Yeomanry, who was among the missing—these are only some of the number who made themselves distinguished in this bloody hour. The officers killed besides Lieutenant McDougal (28th Battery R.F.A.) were Captain Armstrong, 7th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, and Lieutenants Laing, Noke, Campbell, Campion (Imperial Yeomanry). Among the wounded were Captain Sadler, Lieutenants Gibson, Armstrong, Rimington (Derbyshire Regiment), Surgeon-Captain Welford, and Lieutenant Hern (Imperial Yeomanry). Of the men, forty-four were killed and seventeen succumbed to their injuries. The total wounded was 115.

A trooper wrote the following description of the day's fighting: "About midday the Boers fired the veldt, and we were stationed just in front and could not see. Suddenly the enemy rushed through, after giving us a volley. Dozens of our men and horses went down, and I had the worst two hours of my life. Just as we had the order to retire a chap close to me was thrown from his horse. I caught the animal with the intention of taking it back to the owner, but a bullet passed through my coat and grazed my horse, making the animal turn sharply, with the result that the other horse pulled me clean out of the saddle and knocked the wind out of me. I lay there with our men being shot down by dozens. The sights I saw were beyond description. Boers shot our fellows down in cold blood. Dozens of them were simply murdered. They threw down their arms, and the Boers walked up to them and shot them in cold blood. I lay for some time as if dead, but eventually I joined some foot soldiers and we captured our guns again. An awful thing was that many wounded were burned to death in the veldt fire. The devils used explosive bullets, and some of the wounds were dreadful."

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One of the Scottish Horse said: "We rushed up the ridge and shot down any one who came in front of us, and managed to recapture the guns. It was a most bloodthirsty and murderous battle. The enemy were not content with wounding our men, but they started shooting and clubbing our wounded." On this subject Lieutenant Duff (Imperial Yeomanry) collected the evidence of various officers and privates of the Yeomanry and the Derbyshire Regiment, who were eye-witnesses to the acts of atrocity committed by the Boers. He provided Lord Kitchener with the following information. The day after the fight at Vlakkfontein, on May 29, he was conversing with Lieutenant Hern, also of the Imperial Yeomanry, who had been badly wounded in that engagement and has since been invalided home to England. Lieutenant Hern told him that while he was lying wounded on the ground he noticed about twenty yards from him Lieutenant Spring and Sergeant Findlay, both of the Imperial Yeomanry. They were both slightly wounded, and were binding up each other's wounds, when a young Boer, wearing a pink puggaree round his hat, came close up to them and shot them both dead. This Lieutenant Hern saw himself. He lay quite still, and the Boers, thinking him dead, contented themselves with taking his spurs and leggings.

Lieutenant Hern also said that the same day others of our wounded were deliberately shot by the Boers.

The enemy, numbering 1500, were under the command of General Kemp.

On receipt of the news of this engagement General Fetherstonhaugh, with the columns under Colonels Sir H. Rawlinson, Williams, and Hickie, hurriedly pushed north from Klerksdorp so as to deal with Commandant Kemp's barbarians, while General Gilbert Hamilton's force moved by rail from Greylingstad to Krugersdorp, and General Methuen marched from the neighbourhood of Zeerust towards Doornkop. But on the approach of the troops the Boers began flying westward. Subsequently it was reported that Kemp and Beyers intended to join hands in the Waterberg

district, consequently General Dixon proceeded through Olifants Nek to block the passes north of Rustenburg, while General Fetherstonhaugh continued to scour the rugged region west of the Magaliesberg. Near Roodeval on the 9th of June he caught them, seized seventeen prisoners, thirty-three waggons and a quantity of ammunition, and sent the rest scudding northwards. Still scouring the country he dispersed Boers right and left, and finally returned to Klerksdorp with Colonels Rawlinson and Hickie, while Colonel Williams was directed to Krugersdorp to refit. Curiously enough, in the course of these operations over country which had for some months been unexplored by the British, Boers in certain regions were discovered peacefully ploughing and sowing on their farms. They effected to believe the war had ended in their favour, but made no demur on being invited to surrender. Reuter's Correspondent gave the following sample of a conversation which ensued when the Magistrate announced his intention of administering the oath of allegiance to Burghers of the conquered territories desirous of taking it.

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Does taking the oath render military service against our own people compulsory?—No; but British subjects are expected to defend their town in case of attack.

What difference is there between the oath of neutrality and the oath of allegiance?—The first effaces a man's nationality; the second renders him a British subject.

Will the oath prejudice any claim against Great Britain?—No.

Will the oath confer the full rights of a British subject?—Yes.

(Here the Boer could study the policy of the British *versus* that of the late South African Government. Political equality on the one side, and long years of apprenticeship as subject of the Republic on the other!) The next question was:—

Will those taking the oath now have any advantages over those taking it later?—No.

If a Burgher takes the oath now, and his property outside is destroyed by the enemy, will he receive any compensation?—Great Britain repudiates legal liability, but invites claims, which will be brought before a commission.

To resume. Colonel Allenby and General G. Hamilton had meanwhile been clearing the Hekpoort Valley and Breedts Nek in the Magaliesberg. That work successfully accomplished, they moved *viâ* Tafel Kop and Ventersdorp to Klerksdorp. The rest of June was spent in operations against Kemp's guerillas in this region, and the month ended with the breaking up of a commando which had gathered in the Hartebeestefontein Hills. Lord Methuen, after the dispersal of the enemy, employed his troops in escorting convoys to Zeerust.<sup>[5]</sup> Early in July he attacked, on the north-east of Zeerust, a gang of Boers, with stock and waggons, captured forty-three prisoners, thirty-seven rifles, and forty-six waggons. His casualties were two wounded. The Boers lost three killed, while three surrendered.

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**A NON-COMBATANT HERO—AN ARMY DOCTOR  
AT WORK IN THE FIRING LINE.**

At this time, 7th July, Colonel Allenby was moved to the north of Krugersdorp for the purpose of sweeping, in co-operation with General Barton and Major C. Williams, the line of Crocodile River, which was harassed by Boers, who were doing their best to oppose the establishment of posts which were to be occupied by the South African Constabulary.

#### FOOTNOTES:

[3] For composition of force see beginning of volume.

[4] Two guns 28th Battery, one pom-pom, 230 Imperial Yeomanry, one Company Derby Regiment 100 strong, under Major Chance, R.A.

[5] The siege ended about the 22nd of May, when Lord Methuen arrived with a large convoy and dispersed the Boers from the neighbourhood. As an instance of the change which was taking place may be quoted the resolutions passed by some ex-Burghers in regard to the attitude of the leaders of the Bond and of the Dutch Reformed Church towards the peace delegates. "Considering the magnitude of the suffering which has already

occurred from the war, the fearful loss of life and treasure, the thousands of prisoners in exile in other lands or in bondage in South Africa, and the multitude of refugees, both British and Boer, whose homes have been broken up and who are surely being reduced to penury, and considering further the loss and ruin in ever-increasing measure falling on the country, this meeting thanks the Peace Committee for its benevolent efforts, and trusts that it will endeavour to continue them, expressing at the same time its deep regret and indignation at the attitude of Messrs. Andrew Murray, Theron, Sauer, and Merriman towards the peace envoys and the future of the war. Their conduct must tend powerfully in the direction of further bloodshed and increasing misery, and this meeting urges the military necessity of absolutely suppressing all sedition by all the force which martial law affords, and of using the utmost firmness to end this long protracted war, believing that peace alone can bring true prosperity."

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## CHAPTER IX

### OPERATIONS BETWEEN THE DELAGOA AND NATAL LINES

General Bullock, early in May, engaged in the task of chasing Boers who had been dispersed by the operations of General Blood. Round Ermelo and Bethel the scattered commandos of Botha attempted to collect, but General Bullock, advancing through Amersfoort, attacked and drove them from Ermelo on the 9th of May. At this time General Blood's columns under General W. Kitchener and Colonel W. Pulteney were approaching Ermelo from the north, therefore General Bullock disposed his troops along the line Ermelo-Lake Chrissie, closed the road leading north-east, and connected his right with General Blood's force. Simultaneously Colonel Rimington marched to join hands with General Plumer, who was approaching Bethel from the west.

General Plumer, who had left Silverton, near Pretoria, on the 14th of May, to work in conjunction with Colonel Allenby (from Whitbank) and Colonel E. Knox (from Greylingstad) against Boer laagers near the source of the Wilge River, joined hands with both the above-named officers at Krondraai, on the 16th and 17th of May. At the rumour of British approach, the Boer laagers at once broke up, their occupants dispersing towards south and east. Colonel Allenby, on his way to Springs, encountered the Boer rabble near Leeuwkop, and drove them south-east, while General Plumer and Colonel E. Knox proceeded to join Colonel Rimington at Bethel. Considerable opposition was met with *en route*, but large numbers of prisoners were taken, together with a goodly amount of stock, and gradually the Boers, who had made this district a centre for their operations, found themselves empty and shelterless.

General Plumer now extended the three columns at his disposal on the line Bethel-Middelplaats, for the purpose of sweeping the country down to the Vaal, and clearing the region between Leeuwspruit and Kaffir Spruit.

The Boers at this period managed to collect in sufficient quantity to make a violent lunge at a convoy proceeding between Whitbank and Mooifontein, on its way to Standerton. The escort under Colonel Gallway, consisting of detachments of Somerset and Munster Fusiliers, 10th Hussars, and Queenslanders, suddenly found themselves attacked by 400 desperadoes, who made violent rushes to get to close quarters. The resistance of the British band was fierce as it was valiant, and, after a running fight lasting six hours, the Boers were routed, with a loss to them of six killed and thirty wounded. One British officer lost his life, and one was wounded. Five men were killed and twenty-four wounded.

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**MAP ILLUSTRATING THE OPERATIONS BETWEEN DELAGOA BAY AND NATAL LINES, MAY AND JUNE, 1901**

General Plumer and Colonel Knox halted near Standerton, and Colonel Rimington at Platrand, their columns, since leaving Bethel, having secured 37 prisoners and 650 horses.

General Bullock, who on the 25th of May was joined by Colonel Grey (from Standerton), now commenced a series of night raids on various farmhouses along the banks of the Vaal, south-east of Ermelo—excursions which were full of dash and daring, and resulted in the capture of many armed burghers.

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June found both columns at Standerton. Five days later Colonel Grey started on an adventurous hunt for a Boer gun, said to be with a commando at Kaffir Spruit. On the 11th the force surprised a Boer laager at Rietvlei, and after a vigorous fight nine prisoners were secured. One Boer was killed and two wounded. Colonel Grey, having thoroughly searched the district between Ermelo and Bethel without finding a trace of the required gun, returned to Standerton. From the 10th of June to the 4th of July, General Bullock continued his clearance of the country, dispersing Boer gangs east of Elandsberg down to the valley of the Assegai River. He was then called in to the railway and returned to Standerton.

### **BRIGADIER-GENERAL PLUMER IN THE EASTERN TRANSVAAL**

General Plumer, as soon as he had refitted his troops at Standerton, was again off to engage in further sweeping operations against Boer knots in the region between Amersfoort and Piet Retief. General Plumer, with Colonel Rimington on his right flank and Colonel Knox on his left, advanced on the 1st of June on the line Platrand-Springbokfontein-Uitkyk. By the 8th, all three columns had reached the line Driefontein-Breda-Waterval Drift, and thus, on the following day, the columns of Plumer (centre) and Knox (left) were able to swoop from the north upon Piet Retief, while that of Rimington (right), making a night détour, wheeled round the south of the town and blocked all southerly exits therefrom. But, warily, the Boers had made off, and the place was deserted. Colonel Rimington, however, contrived to cut off a Boer convoy which was hastily lumbering along towards the Vryheid Road, accompanied by the escaping Landdrost of Piet Retief and William Emmett, who were forthwith taken prisoners together with twenty-eight more of their compatriots. Twelve waggons and 100 horses were also secured. Colonel Rimington then stationed himself south-east of the difficult peaks of the Slangapiesberg, while they were traversed by Colonel Plumer's troops, who, having moved from Piet Retief towards Wakkerstroom to meet a convoy, were now proceeding over the dangerous heights. The whole force having cleared "as far as practicable" this gibbose and frowning region, moved to Paul Pietersburg, which was also found deserted. Near Elandsberg Nek, however, Colonel Gallway, with some 300 Bushmen, two companies of Munster Fusiliers, and some Sharpshooters, with two guns of Q Battery, were assailed by 300 Boers, who were strongly entrenched there. The enemy were speedily dispersed, but Lieutenant Rudkin, R.H.A., was wounded in both knees, and narrowly escaped death, as a Boer bullet passed through the litter while the wounded man was being carried from the field of action. The columns finally converged on Utrecht. The prize of their labours after leaving Piet Retief amounted to 21 prisoners, 232 horses, and 100 waggons. Twenty-six Burghers surrendered.

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**BRIGADIER-GENERAL THE EARL  
OF ERROLL.**

Photo Elliott & Fry, London.

Action was now taken by Colonels Rimington and Wing against the enemy to north of Utrecht, in the valley of the Pongola River. Colonel Rimington, on the night of the 26th of June, marched towards Tiverton, while Colonel Wing made a détour over the Elandsberg Pass to Schuilhoek. There, the latter attacked the wandering hordes, driving them before him up the valley, where they soon found themselves unpleasantly warmed and welcomed by Colonel Rimington's guns, which took them in the rear. Away they went helter-skelter, leaving behind them nine vehicles, 6500 rounds of ammunition, horses and cattle in plenty, and six dead Boers. Three were captured. Colonel Rimington, after immense activity around Wakkerstroom, returned independently to Platrand, while General Plumer and Colonel Knox from Utrecht marched towards Amsterdam and Carolina, reaching Bothwell, near Lake Chrissie, on the 7th of July.

In the meantime, on June 20, the Boers published the following notice, dated Waterval, Standerton District, signed S. Burger and Steyn, which showed they were still truculent:—

“As his Honour the State President Kruger and the Deputation in Europe have not heard anything direct from our Government since the conference between Commandant-General Botha and Lord Kitchener at Middelburg, and as the Government of the South African Republic deemed it advisable that they should be acquainted with the state of affairs here, therefore, at request of the Commandant-General, and with the kind compliance [?] of Lord Kitchener, a private telegram was sent to them, in which the entire state of affairs was fully described and intentionally put in the worst light, for the means of making the advice of his Honour and the Deputation the more weighty. On this his Honour informed us that he and the Deputation have still great hopes of a satisfactory end of the long struggle, that after material and personal sacrifice we should continue the struggle, and that on their part all steps are already taken and will still be taken for proper provision for the captive women and children and prisoners of war. For discussing and considering this answer of his Honour a conference of the Governments of both Republics was arranged, at which were present Chief Commandant C. R. de Wet, Commandant-General L. Botha, and Assistant-Commandant J. H. Delarey. After a full revision of the condition of military affairs represented by these chief officers, and thorough discussion of our whole cause by both Governments, the following resolution was taken by both Governments, with the advice of the said chief officers:—

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“The Governments of the South African Republic and Orange Free State, with the advice of the said chief officers, and taking into consideration the satisfactory report of his Honour State President Kruger and the Deputation in the foreign country, and considering the good progress of our cause in the Colonies, where our brothers oppose the cruel injustice done to the Republics more and more in depriving them of their independence, considering further the invaluable personal and material sacrifices they have made for our cause, which would all be worthless and vain with a peace whereby the independence of the Republics is given up, and further considering the certainty that the losing of our independence after the destruction already done and losses suffered will drag with it the national and material annihilation [?] of the entire people, and especially considering the spirit of unbending persistence with which the great majority of our men, women, and children are still possessed, and in which we see with thankful acknowledgment the hand of the Almighty Protector, resolve that no peace will be made and no peace conditions accepted by which our independence and national existence, or the interests of our colonial brothers, shall be the price paid, and that the war will be vigorously prosecuted by

taking all measures necessary for maintenance of independence and interests.”

## MAJOR-GENERAL BEATSON'S OPERATIONS

While General Plumer was at Bethel, General Beatson, who had been watching the Middelburg-Bronkers Spruit line, moved to Brugspruit. He then (with Colonel Allenby's column from Springs) marched south, on the 25th of May, towards the junction of Olifants River and Steenkool Spruit in order to catch such Boers as had escaped General Plumer. (Major Garratt, with a few of Allenby's men, during the advance from Springs, made good use of his time, and secured, besides rifles and ammunition, eight prisoners and waggons, a Colt gun, and forty mules.)

General Beatson, on the right bank of Olifants River, soon came in contact with Trichard's commando, which was strongly entrenched on Vaalkrans. The Boers were hard pressed, and had to run for it, leaving behind them, as usual, waggons and stock. After this Allenby's column, temporarily commanded by Colonel Hippisley, searched the region of Brugspruit, found no signs of the foe, and consequently returned *viâ* Wilge River Station to Pretoria. General Beatson continued his operations in the direction of Bethel. A small force of the enemy was reported to be at Boschmansfontein, consequently the General, then encamped at Van Dycks Drift, detached a force to deal with them. Major Morris, with four companies of Victorian Mounted Rifles and two pom-poms, marched towards the laager and found it deserted. On the 12th of June he was instructed to combine with the General in an attack on the marauders to be made on the 13th at Elandsfontein. Therefore the detachment the night before bivouacked at Wilmansrust. No sooner had darkness fallen than the enemy, evading the outposts, crept up to the bivouac, and within very short range poured a deadly fire in on the astonished force. A scene of turmoil followed. Rifles blazed, horses stamped, and soon the guerillas had rushed the camp and captured the pom-poms. The struggle was desperate, and two officers and sixteen men were slain, four officers and thirty-eight men wounded, while many men were made prisoners. Only two officers and fifty men escaped to General Beatson's camp, though such as had been made prisoners were afterwards released. Promptly to the rescue rushed the General, leaving his baggage under guard of his infantry, but though he arrived soon after daybreak on the 13th, the desperadoes had made off, and not a vestige of them was to be seen. He therefore concentrated his force at Koorfontein. The column later, sweeping east, came in touch with General Blood's force north of Ermelo on the 19th, and from thence proceeded, clearing the ground as they went, to Middelburg to refit. The total result of the operations were, 16 Boers killed and wounded; prisoners, 23; rifles, 160; ammunition, 10,850 rounds; 58 vehicles, and some stock.

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## LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR BINDON BLOOD. EASTERN TRANSVAAL

In the middle of May General Bullock, as we are aware, was holding a line from Lake Chrissie southwards. To co-operate with him came General Blood on the conclusion of his operations north of the Delagoa line.

By the 17th of May the columns of General W. Kitchener and Colonel Pulteney were in touch with General Bullock near Ermelo, and General Blood occupied Carolina with his cavalry. Finding the enemy had scampered, operations were set on foot to clear the country towards the East. Colonel Benson, marching south from Belfast, crossed the Komati Valley, while Colonel Douglas, moving from Machadodorp, *viâ* Uitkomst, operated between Komati River and the railway. To stop the guerillas from fleeing north, and also to check them attempting to fly south from the column of Colonel Park (which was scouring from Lydenburg and the difficult ruggedness of the Mauchberg towards Nelspruit), General Spens kept a watchful eye at Nelspruit. General Blood at this time had accounted for four Boers killed, eighteen captured, and nine burghers surrendered, and the number was greatly augmented by the combined movement which followed.

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General Spens then proceeded (on the 10th of June) to operate in the mountainous districts surrounding Machadodorp, Lydenburg, and Nelspruit. He and Colonel Park swept north-west of Nelspruit, while Colonels Benson and Douglas cleared the country north-east from Machadodorp. The reward of the combined efforts, which were quite herculean in view of the region traversed, was 17 Boers killed, 48 prisoners captured, 107 rifles, 38,700 rounds of ammunition, 266 vehicles. Large quantities of stock were seized.

In consequence of the attack before mentioned on Major Morris and the Victorians at Wilmansrust on the 12th, General Blood moved west from Carolina with all available troops. He formed two columns, composed of General Babington's cavalry and the 1st King's Royal Rifles under Colonel Campbell, and directed General W. Kitchener and Colonel Pulteney, who by this time were at Amsterdam, to follow in all haste.

General Blood made his headquarters a few miles north of Ermelo, and established signalling communication with General W. Kitchener and General Beatson. On the 19th of June General Beatson reached headquarters, and the column, accompanied by General Blood, from thence proceeded to Middelburg (which was reached on the 25th) to be reorganised. Meanwhile the column of Colonel Pulteney went to Carolina to draw supplies, following afterwards in the wake of General Babington, Colonel Campbell, and General W. Kitchener, who were moving west to the line Middelkraal-Uitgedacht, north of Bethel. These columns were soon joined by General Blood with a convoy.

On the 31st the troops moved from Middelkraal towards Springs in the following positions: Campbell on the right marched on Kleinkoppie, Babington on Roodepoort, and Kitchener on Grootpan. The last officer on the 3rd of July opened up communication with the columns of Colville and Garratt (the last had relieved Colonel Grey), which were moving up from Standerton and Greylingstad respectively.

Vigorous measures were being taken to prevent Viljoen and other Boer leaders from escaping to the east. The dispersed hordes were collecting in their numbers near Middelburg, and to be beforehand with them Colonel Benson hurried from Machadodorp to Dullstroom, Colonel Park from Lydenburg turned westwards so as to hem in the enemy from the north, while General Spens' column hovered at Wonderfontein ready to pounce as circumstances might suggest.

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### **THE MISHAP TO THE VICTORIANS AT WILMANSRUST, JUNE 12, 1901**

Drawing by R. Caton Woodville

On the north-west of Machadodorp Colonel Benson soon came in touch with the foe; caught him at Vlakfontein, twelve miles out, handled him vigorously, and killed six of his band. One prisoner was taken. The British lost three men, and eight wounded. This was on the 3rd of July. On the 7th Viljoen, with the Johannesburg and Middelburg commandos, again attacked the column at Dullstroom, but got the worst of it, and had to flee, followed up hill and down dale, through ravine and bush, by the dashing little force. General Spens from Wonderfontein now took up the chase, but Viljoen, intimately acquainted with the country, contrived to become as slippery an eel as De Wet, and to make off on the now proverbial Boer principle of those who fight and run away live to fight another day.

### **ACTIVITIES AROUND STANDERTON AND HEIDELBERG**

May in the district between Standerton and Ermelo was opened by a smart affair which resulted in the capture of eight prisoners, a Maxim Nordenfeldt machine gun, fifteen rifles, twelve waggons, and fifteen horses. The force under General Clements had for some little time been engaged in Boer-hunting in the region north-east of Standerton on the right bank of the Vaal. On the 4th May a laager was located, and while troops detached from Standerton and Platrand blocked the roads leading south from the river, Colonel Colville with his column made a night march towards it, along the Standerton-Ermelo road. The surprise was complete, and the Boers opened their eyes to dawn and desperation at one and the same moment. Those who were sufficiently nimble scattered to the four winds, the remainder were seized. Pursuit was impossible, owing to the already fatigued state of Colonel Colville's men. This column, which was composed of 2nd Division Mounted Infantry, 2nd Johannesburg Mounted Rifles, 63rd Battery R.F.A. (4 guns), "O" Section pom-poms, 2nd East Surrey, 1st Auxiliary Company A.S.C., 2nd Brigade Field Hospital, and 2nd Brigade Bearer Company, was now strengthened by four squadrons of regular cavalry. Colonel Colville, commanding this entire force, then spent the remainder of May in operations in conjunction with General Elliot, who was moving through Vrede to the Natal Border. Colonel Colville's route lay from De Lange's Drift up the right bank of the Klip River through the Verzammelberg. On nearing the junction of the Klip and Ganzvlei, Colonel Colville crossed into Orange River Colony, fought more Boers, captured more stock, and after having made an enormous haul, retraced his steps to his starting-point, De Lange's Drift.

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The early part of June was spent in sweeping down the right bank of the Vaal towards Villiersdorp, clearing farms and denuding the district of supplies. On the 22nd Colonel Colville marched north from Val Station to act on the left flank of Colonel Grey's column, which was operating against the enemy between Standerton and the west of Bethel. Towards Watervalshoek the two forces converged, and from here, on the 25th, Colonel Grey's Queenslanders and New Zealanders drove off some 400 of the enemy. After this dashing exploit Colonel Grey moved to Greylingstad to fill up with supplies, and Colonel Garratt (as has been said in the narrative of General Blood's movements) took over command from Colonel Grey. Colonel Colville remained near the scene of the fight, so as to connect with General Blood's columns which were due from the north-east. Colonel Garratt, keeping west of Colonel Colville, and in communication with him, moved north via Boschmankop to Springs. Colonel Colville at Watervalshoek got in touch with

## CHAPTER X

### LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GRENFELL'S OPERATIONS—TRANSVAAL, N.

While Colonel Grenfell was occupying Pietersburg at the extreme limit of the northern line, news came in that small hordes of Boers were moving in the Zoutpansberg district. It was decided to head off this northern trek, consequently Colonel Grenfell with 600 of Kitchener's Fighting Scouts, 12th Battalion Mounted Infantry, two guns and four companies of the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment, made an expedition into the bush veldt to the north of him. His destination was a small township called Louis Trichard, some hundred miles off. Here Colonel Colenbrander, commanding the advance force (Kitchener's Fighting Scouts), arrived on the 9th of May. From this time, after disarming the Boers in the town and clearing the surrounding country, Colonel Grenfell was engaged in the pursuit of marauders who were pushing east towards the Portuguese frontier. Yzerberg was reached on the 17th. On the 19th the dashing Scouts, who had continued their way successfully, skirmishing with and dispersing Boers, performed a feat more smart even than was their wont. Colonel Colenbrander, hearing that a laager was comfortably ensconced at Klip Spruit, planned a midnight excursion to the locality, and surprised Field-Cornet Venter and seventy-two burghers who imagined they were sleeping the sleep of the just. Before they could awake from their delusion their persons, waggons, rifles, and ammunition were at the mercy of the adventurous British scouts. This same party on the 21st seized on a smaller laager and swelled their number of captured vehicles.

On the 23rd, at the request of Commandant Van Rensburg and Field-Cornet Du Preeze, Colonel Grenfell met them, accepted their surrender, and that of some 1500 of their followers, and in a short time marched them back to Pietersburg. With them came seventy waggons and quantities of forage and ammunition and stock. This was a highly satisfactory and pacific termination to the operations in this quarter, and Colonel Colenbrander was now able to turn his attention to roving gangs which were hiding in the direction of Buffels. Several of these groups were encountered, and in various skirmishes seven Boers were disposed of and a Maxim gun captured. Major Knott, with a detachment of the Scouts, pursued and fell upon a commando under Barend Viljoen, made seventy-nine prisoners, and secured 13,000 rounds of ammunition. Thus the work of pacification in northern districts was progressing favourably, and the Boers in the vicinity were learning that resistance was useless. The grand total results of the Zoutpansberg excursion included 9 Boers killed, 150 prisoners, many hundred voluntary surrenders, 550 rifles, 200,000 rounds of ammunition, a Maxim gun, which had belonged to the Jameson raiders, 175 waggons, and much stock.

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While these activities had been going forward, General Beyers, who had watched Colonel Grenfell's departure for Louis Trichard, decided that "while the cat was away the mice could play." He accordingly collected his playful burghers for purposes of mischief around the Pietersburg line. To frustrate him, Colonel Wilson, commanding the 2nd Kitchener's Scouts, with two guns and two companies of the 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders, concentrated at Naboom Spruit, while from Pretoria Major M'Micking, with 400 Mounted Infantry and two guns, was moved to Nylstroom. The combined operations began on the 19th of May over terrible country, which in some places was without roads and in others was seamed with ruts, obstacles, and bush. The Boers, however, were overtaken some twenty miles north-west of Nylstroom by Colonel Wilson, who succeeded in capturing Field-Cornet Oosthuisen and 79 burghers, 100 rifles, 33,500 rounds of ammunition, 66 waggons, a quantity of dynamite, and a vast amount of cattle.



COLONEL COLENBRANDER

Certain remnants of the Dutch gangs continued to hang about, but these were promptly pursued to westward, and caught on the 21st. While Major M'Micking's force demonstrated in front of the Boer position, that of Colonel Wilson made an ingenious détour and caught the enemy napping. The Dutchmen, however, made a stubborn effort at combat; but finally, when Kitchener's Scouts pressed home the attack, they broke and fled, leaving 18 prisoners, 48 rifles, 9000 rounds of ammunition, and 44 waggons as trophies of the fight. So much for the month of May. June began auspiciously, for a detachment of the Scouts, moving from Warm Baths towards Rooiberg, caught and sharply handled some 500 Boers under Nys and Pretorius, and pressed them into the arms of Colonel Wilson, who on the following day polished them off. There was a good deal of resistance and some warm fighting creditable to both parties, but in the end 40 prisoners were captured, 70 rifles, 48 waggons, 8000 cattle, and ammunition in plenty. Thus the enemy was gradually becoming bereft of transport and supplies, their capacity for conflict becoming weaker day by day. Still Colonel Wilson and Major M'Micking relaxed not an iota of their activity and vigilance, and spent the remainder of June in scouring here and hunting there, and protecting the Pietersburg line from any forces which might congregate in the west. Meanwhile arrangements were made to collect an additional force (Colonel Grenfell's) at Potgieter's Rust, so that a combined attack on General Beyers' commando in the Zand River Valley might be begun. On the 21st of June these arrangements were complete. Colonel Grenfell marched south-west from Potgieter's Rust, menacing the enemy's rear, while Major M'Micking proceeded direct from Nylstroom. But owing to the terribly complicated nature of the country which had to be traversed by Colonel Grenfell's force, Beyers' bandits were able hurriedly to scuttle to cover in the north-west.

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Colonel Grenfell, making Zandriverspoort into his advanced base, then proceeded to sweep the surrounding country with his troops. These, after numerous skirmishes and surprises, made a magnificent march of forty miles, "rushed" a Boer laager at Hopewell (at dawn on the 1st of July), and secured nearly 100 prisoners, besides 2000 cattle, 2000 rounds of ammunition, and 100 horses!

## SITUATION AND SKIRMISHES IN CAPE COLONY

The exciting series of chases between rushing Boer gangs, followed or headed by small British columns, continued with undiminished animation. The Boer leaders still in the field (if field it can be called, while burrow would be the more appropriate term) were Scheepers, Malan, Fouché, Kruitzienger, Lotter, Myburg, Smits, Van Reenan, Lategan (a Colesberg rebel), Maritz, and Conroy. Each of these was engaged in independent freebooting excursions—the total number of their followers being now about 1200. They were unharassed by a fixed base of operations, and lived from hand to mouth on such prizes as they could secure, or such hospitality as they could receive from sympathetic "loyalists."

Early in May Colonel Henniker attacked Scheepers, and drove him north from Daggaboers Nek with considerable loss. The remnant, however, broke back and hid in kloofs and ravines in the difficult region around the Koetzeesberg. From their burrows they were eventually dislodged, only to collect again on the 25th of May in the Camdeboo Mountains, situated to west of Graf Reinet. Though their number was materially thinned in course of their hair-breadth escapes from Henniker's pursuing Victorians, they were soon refreshed with new blood, some seventy raiders (Commandantless, owing to the death of Swanepool) having flocked to Scheeper's banner. These now secreted themselves, offering very little fight, and remaining cabined in their warrens, choosing a policy of mischief rather than one of open aggression.

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Meanwhile Colonel Scobell was tackling Malan and his followers, who had remained to impede traffic west of Cradock. These made themselves perpetually offensive, and, on the 2nd of May, coming on Lieutenant Matthews and twelve men of the Diamond Fields Horse, they attacked, and after having shot down their horses, captured nearly all the party. Colonel Scobell came quickly to their rescue, and eventually effected their release. So ingeniously had this officer applied himself to the raider's tactics that he now succeeded in giving the wily ones a surprise. On the night of the 19th he marched in the direction of their laager, and before dawn captured it, killing four marauders, and capturing the horses of forty—while those who escaped did so on shanks' pony, or rode barebacked. Malan himself fled to the west and amused himself for the rest of the month in evading the chasing columns of Major Mullins and Captain Lund. By the 25th of June he had gathered to himself a sufficient commando to make it possible to attack Richmond, but he met with stout resistance, and the next day, on the approach of Captain Lund's column, was glad to make himself scarce. On the 27th Major Mullins, with some of Brabant's Horse, caught Malan's commando between Cradock and Maraisburg, and succeeded in wounding one of the leaders (Lieutenant Cloete) who was carried into hospital at Cradock.

Colonel Haig at this time was busily engaged in directing operations against Kruitzienger, Lotter, and Fouché, whose forces were now swelled by some 500 Dutchmen who had been collected by Kruitzienger during a hurried rush into the Orange Colony. They occupied the neighbourhood north of Steynsburg, and so as to enmesh them, if possible, Colonel Haig arranged a converging movement of Cape Mounted Rifles, and the columns under Colonels Munro, Gorringer, Crabbe, Scobell, and Murray. But the raiders were too wily to show fight. They slowly dribbled away in the surrounding country, most of them making towards Maraisburg. But they were promptly headed off by the British troops, and took refuge in the Bamboes Mountains, where—as a trooper expressed it—they "lay doggo," hoping to live by looting and to wear out the vigilance of their

pursuers.

In June, Kruitziuger, Lotter, Myburg, and Fouché succeeded in dashing across the Molteno railway, and moving eastward from Cyphergat. Van Reenan broke north-west into the Steynsburg district. The main body was followed by the British troops, but they were not in time to save the strongly entrenched village of Jamestown, which was captured on the 2nd of June. This *contretemps* to ourselves was of splendid value to the enemy, for, in addition to much-needed horses to the tune of 150, and ammunition in quantities, they secured food and clothing at a time when they were internally and externally bare, owing to the effective sweeping operations which had denuded the country.

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To pit against the Boer score came a signal success on the part of Captain Lukin, who, with the brilliant Cape Mounted Rifles, had been indefatigable in the work of pursuit, surprise, and skirmish, that filled day and night during Colonel Scobell's operations.

On the evening of the 5th, Colonel Scobell's force (9th Lancers and C.M.R. with three guns) moved out from Roodenek for the purpose of hunting out a laager which was known to be somewhere in the vicinity. With numbed fingers and quaking frames—the thermometer stood below freezing-point—these gallant troopers marched and clambered. Over rugged roads and precipitous paths they went for miles and miles—on foot mainly, in order to keep themselves warm—hunting and exploring around the north-west of Barkly East, and ascending at last a mountain so high that it seemed impossible to get the guns up. Then, near the summit came the split and spurt of rifles, and the advance party knew that the object was attained, the lair of the marauders was discovered. The shots came from the picket, who, having made their protest, fled. Now came the search for the laager itself, but whether it was in the valley some 400 feet below, or whether close at hand, it was impossible to say. A squadron of Cape Mounted Rifles, under Captain Lukin, wheeled to the right, one under Captain Purcell moved to the left. In the light of the moon, brilliant, but casting deep shadows, it was impossible to detect any movement. But the shuffle of hoofs could be heard in the valley. On went the C.M.R., Captain Lukin ahead of them, when suddenly this officer found himself in the thick of a volley. The enemy, alarmed by the picket, had upsaddled and were alert. But the heroes of Wepener were "all there," as the saying is. A shout from their commanding officer was enough, and with a rush as of the wind, the C.M.R. (Captain Goldsworthy's squadron) had galloped on the foe. The Boers were off. Blankets, baggage, rifles, clothing (much of the spoil captured from Jamestown), horses, ammunition, all were left. Three wounded rebels fell into our hands, and fourteen other Dutchmen. The enemy, from a distant hill, again endeavoured to show fight, but their fire was eventually silenced by a few shells, and the Boers in full retreat were pursued as far as was feasible by the Lancers.

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A few days later, in the neighbourhood of Ladygrey, this smart column came in for further triumphs. A detachment of the C.M.R., which had been persistently sniped at by the enemy during their moonlight march, showed that two could play at the game of annoyance. They charged the hiding-place of the miscreants, and surprised them by the shouts of "Hands up!" before they were aware of their proximity. The result was that the dashing Colonials returned to camp, after a quarter of an hour's gallop, plus twenty prisoners and 13,000 rounds of ammunition.

On the 9th of June, French, the magnificent, the indefatigable, came once more to the scene of his first triumphs in the days before the great *coup* made by the relief of Kimberley. He took but a few weeks' holiday after his wholesale dispersal of Botha's hordes on the Swaziland border, and was again to the fore. Now, as Lieutenant-General Sir John French, K.C.B., he directed the operations of all the mobile columns extended over the face of Cape Colony. Widened movements were necessitated owing to the scattered state of the commandos which were now here, there, and everywhere picking up rebels, and needing each to be separately hunted by a detached column.

On the 17th, Kruitziuger and Lotter were caught in the first instance by Colonel Munro, with Lovat's Scouts and Bethune's Mounted Infantry, and later by Crabbe, some twenty-five miles south-east of Maraisburg. Four Boers fell, twelve were wounded, twenty-five horses were left on the field, and fifty captured alive. Other captures included eight prisoners and a quantity of ammunition and saddles. It was reported that Kruitziuger's mongrel force at the time consisted of 276 whites, 10 armed natives, and 18 armed Hottentots, many of whom rode barebacked colts in the last stage of emaciation. Four days later sixty of the Midland Mounted Rifles, a Colonial corps which had done good work in the district, were surrounded by Kruitziuger's band and captured, after the loss of two officers and nine men killed, and ten men wounded.



**GENERAL BRUCE HAMILTON.**

Photo Russell & Sons, London.

Colonel Munro spent the remainder of June harassing raiders under Myburg, north of Jamestown, and others under Erasmus, east of Rayner Station. Colonel Scobell still chased Kruitzienger, and strove to drive him into the arms of Colonel Crabbe, who was engaged in hunting Van Reenan among the Bamboes Mountains. Colonels Crewe, Doran, and Wyndham combined in operations against Scheepers and Hugo, who were still dodging among the Camdeboo Mountains, while Captain Lund flew after errant gangs which had endeavoured to take Richmond and been repulsed by the gallantry of the North Stafford Militia, under Captain Hawkshaw, and by the Town Guard. More troops were also engaged in blocking the passes of the Drakensberg, through which Fouché had gone east towards Maclear in the fond hope of gathering recruits and fresh horses, and returning reinforced; but Colonel Dalgety, with Cape Mounted Rifles and East Griqualand Rifles, frustrated him. In the Calvinia district two gangs under Maritz and Conroy had made themselves troublesome for some weeks, but eventually Conroy, after being too warmly handled, particularly in an engagement which lasted five hours, when Captain Ramsbotham and Lieutenant Beresford of the Border Scouts tackled him near Kenhardt, fled north across the Orange.

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## CHAPTER XI

### ORANGE RIVER COLONY, S.—MAJOR-GENERALS BRUCE-HAMILTON AND C. KNOX —JULY

Great success having attended the construction of the line of defensible posts extending across the Orange River Colony, from Jacobsdal to Ladybrand, a gradual development of the blockhouse system was kept up in order to maintain the security of traffic and form a barrier to the encroachment of roving bands. A continuous line of blockhouses at intervals of a mile apart, following the course of the river from Aliwal North to Bethulie, and running from thence along the railway *viâ* Stormberg, Rosmead, Naauwpoort Junction, de Aar, to Kimberley was commenced in July, and another (starting northward from Frederikstad to the source of the Mooi River, Breedt's Nek along the Magaliesberg) for the purpose of maintaining the connection with the garrison at Commando Nek was begun at the same time by two battalions under the command of Colonel Mackenzie, Suffolk Regiment. Colonel Pilkington, with the South African Constabulary, engaged in like activities to the east of the Pretoria-Vereeniging line, his line of posts extending from Eerste Fabriken, by Springs and Heidelberg, to the Vaal River. It was thus hoped that between the Vaal and Modder Rivers, by means of a converging number of columns, the Boers would be swept from all sides against the British barriers and driven to surrender. To this end the two forces of Generals Bruce-Hamilton and C. Knox were operating in the Orange River Colony during the last half of July.

The former had thus disposed his troops. At Jacobsdal and Luckhoff were Colonels Williams and Dawkins respectively, and moving on Edenburg *viâ* Wepener, were Colonels Rochfort and Du Moulin. Edenburg was reached on the 17th of July, after which all the columns were moved west of the railway, to act as a support to the barrier of police posts along the Modder from Bloemfontein to Jacobsdal, garrisoned by South African Constabulary, and also as stops to the

enemy when pressed southward from the Vaal River. To Colonel Rochfort was allotted the region around Petrusburg; farther west (at Blaauwbank and Negdraai Drifts on the Riet River) came Colonel Williams, while the line of the Orange River (between Norval's Pont and Ramah) was guarded by the columns of Colonels Du Moulin and Dawkins. Colonel Rochfort very speedily reaped the reward of many days and nights of vigilance. Rumour told of a burgher gang under Commandant Myburg which, with a view to rushing into the Cape Colony, was encamped on the Riet, and to defeat this programme he made an arrangement as smart as it was successful. On the night of the 27th of July, acting in concert with Colonel Lowry Cole (who was under his orders in the vicinity), he marched in the small hours to the spot—between Dassiespoort and Jagersfontein Drift—where the laager had been located. Dawn found the enemy surrounded. There was the usual rush, and roar, and scrimmage, in the course of which Myburg was dangerously wounded. The commandant was secured, together with his Field-Cornet, Kock, twenty-four of his men, 100 of his horses, and many carts. Not less energetic was Captain Going with a detachment of Mounted Infantry, who at the same time was engaging Van den Bergs' gang in a laager close by. A few days later (on the 30th) more prisoners and stock were secured in the regions of Fauresmith by the combined efforts of Majors Bogle Smith and Damant.

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Meanwhile, from the 1st to the middle of July, General C. Knox's columns (Pilcher and Thorneycroft) scoured the country between Brandfort, Senekal, and the Basutoland border, and, finding but few of the enemy, Colonel Pilcher betook himself to Thabanchu, while Colonel Thorneycroft went to Ladybrand. After the 17th the troops, divided in four small columns and sprayed fan-like, were sweeping toward the Orange, in search of straggling marauders, Colonel Pilcher's troops, under Major Kean and Colonel Taylor, moving, *viâ* Reddersburg and Dewetsdorp, upon Bethulie (reached 26th July); while Colonel Thorneycroft's columns (under Major Copeman and Colonel Minchin) marched by the Smithfield Commissie Drift, and Wepener Rouxville roads, to Aliwal North, where they arrived on 28th. A not insignificant haul was the result of this sweep, for, though little opposition was encountered, some prisoners, 2300 horses, 1800 cattle, and 126 vehicles were secured. These troops, at the end of the month, extended their operations to the west of the line, into the area between the railway and the Philippolis-Fauresmith Road; and, while Colonel Thorneycroft, from Aliwal North, passed *viâ* Jagersfontein Road Station and Kruger's Siding towards Jagersfontein, Colonel Pilcher marched West from Bethulie along the right bank of the Orange, to Philippolis and northwards to Fauresmith. All the troops of General Knox had reached the Fauresmith-Edenburg Road by the 8th of August, Colonel Thorneycroft plus 28 prisoners, 1000 horses, 69 waggons, and much stock. They then were marched south of the Riet River to act in conjunction with General Bruce-Hamilton's columns.

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These columns, in August (minus that of Major Damant detached to help in General Knox's operations of that period), continued, in various portions of the south-west of the Orange River Colony, to harass the commandos of Hertzog, Lategan, and Nieuwhoudt. A brilliant surprise was prepared by Colonel Lowry Cole for Hertzog on the night of the 24th. The enemy—his laager sheltered by a protecting kloof—was reported to be comfortably ensconced near Vaalhoek. Consequently the British band, marching in the small hours and with the utmost secrecy *viâ* Liebenberg's Pass, Slaghtkraals, and Nitkomst, came at dawn to a point which commanded the guerilla's lair. The success of the manœuvre was complete—there was the usual roar and rampage, the usual scurry and hurry, the ringing of rifles and of hoofs, and, finally, 14 prisoners, 29 rifles, 54 saddles, 43 horses, and all the goods and chattels of the foe were secured. The remainder of Hertzog's crew of eighty bolted towards Zootenberg.

## ORANGE RIVER COLONY, N.—MAJOR-GENERAL ELLIOT

While the sweeping operations were taking place in the south of the Orange River Colony, General Elliot pursued his activities in the north of it. From Springfield Drift on the Wilge River, his three columns (under Brigadier-General Broadwood, Lieutenant-Colonel De Lisle, and Colonel Bethune) moved between the Wilge River and Liebenberg's Vlei, while General Rundle's force acted in co-operation to the east of the Wilge. Beyond a rush on the rearguard of the central column—De Lisle's—shortly after it had left Reitz, little opposition was met with. The troops then moved towards Heilbron, the right column (Broadwood's) passing through Frankfort. During this march some brilliant episodes made the 12th of July eventful. In the first place Colonel Harrison, who had energetically been hunting the enemy for some time past, planned a night excursion which was so successfully carried forward that his 300 Imperial Yeomanry returned with 12 prisoners, 9 carts, and 60 horses! In the second, General Broadwood, warily backing on Reitz to discover if the enemy, according to custom, had sought refuge by closing in behind the line of march of the troops, had some exciting and profitable adventures. He, indeed, almost landed the big fish, Steyn, in the net which hauled in a shoal of government officials of the late Free State. General Broadwood's plan was to surround the town of Reitz before daybreak, but owing to the necessity of making a forced march of thirty miles to rear of the other two columns and the unavoidable delay occasioned by loss of touch by a connecting file during the night, three-quarters of an hour were lost, and the troops, instead of approaching the town at their ease, were forced to gallop straight at it. The result was that, owing to the fatigue of the horses, the biggest prize, Steyn, got safely away; but his departure was ignominious. Seizing the first pony he could find, coatless, bootless—a dilapidated picture of embarrassed somnolence—he made off, carrying with him just his skin and his beard, but leaving behind £11,500 (mostly in Orange Free State notes), 800 sovereigns, and £32 in his waistcoat pocket, his official papers (some remarkable and enlightening correspondence with the leaders of the Transvaal Boers), his guerilla government

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officials, together with Generals A. P. Cronje and T. B. Wessels, Commandant Davel and Field-Cornet Steyn (his brother). Pursuit on jaded horses was useless, therefore General Broadwood had to rest content with the magnificent results he had already obtained. He then returned to join his brigade—skirmishing by the way, but suffering only two casualties—and took his place in General Elliot's line after having, during the short period of absence, covered sixty miles of country. General Elliot, with only three of his force wounded, reached the railway *viâ* Heilbron on the 16th of July without further adventure, his total haul being 8 Boers killed and wounded, 61 prisoners, 4000 horses, 3600 cattle, 5400 rounds of ammunition, and many vehicles!

Before proceeding further, it is interesting to inspect the following letters found in Steyn's baggage, as they serve to throw light on the situation at this time from the Boer point of view:—

FROM STATE SECRETARY REITZ, DATED MAY 10, 1901, TO STEYN

"Meeting held of Transvaal Government with Commandant Botha, Commandant Viljoen, and General J. C. Smuts, considered condition of our country and following facts:—

"First.—Numbers of our Burghers are continually surrendering. This means more and more to unsuccessful termination, as Government and officials left without Burghers entails heavy responsibility on Government.

"Secondly.—Supply of ammunition so nearly exhausted that we shall be unable to engage enemy in another big fight, we shall be brought to a state of helpless flight unable to protect stock. In immediate future we shall be unable to feed our commandos.

"Thirdly.—On account of above, Government becoming weaker, losing support, becoming disorganised.

"Fourthly.—Not only our nation will be destroyed, but it will also be considered that leaders have erred, and all hope of continuation of national sentiment will be lost.

"Fifthly.—Hitherto nation and Government awaited result European complications and mission of our deputation. Government feel most strongly their duty obtain definite assurances.

"Having considered above points Government has determined—

"1. To obtain permission to send messenger to President Kruger point out terrible condition country.

"2. If request refused we will ask for armistice to obtain opinion both nations of future policy to put an end to present state of affairs. We leave it to you to suggest other solutions, but you must carefully consider that this Government is convinced that the time has passed for us to let matters drift on as at present, and that the time has come to take the final step." Usual ending. (Signed) "REITZ."

President Steyn's reply (dated 15th May) acknowledges receipt of letter; continues letter:—

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"Great blow to me. Month ago discussed matters with your Government, agreed not to ask for armistice until things reached utmost extremity. Shall we obtain armistice? I think nothing has happened entitle us to armistice to obtain opinion of our nations. It is true Boksburg commando lost laager; General Viljoen was obliged to burn his, and blow up his Long Tom; but in spite of this we have not come to last extremity.

"Free State been four months without cannon. I also know of men laying down their arms, officers becoming cowardly. Our ammunition has long been scarce enough, still [some] left to continue. You ask what prospect of successful termination. I ask what chance was there for two small Republics when they declared war against mighty power of England? You will answer, 'We have trusted in God's help and foreign intervention. What reason have we for refusing to place further reliance on God?' I have seen last European papers; I firmly believe complications will take place in Europe within next few months, which will gain our good fortune. Knowing leaders of our deputation, I cannot believe they would sit here without hope of intervention, knowing how we struggle and strive, for I know they love their Fatherland sufficiently to frankly ask the British to end the war if in their opinion intervention is hopeless. The fact that these men remain in Europe convinces me that our case is not hopeless. When armistice comes I shall ask opinion of my nation. If they refuse to give in their determination will be mine also. I do not approve of sending messenger to Europe, it shows our hand. I am deeply hurt you having taken this determination without asking my advice and have acted so hurriedly. If you have not despatched messenger do not do so until I can call my advisers. I have sent for General De Wet; he will be here next week. I will then send you opinion.

"In your letter you say you are afraid your officers will be left alone on commando.

"Here officers may surrender, but Burghers will remain steadfast. I must point out that the Orange Free State has not only spent blood and money, but will have lost its freedom by trying to help the sister Republic, and all reliance of one Afrikaner on another will be destroyed for ever. It is ridiculous to think that when flooded with scum of Europe, Afrikaner spirit will remain. If we wish to remain a nation now is the time to struggle. Hope you received Natal newspaper, stating Milner going nominally on leave; truth being he not allowed a free hand. In later English paper I have seen Kitchener and he cannot pull together.

"I enclose cutting *Natal Witness*—'Public mind in England getting very uneasy about South Africa. There are possibilities which we are not at liberty to mention, and would, if we were, we could not (*sic*).'

"All these things convince me we shall be destroying all hope for our nation if we now surrender. Brothers, stand fast—take courage to your disheartened Burghers. I have received verbal information that Commandant Hausbrock had engagement with English, drove them back three times. As soon as I can call a council I will send a reply; do not take any further steps till you have heard from me." Usual ending follows.

(Signed) "STEYN."

Further activities were pursued between the 16th and 24th of the month, when the troops were concentrated at Klerksdorp, activities which had the twofold object of intercepting Boers who might be fleeing before General Fetherstonhaugh's force (which was sweeping the area between Lichtenburg and Klerksdorp), and of taking up assigned positions for the contemplated drive southward from the line of the Vaal to the Modder. Here again the force marched not empty-handed, 15 prisoners, 120 horses, 25 cases of dynamite, stock, vehicles, and ammunition being

the prizes of numerous smartly-executed surprise visits by patrols. Viewing the number of captures in the way of horses, it seemed difficult to comprehend why more mobility could not be secured to the troops, but in reality only 20 per cent. of the prizes were fit for remount purposes, the remainder being brood mares, foals, &c.

While General Elliot was placing his force in the position above described, precautionary measures had to be taken against a recrudescence of mischief in the direction of Kimberley. Report spoke of a contemplated reinforcement of the guerillas in the Cape Colony by recruits from the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. General Smuts was associated with the movement, and the swelling hordes were to join and pass through Hoopstad on their career of devastation. Accordingly Colonel Henry, who was moving between Bloemhof and Christiana, was appointed to keep an eye on the Hoopstad district. On the 16th of July he crossed the Vaal at a point some twenty-three miles south-west of Hoopstad, and promptly secured some prisoners, waggons, and horses that were doubtless about to form part of the reinforced commando. On the 24th, in this district, he was joined by Major Paris, R.M.A., with the Kimberley column, which he had summoned from Warrenton. This officer on the way had come in collision with some 150 of the enemy, and had succeeded, through the gallantry of Dennison's Scouts, in routing them from a strong position. The day after, effecting a juncture with Colonel Henry's force, he again came on the enemy under Commandants Badenhorst and Erasmus, and Field-Cornet Van Aswegan. The Boers were in some strength, but Major Paris's little force (consisting of 230 mounted men, 2 guns, a pom-pom, and 30 infantry, carried in carts) was equal to the occasion. The Boers were surrounded and attacked from three sides, and after a running fight, in which the 74th Squadron Imperial Yeomanry, the Kimberley Light Horse, and Dennison's Scouts distinguished themselves, the enemy dispersed with amazing celerity, leaving seven burghers on the field and their field-cornet a prisoner. One of the British party was killed and three were wounded.

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Brigadier-General Gilbert Hamilton's column was also on the track of the raiders, he having moved from Klerksdorp to Wolmaranstad (on the 21st) in order to fulfil his share of the hunt. At Wolmaranstad he remained not long inactive, for the news of slinking Boers in the neighbouring kopjes came to his ears, and he quickly determined on a surprise visit to their haunts. The dawn of the 26th found Commandant Potgieter and his hardy crew surrounded in their laager at Blinklip, and General Hamilton, at the cost of only two men wounded, succeeded in putting eleven Boers out of action and securing ten more, together with waggons, horses, and supplies.

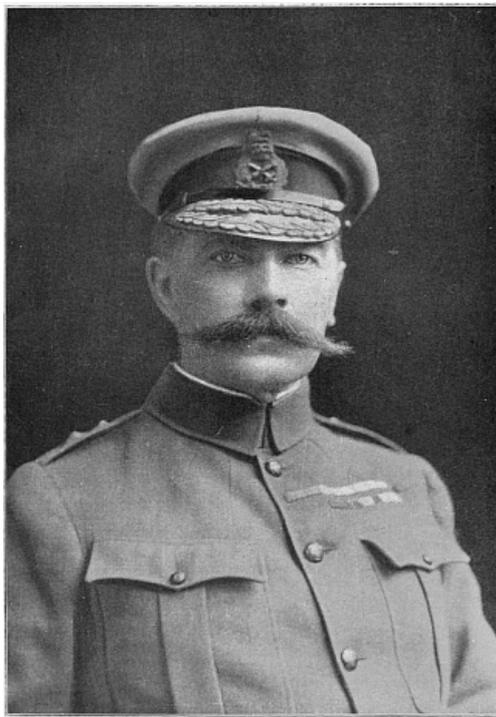
Farther to the east on the line of the Vaal, Colonel Western—who also had been at Klerksdorp—spent his time in reconnoitring along both banks of the river to Venterskroom and back to Coalmine Drift, where he was in a position to join the columns of Colonel Henry and General Elliot, which were ranging themselves in readiness for the main sweep south from the Vaal, on the west of the main line.

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General Elliot's force was now swelled by the column—from Klerksdorp—of Colonel Sir H. Rawlinson, and that—from Reitzburg—of Colonel Garratt. From these three columns he organised a fourth, consisting of 1st Dragoon Guards and two guns under Colonel Owen.

Of Colonel Garratt's movements prior to his operations in connection with General Elliot at the end of July, a word must be said. On the 9th of July he moved to the junction of the Wilge and Vaal Rivers in order to demonstrate to the west of General Bullock, upon the right flank of General Elliot's troops as they marched through Frankfort and Heilbron to the railway. Here, on the right bank of the Vaal, he came on a Boer laager, captured it, and made several prisoners. Later on, on the 21st, having filled up with supplies, his mounted troops chased two Boer convoys which were trekking on either bank of the Vaal near Lindique Drift, and succeeded in securing twenty-five Dutchmen, together with their waggons, carts, and cattle. Eleven of the enemy were killed and wounded in the fray. Smuts was engaged on the following day, but he and his gang fled to the hills, whence it was impossible to dislodge them. Finally, with the assistance of Colonel Rawlinson from the north and General Cunningham from Vereening, the Boers were routed from their snug positions and forced to take to the plains. Eighteen, however, were captured, and more waggons, horses, and cattle. Colonel Garratt then took up his assigned position on General Elliot's left.

To better understand the comprehensive nature of the general sweep which followed, reference to a map is now desirable. In General Elliot's position on the 29th of July we have the Vaal River at our back, the main railway line on our left, the Kimberley-Mafeking line on our right. The various columns were disposed so that the right rested on the Vaal south of Wolmaranstad, and the left (Rawlinson) at Vredefort. On the extreme right came Colonel Henry at Hoopstad; in rear of the left on a wide front came Colonel Garratt, for the purpose of netting fugitives who might break north. In due time, as stops on the east (simultaneously with the advance of Colonel Rawlinson), issued Major Pine Coffin and Colonel Barker (from Kroonstad and Vet River Stations respectively), and as stop on the west (to carry on and lengthen, as it were, Colonel Henry's right arm) came General Plumer, in the region between Boshof and Modder River Station.

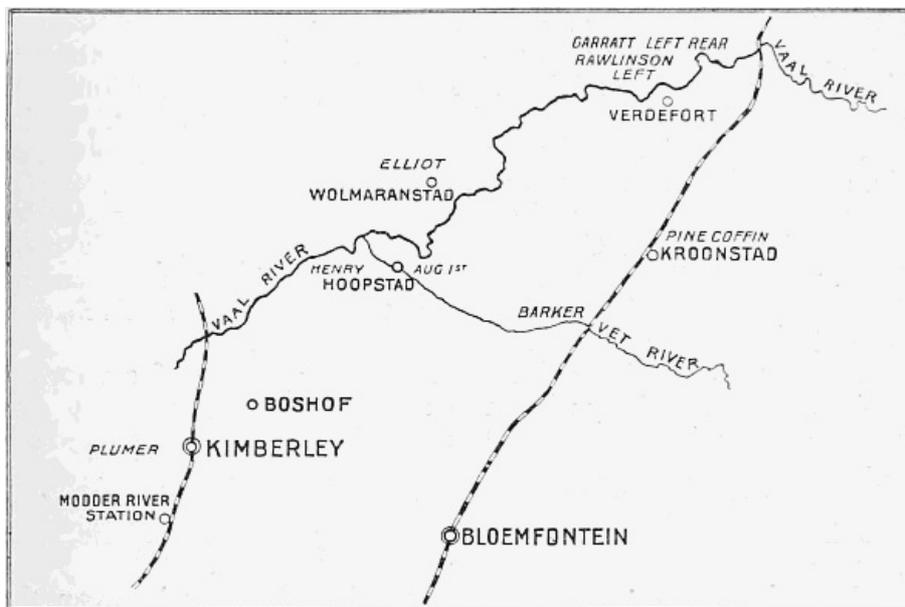


**MAJOR-GENERAL WALTER  
KITCHENER.**

Photo London Stereoscopic Co.

All the bristles being prepared, the great military broom commenced operations on the 29th of July. The events of the end of the month would make a volume of adventure of themselves. A night march by General Broadwood to Bothaville—which was found deserted—caused the fleeing Boers to rush helter-skelter into the net spread for them by Colonel de Lisle, who, with his smart South Australians, had the satisfaction of taking possession of eighteen prisoners and twelve waggons. A grand raid on a farmhouse on the 30th of July was accomplished by Colonel Lowe and the 7th Dragoon Guards, who, as reward of their enterprise, secured eleven armed prisoners, together with their rifles, bandoliers, and horses.

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**JULY 29, 1901.—GENERAL ELLIOT'S SWEEP S. OF THE VAAL**

Then, on the 2nd of August, followed a smart capture of a laager near Graspan by some of Colonel Owen's men (King's Dragoon Guards) under Captain Quicke. This distinguished and now deeply lamented officer pursued the convoy for fourteen miles, and though he had but seven men with him succeeded in capturing it, though a large force of the enemy was at hand! His "bag" consisted of 4000 cattle and 65 waggons. A dashing affray also took place between 200 South Australians (under Major Shea, 15th Bengal Lancers) and Smuts' commando near Vet River. The Colonials, splendidly led by Major Shea, Captain Watt, and Lieutenant M'Farlane, surrounded the farm in the dead of night, and pressing forward on foot, with fixed bayonets, made a rush on the commando. But the Boers had enmeshed their stronghold with a wire network which served to delay the troops, during which period most of the hostile gang were able to escape. But five fell, and eleven were secured, including Field-Cornet Wolmarans of Potchefstroom, who was taken by gallant Shea himself. On the following day (3rd) General Broadwood swept up 7 waggons and 2000 cattle, while Colonel Lowe, after undertaking an eighteen-mile march, surprised a laager, secured 13 of its inhabitants, 86 waggons, and 56 horses. Tremendous hauls on the 6th and 7th

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of August put Colonel Lisle in possession of 40 prisoners, 147 waggons, 600 horses, and 2000 cattle; and on the 8th Colonel Henry and Lieutenant-Colonel Carr-Ellison (commanding 250 of the 4th Imperial Yeomanry) succeeded in capturing two laagers and a goodly knot of prisoners.

Meanwhile General Plumer, moving from the Modder River Station on the 4th, had proceeded to effect a junction with Colonel Henry. (How General Plumer came to be at Modder River at this period must be explained. After his return from Carolina to Bloemfontein in the second week of July, he had moved viâ Bains Vlei, Kruger's Drift, Poplar Grove, Koodoosrand, and Pandamfontein, skirmishing often by the way, and reaching Modder River plus 11 prisoners, 200 cattle, and 62 horses.) Here his troops, divided in two columns under Colonels Colvin and Sir John Jarvis, completed the encircling cordon to the west. During the movement, Sir John Jarvis, be it noted, after a twenty-five mile march, succeeded in securing, near Botha's Hoek, 15 Boers.

The details of General Elliot's march are full of savour, of heroism, and of activity; but the story of swoops, surprises, and surrenders of raiders would outrun the limits of a volume. It is only possible therefore to record the results, which, early in August, showed that 17 Boers had been killed and wounded and 326 captured; 2600 horses, 20,000 cattle, 377 waggons, 371 other vehicles, and 12,500 rounds of ammunition had also been secured.

General Elliot, on the conclusion of his operations between the Vaal and the Modder, withdrew his columns to east and west to the railway to refit. He himself reached Truter's Drift on the 9th of August. General Plumer returned to Modder River Station; Colonel Henry moved back to Boshof, and from thence to Luckhoff, where he operated during August; and Colonels Rawlinson and Western betook themselves to Glen and Bloemfontein respectively. General Elliot's programme was now to prepare at Glen for a fresh advance to the north-east, of a line Ladybrand, Sannah's Post, Glen. But of this anon.

## **ORANGE RIVER COLONY, E.—LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR L. RUNDLE**

General Rundle, as we know, had marched north from Harrismith simultaneously with General Elliot's advance from Springfield Drift on the 4th of July. Till the 12th, the force, marching in three columns, moved uneventfully to the line Tafel Kop-Maidstone-Driespruit. But, on the 12th, the very day that Colonel Harrison in one place and General Broadwood in another were trouncing the enemy and putting them to flight, the Imperial Yeomanry came in for some exciting experiences. It so happened that forty men of the Yeomanry under Lieutenant Edgell left Colonel Harley's (centre) column to communicate with that of General Campbell (right). Promptly Commandant Charles Botha got wind of the movement of the small party and attacked them. But the plucky band, though young Edgell, the sergeant, and four men were wounded at the first volley, held their own, and finally the enemy was routed, leaving their leader dead on the field.

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The following account of a yeoman's experiences serves to show how Charles Botha met his death: it fails, however, to describe the gallantry and resource of Corporal F. M. Grove, 53rd Company Imperial Yeomanry, who, when the officer and sergeant were wounded, took command, fortified a post, and kept off the Boers till relief came:—

"The 12th of July I shall never forget. It was the worst day I have ever had. We had reached camp and had done a good day's work, having captured tons of mealies. It was found that we could not heliograph to Rundle, who was sixteen miles on our right; so they had to send a despatch, and our lieutenant with forty men had to take it. As we were rounding Bothasberg we came face to face with fifty or sixty Boers. There was absolutely no cover, and as it was too late to dismount there was only one thing to do—to charge. That we did, splitting them in all directions. Had we been a cavalry regiment with swords and known how to use them, we could have cut them to pieces. Our lieutenant, the Hon. Wyatt Edgell, led us, whip in hand, and was the first to go down with a bullet in his leg just above the knee. Shots were coming like hail. Charles Botha, who was at the head of the commando, kept shouting, 'Surrender! surrender!' but he was shot dead with one bullet behind the ear and another in the shoulder. Six of his men stuck to him like glue, but he was too big for them to get away, being about six feet one inch in height and weighing seventeen stone. It is a marvel to me that we were not annihilated. We built a breastwork of stones, being fired on all the time. When it was dark the guide made his way back to camp for help, but the groans of the wounded throughout the night were horrible. In the morning we were relieved, and the Boers came out under a flag of truce for half-an-hour to bury their dead. We went to Vrede next, and after a day's rest left that place in a shocking state. We killed thousands of sheep and put them in every house. The stench in a week will be horrible; it is to prevent the Boers from returning."

The following day, in order to clear the line of advance from Boers who were scurrying eastwards, General Rundle directed Colonel Harley to close towards General Campbell in order to strengthen the right flank, and on the 14th the hills south-east of Vrede were occupied, and communication with Colonel Rimington (who had marched to the latter place to catch the scattered hordes that might be pushed towards him) was established. General Rundle, with his own and Colonel Rimington's prizes, proceeded over the Klip River to Standerton and was joined by Colonel Reay (left), who had crossed the Vaal at Robert's Drift. His total haul, irrespective of the prisoners handed over by Colonel Rimington, amounted to 13 prisoners, 7000 horses, 35 vehicles, and 1000 tons of forage. Twelve Boers were killed and wounded. The British force lost four men, while one officer and fifteen men were wounded. From Standerton, having refilled with supplies, General Rundle marched south on the 20th. Starting from Bothaberg, south-west of Vrede, he moved to Witkoppies, some thirty miles south-west of that town, and finally scoured the hilly country lying between the Natal border and the Vrede-Harrismith Road. The Boers, gnome-like, popped and "potted" from their hiding-places, but cautiously kept from open battle;

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nevertheless, General Rundle returned to Harrismith with 6 prisoners, 3590 horses, 679 trek oxen, and 4760 cattle. Twelve Boers during the march had been killed and wounded.

On the 8th of August General Campbell marched with a column (Grenadier Guards, Leinster Regiment, 1st Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, and four guns and a pom-pom) through Retief's Nek in connection with a movement of General Elliot's, which should have driven the enemy into the Brandwater Basin, where General Campbell would have secured them; but the Boers knowingly made for the north, and thus General Campbell's captures were limited to waggons, carts, and horses. Colonel Harley meanwhile was employed in escorting supplies from Harrismith to Bethlehem, which at this date became the centre for a new column under Brigadier-General Sir John Dartnell. This force consisted of two regiments of Imperial Light Horse, specially equipped to ensure increased mobility.

### **ORANGE RIVER COLONY, N.—COLONEL RIMINGTON—BRIGADIER-GENERAL BULLOCK—BRIGADIER-GENERAL SPENS**

Of Colonel Rimington's activities prior to his meeting with General Rundle we barely know the outline. On the 13th of July his troops displayed an immense amount of dash in a smart set-to with some Boers who, with their convoy, were on the north-east of Gambokshoekberg. The enemy's rearguard covering the march was forced from its position by the rapid rush of the mounted troops, who scattered the band, killed six of the foe, took ten prisoners, and 2000 head of cattle, which prizes were handed over to General Rundle on the occasion of the meeting near Vrede, of which we know. His hands free, Colonel Rimington then proceeded from Vrede to Heilbron, skirmishing by the way. From this time till August he operated in the triangle between Heilbron, Lindley, and Kroonstad, engaging in the same energetic system of night marching and surprise which was being everywhere vigorously carried forward, with first-rate results. Fourteen Boers killed, 36 prisoners, 24 voluntary surrenders, 68 ox-waggons, 52 vehicles, 5300 cattle was an excellent sum-total to bear witness to the work accomplished at that time.

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General Bullock meanwhile, in July, had been sweeping the neighbourhood of Villiersdorp and Cornelia for the purpose of brushing Boers into the arms of General Elliot during the move of that officer from Springfield to Heilbron. But these wary Dutchmen were wide-awake and not to be entrapped. He therefore returned to Heidelberg, where General Spens took over command. Flying columns under Colonel Jenner and Major Gough now went to work with a will, and each column had the satisfaction of arriving at Heilbron in August, having captured a convoy apiece with the total loss of one man killed and four wounded. In the course of General Spens' sweep from Heidelberg to Heilbron his troops brought in 42 prisoners, 110 carts, 5600 cattle, and the supplies before named. In August he left Heilbron and renewed his activities in the direction of Kroonstad.

### **TRANSVAAL, S.W.—OPERATIONS OF GENERAL FETHERSTONHAUGH—CLEARING THE MAGALIESBERG—JULY**

In July Major-General Fetherstonhaugh's force (in four columns, under Brigadier-General Dixon and Colonels Sir H. Rawlinson, E. Williams, and Hickie) operated from the Magaliesberg to Zeerust (reached on the 10th), and from thence back to Klerksdorp. The early part of the march was highly eventful, particularly for Colonels Williams and Hickie, who were repeatedly assailed by the enemy from almost inaccessible hiding-places. They nevertheless assisted in producing excellent results, and Roberts' and Kitchener's Horse highly distinguished themselves. In the end 13 Boers were killed and wounded, 26 were taken prisoners, 47 voluntarily surrendered, and 13 burghers, who had been imprisoned by their own men, were released. Waggons and cattle in plenty were secured. Nearer Zeerust all seemed placid; farmsteads and agriculture showed little sign of a state of war. On the return movement (begun on the 12th) General Fetherstonhaugh marched his right centre column through Lichtenburg, his own three columns being on the right, and that of General Dixon on the left. Thus the enemy, fighting continually, was driven day by day before him towards the region shortly to be swept by General Elliot's fan of troops. Large quantities of stores (unearthed from caves in the hills or discovered bricked up in the houses) were destroyed, 10 Boers were killed or wounded, and 22 prisoners taken. Klerksdorp was reached on the 21st of July after a particularly hard march, in which Colonel Hickie's column especially suffered from the scarcity of water in the district. General Dixon ere this had returned to Krugersdorp. General Fetherstonhaugh, after a brief rest, set out on the 27th along the Taung-Vryburg line, where the enemy was reported to be active. On his right now moved Lord Methuen (from Lichtenburg), while Colonel Von Donop of Lord Methuen's force swept from Kraaipan and Geysdorp on the west of the hills, and Colonel Scott with a small column co-operated from Vryburg. The area was soon denuded of foodstuffs, and 58 prisoners of war were taken. Six of the enemy were killed.

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While these energetic movements were going forward General Gilbert Hamilton was scouring the Klerksdorp Ventersdorp district, and Colonel Allenby was searching some almost unassailable positions round the Magaliesberg. His columns nevertheless scored some successes. On the daybreak of the 9th of July they surprised some Boers who were laagered at Zeekoehoek, and though many of them made good their escape to the hills, their field-cornet and twelve comrades were seized. On the 11th the enemy was again discovered in an almost inaccessible position on

the Magaliesberg, but what the mounted men failed to accomplish the artillery achieved, and soon the mountain heights were ablaze with the flames of the burning laager and two waggons of dynamite and ammunition which had been blown up.

Later, in conjunction with Colonel Kekewich (who at Krugersdorp had taken over command of General Dixon's column), Colonel Allenby set about a further clearance of the Magaliesberg passes; but by the 7th of August the whole region had become too hot for the Boers' liking, and they evacuated it, enabling the British to occupy Breedts Nek and establish a post on the summit. To thoroughly protect this favourite haunt of the Boers from their future visits two other columns were also engaged. Major-General Barton moved with a force from Pretoria to west of Commando Nek, clearing the country of supplies and establishing the network of posts to be occupied by the South African Constabulary, while Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Basing (with the Royal Dragoons, two guns and a pom-pom) covered the construction of the Frederikstad-Breedts Nek line of blockhouses, and kept up communication from thence to General Barton's column.

## **TRANSVAAL, E.—LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR BINDON BLOOD**

General Viljoen's commando being still to the fore, north of the Delagoa line, the operations of July were mainly directed against him. General Blood, taking command of General Babington's column, and followed by General W. Kitchener, moved on the 10th of July from Springs to Middelburg. Here, later, he was joined by Colonel Campbell, who had been engaged in conducting a reconnaissance north of the line from Elands River Station towards Wagen Drift. Though the utmost energy and activity prevailed on all sides, the results were disappointing. Owing to the vast expanse of country and the Boers' intimate acquaintance with all its nooks and crannies, they were able to play the game of hide-and-seek with impunity, taking care never to be caught in the open, and to avoid every chance of a collision.

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Colonel Benson in his operations, however, had better luck. Moving from Dullstroom on the 9th of July, with Colonel Park on his right, he soon managed to discover the whereabouts of Viljoen's commando. Promptly the Dutchman was routed from his position at Middelkraal by the 2nd Scottish Horse, a glorious set of "irregulars," many of them hailing from Australia, who were first and foremost in every "ticklish" exploit. Indeed there was no end of their pluck; and on this occasion a mere handful of them, under their smart leaders Major Murray and Captain Lindley, contrived to keep at bay the hostile herd till the arrival of supports. Having dispersed the guerillas, Colonel Benson dealt in an equally effective manner with Muller's men on the west, a party of raiders who were now driven north from the neighbourhood of Witpoort. Reports presently said that Viljoen was still lingering somewhere in the west, consequently the 18th Mounted Infantry pushed off in pursuit, and succeeded in catching and capturing the tail of his convoy and some fifteen waggons. While the Colonel moved his main body—on the 11th—in the direction of Paardekloop, the 2nd Scottish Horse circled around towards the Tautesberg, unearthing and capturing prisoners and horses by the way and discovering vehicles hidden in the kloofs, which Viljoen had evidently deposited there for a "rainy day." This notable leader was discovered on the 15th of July at Laatstedrift, on the right bank of the Olifant River, whither Colonel Benson had moved after the arrival of a convoy brought by General Spens from the railway to Brinkwater. An inspiring feature of this discovery was the wonderful tenacity of Lieutenant Kelly of the Scottish Horse, who, though wounded in the stomach at the onset, had no sooner located the enemy than he crawled under heavy fire to inform the officer commanding! A smart engagement followed—an engagement creditable to both sides—and after some close fighting both the enemy's flanks were turned, and they were sent scuttling across the river into the thick bush country on the west. In the course of these varied operations 20 Boers were captured and 17 killed or wounded; 110 horses, 64 waggons, and a large quantity of ammunition were secured. More prisoners had also been seized by General Spens in the course of his move with the convoy to Brinkwater and back to Middelburg, where he arrived on the 20th. Soon after this date he proceeded to take command of another column.

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General Beatson meanwhile, on the night of the 7th of July, had done some highly effective work. His surprise visit to the laager of Commandant Trichard, which was located some twenty-five miles north of Middelburg, resulted in the breaking up of the marauding gang and the dispersal of them into the rugged country round Olifant River. The commandant himself merely escaped by "the skin of his teeth." Further pursuit being useless, the General returned to Middelburg and assisted in the hunt for Viljoen, who was not to be caught, however, for he had warily doubled back to his friendly kopjes on the right bank of the Olifant. Returning to Bronkerspruit Station along the Wilge River General Beatson, while searching in all the adjacent kloofs, came on twenty-five waggons containing ammunition and clothing. As the duties of most clearing columns were very much alike, some quotations from an officer's letter may serve to show the nature of the work and of the country to be cleared of Boers and supplies:—

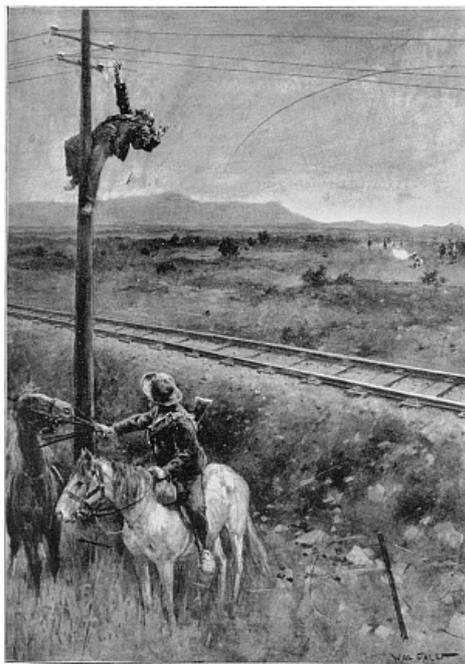
"The usual proceeding is as follows: On the first day we occupy the high ridges on each side of one of the huge valleys, or kloofs, as they are called. This the Boers, with the exception of a few 'snipers,' who wound or kill one or two of our advanced scouts, do not attempt to oppose. Then begins the difficulty. From each side the ground slopes down very steeply—in many places it means recourse to hands and knees—for about a mile; then comes a sheer precipice about 100 feet deep, and at the bottom a valley about 100 to 500 yards broad, with a stream in the middle and very thickly wooded. On each side of the main valley the cliffs are broken by smaller kloofs running up them, and they contain any number of caves and huge boulders. On the whole, one of these valleys makes about as difficult a bit of country to clear as any you could imagine. The Boers lie hidden among the rocks and in caves, and 'snipe' from them heavily at any man attempting to

climb down the precipitous sides. We generally spend a day or two in shelling and advancing as far as the edges of the precipices, and then on the night before we send our infantry down into the valley most of the Boers escape. They dispute every inch of the way until they see that the position is untenable for them. Then off they go."

The writer of the letter mentioned a particular instance of this kind of work, in which the Boer women hung white flags all over their laager, and some Boers took advantage of the fact that the British gunners duly respected the flags to hide among the rocks round the laager, and to "snipe" the troops as they advanced. He continued:—

"We slept out at night; it was fearfully cold; we had no blankets, and only half rations. We were ordered on the next morning to get the guns down a long spur jutting out into the valley. This appeared to be impossible, as the ground was fearfully steep and stony, and there was no road. However, with the aid of 50 Highlanders and a lot of rope, we managed to get down after two hours' hard work. The position was a beautiful one, being only 1700 yards from the place occupied by the Boers on the previous day. We would probably have had some casualties from rifle fire, being on exposed ground, but the Boers appeared to have left during the night. Our infantry entered the kloof from both sides, and spent two days in collecting cattle and in blowing up 50,000 rounds of Boer rifle ammunition. The Boer families were brought in, and made more comfortable than they had ever been before. The Boers all say that they do not mind deserting their wives, as they know that we look after them, and make them more comfortable at Middelburg than they were when living on the veldt."

In the course of General Beatson's operations on the 11th of July he had the misfortune to lose his intelligence officer, Lieutenant Anderson, R.E., a brilliant and zealous soldier, who was shot while galloping ahead with an advance party of Victorians and Mounted Infantry in hot chase after a gang of Boers. [Pg 97]



**BOERS CAUGHT IN THE ACT OF  
CUTTING THE TELEGRAPH  
WIRES**

Drawing by Wal Paget

With troops refitted, General Kitchener and Colonel Campbell now sped north from Middelburg, bent on getting in touch with the quarry. General Kitchener was successful. At Blaauwbank, on the 29th, a brisk engagement—a brilliant chase by the 19th Hussars, followed by the 18th in support, and a rush with fixed bayonets—resulted in the recapture of the two pom-poms taken from the Victorians on the 11th of June, and the seizure of 32 prisoners and 20 waggons of Viljoen's commando. The commandant himself made haste to withdraw to north and north-west of the Olifant.

On this day (29th) General Sir Bindon Blood, with Colonel Benson's column, moved from Wonderfontein to Carolina. The march was not without incident, for by night, at Mooitley, the troops of Colonel Benson made a smart swoop upon a Boer laager, and possessed themselves of 17 prisoners, 50 horses, and 10 waggons. A few days later another descent on the marauders in the same neighbourhood swelled the list of captures by 29 prisoners (five of whom were Botha's despatch riders), 70 horses, and 5 carts.

August opened with more surprises, skirmishes, and surrenders in other directions. At Diepkloof, on the Kruis River, General Kitchener, on the 3rd, dispersed a small commando, leaving two dead Boers on the field, and taking 13 prisoners. Colonel Park, between Lydenburg and Dullstroom, had also some exciting tussles, after which he proceeded to scour the country between Roos Senekal and the Tautesberg.

## STANDERTON-HEIDELBERG—LIEUTENANT-COLONEL COLVILLE

Lieutenant-Colonel Colville, from Greylingstad, spent the end of July in scouring the district north of the railway line between the Waterval River and Leeuwspruit, and defeating the mischievous activities of gangs under Alberts, Mears, and Pretorius. It must be remembered that these guerilla chiefs were paid £25 a month by the Boer Government for their services, and that they had this to gain and nothing to lose by adhering to their policy of resistance. The Boer Government, according to rumour, had now formed a new seat (its seats were so many and so portable that it is difficult to remember them!) at Watervalshoek, about twenty-six miles north of Greylingstad, consequently it was decided that this hotbed of disorder must be assailed without delay. Thereupon, on the 4th of August, three forces were moved out—Colonel Colville's and Colonel Stewart's (Johannesburg Mounted Rifles) to Rooipoort (ten miles west of Bethel), while Colonel Bewicke-Copley marched from Springs towards Watervalshoek. From Rooipoort Colonel Stewart searched the northern road through Drefontein and Saltpeter Krantz, while Colonel Colville exerted his vigilance along the southern route to Watervalshoek. He reaped his reward. At the junction of the Waterval River and Klipspruit he suddenly spied a Boer convoy—the convoy of General Alberts—on the march. Immediately all was excitement. Away went his gallant men, racing and galloping over a good seven miles, never ceasing their rush till the convoy was hounded down, till the whole bunch of guerillas, with 28 loaded waggons, 12 carts, 55 horses, 1400 cattle, and 2000 rounds of ammunition were seized.

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Meanwhile, the Boer Government had again vanished into thin air!

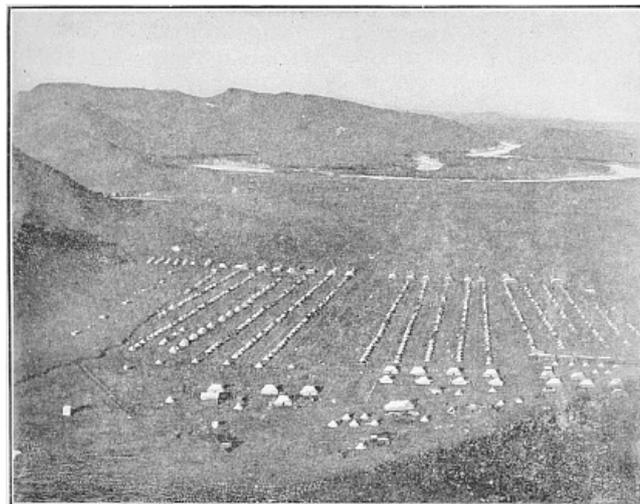
Colonels Colville and Stewart moved to Standerton, while Colonel Bewicke-Copley hustled bands of flying Dutchmen, who disappeared into the valley of the Wilge.

## CAPE COLONY—JULY

General French, in the middle of July, organised a big combined movement to dislodge the raiders from the Camdeboo Mountains near Graaf Reinet. The activities of the troops, brilliant as they had been, had not entirely purged the Cape Colony of the offensive element, and gangs of guerillas were still popping out here and there, in their mischief assisted by traitors, whose Janus faces it took some time to unmask. General French's efforts were now directed against rebels and raiders, and in a particularly successful series of hunts several Boers were killed and wounded, and 31 prisoners, mostly Cape rebels, were captured.

The combined commandos of Fouché and Myburg made an unusual demonstration on the 14th of July, and actually attacked the Connaught Rangers, under Major Moore, who, while escorting a convoy, were camped in a position between Aliwal North and Jamestown. It took some hours of determined fighting to beat off the ferocious enemy, who were splendidly posted on high hills, and were only defeated by dusk. Three officers and 17 of our wounded were left to tell the tale of stubborn resistance. The enemy were pursued by Colonel Munro, and caught after a wearing chase south-west of Jamestown. Some of their number were killed and some were forced to retreat upon the "Connaughts," who, as may be imagined, received them in passing with considerable warmth. By the end of the month, Fouché, owing to the incessant vigilance of Colonel Munro and Major Moore, found the Colony too hot to hold him. He therefore betook himself across the Orange near Aliwal North. But Kruitlinger kept up the excitement by dodging in the mountains south of Cradock. From thence he pounced, on the 21st of July, upon Colonel Crabbe and his column. The sudden outburst of musketry at close quarters, as it were from the bowels of the hills, caused the horses to stampede, and the loss of 200 horses at a critical moment was found to be no trifling matter. A horrible tussle ensued, but luckily at the end of the day Colonel Crabbe was able to withdraw to Mortimer Station with his force, five of whom were wounded.

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CONCENTRATION CAMP AT NORVAL'S PONT

Colonel Scobell's encounter with the enemy on the 23rd was more happy in its results. He formed

part of the cordon which was pushing the enemy towards the Orange, and during the operation the indefatigable Colonel Lukin and 90 Cape Mounted Rifles under Captain Cosgrove made a grand swoop upon Lategan's laager, fought and defeated 150 of the foe, captured 10 prisoners (including a field-cornet, Buys by name) and 105 saddles and horses. But it was what may be called a "touch-and-go" affair, for at one time Lieutenant Welby with only twelve men was surrounded by forty Boers, whom he withstood for an hour till rescued. Not less successful were the columns of Colonels Doran and Wyndham and the energetic Captain Lund. (This officer, on the 19th, secured a waggon containing the rifles of Smits' commando.) But such of the enemy as got away now dispersed under cover of darkness into the remote bridle-paths, and bided their time in their well-chosen coigns of vantage, where in ones and twos they were unassailable. General French was therefore obliged to arrange a backward and southward movement of the fan of columns from a line Vlakfontein, Richmond, Middle Mount, Middelburg, Schombie, Steynsburg, Stormberg, so as to force the scattered bands northwards again. From the 29th of July to the 3rd of August was passed in this manoeuvre, wearing but remunerative, for by the end of this time the raiders slipped through the loopholes intentionally made by the columns, which had been ordered to contract their fronts for this purpose, and once more the troops (extended laterally on a line Beaufort West, Pearston, Drennan Station, Cameron's Glen, Cathcart) had the satisfaction of pressing the enemy north towards the line of blockhouses on the Steynsburg-De Aar line. The only big commando that remained south was Scheepers', which a detached force of 10th Hussars, 12th Lancers, and two guns proceeded to chase.

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The process of attrition was going forward slowly and surely. The numbers of captures were monthly increasing, but the organised system of intimidation pursued by the Boer leaders against both burghers, who, if left to themselves, would have surrendered, and natives, who went in fear of their lives, and became informants, made the work of settlement exceedingly harassing. In these circumstances, Lord Kitchener "considered it advisable to form some specially mobile columns for independent and rapid action in different parts of the country, generally at some distance from the operations of other troops." These columns were given a free hand in respect to their movements, and acted at any time on intelligence gained by themselves in addition to such as might be received from headquarters.



**DELAGOA BAY.**

Drawing by Donald E. M'Cracken.

## **THE SITUATION—AUGUST**

In May Sir Alfred Milner paid a visit to England, and his reception in Great Britain left no doubt in the mind of people at home and abroad regarding the determination of the Government to adhere to their South African policy. The King conferred on him the dignity of a Baron, and both in the City of London and in that of Cape Town there were rejoicings at the honour done to one who had served the cause of Great Britain with such skill and unswerving devotion. In August Lord Milner returned to his duties as High Commissioner for South Africa and Administrator of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, much benefited by the brief rest from his labours.

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As it was found necessary to adopt sterner measures to crush the lingering guerilla warfare, Lord Kitchener issued, on the 7th of August, the following Proclamation:—

"Whereas the late Orange Free State and the late South African Republic have been annexed to his Majesty's dominions;

"And whereas his Majesty's forces are and have for some considerable time been in complete possession of the seats of Government of both the aforesaid territories, with their public offices, and the whole machinery of administration, as well as of all the principal towns and the whole of the railway lines;

"And whereas the great majority of the Burghers of the two late Republics, to the number of thirty-five

thousand, exclusive of those who have fallen in the war, are now either prisoners or have submitted to his Majesty's Government, and are living peaceably in towns or camps under the control of his Majesty's forces;

"And whereas the Burghers of the late Republics still in arms against his Majesty are not only few in numbers, but have lost almost all their guns and munitions of war, and are devoid of regular military organisation, and are therefore unable to carry on regular warfare or to offer any organised resistance to his Majesty's forces in any part of the country;

"And whereas those Burghers who are still in arms, though unable to carry on regular warfare, continue to make isolated attacks upon small posts and detachments of his Majesty's forces, to plunder or destroy property, and to damage the railway and telegraph lines, both in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal and in other portions of his Majesty's South African Dominions;

"And whereas the country is thus kept in a state of disturbance, checking the resumption of agricultural and industrial pursuits;

"And whereas his Majesty's Government is determined to put an end to a state of things which is aimlessly prolonging bloodshed and destruction and inflicting ruin upon the great majority of the inhabitants, who are anxious to live in peace and to earn a livelihood for themselves and their families;

"And whereas it is just to proceed against those still resisting, and especially against those persons who, being in a position of authority, are responsible for the continuance of the present state of lawlessness, and are instigating their fellow-Burghers to continue their hopeless resistance to his Majesty's Government;

"Now therefore I, Lord Kitchener, &c., under instructions from his Majesty's Government, proclaim and make known as follows:

"All commandants, field cornets, and leaders of armed bands, being Burghers of the late Republics, still engaged in resisting his Majesty's forces, whether in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal or in any other portion of his Majesty's South African Dominions, and all members of the Governments of the late Orange Free State and the late South African Republic, shall, unless they surrender before the 15th of September next, be permanently banished from South Africa; the cost of the maintenance of the families of all Burghers in the field who shall not have surrendered by 15th September shall be recoverable from such Burghers, and shall be a charge upon their property movable and immovable in the two Colonies."

The Proclamation was the result of correspondence which had taken place between Sir H. E. M'Callum, Governor of Natal, and Mr. Chamberlain. The Governor's telegram, dated 24th July, ran thus:—

"I sent you by last mail long minute submitted to Ministers containing following suggestions:

"Protracted continuance of hostilities vitally affecting interests of Natal is viewed with grave concern. Raids into the Colony frequently render it impossible for loyalists to return to farms and avocations. Feeling of unrest among natives created by raids, revenue suffering, trade paralysed, railways monopolised by military, towns overcrowded with refugees and persons awaiting return to Transvaal, stock being affected with disease due to introduction of captured stock from the new Colonies, famine prices prevailing, Colony still subject to censorship and martial law.

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"Under these circumstances Ministers advocate sterner measures to crush present guerilla warfare. They point out that Boers still fighting have little to lose, that their women and children are protected and well treated, and that their farms are safe from confiscation, therefore Boers free from anxiety and encouraged to continue in the field, growing accustomed to life of pillaging and looting, and communicate frequently with refugee camps which thus are source of danger. Those who are not rebels know that if captured they will be treated as prisoners of war and released at the conclusion of hostilities.

"Ministers believe that excellent effect would be produced if it were made generally known that if Burghers now in the field do not surrender by given date, say, within one month, cost of maintenance of all women and children will be chargeable against immovable property of Burghers in the field; also that Boer generals and leaders in the field should be informed that unless they and their commandos surrender by date specified they will be banished from South Africa for life when captured.

"In making these observations and recommendations Ministers disclaim intention of appearing to reflect on military operations, of which they realise the immense difficulties. They will continue to render the Imperial Government every assistance to secure settlement and pacification."

A telegram followed from Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Kitchener containing the draft of the Proclamation, which was to be issued with the least possible delay. Lord Kitchener was desired before issuing it, however, to communicate its terms to the Governors of Cape Colony and Natal, and ascertain whether their governments agreed to them. The proposal was approved by the Colonial governors, the document received a few emendations, and was issued as above.

There was, naturally, an outcry at all sterner measures that were proposed, by what may be called the "Prolong-the-War Party"—the pro-Boer orators who were daily, by their excited utterances, betraying the Boers into the belief that their showy sympathy would bring about practical results. But in reality the stern measure was intended as a merciful measure to save desperate men from a suicidal policy of resistance to the inevitable, the country from devastation, and women and children from suffering. Their territories were annexed, their leaders, most of them, were exiles or prisoners, hostilities had developed from guerilla warfare to simple brigandage and outrage, and the British were keeping up the supply of troops with the determination of "fighting to a finish." Indeed, by the middle of 1901, there were 138,000 regulars, 58,000 Colonials, 23,000 yeomen, 20,000 militia, and 10,000 volunteers—a total of 250,000 men under arms in South Africa. With this ever-increasing multitude bearing down upon them, the days of the belligerents were numbered, but this they doggedly refused to believe, or, even if they believed the worst, they decided—like the wasp who parts with his sting only to die—on leaving behind them the largest legacy of pain and trouble the circumstances would admit.

The South African Constabulary by the middle of the year had grown into an effective force, and were operating from the vicinity of the railways and occupying fortified posts, and thus rendering themselves exceedingly valuable in checking the efforts of the enemy to pass through the cordon around the cleared districts. The Boers, by the loss of their ox-waggons, were seriously impeded in regard to their supply arrangements, and the series of captures which took place in all parts of the country made a considerable drain on their numbers in the field. Still, small gangs of three to four hundred men roving loosely over the country could, in cases of emergency, concentrate and cause vast trouble and annoyance and even danger to the small mobile columns, broken up as they were, in order to operate over vast areas in search of the scattered hordes.

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Viewing the intense labour and increasing strain suffered by the Commander-in-Chief at this time, it is pleasing to quote the letter of an officer competent to speak regarding the magnificence of the steady if slow work that was being accomplished:—

“We are eleven hours a day in the saddle on patrol duty, and good solid work is being done by mobile columns. You will not get much of our movements through the Press, as the policy of secrecy is really the only safe one with the Cape Colony now undermined by rebels from north to south. It would be difficult to over-praise Lord Kitchener for his remarkable power of self-control and ability to keep his own counsel. His ceaseless efforts to get the right men into the higher and brigade commands are recognised by all of us who have suffered in the past from incompetent leaders. In spite of the clap-trap that is being talked in Parliament by ignorant and vain knights of the shires, I can assure you that a more humane and pacific general never directed a force on active service, and this testimony is from Boer and British alike.”

Considerable stir was created in England among the so-called humanitarians regarding the mortality of children in the concentration camps, where the Boer families had of necessity to be housed and cared for. The mortality was certainly high, but on strict inquiry it was found that mainly through the ignorance, listlessness, and idleness of the Boer mothers the sick infants were treated wrongly or neglected. Dr. Jane Waterston, late President of the Women’s Rand Relief Committee, in a letter to the *Cape Times*, with level-headed brevity discussed some points which the Boer sympathisers had carefully ignored. She pointed out that—

“Ordinary colonial women who have been through the stress and strain of the last two years are not very favourably impressed by the present stir in England over the assumed privations of the Boer women and children. If looting, flogging, ruining, and train-wrecking can be dignified by such a name as war, they hold that in all matters of supply our fighting men, who, as well as fighting our battles, guard our women-folk or our sick men, injured by wounds or disease in our service, come first and foremost; after them come our own civilian population; and lastly come our prisoners, or those Boers who have surrendered or been brought in.”

Again she said:—

“Large as was the sum collected in Great Britain by voluntary subscriptions, at no time did the women and children of the loyal colonial refugees of the poorer classes receive more than mere sustenance. Judging, however, by some of the hysterical whining going on in England at the present time it would seem as if we might neglect or half starve our faithful soldiers, and keep our civilian population eating their hearts out here as long as we fed and pampered people who have not even the grace to say ‘thank you’ for the care bestowed on them.

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“As we see it, the problem before our military men is, how to manage, feed, and care for large numbers of women and children, and yet not feed the enemy and so prolong the war, or rather existing brigandage. If the women are left on the farms with food, that food will be promptly handed over to the commandos, who would lightly take it all, and trust to British soft-heartedness not to let their women and children die of starvation, but to replenish all the empty larders by means of scattered convoys, which would give them at the same time grand chances of loot and first-rate practice in sniping. To obviate this the military have had to make up their minds either to let the women and children starve on their farms or else gather them into large concentration camps. This war has been remarkable for two things: first, the small regard that the Boers, from the highest to the lowest, have had for their womankind; and secondly, the great care and consideration the victors have had for the same, very often ungrateful, women.

“It is the fault of the Boer men, not ours, that their women and children are in concentration camps. The task of our *pro tem.* rulers is not made easier by the fact that no consideration of the stuff on a supply train being partly meant for their own wives and children would hinder Boer husbands and fathers from wrecking the train and destroying the food. They comfort themselves with the thought that the soldiers may have to go on half rations and tighten their belts, but ‘these fools of English will serve out as usual the daily ration to the refugee camps.’ At present there is the danger that the Boers will waken up to have a care for their womenfolk, and will go on fighting for some time so as to keep them in comfortable winter quarters at our expense, and thus our women and children will lose a few more of their husbands and fathers.”

In corroboration of Dr. Waterston’s statements it may also be noted that the Government, while spending hundreds of thousands of pounds monthly on the Boer refugees, had devoted only £50,000 towards the Imperial Relief fund for helping the loyalists.

Naturally, among the British sufferers, the continual attempts to propitiate an irreconcilable enemy were looked upon with disgust and even suspicion, and very rejoiced were they to find that steps were taken to arrest and remove Boer sympathisers in Johannesburg and elsewhere, who were known to be assisting in a widening conspiracy to get surrendered burghers to return to their commandos, and so reproduce a recrudescence of hostilities. On all sides the lying tongues of the Boer party, who had declared war and quitted the field, strove to urge the remnants towards further resistance by declaring that Great Britain was divided against itself, and that it had not sufficient endurance to see the matter through.



**CHURCH SQUARE, PRETORIA.**

Drawing by Donald E. M'Cracken.

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## CHAPTER XII

### ORANGE RIVER COLONY—AUGUST

At this time, as we know, the troops of Generals Bruce-Hamilton and C. Knox were engaged in clearing operations to the south of the Riet River, but, in consequence of a recrudescence of activity in the south-eastern districts of the Orange Colony, the operations were somewhat curtailed, and attention was directed to the offending quarter. The activity showed itself firstly on the 12th of August, when some 250 Boers under Boshoff, fleeing from the trap that Elliot had prepared for them, burst through the line of blockhouses near Sanna's Post. Secondly, another marauding gang of the same size, under Kruitzinger, in evading French's hunters, east of Norval's Pont, had penetrated the Springfontein-Bethulie line near Providence Siding, on their way to Boesmans Kop—an old and favourite haunt. Finally, a similar party under Smuts and Dreyer, on the 15th, had succeeded in squeezing past the line of police posts on the Modder, to the north of Petrusburg. These three movements suggested the possible concentration of the raiders in the now clear area between Wepener, Rouxville, and Smithfield, and consequently General Knox at once directed his attention to this quarter, in order to prevent any fresh junction of forces, and the entry of swelled commandos into Cape Colony. He therefore moved his troops from west to east of the railway, so as to interpose them between the enemy and the river line. Major Damant's column was detached from General Bruce-Hamilton's command, and the Royal Dragoons, under Lord Basing, were brought by rail from the Transvaal to Springfontein, while Colonel Western moved from Bloemfontein to Bethulie to join General Hart, who with Col. the Hon. H. D. Murray's column, the Connaught Rangers, was guarding the river west and east of Aliwal North.

Nor was this all. Colonel Sir Henry Rawlinson was ordered to pursue Boshoff's guerillas, who were scurrying through the Bloemfontein-Ladybrand line, but these nimble ones, bent rather on flight than fight, knowingly avoided contact with the pursuers. Kruitzinger, gathering the bedraggled remnants of commandos as he went, veered towards the Basuto border, hugged it gingerly, and stealthily crept towards the river, so that, on the morning of the 4th of September, he succeeded with 300 men, despite the vigilance of our troops, in effecting a crossing into Cape Colony at Kiba Drift. The Boers did not, however, escape Major Damant, who was hunting for them in the neighbourhood of Spitzkop. He scented them out at Oudam, to the west of Boesmanskop, and was off with 300 mounted men, 2 guns, and a pom-pom to attack them. The marauders were on the alert, and they, on the 14th, galloped off as fast as their mounts would carry them. For a good ten miles galloped hunters and hunted, till at last the quarry, dispersing, sought almost inaccessible refuge in the Marsfontein Hills. But 4 prisoners, 20 horses, 6 mules, 5 rifles, a heliograph, and the Commandant's despatch-box fell into Major Damant's hands. From the prisoners it was discovered that they formed part of Delarey's gang, who were moving under Dreyer to reinforce Kruitzinger at the Cape. Meanwhile, Lord Basing was hunting around Boesmanskop, and Colonel Thorneycroft's two columns, under Colonel Minchin and Major Copeman, were working their way (from Reddersburg and Smithfield respectively) towards Zandfontein, twelve miles east of Rouxville, where they met at the end of August. The enemy, ensconced in the kloofs, crannies, and kopjes between Zastron and the Orange River, succeeded in evading them, not a very marvellous feat considering their intimate acquaintanceship with the geographical features of this locality.

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Colonel Pilcher's two columns of General Knox's force, under Colonel Taylor and Major Lean, now marched from the west into Bloemfontein and Edenburg, and from thence south to Bethulie,

while Colonel Pilcher pushed up the valley of the Caledon towards Smithfield, thus freeing the troops of Colonel Thorneycroft and Lord Basing, who were able to scour further east. About this time, 25th of August, Colonel Sir Henry Rawlinson, marching south from Dewetsdorp, encountered a detached bunch of Smuts' men scuttling east of Reddersburg. A brilliant chase to the north-east followed, the mounted troops under Major Gosset pursuing with such dash that 25 prisoners out of the party of 120 were secured, and 30 of their horses captured. In September, after the column had obtained supplies at Edenburg, further activities all along the Basuto border were engaged in, and, on the 8th the mischievous hordes were driven north from a position they had taken up in the vicinity of Elandsberg. But Smuts and his following, despite the close proximity of Colonel Thorneycroft, were successful in finding a loophole at Kiba Drift, and escaped into Cape Colony on the 4th. There he was quickly "spotted" by General Hart, who pursued him towards Ladygrey. Both General Hart and General French had now their hands full. Kruitzienger's and Smuts' men, who had effected a crossing, required to be dealt with, so, in order to reinforce General French, Colonel Pilcher moved from the Caledon Valley to Burghersdorp on the 7th of September.

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### **ORANGE RIVER COLONY, S.—BRIGADIER-GENERAL PLUMER**

We left General Plumer, on the 11th of August, surrounded by the prizes won during his expedition to block the exits to the west during General Elliot's sweep from the Vaal to the Modder River (see Map, p. 89). These prizes included 32 prisoners, 346 horses, 566 cattle, 28 waggons, and 39 carts. Four days later he was off again on fresh Boer-hunting adventures. On his right moved Colonel Colvin, *viâ* Doornhoek and Roodepan to Zoutpans Drift on the Orange River; on his left marched Colonel Sir J. Jarvis through Koffyfontein and Luckhoff. The place between the Kimberley-Luckhoff line was a desert. Not a Boer showed his nose. Only some cattle, which were captured, betrayed his recent haunts. General Plumer concentrated his force at Zoutpans Drift on the 21st, and on the 23rd began a new move. The Orange River Valley to the east and all its mysterious kloofs were thoroughly searched, and the loopholes, whence the hunted might evade the vigilance of General French's troops on the other side, were watched with lynx eyes. But the Boers were not to be caught napping in this way. At last, however, a commando under Lategan, which had been forced to run from the Cape Colony before Colonel Byng's men, came plump upon Plumer, who was then on the look-out, south of Philippolis. A spirited chase ensued, and the fugitive band was relieved of 8 comrades, 4 rifles, 46 horses, and 11 vehicles. General Plumer's force reached Prior's Siding and Springfontein on the night of the 30th of August, and, one may almost say, without waiting to draw breath, was off again to join in the hunt for Kruitzienger.

### **ORANGE RIVER COLONY, E.—MAJOR-GENERAL ELLIOT—AUGUST**

After a brief rest at Glen, General Elliot, on the 18th, spread his troops on the line Glen, Sanna's Post, Ladybrand, with the intention of making a sweep to the north-east and a final wheel towards the Wittebergen Mountains. The object of this wheel was to drive such Boers as might be lurking about into the arms of General Campbell, who, it may be remembered, was waiting at the Brandwater Basin to mop them up. On General Elliot's left were Colonel Barker and Major Pine Coffin, working from Winburg to co-operate towards the Tabaksberg and Doornberg; while in the Senekal district was an outstretched net—composed of the troops of General Spens, Colonel Rimington, and Colonel Wilson—ready to haul in any interlopers that might be driven north by General Elliot's activities.

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Haasbroek, whose laager was reported to be somewhere in the vicinity, was now the main object of the hunt. Report said that he, with 300 men, was on the Korannaberg; consequently this eminence was surrounded on three sides by the Mounted Infantry from Thabanchu and Ladybrand working one way, while Colonel Baker and Major Pine Coffin so disposed themselves that the enemy, retreating toward Doornberg, would meet with a warm welcome. But Haasbroek had bolted. When, after a long and weary night march, Colonel Lowe's doughty men scaled the ridges, they found on the summit only some twenty Boers, two of whom were killed and one wounded. This was especially disappointing, as on the 22nd a commando, said to be under De Wet, cropped up most unexpectedly, and pounced upon a small party of the Black Watch Mounted Infantry, which had been detached from Ladybrand to Modderpoort for the purpose of driving such Boers as they might find towards General Elliot's right front. And this commando—their superiors in numbers and in point of position—was not to be overpowered, and eventually, after a fierce tussle, in which five of the enemy were killed, including the field cornet, the party was captured. Hearing of the disaster, General Broadwood, who was on General Elliot's right at Maquatlings Nek, rushed at once to the rescue, making a forced march throughout the night of the 22nd, but without avail. The enemy and their British prize had disappeared. The prisoners were afterwards released—the Boers having already too many mouths to feed and no means of securing their haul. From this time to the 26th the Division halted in the region of the Korannaberg, and the time spent in awaiting supplies was occupied in completely scouring the surrounding country. On the 26th the march towards Wittebergen was resumed. Of course, Haasbroek and his friends Froneman, Koen, and Hermanns Steyn were soon aware of the direction taken by the troops, and were not slow in vacating the position that they had taken up at Wonderkop, and moving north. By the 30th the columns were spreading out on a line—Retief's Nek, Commando Nek—hunting as they went in valley and kloof, in ridge and ravine, for signs of

the marauders. Tiring and fatiguing were the explorations, and often unremunerative; indeed, as a total, the results of so much energy were disappointing. Horses, cattle, and waggons were found in good quantities, but only 13 Boers were killed, 11 wounded, and 21 prisoners taken after numerous exciting expeditions. The rest of the guerillas were driven either in the direction of General Campbell's troops or towards the north. General Elliot moved to Winburg on the 6th, where he was joined later by Colonel Barker and Major Pine Coffin, who pursued their investigations of the country some days longer.

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## **SWEEPING THE KROONSTAD DISTRICT—BRIGADIER-GENERAL SPENS— AUGUST**

The columns of General Spens, moving from Heilbron to Kroonstad between the 6th and the 12th of August, performed a prodigious amount of work, Major Gough and his Mounted Infantry alone securing 12 prisoners, 900 cattle, 30 carts, 2 waggons, and 186 horses.

On the 16th the General again made a grand effort, which, however, was not crowned with brilliant results such as those just chronicled. The mounted troops of Colonel Jenner and Major Gough, with four R.H.A. guns, made a laborious night march of 35 miles from a farm north of Welvart, in order to surround Lindley before dawn. The thing was splendidly managed, but to no purpose. The town was vacated. The "slim" ones had slunk off in a manner as disappointing to us as it was commendable in them. So, on the 18th, General Spens was joined six miles north-west of Lindley by his worn and disgusted band. Little rest did they get. On the 20th they were again on the move, for it was necessary that the rolling stone of the Boers should not be allowed anywhere to pause and gather moss in the form of recruits and roving raiders. The country north of the Lindley-Reitz road, as far as Lovedale, was diligently searched. From Stryfontein on the 21st Colonel Jenner and Major Gough were despatched in the direction of two farms on the Lindley-Bethlehem road, which were known to be hotbeds of hostility. A brilliant night march brought the troops to their destination, but the Boers were on the alert, and in the grey of the morning put spurs to their horses, and fled wildly in the direction of the valley of the Valsch River, followed by salvoes from the pursuing force. General Spens continued his sweep, and at last at Olievenfontein (on the Lindley-Kroonstad road) came in touch with the enemy. Here, his left flank guard had 200 to tackle—a desperate band who came, for a wonder, to close quarters, and fought with dogged valour.

It was with no little difficulty that the foe were eventually driven off, and that with the loss of gallant young Wallis (Royal Irish Fusiliers) and 2 men, while 13 of the men were wounded. The force neared Kroonstad by the 29th August, about which time a splendid officer, Captain Dick (Royal Irish Fusiliers), succumbed to wounds incurred while gallantly leading his men.

Colonel Rimington meanwhile had relaxed none of his efforts. A smart little affair on the 15th, in which he caught a Boer convoy trailing along near Doornkloof, some seventeen miles north-west of Lindley, helped to swell his "bag." Then on the 17th, at Vechtkop, he dashed into a knot of 200 Boers under Waude, Mentz, and Boshoff, and sent them spinning, following hot foot for full eight miles till they dispersed in the mists of the south-east. That done he turned his attention to Trommel, near Reitz. Here he pounced on a small laager—secured 16 prisoners and some fat cart-loads of provisions, beside waggons and horses. He was back again at Kroonstad by the 28th. But two days later, he was to the fore taking his place in the scheme of General Elliot's operations, which have been described, and, later, co-operating with General Spens and Colonel Wilson in their endeavours to intercept the roving bands. His activities were unending. On the 31st of August he "spotted" the commandos of De Vos and Lategan, chased and dispersed them, and secured the best part of their belongings; later, near Senekal, he made a dash on another convoy, chased it, and, after a good ten miles' rush and a smart fight, killed 4 Boers and took 10 whole, together with 61 loaded waggons, 25 carts, horses, mules, and 2000 cattle. This with the loss of only 4 men wounded. On the 6th of September, after reconnoitring towards Blitzberg, Colonel Rimington returned, heavy with the spoils of war, to Kroonstad.

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**GENERAL ELLIOT**

Here he was followed two days later by Colonel Wilson, who had been following an identical plan of pounce and pursuit on the right. He too had skirmished with good effort, first engaging some of De Vos' men and sending them to the right-about, and secondly attacking Haasbroek's commando, midway between Senekal and Ventersburg, and handling it somewhat roughly. Seven Boers were killed, 3 prisoners were taken, together with carts innumerable, full and empty, and cattle to the tune of 2000. The central column under General Spens, which all this time was moving direct on Senekal, worked brilliantly and scored some success, the total result being 5 Boers killed, 3 voluntarily surrendered, 11 prisoners, 34 Cape carts, and 1800 cattle captured.

### **OPERATIONS NEAR HONING SPRUIT AND THE LOSBERG— LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GARRATT**

In August, Colonel Garratt, who was following in rear of General Elliot's movement on the Modder (see p. 89), marched from the junction of the Vet and Zand Rivers to Bultfontein. Here, on the 12th, he encountered a band of guerillas, took two and killed two, and pursued the rest as far as the banks of the Zand River. Here he lost them, for horse flesh could do no more. Turning, he veered north towards Honing Spruit. In this direction, near the junction of the Rhenoster and Honing Spruit, was said to be the laager of Spanneberg, and consequently a force under Colonel the Hon. H. White (300 mounted men and 30 Burgher Police) was detached to deal with him. Through the night of the 18th the troops marched warily yet rapidly towards their prey, fearing that at any moment rumour of their approach might render the expedition—as these expeditions were so likely to be—futile. But no; by dawn the sleeping gang was surrounded; they opened their eyes to the consciousness that a small forest of British rifles had grown up around them, and that efforts of defence were useless. They had to deal with men who were more than their match—Simpson of the New Zealand Regiment, Quintal of the New South Wales Bushmen, and other splendid fellows before whom they were only too glad to run! One Boer lost his life in the scrimmage, twenty-five were made prisoners, and Steyn, late Landdrost of Vredefort, was among them. Carts, waggons, horses, cattle too, were taken possession of, and the smart little force, after having covered 56 miles in 36 hours, returned to headquarters, duly elated with their prize. It was now necessary to search in the region of the Losberg for fugitive bands, and to this end Colonel Garratt on the 21st crossed the Vaal at Lindique Drift. The mounted troops were eternally spying and scouring hither and thither, and their activity was not in vain. In the distance on the morning of the 24th loomed what appeared to be a convoy—a convoy moving towards Buffelshoek. In an instant the trackers were after it, and before long the hostile gang was caught, dispersed, their precious freight taken, and with it eight prisoners, carts, oxen, cattle, and horses. With this extra burden on their hands, the party, fatigued after the chase, were, as may be imagined, almost at the mercy of fate. Fate, as it happened, was capricious. Such of the Boers as had contrived to escape gave warning of the perilous position of the British force, and at noon returned with a party of 300 of their fellows, who had been collected from the skirts of the Gatsrand. A vigorous fight ensued. The Boers, doughty always, were now grown dashing, the spur of famine driving them to the valour of despair. Between both was the prize—the prize to be held by those who had won it; by now, infinitely more precious than in the winning—the prize to be recaptured by those who had all the calls of the flesh to prompt the spirit to battle and retaliation. This was indeed a tug of war. Till five of the afternoon—from noon till five—fought those men. The Boers, fresh from the hills, hungering with a mighty hunger for their precious convoy—the British, worn with the long rush since daylight and the previous fight, but holding on, like the never-say-die fellows they are, till the desperadoes were at length driven off in the direction of the Vaal. But this engagement was costly, for one officer and one man were

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killed, and two men were wounded.

This brilliant little force, which was covering the establishment of posts by the South African Constabulary, two days later made another successful night march from the Losberg to Leeuwpoort. More prizes of horses, mules, cattle, and prisoners—numbering thirteen—were the fruit of their pluck and perseverance, and in the net they had the satisfaction of discovering a nephew of General Delarey, a person who counted for considerably more than the poor tramps who had joined the guerilla proceedings for reasons of mere bellicose vagrancy.

On the 2nd of September Colonel Garratt marched to Meyerton and Vereening, and from thence moved by rail to Paardekop Station on the Standerton line. This was a precautionary measure, for rumour now pointed to possible raids on the Natal border, and to frustrate any concentration of hostile bodies Colonel Garratt was to commence working from Paardekop towards Wakkerstroom.

## **SCOURING THE MAGALIESBERG—COLONELS ALLENBY AND KEKEWICH**

We left Colonel Allenby in the occupation of Breedt's Nek, which the Boers had evacuated.



**NIGHT ATTACK ON A BOER CONVOY BY  
MOUNTED INFANTRY UNDER COLONEL  
WILLIAMS**

Drawing by John Charlton from a Sketch by a British Officer

On the 7th of August a movement was made to obtain possession of the Damhoek and Pampoen Kraal Passes. At the latter place a gang of forty Boers was effectively tackled by the Volunteer Service Company and the King's Own Scottish Borderers under Major Mayne. The whole bunch was most skilfully surrounded and secured, and with them Mr. F. Wolmarans, chairman of the late Volksraad. The passes were occupied, and from the 10th to the 12th of August stray Boers were unearthed by Colonel Allenby in the southern slopes of the Magaliesberg, between Nooitgedacht and Grobelaar's Pass. Nine Boers were brought in, fourteen rifles, some waggons, carts, and dynamite. About this time Major Butler (in command of the Carabineers) was detached from Colonel Allenby's column to co-operate with General Gilbert Hamilton, who had been engaging in the incessant harrying of Liebenberg's commando and other raiders east of Lichtenburg. Marching by night and by day, he had hunted and tracked, worried and pursued, but had never succeeded in bringing the enemy to open fight. Now, on his return to Ventersdorp on the 11th, he arranged, with the assistance of Major Butler's men from the north, for a simultaneous attack upon Koperfontein and Basfontein. The attack was splendidly managed, and on the morning of the 14th, after some vigorous fighting, in which Lieutenant Till (6th Dragoon Guards) and one man lost their lives and 5 men were wounded, 10 prisoners, 27 waggons, and 100 cattle were captured. Three Boers were killed.

Major Butler and the Carabineers rejoined Colonel Allenby at Damhoek, while General Hamilton reconnoitred towards Tafel Kop and made more prisoners.

General Barton now watched the establishment of posts eastwards over the hill from Breedt's Nek, while Colonels Kekewich and Allenby, having completely effected their sweeping operations, moved to Commando Nek for supplies. But of course the dispersed Boers were forced to hide somewhere, so, going north, they chose Zwartkopies, whence after some skirmishing they were driven by Colonel Allenby. Meanwhile Colonel Kekewich, moving at the same date (19th) from Commando Nek, ferreted along the bed of the Crocodile River and effected the capture of fourteen of the enemy together with their horses. So vigorous were the operations of both these officers that the Boers in the district began to feel that their days were numbered, and that they had better surrender with a good grace. This twenty-nine of them did at Beestekraal, where Colonel Allenby was operating, on the 23rd, while on the 25th sixteen more (including T. Kruger, a nephew of the ex-President) surrendered to Colonel Kekewich, who was then at the junction of the Crocodile and Elands Rivers. As most of the remaining raiders had now betaken themselves to the rugged and almost inaccessible country on the north, where pursuit would have been useless, Colonel Kekewich veered south, while Colonel Allenby moved west, with a view to watching the west of Magaliesberg in the direction of Rustenburg. September found them posted

at points where they might work in combination against Kemp's commando—Colonel Allenby at Bashoek (a northern fringe of the Magaliesberg) and Colonel Kekewich near Magato Pass.

At this date, owing to the unceasing exertions of General Barton, Colonels Kekewich and Allenby, and Lord Basing, together with the extension of the system of Constabulary posts, excellent results had been obtained in the area bounded on the north by the Magaliesberg, on the south by the Vaal, on the east by the Pretoria line, and on the west by the Frederikstad-Breedt's Nek line of blockhouses. Scarcely a Boer was to be seen. The raiders were forced to the extreme limits, east and west, north and south, and against their safety in these outskirts, further operations were soon to be directed.

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## TRANSVAAL, S.W.

Their work over in the Marokani range and the valley of the Harts River, Lord Methuen and General Fetherstonhaugh by parallel routes moved to Klerksdorp. General Fetherstonhaugh marched (on the 9th) his two columns along the right bank of the Vaal, searching in every hole and cranny for nests of marauders and destroying such supplies as he found. Colonel Hickie unearthed few Boers; but Colonel Williams, by a knowing dodge worthy of De Wet himself, set a trap which enclosed a whole convoy plus eighteen prisoners, cattle, and vehicles. His manoeuvre was this. Report spoke to the fact that the convoy of Commandant Vermaas on the 19th was trekking towards Katdoornplaats, north of Wolmaranstad. Accordingly, he sent off his convoy under escort towards Leeuwfontein, thus giving the effect that he was on the march in that direction. Meanwhile he reserved his alert Colonials (the New South Wales Mounted Rifles and Bushmen) for an enterprise after their own heart. In the dead of night they were ordered to proceed towards their goal, and at early dawn when they reached Katdoornplaats they traced the tale of Boer departure and the direction of it by the wheel-tracks in the soil. Not a moment did they lose. Off on a gallop of twelve miles they went, lessening, as they plunged onward, the distance between themselves and the lumbering convoy. At last they were even with it; the ping of bullets told the Boers that their flight was a failure and that they had met their match. And so it came to pass that this mettlesome force, after an expedition during which they covered sixty miles in twenty-seven hours, returned to headquarters with the spoil before named, every one of the captured vehicles being brought away with them. Among the prisoners was the late Landdrost of Bloemhof and a telegraphist with complete tapping apparatus.

While these columns were moving on Klerksdorp, which they reached on 22nd and 23rd of August, Lord Methuen, on the left, had been skirmishing his way along, fighting both with the gang of Delarey and with that of Vermaas, fights of no limp nature, for he came into Klerksdorp on the 22nd with 13 prisoners, 23 voluntarily surrendered Boers, 400 trek oxen, 1848 cattle, 43 waggons, 19 carts, 76 horses, and 8 mules. He had lost one man, and one officer and eight men had been wounded in the various frays. In addition to these commandos which were trounced on the journey, report said that General Kemp with some 800 followers was flitting between the kopjes and crevices on the south-west of Olifant's Nek. An effort therefore had to be made to meet this hostile multitude, and to this end the various troops moved by the 1st of September to situations which were supposed to enclose the marauders and afford them no loopholes of escape. Unfortunately, Lord Methuen's men were covering a wide expanse of ground, and were forced to move to block a reported attempt to escape towards Lindley Poort; and through the gap thus created between the columns of Lord Methuen and those of Colonel Hickie, the Dutch leader contrived to bolt. But in his dashing feat only his mounted men could follow him, and consequently a large body of Boers with waggons, carts, ammunition, indeed all his effects, were left behind, and by degrees were unearthed from their burial-places in the kloofs and taken possession of.

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Lord Methuen, on the 2nd of September, marched from Brakfontein to Roodival (on his return journey to Zeerust), and while proceeding to the north-west he suddenly espied a convoy in the distance. A mad chase ensued, followed by a brisk fight, in which 6 Boers were left dead on the field. Of prisoners 22 were taken, together with waggons, carts, cattle, and ammunition in enormous quantities. Passing on, Lord Methuen spent the following days in capturing more vagrants; but on the 5th his troops came in for stiff work. They were now in the country of scrub and jungle in the Marico Valley, and round them on their right were Delarey and Field-Cornet Van Tonder, whose convoy had been captured, while on the left were Commandants Botha and Liebenberg. In addition to these was the Marico commando under Commandant Lemmer and Field-Cornet Louw, who attacked the rearguard. A stirring action followed, the brunt of which was sustained by the 5th Imperial Yeomanry and the Welsh Squadrons. Eleven Boers were killed, 8 wounded, and 11 prisoners, while 10 waggons and 5 carts were captured. This haul was somewhat increased by the contributions of Colonel Von Donop, who with his detached column had taken a more southerly route through Quaggashoek and the lead mines, where he collected 3 Boers, 39 vehicles, and some cattle. The total British casualties on the march between Brakfontein and Zeerust were 1 officer and 12 men killed, and 2 officers and 28 men wounded.

While Lord Methuen returned to Zeerust and General Hamilton marched to Kaffir's Kraal (fifteen miles north-west of Klerksdorp), General Fetherstonhaugh remained for a few days trapping the stragglers from Kemp's force, in which operation he was assisted by Colonel Kekewich, who afterwards (on the 7th) retraced his steps *viâ* Middelfontein towards Naauwpoort. Colonel Allenby on the 9th got back *viâ* Rustenburg to Commando Nek, having indulged, as he went, in various exciting exploits. At Schaapkraal he scented out a Boer laager and by night surrounded it

so cautiously and so cleverly that the Boers, though they made an effort at fight, had not the ghost of a chance. Unfortunately in the skirmish two men of the Scots Greys fell. Of the enemy, 22 were made prisoners and 2 were killed. Rifles, carts, loaded waggons, and ammunition swelled the total.

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### **THE PIETERSBURG LINE—LIEUT.-COLONEL GRENFELL**

Colonel Grenfell spent July and the better part of August in operating against General Beyer's gang, which still hovered around the west of the Pietersburg line. These marauders in small numbers were captured occasionally, but they were more inclined for manslaughter than for war, and seldom came out into the open, contenting themselves merely with train-wrecking. On the 4th of July, taking advantage of the thick cover that surrounded the line north of Naboom Spruit Station, Commandant Lys and his party lay in wait for a train for which a mine had been previously prepared. The mine exploded to time and the train with its escort of Gordon Highlanders was brought to a standstill. Then from their comfortable ambush the enemy proceeded to fire, killing Lieutenant Best and 9 Gordon Highlanders, an artillery-man, 2 Engineers, the driver, fireman, guard, and 4 natives. The success of this scheme so delighted the ruffians that they tried the same game again and again, and on the 31st of August a still more tragic affair took place. The train was travelling between Waterval and Hamanskraal Stations, and had descended a deep cutting when an explosion occurred. Before the victims could recover the shock of derailment the Boers hiding on the banks rained bullets among their number, killing and wounding at their pleasure. Colonel Vandeleur (Irish Guards), a valuable young officer of great promise, fell; with him among the dead lay 13 men, 1 traveller, and 2 natives. Four officers were wounded, besides 20 men and a woman. The mail-bags were seized by the marauders, who were well pleased with their murderous success.

To effect their chastisement and secure the line in future from further assaults, General Barton quickly despatched from the Hekpoort Valley, by Zilikat's Nek, to Waterval, a flying column. The force (250 men and two R.H.A. guns), under Colonel Hacket Thompson, pursued the enemy, and near Wagon Drift caught them. A brisk fight ensued, four of the gang were killed and a portion of the captured mails was recovered, after which the column moved back to Eerste Fabriken, and from thence to Waterval by the 8th of September.

### **THE TRANSVAAL (NORTH-EAST)—GENERAL BLOOD'S OPERATIONS**

The first exploit of General Walter Kitchener in August was the surprise of a convoy near Diepkloof, some thirty-five miles north of Middelburg, where he was encamped. Colonel Park meanwhile searched for the remnants of Viljoen raiders in the rugged region of the Tautesberg, and that done, marched to Paardekloof. A week later, as a larger and more rapid swoop upon the enemy was contemplated, General Kitchener from his own, Colonel Campbell's, and Colonel Park's columns organised a flying column consisting of the 18th and 19th Hussars, 4th Mounted Infantry Battalion, two guns of the 81st Battery R.F.A., a pom-pom, and sixty "Devons," who were to be carried in carts. With this column he left Diepkloof at 4 A.M. on the 10th for Krokodil Drift on the Olifants River, while Colonels Campbell and Park, with the remainder of the infantry (in waggons), proceeded to Rooikraal and Holnek.

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General Kitchener now scoured the valley of the Blood River, and finding it clear of guerillas, and hearing that Viljoen's horde had betaken itself to the banks of the Moos stream, he pushed thither with his cavalry, over the stream and on towards the valley of Elands River, leaving the Mounted Infantry with the pom-pom to guard Krokodil Drift. Up to this time no vestige of the quarry had been sighted. But now from the low banks fringing Elands River, dust in the distance, some seven miles off, seemed to hint of a moving convoy. The vision was tantalising. But an almost impregnable jungle stretched between the dust-cloud and the British troops, and the General decided that a cut across country would be futile. From his observations he calculated that this convoy moving down the left bank of the river towards Commissie Drift might be headed off at that point; therefore the column was soon pushing along the right bank towards the drift in expectation of a fight. But the Boers were wary. By the time the British force gained the drift, they discovered to their dismay that the enemy had retraced their steps and were off to the south-west. After this disappointment the column moved to Uyskraal, and from thence on the 16th they pushed up the Elands Valley to Vrieskraal. The 19th Hussars, who were in advance, soon found to their cost that the dense jungle in that region was populated with Boers, and at midday the officer commanding sent back word that he was being hard pressed. The Boers, indeed, were on all sides, and as fast as the officers advanced, they found themselves surrounded. The predicament threatened to be disastrous, for four of the officers and nineteen of the troopers had been seized when the 18th Hussars and guns, which had been pushed forward in support, turned the scale of events. Fighting, fast and furious, in the thick of a dense mass of scrub and tangle was carried on, the enemy sticking to the bush with fierce tenacity, the Hussars steadily pushing them back and back to the region of some kopjes where, in the shadow of the night, they sought refuge. Fortunately, during the scrimmage the foe were forced to let loose the officers and men whom they had captured, but five gallant troopers were lost. The Boers made use of the darkness to effect their escape, and by the morning the whole of their position was evacuated. General Kitchener now rejoined Colonel Campbell at Roorikraal, the flying column was broken up, and the 4th Mounted Infantry returned to Colonel Park.

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From this date till the end of the month the columns moved slowly down to the railway, those of General Kitchener and Campbell by Blinkwater to Wonderfontein (which was reached on the 4th September), and that of Colonel Park by Roosenekal and Welpoort to Bankfontein (five miles north-east of Middelburg), which was reached on the 8th. The combined "bag" contained 53 prisoners, 22 voluntarily surrendered burghers, 2072 cattle, 76 horses, 60 waggons, and 24 carts. Sixteen Boers were killed. A 15-pounder gun and three Maxims were found by Colonel Park, the enemy having first taken care to destroy them.

Colonel Benson meanwhile had been untiringly sweeping the district between Carolina and Ermelo, causing the Boers to live in a state of sleepless anxiety lest he, in one of his midnight swoops, should catch them snoring. On the 15th he arranged another of these expeditions, the direction being Warmbaths, some thirty-four miles north-east of Carolina, where he then was. He moved first to Nooitgedacht. Here he dropped his encumbrance in the form of waggons, &c.; and thus lightened, he stole with his brilliant little band, Colonel Wools-Sampson leading them, across the pitch-black veldt towards the enemy's camp. For thirty-four miles they crept on their errand of surprise. The stratagem was successful. A good number of Boers escaped, but they went horseless and cattleless. Fifty-two prisoners were taken, the majority of whom were captured in a dashing rush by the Eastern Transvaal Scouts under Major Young. Among the captives was a captain of scouts for the Carolina districts, and also the father-in-law of Mr. Schalk Burger. Colonel Benson now returned to Carolina, where he remained till the 21st of August.

Of the activities of Colonel Benson's force the correspondent of the *Morning Post* reported enthusiastically. He said:—

"The intelligence officers of the column, for some time under Colonel Wools Sampson, did their work in a most efficient manner. By various clever tactics they would locate bodies of the enemy, perhaps twenty and sometimes even fifty miles away from the camp. On their information a sudden swoop would be planned, and carried out, as a rule, successfully. On occasion the whole column would march several miles in the opposite direction to that of the object of attack. Then after the camp was formed, the horses fed, and the men about to turn in for the night, sudden orders would be given for the mounted men to march. The plans were not known generally, even by the officers, till within an hour of marching. Then the camp would be left in charge of the infantry, and the mounted men would proceed as silently as possible on their night march of from twenty to fifty miles. If guns were taken the wheels would be muffled, and every possible precaution would be taken to keep the movement secret. Through the intelligence officers knowing the roads thoroughly very few mishaps have occurred. The march was usually done in column of fours until the point was reached whence the attack was to be made. Even on the darkest nights, when it was difficult for a trooper to see his horse's head, only very rarely has a man got off the road and lost the column. After a couple of months' practice the men became adepts at the work.

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"When the point was reached from which the attack was to be made the force would be divided into several independent squadrons and sent round the position occupied by the enemy, each squadron leader being carefully instructed about what he had to do, whether his part in the plan was to hold a neck over which the enemy would probably attempt to escape, or whether it was to rush the position at a given time. The usual plan was to make the attack just as daylight began to appear. The leading squadrons detailed for the work, as a rule with Colonel Benson at their head, would gallop for the farmhouse or laager and be right among the Boers before they were properly awake. Latterly the Boers have been taking greater precautions, and some of the commandants have made it a rule to be saddled up by three o'clock every morning. The districts operated in—Carolina, Ermelo, Middelburg, and Lydenburg—have become noted during the war for the stubborn resistance they have made. In these districts there are still considerable numbers of the enemy about, mostly split up into small lots of ten, twenty, or perhaps fifty men. There are many farms which have not been visited by any column. These are situated away from the main roads, and hidden in kloofs and valleys among the hill ranges. These contain stores of food and serve as resting-places for the enemy. The work of destroying these food depôts is steadily prosecuted, but is necessarily a slow process. The Boers, however, obtain abundant supplies from the Kaffir kraals, mealies, meat, and salt being the principal food, and, judging from the condition of the prisoners taken, the Boers thrive on it."

While the Eastern Transvaal Scouts, under Major Young, were making their reputation for dash in this district, the South African Constabulary and Morley's Scouts, under Captain Wood, had been doing splendid service patrolling the region of Bronkers Spruit. Boers were known to be in the valley, and the Constabulary posts were threatened by the dangerous contiguity of snipers sheltered in networks of dongas beyond them, but the strength of the Boers was not determined till the 17th, when the small British force came suddenly upon a gang of some 800 marauders which had halted at Middelburg. There was nothing to be done but to attack, and that with rapidity, and before the sudden and really splendid rush of Constabulary and Scouts the great Boer mass gave way—their horses stampeded—and many were wounded, while 11 were taken prisoners. But alas for the tide in the affairs of men! It turned at the most critical moment. The Boers, becoming suddenly aware of the small number of their assailants, made haste to rally their forces and boldly lunged back on the British party. Hand-to-hand fighting, ferocious and sustained, followed, during which Captain Morley of the Scouts was dangerously wounded. Back and back went the Constabulary, on and on came the Boers, till they had recovered the 11 prisoners that had been taken from them and secured 14 of the British to boot. In the fierce fray five of our men were wounded and one killed. On the following day an effort was made by Colonel Bewicke Copley to catch the guerillas and punish them, but without avail. He made a forced march from Springs towards Middelburg, but the commando which had wrought such havoc among Captain Wood's men was nowhere to be seen. Report said it had disappeared towards the south-east, so after dispersing such stragglers as were found hanging about the line of march preparing to locate themselves in the comfortable sniping-places of spruit and donga, he proceeded to Olifantsfontein, whence he sent for further supplies from Springs. At Olifantsfontein he stayed a week, then went to Springs for the purpose of co-operating with Colonel Benson. This

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officer, owing to some misunderstanding regarding the urgency of the orders calling him west, and being ignorant of the Boer concentration that had been effected on the 17th, moved from Carolina only on the 21st of August. He marched by Vaalbank to Middelkraal; from thence he veered northwards; drew supplies from Middelburg, and again proceeded on his course towards Brakfontein, near the sources of the Wilge River. Here Colonel Bewicke Copley, after a twenty-mile march, had arrived, and here at dawn on the 31st he came in collision with 450 Boers; fought them; wounded Lieutenant Roos of the Staats Artillery and some others; took 7 prisoners, some horses, cattle, and waggons, and sent the rest scattering to the south.

Colonel Benson, too, was doing his share of the Boer-hunting. Hearing that the enemy had gone south towards the upper part of the Waterval Valley, he decided on another of his night marches for the surprise of the foe. Leaving his waggons in charge of the infantry, he led his mounted troops towards the laager at Kroomdraai (west of Ermelo). The pickets were "rushed," and before the startled Boers could reach their horses, the gallant Scottish Horse plunged in among them. Fourteen prisoners were taken. The late Landdrost of Heidelberg, and Brink, a member of the Special Government Court for the trial of prisoners, were of the number.

At the conclusion of the adventure—in which he captured 12 waggons, 17 Cape carts, 80 horses, 514 cattle, 11 mules, and some supplies—and in consequence of the Boers having escaped beyond pursuit to the south-east, Colonel Benson proceeded early in September to the Delagoa line (Witbank Station), while Colonel Bewicke Copley returned to Springs.



**BULLOCK WAGON CROSSING A DRIFT ON THE  
UMBELESI RIVER, SWAZILAND.**

Drawing by Donald E. M'Cracken.

## **LIEUTENANT-COLONEL COLVILLE'S OPERATIONS**

In August Colonels Colville and Stewart, who had been operating north of Greylingstad, moved to Standerton. On the 10th the last officer entrained for Dundee to reinforce the troops on the north-east frontier of Natal, while Colonel Colville crossed the Klip and established an entrenched camp at Brakpan. He now, with mounted troops and guns, scoured the Upper Klip Valley, penetrated Natal by Muller's Pass in the Drakensberg, and deposited at Newcastle his stock and prisoners captured during the march. This march was by no means a triumphal progress, for the district was fringed with Boers who sniped by day and brewed mischief by night. The dongas, spruets, and hills afforded them excellent cover, and the men needed nerves of iron to play a livelong game of hide-and-seek with death, which peeped cunningly from every nook and cranny.

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Colonel Colville returned *viâ* Botha's Pass to De Lange Drift minus many of his gallant men who were wounded in the course of the ordeal, and proceeded to Standerton on the 6th of September.

## **NATAL—LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR H. HILDYARD**

On the Natal frontier affairs had become somewhat unsettled. The Boers who had been swept off from the Standerton line were dribbling across the frontier, and others round about Vryheid and Utrecht seemed to be waiting an opportunity to effect a concentration. At the end of July it became certain that the foe was gathering in good numbers to the east of Nqutu, and that many more might be creeping through the long grass to other parts of the country which had become more or less settled. On the 28th of July things came to a climax. Major F. A. Henderson (8th Hussars), who with 200 mounted men (8th Hussars and Natal Volunteer Composite Regiment) was scouring the locality around Nqutu, came on the foe and engaged them. The marauders were more than usually strong and more than usually tenacious. They launched themselves, in a mass of 400, with great dash against the small British force, in the hope to intercept the troops if possible during their retirement to Nondweni; but through the skill of the commanding officer

and the dash of 20 men of the Natal Volunteers, who raced them for a kopje and won, the Boers were frustrated. The fighting lasted the whole day, and the Boers made frantic efforts to capture a gun of the 67th Battery R.F.A., but with great energy the piece of contention was galloped off under a brisk fusillade from the foe till it was safely out of their range.

Doggedly both parties battled together, with the result that Major Jervis-Edwards, a gallant officer whose loss was much deplored, and three men were killed, and five were wounded. Soon after this, the Boers becoming still more obstreperous, it was arranged that Lieut.-General Sir H. Hildyard's command should be strengthened by the addition of the column of Colonel Stewart, whose departure for Dundee we may remember, and another under Colonel Pulteney. This column consisted of the Victorian Mounted Rifles (moved from the Delagoa line), a squadron of the 8th Hussars, the Dublin Fusiliers Mounted Infantry, and two guns. While this mobile column was sweeping from Utrecht to Kambuladraai, Colonel Stewart was marching from Dundee through Vryheid towards the same destination. A junction was effected on the 23rd of August, on which date a brisk encounter took place between Colonel Pulteney's men and the Boers who were sneaking in the west of the Schurveberg. In the engagement two of the Victorians were killed and five wounded.

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On the following days both columns retraced their steps to Vryheid and then, united under the command of Colonel Blomfield, moved to the junction of the Pivaan and Manzaan Rivers. The march over rugged and tormenting ground was one trying to the patience of man and beast, particularly as gangs of Boers under Scholtz at intervals prevented any chance of monotony by variations in the art of sniping and "potting." The force returned to Vryheid on the 31st, little having been accomplished owing to the impracticable nature of the country. But two Boers were killed. Early in September Colonel Blomfield began a new scouring expedition, moving down the valley of the Umvalosi on to Bethel and Brakfontein. Here again, on the 4th September, he had a smart tussle with the enemy, and having dispersed them, moved to Nondweni and thence to Dundee.

### **CAPE COLONY—LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR J. FRENCH**

Early in August the troops of General French were found on the line Beaufort West, Pearston, Drennan Station-Cameron Glen-Cathcart. They now began pushing steadily northwards, sweeping the enemy before them. Krutzinger, thus pressed, was forced to retire in the direction of Middelburg and Steynsburg. His gang—dispersed by various frays with the British columns, and divided in desultory knots which succeeded in passing through the line of British blockhouses—reassembled north of the Zuursberg at Langedrift (fifteen miles north-west of Steynsburg). Here their number was swelled by bands under Erasmus, Wessels, and Pypers. There was now a somewhat formidable army of guerillas, and these on the 13th were encountered by Colonel Gorringe at Rooifontein. The gang were attacked, driven back past Venterstad into the Orange River, and in their retreat were so effectively hustled by Captains Nickalls and Sandeman, that they lost many of their number, among them Commandant Cachet, while the redoubtable Erasmus, together with Krutzinger's secretary, were captured. Colonel Hunter Weston about this time had also been engaged with Theron and had driven him and his to the right-about with characteristic despatch. While these frays were going forward, Lategan's raiders, who had been pressed into the Orange River Colony, were there being forcibly tackled by Colonel Byng and General Plumer. So far so good. But there were other gangs that buzzed mosquito-like in a circle; and these, under Lotter and Botha, after being flicked northward from the Rhenosterberg (south-west of Middelburg), veered round and contrived to break through the pursuing columns and re-establish themselves in the hilly region of Spitzkop (thirty miles south of Middelburg). Smit's gang, after being routed from the Rhenosterberg, scurried across the rail towards the north-west of Deelfontein, afterwards infesting the country between Carnarvon and Fraserburg; Lotter and Botha shifted to the Cradock district, while another troop of marauders under Theron created havoc and consternation between Aberdeen and Willowmore. Still, though the mosquitos continued to draw good British blood occasionally, they paid a fair price for it, and in the series of attacks which whisked them north 19 of the number were killed, 43 wounded, and 17 captured.

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**LIEUT.-COL. GORRINGE**

It must here be noted that on the 17th of August, at Graaff Reinet, three of the rebel leaders, Van Rensburg, Fourie, and Pfeifer, who were captured at Camdeboo in July, were executed. Ten others were sentenced to penal servitude for life in the Bermudas. It was impossible to feel commiseration for these men, in view of the numbers of British homes they had robbed by the insane folly of resistance after the annexation of the Boer territories, and it was felt that unless some severe measures were adopted the system of lawlessness would continue for ever in the Colony.

It was now necessary to make new dispositions in order to guard against the return of the raiders who had been driven north, and to pursue those who had succeeded in scuttling to the south. Accordingly Colonel Wyndham followed the tracks of Smit to the west, and Colonels Crabbe and Hunter-Weston and Captain Lund converted themselves into a three-headed Cerberus to guard the Zand Drift (west of Colesberg) against the reappearance of Lategan. Colonel Gorringe's column, with the 17th Lancers, kept a vigilant watch on the Orange between Norval's Pont and Bethulie, while Colonels Doran, Scobel, and Kavanagh, working to the south, followed the spoor of Lotter, Botha, and Theron. So stood affairs towards the end of August. Then a rumour came to the effect that Smit and Scheepers were brewing mischief, the first at Fraserburg, the latter near Laingsburg. Therefore, most promptly, the column of Colonel Crabbe was shifted to Matjesfontein.

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Two days later, on the 5th of September, Colonel Scobell, who was chasing Lotter, scored the biggest success of the guerilla campaign. At Petersburg, some forty miles west of Cradock, he succeeded in surrounding his man and in capturing not only him and his whole commando, but an additional gang under Breedt! The whole affair was most brilliantly conceived, and reflected credit on so many for their pluck and gallantry, that some of the names of the heroes who contributed to the success of the affair are scarcely known. Firstly, much of the kudos is due to a party of Midland Mounted Rifles, who, on the 2nd of September, held with such tenacity a pass that Lotter hoped to push through, that the career of the Boer leader was arrested and it became possible for Colonel Scobell to effect his checkmate!

Among the splendid supporters of the Colonel who were notable for exceptional gallantry were Captain Lord Douglas Compton, 2nd Lieutenants Wynn and Neilson, Captain Purcell (9th Lancers), and Lieutenant Bowers, Cape Mounted Rifles; while all the men of the 9th Lancers so distinguished themselves that it is impossible to cite the names and the deeds done by those glorious fellows without devoting pages to the task. Unfortunately Lieutenant Theobald, who had been killed earlier in the month, lost the finale, to which he, with his comrades, had so perseveringly and so gallantly contributed.

The list of prisoners included Commandant Lotter and Field-Cornets J. Kruger, W. Kruger, and Schoeman, and among the dead were two notorious rebels named Voster. The booty consisted of 200 horses, 29,000 rounds of ammunition, and all the vehicles and supplies of the commandos. Our casualties included Lieutenant Burgess, Cape Mounted Rifles.

In other parts of the Colony the columns were almost equally active, if not equally successful. The remnant of Fouché's party, after his departure across the Orange, gathered themselves under the banner of Myburg and took up positions in the triangle Ladygrey, Dordrecht, and Burghersdorp. Colonel Munro spent his time in hustling them, and on the 29th of August had a spirited engagement some twenty miles north-east of Dordrecht, which resulted in the defeat of the hordes, who were driven over the Drakensberg into Transkei territory. His columns, together with the local troops, then took up positions in the defiles and passes, so as to block them effectually and prevent a chance of the return of the marauders.

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General Beatson, who was now assisting in General French's operations, was actively chasing Scheepers in the south—first below Willowmore, then to Aventour, then to the west in the direction of Klip Drift; thence to Oudtshoorn and Ladysmith. Here the young Boer leader was set on by the local troops, whereupon he shifted his course to Barrydale. This rush took him till the 31st of August, during which time the hunt was vigorously carried on by Colonel Alexander and the 10th Hussars. Scheepers made an attempt on Montague, and was baulked by a detachment of the Berkshire Regiment. He then made various plucky but futile efforts to get across the rail, his object being to effect a junction with Smit, who was on the other side of Matjesfontein. He came in collision several times with the troops of Colonel Alexander, who, in the course of their gallant efforts to frustrate the Boer designs, had 2 officers and 10 men wounded, and lost 4 men. In the south-west, Maritz was meanwhile being hunted by Colonel Capper, who kept the raiders perpetually on the move, and forced them to break into an aimless, rudderless gang, glad of hiding-places in the Roggeveld Mountains.

While all this ferreting and hunting was going forward in the south, some brilliant deeds were taking place in the Kimberley district. De Villiers and Conroy, with a strong force, made a lunge upon Griquatown, the garrison of the place being only 100 in number. The force, though small, was determined, and the aggressors were sent to the right-about. This was on the 12th of August. On the 24th the hostile hordes made a vigorous dash on a convoy, for which they doubtless hungered with a hunger that lent heroism to their attack. Certain it is that they came to very close quarters, and that fighting between them and the escort (74th (Irish) Squadron, Imperial Yeomanry), under Captain Humby, was carried on more stubbornly and fiercely than usual. The Boers—400 of them—surrounded the convoy, and it seemed at one moment as though they must inevitably annihilate the little British force; but the men stood their ground like rocks, or, rather, like fervid volcanoes spouting fire, and fighting with such daring and determination that eventually, at nightfall, the enemy were forced to withdraw. The gallantry of the officers and men of the Yeomanry was superb—Lieutenant Despard and Lieutenant Kidd (Diamond Fields Artillery) performed splendid work, and the magnificent manner in which Captain Humby extricated his convoy from the hellish vortex and succeeded in getting to his destination without the loss of a waggon is a tale that needs pages to tell. Nine men of the escort, however, paid with their lives for their grand tenacity, and 2 officers and 21 men were wounded.

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The captures from and losses of the enemy during August were 186 killed, 75 wounded, 1384 prisoners, 529 voluntary surrenders, 930 rifles, 90,958 rounds of ammunition, 1332 waggons, 13,570 horses, and 65,879 cattle—a sum-total which makes a really wonderful and practical testimonial to the ceaseless energy and zeal of the British troops.

Before closing the record of the events of August 1901, reference must be made to the visit paid by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York to the Cape. Their Royal Highnesses, who had been on a tour round the world, landed at Simonstown on the 19th of August, and thence proceeded to Capetown. The demonstration made by the Cape loyalists was enthusiastic beyond words, the weather was superb, and the scene—the brilliant decorations, the British cheers, the massed bands, the Kaffir war-dances and whoops—was one never to be forgotten by those who took part in it. The Prince, in his reply to the loyal addresses, made this memorable allusion to the heartiness of the Colony's reception:—

"We are glad to have this opportunity to give public and grateful expression to our feelings of profound satisfaction at the very enthusiastic and hearty welcome accorded us on our arrival here to-day. The fact that during the last two years you have been passing through such troublous times, and that in addition to your other trials the Colony has suffered from an outbreak of plague, from which it is not yet entirely free, might well have detracted from the warmth of your greeting, but, in despite of all your trials and sufferings, you have offered us a welcome the warmth and cordiality of which we shall never forget. I should also like to express our admiration of the appearance the city of Capetown presents to-day. Apart from their tasteful decoration, the principal streets through which we have passed offer an aspect very different from that which they possessed twenty years ago when I visited your Colony. I congratulate you on the abundant evidence of the progress achieved during that time, and notably on your trade and commerce and the development of your harbours and railways. I greatly deplore the continuance of the lamentable struggle which has so long prevailed within South Africa, and for the speedy termination of which the whole community fervently prays. During this time you have had to make grievous sacrifices. Numbers have personally suffered trials and privations, while many of the flower of your manhood have fallen in the service of their King and country. To all who have been bereaved of their dear ones by the war we offer our heartfelt sympathy and condolence. May time, the great healer, bring consolation. That South Africa may soon be delivered from the troubles which beset her is our earnest prayer, and that ere long the only struggle she knows will be eager rivalry in the arts of peace and in striving to promote good government and the well-being of the community."

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## CHAPTER XIII

### NATAL AND THE EASTERN TRANSVAAL—SEPTEMBER 1901

At this time the war entered on a new phase. The Boer generals felt the necessity of tiding over the 15th of the month, the date fixed by the Proclamation of the 7th August as the limit of time within which, by voluntarily surrendering, the leaders might avoid certain penalties threatened

by that proclamation. And by dint of unusual activity they succeeded. There were few surrenders, it is true, but the tactics adopted by the enemy cost them, in the end, more heavily than their previous evasive methods. They broke out in the Ermelo and Vryheid districts about the middle of the month. Their harassing rushes and their escape into the Ermelo district had been difficult to arrest owing to the unfinished state of the blockhouse line then being built from Wakkerstroom to Piet Retief by the 2nd Battalion Scots Guards and 2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment under General Bullock. At Belfast, on the 16th, the garrison was attacked by Grobelaar and 100 men evidently in need of supplies. They were handsomely repulsed, and only one of the garrison was wounded; but bullets that fell in the refuge camp caused the death of a woman.

General Lyttelton had now assumed command in Natal in place of General Hildyard, who, after a long spell of brilliant service, had gone home on leave. The new chief at once turned his attention to the rumour of assembling commandos, and to frustrate concentration Major Gough's Mounted Infantry with Colonel Stewart and the Johannesburg Mounted Rifles moved from Dundee to De Jager's Drift. Meanwhile Pulteney's troops were at Volksrust, and those of Garratt moving, *viâ* Wakkerstroom, on Utrecht.

The enemy were reported to be near Scheepers Nek. Colonel Stewart and Major Gough, on the 17th, decided to push on towards Blood River to get in touch with them, the last marching about an hour in advance of the first. Major Gough, as he neared the river, sent a message requesting Colonel Stewart to remain at Rooi Kop, in readiness to support him should he hear the sound of guns in action. Half-an-hour later, seeing Gough's men galloping towards Blood River Poort, the Colonel pressed forward his mounted men in support. It was then he heard that the Major had met with a reverse—a serious reverse. Quickly appreciating the ticklish position in which he himself was placed—it being imperative to protect not only his own guns but Major Gough's baggage at Rooi Kop—he decided to retire to De Jager's Drift and thus cover Dundee, which, as it turned out, was menaced by a gang of great strength. The tale of the misfortune to so magnificent an officer as Major Gough is hard to write, for a series of services more gallant and brilliant than his it is scarcely possible to find. The circumstances were these. With characteristic dash he no sooner "spotted" the enemy than he pressed forward to seize a ridge which appeared to command their position. He had galloped into a well-arranged ambush. Instead of 300 as he supposed, there were 1000 Boers in front of him, and these speedily overwhelmed his right flank and assailed his guns from the rear. There was fighting of the hottest description at very close quarters, in which Lieutenant Lambton, 1st Durham Light Infantry, and Lieutenant Blewett, 1st Rifle Brigade, with great bravery sacrificed their lives; but the gallant little force (consisting of two guns 69th Battery R.F.A. and three companies of mounted infantry), terribly outnumbered, was eventually captured. The breech-blocks and the sights of the guns were destroyed before they fell into the enemy's hands. The circumstances of the capture of Second Lieutenant Stormonth-Darling (2nd Scottish Rifles) serve to show the manner of the British repulse. He commanded the escort to the guns, and in spite of the Boers being upon him continued to fire and encourage his men till he was overpowered and the rifle snatched from his hands. Major Gough and Captain Cracroft, Royal Irish Rifles, escaped during the night and joined Colonel Stewart at De Jager's Drift.

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Captain Mildmay, 3rd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps, and 14 men were killed in action. Captain Dick, 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers, was severely wounded.

Lieutenant Furnell, 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers, Lieutenant Lambton, Durham Light Infantry, Lieutenant Price-Davis, King's Royal Rifle Corps, and about 25 men were wounded, and 5 officers and 150 men made prisoners.

Troops were at once concentrated on the threatened point, and the Boers—said to be commanded by the Bothas, Opperman, Britz, and Henderson—finding the line of the Buffalo bristling with British, were forced to seek access to Natal by a wider *détour* to the south. This led them to the fortified posts of Itala and Fort Prospect, north-west of Melmoth, on the Zululand frontier. At Itala the garrison consisted of two guns of the 69th Battery R.F.A. and 300 men of the 5th Division Mounted Infantry under Colonel A. J. Chapman, Royal Dublin Fusiliers. At midnight of the 26th, Botha, Scholtz, Opperman, Potgieter, and their following of some 1500 men, in groups, began an attack on this post from west, south-east, and north.

The advance post of 80 men was first rushed, and many of the party were killed or forced to surrender, while others succeeded in escaping down the hill to assist in the fighting that was to come. For nineteen hours without intermission the enemy continued to assail the camp, though doggedly kept at bay by the defenders. The whole area was swept by blasts of bullets, and the British force at last, foodless and waterless, were confronted with the fear that even the ammunition might not hold out. The guns, under Lieutenant Herbert, R.F.A., which had been valuable during the night while the moon gave light and the shadows shelter, became in the daytime targets for the foe, and consequently when Lieutenant Herbert and four gunners were wounded the rest were ordered to take cover. But fortunately young Trousdale, after both his men were killed, pluckily stuck to his Maxim and worked like a Trojan. At last under cover of dusk the enemy, repulsed on all sides, withdrew in a north-easterly direction, taking with them, assisted by natives, their wounded and dead in great numbers. Many deeds of gallantry were performed, and Lieutenant Lefroy, 1st Battalion Dublin Fusiliers, who with Lieutenant Kane at first rumour of assault was sent to occupy the highest point of the Itala a mile from the camp, distinguished himself by shooting with his revolver Commandant H.J. Potgieter. Commandant Scholtz and about 270 Boers were also killed during the vigorous repulse. The British lost a smart officer, Lieutenant Kane (South Lancashire Regiment), and 21 men killed: 5 officers and 54

men wounded. Colonel Chapman, owing to the complete exhaustion of his force and lack of ammunition, then decided to evacuate Itala, leaving Lieutenant Hislop and twenty unarmed men and Chief Veterinary Surgeon Probyn to look after the wounded. Lieutenant Fielding (R.A.M.C.), who early in the day had valiantly gone up hill to attend the wounded in the advance post, had been captured, but was subsequently released and came into camp after the column had marched off to M'Kandhla. This place was reached without molestation.



**"NO SURRENDER!" THE DEFENCE OF FORT  
ITALA ON SEPTEMBER 26, 1901**

Drawing by R. Caton Woodville

At Fort Prospect the British post was equally tenaciously held by thirty-five men of the 5th Division Mounted Infantry and fifty-one men of the Durham Artillery Militia under the command of Captain C. A. Rowley, 2nd Battalion Dorsetshire Regiment, who contrived with the small force at his disposal to send the 500 attacking Boers to the right-about with considerable aplomb.

He, fortunately, was warned as to the coming commandos, and made haste to prepare for them a warm welcome; providing also extra food, water, and ammunition for his men in the trenches. At 4.30 A.M. the Boers made a violent lunge on the west and north of the position, directing the main fury of their attack at the two laagers held by the Durham Company of Artillery. They penetrated the wire around the laagers and got to within twenty yards of the defenders, but Lieutenant R. G. M. Johnson and his splendid companions were too much for them, and finally the Boers were driven off. They then fought wildly in the rear of the camp, but again met with the same dogged resistance. The defence lasted about thirteen hours and reflected credit on all concerned, especially on Captain Rowley, whose foresight had averted great loss of life. In addition to the splendid work done by the Militia Artillery and the Dorsetshire Regiment, the Zululand Native Police distinguished themselves. Gallantly led by Sergeant Gambi, thirteen of them came four miles from their own post to reinforce the garrison. The British loss was only 1 killed and 8 wounded, a small total considering the thirteen hours' risk run by the little party.

The necessity of combing this difficult and at times almost impenetrable country of Boers caused General Lyttelton to direct a movement which occupied the tempestuous close of September and the early days of October, in which Generals Bruce-Hamilton, Clements, and Walter Kitchener vigorously engaged. Despite the unfavourable elements they succeeded, if not in striking them when concentrated, at least in forcing the Boers gradually to retreat north to Boschoek, Kromellenbog, and Leeuwnek. Here they were held for a time by General Kitchener, but on the night of the 5th of October, at the cost of their baggage and waggons, they succeeded in rushing round the left flank and retreating in the direction of Piet Retief. General Kitchener followed and had a smart engagement with the rearguard, which—in a strong position—covered the flight of the main body.

On the 11th the enemy was moving through Swaziland by Mahamba, and this news caused Colonel Colville adroitly to arrange a plan which resulted in the intercepting of a convoy belonging to the Ermelo and Amsterdam commandos. The Colonel's column at the time was covering the construction, by General Bullock's troops, of the blockhouse line from Wakkerstroom. He pushed on hurriedly from Piet Retief and pounced on the Boers' much needed convoy, harassing Botha and his burghers, who scurried to escape before the British advance. By now the blockhouse line was sufficiently advanced to be a serious impediment to the enemy's movements: it not only forced him to abandon his waggons but also the two guns of 69th Battery which were lost during Gough's reverse at Blood River Poort.

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Brigadier-General Reeves (temporarily commanding in the absence of General Blood, who had left for India), with Colonels Park and Benson, continued to operate north and south of the Delagoa Railway. Colonel Benson, on the 10th, made a splendid march on an extremely dark night and surprised a party of Boers at Pullen's Hope (south of Middelburg), where he took 33 prisoners, 73 horses, together with cattle-carts and ammunition. On the 15th he, with two squadrons of the 2nd Scottish Horse and 19th Battalion Mounted Infantry, repeated his adventurous tactics, again surrounded and surprised the enemy at Tweefontein, and, though some made good their escape, added 10 Boers to his roll of prisoners and 250 oxen to his herd of cattle. Still indefatigable, he and his doughty band on the 17th, after a forty miles' march from

Carolina, fell on the foe. The early mist was lifting round two laagers full of slumbering Boers at Middeldrift and Busby, when with a rush and a yell the British troops covered the scene. The usual rout, the usual stampede, and finally 54 prisoners—among them P. Botha, late Landdrost of Pretoria, and Commandant Nieuwhondt were captured, together with vehicles, horses, and cattle. Colonel Benson then pushed on and on—a triumphal progress—for he gleaned Boers wherever he went; 12 on the 28th near Bethel, and 7 early in October at Driefontein, in addition to horses, mules, and cattle, thus compelling those who evaded him to scuttle north denuded and demoralised. In the course of their chasing, this intrepid British band covered over fifty miles in nineteen hours. The Boers seldom spent a night in one place, and saddled up regularly at 3 A.M. in readiness for flight, therefore the captures made were the result not only of alertness and dash, but of indomitable perseverance.

Colonel Park had been engaging in like adventures, and had taken many prisoners. With six companies of Mounted Infantry and two companies of the Manchester Regiment, he began October by a search between Kruger's Post and Ohrigstad. He secured some armed burghers, and destroyed such ammunition and forage as could not be removed. On his return journey he came in collision with Viljoen at Rustplaats, and after an engagement covering hours the Boers withdrew. On the 7th of October he attacked a party of Boers at a farm at Rosenkrans, captured their ammunition, mealies, and waggons, but not their persons.

The Constabulary posts running from Eerste Fabriken, *viâ* Springs and Heidelberg, to the Vaal River were pushed forward by Colonel Pilkington (S.A. Constabulary) to the line Wilge River Station, Greylingstad, and the junction of Kalk Spruit with the Vaal, thus enabling a more vast tract of country to be cleared. Sir Henry Rawlinson cleared the front of the Constabulary between Standerton and the Vaal River with increasing vigour, chasing Boers westward and southward before him. On the 3rd of October, at Greylingstad, he organised a night patrol to Barnard's Kop, which resulted in the capture of three armed burghers, and subsequently, on the 5th, he surprised Field-Cornet Botha at Kaffir Spruit, captured 7 of his men, 20 of his carts, and 250 cattle. Pretorius, whose laager was near by, though followed with zest, made good his escape. Colonels Hackett Thompson and Bewicke Copley also engaged in the work of protecting the Constabulary, but came in collision with few of the enemy, who were now moving south.

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## TRANSVAAL (WEST)

Lord Methuen may be said to have carried on existence to a rippling accompaniment of Boer bullets. All along the Marico valley to Zeerust his rearguard was followed and engagements were frequent. September was spent in passing convoys from Lichtenburg and Zeerust and preparing for an advance to cover the collection of ripening corn in the Marico district, the establishment of a line of blockhouses between Zeerust and the lead mines, and the clearance of the country of scattered bands. On the 4th of October an affair of patrols at Witgeboom Spruit resulted in five burghers being killed.

General Fetherstonhaugh and Colonel Kekewich continued to hunt dismounted stragglers of Kemp's force south-west of Olifant's Nek. Kemp had escaped the British cordon towards the north-east, and was said to be about to work his way south. Colonel Kekewich, after depositing his prisoners at Naauwpoort, left there on the 13th of September to clear the northern slopes of the Magaliesberg. He operated for some days in conjunction with Colonel Mackenzie (1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment), who was employed in the construction of blockhouses south of the Magaliesberg, and removed from the creeks and crannies of the hills various impediments, in the form of Field-Cornet Klopper and thirty-six of his countrymen. After this haul of prisoners, Colonel Kekewich returned to Magato Nek to co-operate with General Fetherstonhaugh against Kemp's party, who were reported to be hanging about the Toelani River. On the 24th, by the way, he surrounded the laager of one Van Rooijan at Crocodile Drift (Elands River), and secured the commandant and thirty-five of his gang. Kemp, as yet, was not to be found. But he was not long inactive. At dawn on 29th, he and Delarey (who had evidently followed Colonel Kekewich from the Valley of the Toelani) made a lunge at the British camp near Moedwill. From three sides they, some 1200 of them, turned a blizzard of lead on Colonel Kekewich's force.

The Derbyshire Regiment, with 1½ companies, held the drift to left of the camp. The mounted troops (Imperial Yeomanry and Scottish Horse) extended round the right and front of the camp, and joined up with the Infantry outpost on the drift. Firing was heard at 4.40 A.M. on the north-west, and subsequently it was found that a patrol going out from the southerly piquet, furnished by the Devonshire Imperial Yeomanry, had been attacked. Then closer and closer came the enemy upon the Yeomanry piquet. Every gallant fellow dropped. Soon the Boers were established to east of the river and commenced an attack on another Imperial Yeomanry piquet. The officer in command fell, and nearly all his men around him. The enemy, ensconced in the broken and bushy ground near the bed of the river, continued the aggressive, while all in camp rushed to reinforce the piquets except a small party of the Derbyshire Regiment, which remained to guard ammunition, &c., the Boers having annihilated two piquets. The Boers now pushed up the river, outflanking the Derbyshire piquet holding the main drift, and, in spite of really superb resistance, occupied the position. For this reason: but one man of the gallant number remained whole! The camp now was flooded with bullets, and all ranks under various officers made for the open, while the guns strove to keep the enemy, indistinguishable from British in the dusk of the morning, at a distance. Captain Watson, Adjutant Scottish Horse, who was mortally wounded, announced the arrival towards the east of the enemy, whereupon Major Watts with a strong body of the

Derbyshire Regiment moved out to confront them, while Major Browne (Border Regiment) with a number of men—servants, cooks, orderlies, and any one who came to hand—prepared with fixed bayonets to charge the enemy in the bushes. The Boers had given up the east, however, and continued to file from the north till the Imperial Yeomanry and Scottish Horse, under Captains Rattray, Dick Cunyngham, and Mackenzie, joined in the general advance and threatened to outflank them; then, seeing their danger, they fled to their horses and galloped madly to the north, under fire of the British guns. Colonel Duff, with two squadrons, had been prepared for pursuit, but owing to the heavy losses sustained, especially among the horses, the project was impossible.

This fierce, determined, carefully-planned attack lasted two hours, and the success of the repulse was mainly due to the amazing gallantry of all ranks, especially of the 1st Battalion Derbyshire Regiment. Some brilliant deeds were done, notably by 2nd Lieutenant Mills, whose splendid disregard of danger cost him his life; Lieutenant Persse (7th Imperial Yeomanry), who fought persistently at his post though wounded in three places; and by Captains Dick Cunyngham and Rattray, and Lieutenants Symonds, Rattray, Cameron, Loring, and Stuart-Wortley, of the Scottish Horse. A fine officer, Captain Laird, R.F.A., was among the killed, and Lieutenant Duval was wounded, and Captain Wheeler escaped merely by a miracle. The medical officers, Major Lavie (R.A.M.C.) and Mr. Kidd, Civil Surgeon, pursued their deeds of mercy, utterly regardless of their lives and of their own wounds. The Colonel, himself wounded, paid dearly for his triumph. Of his force 1 officer and 31 men were killed; 127 men were wounded and 26 officers, among whom were:—

*Scottish Horse.*—Major Blair, Captain Field, Lieutenant Loring, Lieutenant Stuart-Wortley, Surgeon-Captain Kidd, Lieutenant Jardine, Lieutenant Edwards, Lieutenant Prior, Lieutenant Cameron, Lieutenant Flower.

*Royal Artillery.*—Captain Baldwin.

*1st Derby Regiment.*—Captain Keller, Captain Anley.

*Imperial Yeomanry.*—Captain Seymour, Lieutenant Whyte.

Out of a party of twelve of the Derbyshire Regiment which was guarding a drift, 8 were killed and 4 wounded; and some idea of the severity of the fire and the doggedness of the fight may be gained by the fact that three piquets were practically annihilated, thus enabling their comrades to get under arms.

Among others of the Scottish Horse whose persistent and gallant services contributed to Lord Methuen's success, may be mentioned Captains Field and Ian Mackenzie, and young Lieutenant Jardine, who was wounded.

Command of the column was afterwards temporarily assumed by Colonel Wylly (Derbyshire Regiment), but Colonel Kekewich, recovered, soon returned to duty.

General Fetherstonhaugh had meanwhile driven before him many Boers. On the 21st he captured a position at Winkelhoek, and after searching further turned back to Waterval and thence to Kwaggafontein. On hearing of the Moedwill fight he sent Colonel Williams to Colonel Kekewich's support, and followed himself with all haste. But of course the Boers had flown, scattering among the farms in the Rustenburg Zeerust road. General Fetherstonhaugh finally moved south, and Colonel Wylly to Rustenburg.



**THE GALLANT BUGLER OF FORT  
ITALA**

Drawing by R. Caton Woodville

By October the line of blockhouses from Kopjes Station to Potchefstroom was built by the 2nd Battalion Scots Guards and 1st Oxfordshire Light Infantry, and that between Heilbron and Frankfontein occupied by the Railway Pioneer Regiment under Colonel Capper. Meanwhile Colonels Byng and Dawkins (from the south of Orange Colony) chased and ran down Boers as they sought to escape the blockhouse cordon, and thus thoroughly cleared the region. Colonel Byng made an effort to attack a concentration of 300 he had heard of at Bothaville, but on his approach they dispersed into the river valleys. Still, in the course of their operations and the return along the Valsch River to Kroonstad, &c., Colonels Byng and Dawkins secured eighty-one prisoners of war.

General Mildmay Willson organised a small smart force, under Colonel Hicks (2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers), consisting of 250 mounted infantry, 2 field guns, and 5 companies of Infantry, to establish and provision constabulary posts and hunt Boer snipers. In the course of their operations and afterwards between Potchefstroom and Venterskroon they, with the assistance of co-operating constabulary troops, secured 42 prisoners (including Field-Cornets George Hall and Vander Venter), and a 7-pounder gun which had been taken from the post at Houtkop.

### OPERATIONS IN THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY, N.

Colonel Rimington's column worked incessantly during September, and to good purpose. On the 14th, marching from Leeufontein (six miles south of Heilbron), they made a surprise visit to a laager, which resulted in the capture of six Boers, waggons, carts, horses, and mules. Later, on the 22nd, still hunting and hustling, he overtook Strydom's commando, made a tremendous haul of impedimenta, and secured thirteen prisoners. He then finished the month by marching to Oploop (between the Klip and Wilge Rivers) to watch for an opportunity to co-operate with Colonel Rawlinson, who, as we know, was aiding the constabulary north of the Vaal, and who, by now, had driven Buy's commando to the south of the river. On this band Colonel Rimington promptly pounced, and October found him enriched by 24 prisoners, 2000 cattle, 30 horses, 14 loaded waggons, 22 Cape carts, and 20 mules. Later, on the 7th, he moved from Standerton (whence he had drawn supplies) to co-operate with General Broadwood and Colonel de Lisle from Harrismith.

To reinforce Colonel Rimington went Colonel Wilson (Kitchener's Fighting Scouts) from Kroonstad to Heilbron on the 1st of October, and scarcely were they under way before they were attacked by the enemy. But the scouts, true to the name they bear, gave such good account of themselves that the enemy scattered, but considerably thinned in their numbers. The troops afterwards covered the line of blockhouses from Heilbron to Frankfort.

### MAJOR-GENERAL ELLIOT.—ORANGE RIVER COLONY, E.

On the 10th of September General Elliot started to again sweep and glean in the Wittebergen district. Colonel Barker and Major Pine Coffin operated from Winburg to west of the line of advance. General Campbell remained on the Wittebergen slopes, and General Dartnell, with the Imperial Light Horse (from Bethlehem), assisted in blocking the Retief and Stabberts Nek passes. The movement itself commenced in four columns, Lowe and De Lisle in the centre, with Broadwood and Bethune to right and left respectively. In the course of the march Colonel de Lisle brilliantly descried and ran down a convoy then trekking towards Korannaberg, but not without infinite dash and corresponding fatigue: 15 prisoners, 47 waggons, 22 carts, 250 horses, and 2500 cattle were the prizes of the adventure. Colonel Bethune, too, had his innings, for on the 12th he routed seventy of the bandits from their lair near Wonderkop, and the next night, after an exciting march to Rietolei, caught and again engaged the foe.

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COLONEL BETHUNE AND HIS BRIGADE STAFF

The combined movement continued to yield good results. The mountain kloops disgorged large quantities of supplies and vehicles, and from these regions General Campbell ferreted out seventeen Boers. The hunters held their lives in their hands, for the game of hide-and-seek had to be played with desperate men sniping from every coign of vantage. In consequence of the development of events connected with General Botha's enterprise in Natal, some of the troops of General Elliot pushed north from Harrismith. General Dartnell with the 2nd Imperial Light Horse had preceded them, and he, together with Colonel Bethune and 600 men, moved on to Eshowe in Zululand. From Harrismith towards the frontier, near Vrede, Colonel de Lisle and General Broadwood marched at the end of the month, and their presence soon warned the Boers, who had been contemplating encroachments into Natal, to take themselves off. On the 5th of October an effort was made to get in touch with them, but they were far too knowing to be entrapped.

While these operations had been going forward, General Rundle had been doing his share, passing supplies into Bethlehem and generally blocking the passes leading to Natal, and relieving garrisons on the line which had hitherto been furnished by the Natal command. The 1st Imperial Light Horse, under Colonel Briggs, acting independently from Bethlehem after the departure of General Dartnell for Zululand, came in for some thrilling experiences. This excellent force was well suited for exploits of a daring kind and long-distance raids such as had to be undertaken. On the 28th they made a circuitous night march of thirty-eight miles from Bethlehem, and dawn found them surrounding the town of Reitz. It was a brilliantly conceived and brilliantly carried out affair, and the prize of twenty-one prisoners (including Landdrost Piet de Villiers), nine Cape carts, two waggons, twenty-four horses, 250 cattle, and some ammunition, was well deserved. The Boers, on Colonel Briggs' way back, made many night attempts at reprisals, but the Imperial Light Horse was not to be caught napping.

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The troops in the Wepener, Dewetsdorp, Bethulie, and Zastron districts were now sprayed out to catch the dispersed stragglers of Kruitziuger's commando: Colonel Thorneycroft at Quaggafontein, guarding the river south of Zastron; Lord Basing patrolling from Jurysbaken to Commissie Bridge on the Caledon; Sir Henry Rawlinson moving south from Elandsberg to Aliwal; and General Plumer at Smithfield. Major Damant had returned to Springfontein. General Plumer, from Smithfield, detached Sir John Jervis upon Wepener in pursuit of guerillas, himself hunting with Colonel Colvin's column along the Basuto border. On the 15th the force reassembled at Wepener, where they learned that Kruitziuger had doubled back towards Elandsberg. While Colonel Colvin scurried thither to co-operate with Colonel Thorneycroft, the General and Sir J. Jervis moved towards Smithfield. Sir John's men, under Captain Knight of the Buffs, had an exciting affray on the 19th, and succeeded in landing big fish, Adjutants Brand and Joubert, and eight prisoners in all. Colonel Smithson and the 13th Hussars engaged Boers at Lemonfontein on the 11th. They covered eighty miles in two days, surprised the enemy, and made a splendid haul of prisoners and effects. Colonel Colvin had also his success, for on the 22nd a party of New Zealanders, under Major Tucker, engaged the enemy on the Elandsberg and secured Field-Cornets Hugo and Bothma, and several other prisoners.

Unfortunately the effect of the squeezing operations which were taking place caused the enemy to be driven to the Thabanchu line, and here, as though history was bound to repeat itself, the unfortunate U battery met with a mishap. On the 19th a small force of 160 mounted men under Captain Tufnell, and two guns of U Battery, R.H.A., under Lieut. Otter-Barry, which had been detached by the officer commanding at the Bloemfontein Waterworks, were surrounded and captured at Vlakfontein (eighteen miles south-west of Sanna's Post) by a superior force under Commandants Coetzee and Ackermann. Lieutenant Barry, R.H.A., lost his life in the gallant defence of his guns. All efforts were now made to hem the enemy against the Thabanchu line, and General Plumer and Colonel Rochfort (commanding General Bruce-Hamilton's force during his absence in Natal) worked hard to this end. It was a question of fight, fight, fight, and hustle, hustle, hustle on all sides. At the end of the month (the 29th) Colonel Lowry Cole had the satisfaction of hauling in Commandant Drezer and Field-Cornet Van Vunren, with their followers, whose laager he had surprised.

At the same time some sharp fighting took place between two hundred New Zealanders<sup>[6]</sup> under Major A. W. Andrews, a smart officer of the Indian Staff Corps, who were holding Mokari Drift on the Caledon, and some 300 or 400 Boers who were in the act of crossing. The Boers, after a severe mauling, fled westward, leaving six dead and seven wounded on the field. Colonel Thorneycroft also had had stiff work with a marauding gang near Corunna on the 20th.

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After this date the columns on the east of the main line of rail had each assigned to them an area with a centre from which to work. They acted independently, yet as required could combine against any formidable gathering of the enemy. In the south-western portion of the Orange Colony the situation was improving so remarkably that first the columns of Colonels Byng and Dawkins were able to withdraw towards the Vredefort district; then those of Major Damant were removed to Heilbron; while the rest, under Colonel Rochfort, were transferred to the more disturbed area of the east of the railway. Colonel Henry maintained his operations in the district, but the verb "to blockhouse" having been so liberally conjugated throughout the region, his duties were comparatively light.

## EVENTS IN CAPE COLONY

The early part of September was spent in chasing Commandant Smuts, who had burst from the

Orange Colony into the Jamestown-Dordrecht district. Here he was tackled on the 12th by Colonel Monro, but succeeded in evading our columns. The raiders then rushed in the night across the line towards Tarkastad. To the south in all haste followed Colonels Gorringe and Doran and the 17th Lancers, while the west was guarded (at Cradock) by Colonel Scobell. Smuts, when some eighteen miles north-west of Tarkastad, in desperation decided to attack a squadron of the 17th Lancers under Major Sandeman. These seeing a force dressed in kharki approaching, accepted them as comrades till too late. The enemy was almost upon them before they discovered their mistake. But the "Death or Glory Boys," even in these circumstances, fought valiantly, and though three officers and twenty men fell, and Major Sandeman and thirty men of the squadron were wounded, all brilliantly maintained the traditions of their regiment. The approach of Major Nickalls and another squadron of the Lancers forced the Boers to cease fighting and continue their bolt to the south.

An interesting report of the smart engagement was published by the *Midland News*. The correspondent wrote:—

"Smuts' commando rushed a squadron of the 17th Lancers, under Captain Sandeman, on Tuesday morning, the 17th inst. The squadron was posted at Modderfontein, guarding the southern exit from Elands River Poort, and another pass towards the north-east, known as Evans Hoek, to prevent the Boers from coming south-west into the Cradock district. The surprise was due chiefly to the Boers being dressed in kharki, and being thus mistaken for Colonel Gorringe's men, who were expected to arrive from Soude Nek in the course of the day. A mist which hung over the low ground till late that morning also favoured the approach of the enemy, as in the case of Colonel Scobell's capture of Lotter's commando.

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"On receipt of a report that a small picket in advance of the camp had been rushed, a troop quickly mounted and rode towards the poort. The officer in command saw some kharki-clad men about two miles from camp, and thinking they were some of Colonel Gorringe's column, rode forward to meet them. When about two hundred yards distant, seeing them levelling their rifles, he shouted out, 'Don't fire! we are the 17th Lancers.' The only answer was rapid rifle fire, which emptied several saddles.

"During this time another body of the enemy had worked up the donga running past the camp, and approached it from the rear. These men were dressed in kharki, and were taken for friends. Major Nickalls was encamped at Hoogstude, about three miles distant, and, having been informed of the attack on Captain Sandeman's camp, he was coming up to its support. Consequently the order was given not to fire on this party.

"The camp was placed on the southern slope of a gentle rise, which is encircled on the west by a spruit running generally north-west, and joining the main river about two miles distant. About three hundred yards from the spruit the ground on which the camp stood rises into a rocky kopje about a hundred yards long at the crest. This was defended with great determination, and most of the casualties occurred here.

"The Boers, too, suffered very severely in the attack on this position, and it was not until the enemy attacked the hill from the rear that any impression seemed to have been made on the defenders. A perfect hail of bullets appears then to have been poured in from the rear, which killed or wounded all of its defenders. Finally Captain Sandeman tried to reach the kraals in the vicinity of the camp, but most of the men with him were shot down, and he himself was wounded.

"The Boers then rushed the camp, but not a single man surrendered, the enemy levelling their rifles and firing on any man they saw.

"On Major Nickalls's squadron coming up the enemy retired quickly in the direction in which they had come.

"The Boers, on entering the camp, went straight for the supplies, but were able to take away only a few biscuits and hardly any ammunition, the Lancers having emptied their bandoliers, as the hundreds of empty cartridges found on the kopje eloquently testified.

"The enemy's casualties were extremely heavy. The dead and wounded were carried off by the commando when it retired."

From Bank View to Mount Prospect, then across the Mancazana, along the Fish River and over the Port Elizabeth line near Sheldon Station the raiders went, followed with unrelaxing energy by Colonels Gorringe, Doran, and Scobell. Colonel Gorringe succeeded in catching them in the Zuurberg Mountains and caused them to split their force in two, one half fleeing south, the other west. Early in October they reunited south of Darlington and were again attacked and trounced by the indefatigable Colonel, who drove them north with the loss of three of their number killed and five wounded.

Meanwhile Myburg and Fouché had been flitting around the northern borders, while Colonels Monro, Pilcher, Western, General Hart, with Colonel Murray's troops and the Connaught Rangers, guarded the river line from Bethulie to Herschel. The residency at this place was attacked on the 4th, but Major Hook and the local police sent the foe to the right-about with considerable celerity and the loss to them of twenty-nine horses and three men. Everywhere small gangs of Boers made themselves obstreperous, and some made an attempt on Ladygrey, which was promptly repulsed. On the 20th of September, however, Kruitinger, north of Herschel, endeavoured to force a passage over the Orange, and came into collision with some

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eighty of Lovat's Scouts under Lieutenant-Colonel Hon. A. D. Murray. The gallant Scotsmen, small in number but large in courage, held on grimly to their post, and the attempt to cross was fiercely resisted, but unhappily with the loss of the brilliant commander, who had led them throughout the campaign with gallantry and distinction. He fell shot through the heart while shouting, "Fix bayonets!"<sup>[7]</sup> His adjutant, Captain Murray, also fell, and sixteen of his brave men, while one officer and thirty-five men were wounded. A gun was carried off under cover of darkness, but it was promptly followed up and recovered in a smart engagement in which the Boers lost two killed and twenty prisoners. The end of the month, the enemy having withdrawn into the Transkei, was spent by Colonels Monro and Pilcher in watching the passes of the Drakensberg; but later they, with Colonel Western—leaving Colonel Monro and local troops in charge of the area—were recalled to the south-east of the Orange Colony. Commandant Scheepers at this time was making himself obnoxious in the region of the line near Matjesfontein, and to circumvent him General Beatson despatched Colonel Crabbe's column from Waggon Drift on a night march, which helped materially to break down Scheepers strength. The force completely surprised the enemy under Van der Merwe (in a place where they had outspanned some twelve miles east of Laingsburg), killed the commandant—a sporting youth of eighteen, who was considered by his friends as a De Wet in embryo—and one of his followers, wounded many of the burghers, and took thirty-seven prisoners, including Field-Cornet Du Plessis. This was on the 10th. From that time to the 20th Scheepers was kept on the move, and finally after much veering and dodging reached Klip Drift on the 20th. He continued to evade the pursuing columns of Colonels Crabbe, Atherton, and Major Kavanagh till the 5th of October, when this last officer almost captured him. He was attacked at Adams Kraal, twenty miles south-south-west of Ladysmith, and only succeeded in saving himself "by the skin of his teeth."

Commandant Theron, hoping to join Scheepers, was fleeing before Colonel Capper in the Ceres district. This officer was assisted by Colonels Alexander and Wyndham, who, when they had driven the enemy well away to the north-west, continued in the chase after Scheepers.

Colonel Sprot and Major Lund were persistently engaged in tussles with Lategan's gang, which had reappeared south of the Orange, and in a brilliant encounter on the 23rd of September Major Lund succeeded in securing an influential rebel, Louw by name, together with seven of his followers. Colonel Hunter-Weston, in a smart engagement with Lategan, secured Coetzer and other rebels and drove the rest northwards.

Sad was the fate of a gallant fellow, Lieutenant M. Gurdon Rebow, who, with nine men of the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, while searching a farm, was attacked by the enemy at Cyferkuil, near Riet Siding, on the 17th. Some thirty or forty Dutchmen burst suddenly upon the small party, whose gallant stand against this overwhelming majority was one of the most striking episodes of desperate valour on record. A summons to surrender was refused, and it was not till Gurdon Rebow himself had been shot down and one of his men had been killed and two dangerously wounded that the remaining few Grenadiers, after a fight of three hours, were captured. The sergeant of the patrol lost his life in a gallant effort to swim the Carolus River in search of help.

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As a proof of the herculean labours of the columns during this month, in spite of the prevalence of rinderpest among the cattle and the consequent reduction in the efficiency of the ox transport, the sum total of achievement may be quoted: 170 Boers killed, 114 wounded and prisoners, 1385 unwounded prisoners, 393 surrendered burghers, 11,000 horses (practically useless), 41,500 cattle, 798 rifles, 119,000 rounds small arm ammunition, and 770 waggons.

At Pretoria the month closed with the execution of Broeksma, formerly the Public Prosecutor of the Transvaal, whose trial, begun on the 12th of September, lasted three days. He was charged on the four counts of breaking the oath of neutrality, treachery, high treason, and inciting to break the oath of neutrality, and the evidence showed that the police found in his house treasonable pamphlets and documents, including copies of letters addressed to Mr. Steyn, Mr. Reitz, "Dr. Williamson," and Mr. Kruger. Other letters were produced in court which purported to have come from Dr. Krause. On the concluding day of the trial the Crown Prosecutor stated that "Dr. Williamson" was in reality Dr. Leyds. Sundry other burghers and Netherlanders were tried for treachery and on other charges, while some were found guilty of high treason and murder and sentenced to death. This sentence in most cases was commuted to penal servitude for life, or reduced to terms of imprisonment.

## FOOTNOTES:

- [6] This corps (the 6th New Zealand Mounted Rifles) greatly distinguished itself in many ways. On one occasion (the 16th September) Lieutenant Tudor, with only twelve men, crossed the Caledon and kept in touch with 200 Boers for three days, afterwards holding a position for three hours against fifty Boers with exceptional gallantry. A young hero, Lieutenant Caskey (5th Queensland Imperial Bushmen), lost his life during the dashing exploit. Captains Findlay (The Buffs) and Knight with the New Zealand Mounted Rifles, also performed notable service in command of detached troops during this period.
- [7] Colonel the Hon. Andrew David Murray was the brother of the present Earl of Mansfield, and was born in 1863. He entered the army in 1884 as second lieutenant in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, became lieutenant in 1893, and brevet-major in 1898. He served in the Nile Expedition, 1884-85, with the Soudan Field Force, 1885-86, with the

## CHAPTER XIV

### PROGRESS IN OCTOBER 1901

It may be remembered that on the 15th of October Colonel Colville pounced on a convoy that was moving after the Boers in their flight towards Swaziland. On that border he remained while General Plumer's force (released, as we know, from the south-east of the Orange Colony owing to the state of quietude there) acted on the, by now, almost impassable blockhouse line between Wakkerstroom and Colonel Colville's column. Meanwhile General Walter Kitchener's troops, with those of Colonels Campbell, Garratt, and Stewart, moved like a big broom sweeping up the stragglers south of the line, till news came in that Botha, instead of taking the Swazi direction, had veered north and was with a small column hanging around Amsterdam. To catch the Boer general Colonels Rawlinson and Rimington pushed on from Standerton on the 19th of October. They reached Amersfoort on the 21st, and on the 25th, after a perilous night march over ground seamed with small posts of protecting Boers, he succeeded in surrounding the farm near Schimmelhoek, where the Boer chief was reported to be. Colonel Rimington's men were ordered to make for the farm, avoiding the main laager and posts, while those of Colonel Rawlinson moved between Ermelo and the farm—but though the movement was admirably carried out and Colonel Rimington's troops rushed the farm, the enemy had been forewarned and was on the alert. Botha had but a moment to bolt in, but that moment he used. Though he and all but four of his men got away in safety, his personal property and some papers, very enlightening to the British, fell into their hands. The main laager having retreated north towards Lake Chrissie, pursuit was abandoned, and Colonels Rawlinson and Rimington returned at the end of the month to Volksrust and Zandspruit respectively.

General G. Hamilton and Colonel Pulteney were meanwhile moving, in continuous torrents of rain, around Utrecht and Vryheid in order to block all Boer attempts to break through northern Natal into the Orange Colony; and further south General Bruce-Hamilton, with the troops of General Spens and Colonel Allenby, hunted the Vryheid and Ngomi region with incessant activity, despite all the impediments of fog and bog and downpour. Scrimmage and skirmish varied the monotony of the hard work, and in the end 21 killed, 11 wounded, and 160 unwounded Boers, together with carts, ammunition, cattle, and foodstuffs, bore testimony to the pluck and endurance of the troops engaged.



**THE FIGHT AT BRAKENLAAGTE: BOERS CHARGING**

Drawing by John Charlton

### TRANSVAAL (EAST)

Colonel Benson was at this time continuing his system of midnight annoyance, which was telling on the nerves of the enemy and causing Botha to rack his brains to arrange a plan of getting quit of so ubiquitous and "slim" an antagonist. Moving from Middelburg on the 20th—with 3rd and 25th Mounted Infantry, three squadrons of Scottish Horse, 4 guns 84th Battery, two pom-poms, and the Buffs—Benson began moving to the south. He surrounded a laager south of Brugspruit on the 22nd, captured 37 prisoners, and marched next day to Bethel and on towards Rietkuil. During this march, on the 25th, the rearguard was heavily engaged by some 700 Boers under Grobelaar, Trichardt, and Erasmus, who hoped to stop the night manœuvres for a bit. But the Dutchmen were quickly repulsed (with the loss of Civil Surgeon Robertson and one man), and Colonel Benson moved on, impeded by many thunderstorms, towards Brugspruit *viâ* Bakenlaagte.

At this place there was considerable sniping, while the enemy on all sides, in the mists and fogs and rains, collected under Botha and Groblaar in order to effect a junction and at last bring things to a crisis. Colonel Benson, who hoped to halt at Bakenlaagte, found the place on the 30th already in possession of the enemy. Some fighting followed and the Boers took themselves off, and the columns moved gradually into camp covered by the rearguard, composed of 2 companies of Mounted Infantry, 2 squadrons 2nd Scottish Horse, 2 guns 84th Field Battery R.A., and one company of the 2nd Battalion the Buffs, the whole under the command of Major Anley, 3rd Mounted Infantry. The guns, a company of the Buffs, and 50 Mounted Infantry took up a position on an irregular ridge some 2500 yards from the camp, screened by posts of Mounted Infantry and the Scottish Horse on either flank and south of the ridge. The enemy meanwhile, in the wind and sleet and rain, taking advantage of the fact that the storm was bursting in the face of the British columns and of the vast expanse of rolling downs and the convenient hollows with which they were familiar, were creeping and congregating ant-like round flanks and rearguard. No sooner had the column and baggage got into camp and arrangements been made for defence than they began to advance in formidable array. Major Anley at noon, while about to carry out an order for the screen of Mounted Infantry and Scottish Horse to fall back on the remainder of the guard at Gun Hill, suddenly found himself in close contact with the foe. They were continuing to advance in great numbers, galloping and shouting and firing. He at once commenced to retire on Gun Hill, but, in the very act, the Boer force appeared over the rise, and absolutely regardless of the British guns came on and on and stormed through Scottish Horse and Mounted Infantry, many of whom were killed before they had time to fire. The Boers then dismounted and formed up on dead ground whence they could work their way to a position within close range of the guns on the crest, while themselves in comparative safety. The original escort, the company of Buffs posted to the front of the guns on the south side of the ridge, was captured and the Mounted Infantry Company of the Yorkshire Light Infantry and the squadron of Scottish Horse who promptly formed up on the flanks of the guns, despite their gallant efforts, found themselves unable to offer serious resistance to the terrific volleys of the foe.

With the exception of the western end of the ridge, which was held by a party of mounted infantry till dark, the whole gradually fell into the enemy's hands. When Colonel Benson became aware of the nature of the attack he ordered two more companies of the Buffs to reinforce the rearguard on the ridge, but these could not succeed in reaching a position whence their fire could be brought to bear. He himself was one of the first to fall, hit in three places.<sup>[8]</sup> Referring to the death of this hero and the doings of his warlike band at the critical moment when the Boers made their fierce onslaught on the defenders of the ridge, Mr. Bleloch of the *Morning Post* wrote:—

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“A squadron of Scottish Horse had just gained the edge of the ridge to defend the guns when the Boers charged. Colonel Benson and his staff were stationed near the guns. When the Boers got to the ridge they shot down, almost in the first few minutes, the greater number of the defenders, and it was the stubborn defence of the survivors which checked their further advance and prevented them at the time from rushing the ridge first, and possibly the camp afterwards. The defence of the ridge saved the column from imminent disaster, and inflicted on the Boers a heavy penalty for their daring attack. Unfortunately it was only done at the cost of many valuable lives.

“Shortly after Major Murray was killed several Boers approached, shouting ‘Hands up!’ Corporal Bell, the son of Sir James Bell, shouted back ‘No surrender!’ and kept on firing. He killed one Boer, and immediately afterwards another Boer shot him from a distance of twenty paces. Other Boers then fired at him, and he was killed. A man named Bradshaw Smith, who was found lying dead near Corporal Bell, carried on his duty in the same spirit. He had a pile of empty cartridge cases by him, and wounded survivors state that he killed or wounded thirty Boers with his own rifle before he received a fatal shot. Lieutenant Kelly, who had received his commission only three weeks before the fight, fell near the same spot. He came from Australia, and was advanced rapidly to the rank of sergeant and then to that of lieutenant. He was one of the best fighting men in the regiment. He cheered and rallied his men in the most fearless manner, being wounded many times before he fell for good. When picked up he was found to be literally shot through and through.

“These are conspicuous examples among a band of heroes. To the men of the Scottish Horse, the Yorkshire Mounted Infantry, and the artillery is due the credit of maintaining the defence when it appeared to be almost hopeless. Knowing full well that only a few were left they held on, firing or selling their lives dearly, and keeping it up until almost the last man fell. The latest accounts show that out of 92 men of the Scottish Horse on the ridge, 88 were killed or wounded. Scotland may well be proud when at the end of a wearisome war she can send out men who die willingly and fearlessly in the performance of their duty.”

Colonel Guinness<sup>[9]</sup> also fell by the guns, having fired the last shot of case on the advancing enemy before he was killed. Captain C. W. Collins (Cheshire Regiment), who died of his wounds, Lieutenant Jackson (King's Own Royal Lancashire Regiment), Lieutenant Sloan (R.A.M.C.), Lieutenant Robertson (Scottish Horse), played glorious parts in this melancholy scene, and Lieutenants Bircham and Crichton (King's Royal Rifle Corps) distinguished themselves by remaining gallantly in command of their respective units though severely wounded early in the fight. The attack on the camp itself was easily driven off, but no further reinforcements could be sent to the ridge, nor were guns in camp able to materially assist the defence with the rearguard. All hands in camp worked hard to entrench the position which, before night, was rendered so strong that no subsequent attack was made. Colonel Wools-Sampson took command of Colonel Benson's column, and on the 31st the columns of Colonel Barter and General G. Hamilton went hot foot to his support. The bulk of the enemy with the captured guns had, however, disappeared beyond the reach of the British force. Of the losses on both sides Mr. Bleloch wrote:—

“Of Colonel Benson himself every voice proclaims him a hero. Though grievously wounded, he sent back to Major Wools-Sampson, telling him not to send out the ambulances because the Boers would take the

opportunity of removing the guns, but to continue bursting shrapnel just on and over the ridge to prevent any further advance of the enemy. Major Wools-Sampson acted on these orders, and it was in imminent danger from our own gun and Maxim firers, as well as from the enemy, that some of the survivors of the Scottish Horse and Yorkshires moved about helping their wounded and dying comrades. Dr. Sloane, of the Scottish Horse, is praised by every one. The fire from the camp and from the other positions commanded by Major Wools-Sampson checked any further advance of the enemy. The Boers had paid dearly for their bravery, and their enthusiasm died down, though they continued a heavy fire all round the position. Major Wools-Sampson had taken every measure for the safety of the camp. He reinforced the southern positions held by the 25th Mounted Infantry, under Major Eustace, and called up all the Transport Commissariat officers and men to aid in defending the camp proper. When Colonel Benson was brought in about nine o'clock at night he told Major Wools-Sampson to see to his defences, because Botha had stated that unless he surrendered he would attack in the morning with 1400 men. The men were put to work entrenching, and by daylight the position was impregnable. The heroism on the ridge and the clever dispositions of the determined soldier commanding the camp had balked the Boers, and Botha admitted that the fight was a failure. Between 200 to 300 Boers are known to have been killed and wounded. Man for man the losses were about equal on each side, but we have suffered the greater loss in the death of the gallant leader of the column and his equally brave associates. Men like Benson, Guinness, Murray, Lindsay, and Thorold, and the other officers who fell are difficult to replace. Lieutenant Straker, of the Scottish Horse, who was thrown from his horse and stunned, while retiring to the ridge, was taken prisoner, and remained with the Boers next day. Being conversant with the taal, he learned many things from the Boers which confirm their disappointment at the result of the fight."

Among the forty-four Boers killed was General Opperman. General Chris Botha and 100 of his men were wounded.

The British casualties in addition to Colonel Benson were:—

#### KILLED.

Royal Artillery—Lieut.-Col. E. Guinness, Lieut. Maclean. Scottish Horse—Major F. D. Murray, Capt. M. W. Lindsay, Capt. Inglis, Lieut. Kelly, Lieut. Woodman. Yorkshire Light Infantry (3rd Mounted Infantry)—Capt. F. T. Thorold, Lieut. E. V. J. Brooke, Lieut. R. E. Shepherd. East Kent Regiment—2nd Lieut. A. J. Corlett.

#### WOUNDED.

Coldstream Guards—Capt. Eyre Lloyd (since dead) Cheshire Regiment—Capt. C. W. Collins, severe. Northamptonshire Regiment—Capt. A. A. Lloyd, D.S.O., slight. King's Royal Rifle Corps—Lieut. H. F. W. Birchan, severe; Lieut. T. G. Dalby, severe; Lieut. R. Seymour, severe. Scottish Horse—Capt. Murray; Lieut. W. Campbell, severe; Lieut. C. Woodman, dangerously; Lieut. Firms, dangerously; Lieut. A. T. Wardrap, severe. East Kent Regiment—Capt. Ronald, slight; Second Lieut. L. H. Soames, severe; Second Lieut. W. Greatwood, slight. Yorkshire Light Infantry—Lieut. L. H. Martin, severe. Killed—Fifty-four non-commissioned officers and men. Wounded—One hundred and sixty non-commissioned officers and men (four since dead.)

Colonel Park at this time worked in the Heidelberg district, Colonels Hacket-Thompson and Bewicke Copley in support of the Constabulary Posts, and Colonel Rawlinson in Heidelberg. Colonel Hacket-Thompson on the 14th of October routed a Boer gang that threatened the Pietersburg line, and on the way north Major Ross (Canadian Scouts) surprised and broke up Field-Cornet Jan Visagie's commando at Kranspoort. So much opposition did the Boers offer in the rugged country near Tweefontein, that Colonel Williams with 600 Australians was sent from Klerksdorp to reinforce Colonel Hacket-Thompson. On the 26th, while moving by Kameelpoort to Wolvekraal, a Boer picket was driven in, and fifty prisoners with their effects were taken. On the 27th the difficult Witnek defile—a pass six miles long—was forced by Col. Williams, in spite of the Boers, who held it in great strength and brought a pom-pom to bear on the troops. The splendid advance of the Australians eventually forced the enemy to give up his hold and take to his heels, leaving five dead on the ground and four prisoners in our hands.

Colonel Colenbrander's men (Kitchener's Fighting Scouts) between the 6th and 21st scoured the hitherto untraversed region between Warmbaths and Magalapyi on the Rhodesian Railway. They visited Boer haunts which had been carefully located beforehand and pounced on various Boer supply depots, with the result that on return, on the 2nd of November, they showed a bag of 45 prisoners, 10 voluntary surrenders, 67 rifles, 4000 rounds of ammunition, and a large number of waggons and cattle.

Colonel Hawkins (commanding Colonel Wood's column) displayed rival activity in the region west of the rail between Nylstroom and Geelhout, and his captures amounted to 97 prisoners, among whom were Field-Cornets J. J. Van Staden, J. P. Botha, J. Duverhage, Captain G. Coetzee, Adjutant Muller, and C. Schutte (former Landdrost of Pretoria), besides rifles, ammunition, waggons, cattle, and horses.

## TRANSVAAL (WEST)

Colonel Kekewich from Rustenburg and Lord Methuen from Zeerust engaged in a converging movement for sweeping up Boers in the direction of Lindley's Poort, but Boers being shy, these officers returned to their original posts. While Lord Methuen was marching from Zeerust towards Lindley's Poort, Colonel Von Donop from Zeerust moved in the direction of Tafel Kop. On his way back, on the 24th, at Kleenfontein (between Wonderfontein and Wilgeboom Spruit), he was confronted by over 1000 Boers under Generals Delarey, Kemp, and Celliers. These had taken

advantage of the thick scrub through which the British were moving to gallop to close quarters and set upon the little force.

Fighting was ferocious, particularly round the two guns (4th Battery R.F.A.), and the heroism shown by one and all, particularly by the gunners, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate. One officer, 17 men of the gun detachments, 26 escort of the Northumberland Fusiliers (some 60 strong), were either killed or wounded in this desperate and successful defence. All distinguished themselves in one way or another; notably young Lieutenant Hill (R.F.A.), who sacrificed his life, two gunners, Neil and Murphy, and drivers Divers and Platt. Lieutenant Hobbs (R.E.), a prodigy of valour; Captain Laing (R.A.M.C.), 5th Imperial Yeomanry, who tended the wounded regardless of the heavy fire; Lieutenant Baldwin, who fought like a lion; and Lieutenant Caird, who was killed, were a few of many who behaved nobly. The men were heroic as their officers. Sapper Ryder, for instance, hearing the guns were in difficulties, galloped alone to them and joined in their defence, subsequently fetching reinforcements under heavy fire. Sergeant Roland (Bechuanaland Rifles), too, in the same deadly hail, collected men and carried messages with the daredevil courage for which he is notable. Sergeant Browning (4th Battery R.F.A.) kept his gun in action till the Boers were upon him, when he endeavoured to remove the breech screws and got wounded in the act. Sergeant Miller (1st Northumberland Fusiliers), whose splendid services have been noted on many occasions, collected men and set them to hold an important position, and Sergeant Baily of the same regiment distinguished himself by his determination and bravery. [Pg 145]

The Boers, repulsed on all sides, eventually drew off, leaving 40 dead and 5 wounded, including Commandant Oosthuyzen (since dead), on the field.

Colonel Kekewich had also some noteworthy adventures. On the 28th he marched to attack a laager at Beestekraal on the Crocodile River. Having concealed his troops in the hollows around Hartebeestspruit, he, on the following day, resumed his march. At night his mounted troops, under Colonel Duff, moved towards Beestekraal, while his infantry moved to Klipplatt. The western approaches to the Boers' camp being unguarded, they fell victims to the surprise prepared for them. Resistance they soon found to be futile, and Colonel Kekewich marched back to Rustenburg plus 78 prisoners (including B. A. Klopper, former chairman of the Volksraad) and many waggons and horses.

## OCTOBER IN THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. J. Byng from Kroonstad spent the best part of October pouncing on commandos. On the 13th he attacked a laager at Jackfontein and captured 18 prisoners, and later in the month (the 25th) he surrounded Spanneberg's laager at Huntersolei, securing, with Field-Cornets Spanneberg and Oosthuyzen, 20 burghers; 11 extra prisoners were captured near Plessis Rush. On the 2nd of November he moved to Heilbron to take up his position for combined operations in the direction of Reitz. At Heilbron was Colonel Wilson (Kitchener's Fighting Scouts), who with Major Damant at Frankfort continued to cover the completion of the blockhouse line in that region. Major Damant on the 13th caught and engaged 300 Boers near Naudesdrift on the Wilge, and two days later handled somewhat vigorously a gang of 500 whom he drove to the Bothersberg, capturing Adjutant Theron in the course of the operation. More prisoners were secured before the end of the month.

General Elliot's columns, under Broadwood, with the energetic Lowe and De Lisle, continued to operate north of Harrismith, but they were much hampered both by rinderpest and by incessant rains. Nevertheless Colonel De Lisle, working independently, surprised a Boer laager on the 15th, in the neighbourhood of the Wilge River, and made a fine haul of vehicles and cattle, in addition to the fifteen prisoners taken. General Broadwood, with 700 of his own men and some detachments of General Rundle's force, made an expedition to the eastern extremity of the Brandwater Basin, which resulted in the capture of a few prisoners and much ammunition. General Campbell remained in the region constructing forts, in order to baulk the enemy at important points. From Bethlehem Colonel Briggs (1st Imperial Light Horse), with his dashing men, carried on a series of exciting raids, thus clearing the country for twenty-eight miles round.

Major-General C. Knox and Colonel Rochfort, under the general control of Lieutenant-General Tucker, engaged in operations for the completion of the clearance of the south-eastern portion of the Orange Colony, where Commandants Brand, Ackerman, and Coetzee still struggled to make themselves baneful. They gave considerable trouble, as their intimate acquaintance with the country made their deft dodges for prolonging the game of hide-and-seek highly successful. Still, in spite of their evasive tactics, 125 were taken and seven killed or wounded. [Pg 146]

## OPERATIONS IN CAPE COLONY

General French, whose headquarters were at Middelburg, by his vigorous measures to check the invasion, had so far swept the central districts of the Colony that a large number of troops were freed to hunt the south-western and north-eastern areas. On the 11th Lotter was executed, and curiously enough on the same date the arrant raider and desperate rebel Scheepers was captured by a patrol of the 10th Hussars under Captain Shearman, at Koppie's Kraal, where he had been left too ill to proceed. On his recovery he was tried on various charges, and sentenced to death. As his case aroused considerable interest, a short report of the trial is appended.

The Court sat at Graaff Reinet on December 18, 1901, and there were sixteen charges brought against the prisoner—seven of murder, one of attempted murder, one of placing prisoners in firing line, one of ill-treating prisoners, three of flogging (one being a British subject and two natives), one of destroying railways, one of train-wrecking, and one including fifteen charges of arson.

The one charge on which the finding of “Not guilty” was returned was the fifth, which related to the case of two scouts named John Jackspan and Johannes Rooji, who were shot in September at Wildepaardefontein, Montagu district. These men were shot, but the evidence went to show that it was by the order of Commandant Van der Merwe, Scheepers being on the farm at the time lying ill in a cart.

The first charge of murder on which a verdict of guilty was returned was that of shooting two natives named Jacob Fillis and Kiedo, captured when scouting in September at Secretaris Kraal; the second was a charge of shooting a Kaffir policeman named Moycwka at Brakwater in January 1901; the third was that of shooting a native, name unknown, at Uitkomot, in March; the fourth was that of shooting a native scout named James at Brighton in August; the sixth was the shooting of a native named John Kennedy in the Worcester district in September; and the seventh the shooting of Zederas, a native, at Kruis River, the victim being first sjamboked. This was also in September. The other charges were fully proved. In all fifty-two witnesses were called for the prosecution.

Apart from two witnesses whom he called, Commandant Scheepers gave evidence himself. He said his name was Gideon Jacobus Scheepers, that he was a Free State Burgher, and head of the Heliographic Department at Bloemfontein.

“I surrendered on the 10th October 1901, and at that time I occupied the position of commandant in the combined forces of the late South African Republic and Orange Free State. I was promoted to the rank of commandant in the month of March last, but through some cause which I do not know of the formal appointment only reached me in August last. Previous to this I held the rank of captain. On 15th November 1900, I and the troops to which I belong came into the Cape Colony under General De Wet’s command, but General De Wet did not himself come into this colony at that time. While we were with Commandant Kruitzinger he was in chief command, but as soon as the forces divided I was in chief command of my division. Before I came into the Cape Colony, on above date, there was a council of war held in the Free State, composed of all the chief officers in command. At this council of war propositions were made and carried that a letter should be written to Lord Kitchener drawing his attention to the destruction by fire and otherwise of property in the Free State and Transvaal, saying that if this destruction did not cease the officers in command of troops invading the Cape Colony would after a while receive instructions to proceed with destruction in the colony of all properties belonging to persons not friendly to the Republics. Prior to this letter, one to the same intent and conveying the same information had been written to Lord Roberts. In March last proclamations issued by General De Wet and signed by ex-President Steyn reached me, and the contents thereof was an instruction to the officers in the Cape Colony to treat all persons not on friendly terms with the Republics to the same destruction of property as had been done by the British in the Free State and Transvaal. I saw a copy of this proclamation in one of the Graaff Reinet newspapers. My instructions and proclamations I have handed over to my successor.”

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The prisoner then dealt with the various charges in detail, declaring in respect of some that he had given no orders, as to others that the men were shot after sentence by courts-martial, and that they were spies. As to the destruction of railways, the train-wrecking, and the burning of farms, he pleaded that he was only carrying out the instructions of his superior officers. He vehemently denied having ill-treated his prisoners.



**GENERAL MAP OF THE EASTERN PORTION OF CAPE COLONY**

In the course of the trial the following telegram was received by the president:

"Can fact that Scheepers spared my son's life—Grant, 12th Lancers—in time of great excitement, September twenty-third, be pleaded in mitigation of sentence if sentenced? Please forward this to confirming office.

GRANT, Monymusk."

In reference to this telegram, Scheepers said:—

"Lieutenant Grant, 12th Lancers, as far as I have seen, has done the bravest deed ever done by a British officer. It was south-east of Oudtshoorn, along the Commanassie River, after having wounded two and captured eight of my men, as he was crossing the river I came upon him with four men. I shouted to him, 'Hands up!' He was in the water on the point of crossing the river, and as I shouted to him 'Hands up!' he paid no attention. When I shouted to him a second time, 'Surrender, or I'll shoot you down,' the four men with me pointed their guns at him, when he dropped his gun and revolver and surrendered. The men with me wanted to shoot him down, as he had wounded two of my men; I ordered them not to do so. I ultimately captured him and took him to a house and gave him a bed, and liberated him." He also claimed that the one thousand three hundred prisoners he had taken had been treated well.

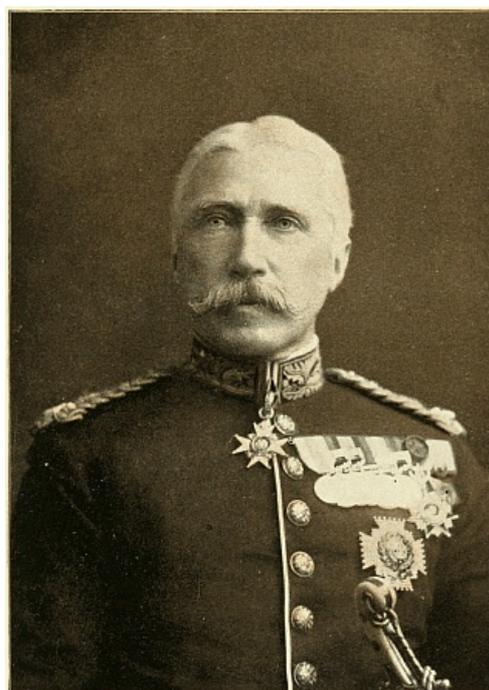
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Scheepers was found guilty, after five days' trial, on all charges except the one of murder mentioned, and sentenced to death. The sentence was confirmed by Lord Kitchener about a fortnight later, on January 14, 1902, and the prisoner was shot at Graaff Reinet on January 18, 1902.

Colonels Crabbe and Kavanagh hunted from Oudtshoorn to the north-west Smuts', Bonwer's, and Pyper's rovers. Colonels Haig and Lukin engaged in an animated chase, here, there, and everywhere, after Van der Venter and his band of marauders, and at last the vigilant Lukin, on the 21st of October, had the happiness of surprising the quarry six miles south-west of New Bethesda. Fourteen prisoners were taken, and one Boer lost his life in the affray. The rest of the party, as they escaped westward on the 24th, were engaged by Colonel Scobell, who had been chasing Smuts out of the Aberdeen district.

The month ended with combined operations for purging the place of the commandos of Maritz, Smit, and Theron, and driving these undesirable elements into the remote districts beyond Calvinia. In these lively proceedings Colonels Capper and Wyndham and Captain Wormald were engaged, and by the end of October they had reached the line Lambert's Bay, Clanwilliam.

Colonel Monro's column, after covering the construction of a line of blockhouses from Stormberg to Queenstown, commenced, in conjunction with a force under Colonel Scobell, to hunt the enemy north of Dordrecht. Meanwhile another line of blockhouses from De Aar to Beaufort West was concluded, thus adding materially to the security of the main line. The Proclamation of Martial Law at Cape ports was now deemed necessary, and regulations were made by the Colonial Government and the Commander-in-Chief with a view to minimising interference with legitimate trade, preventing inconvenience to law-abiding persons; adequate powers were secured for the military authorities to enable them to deal with the plots and intrigues of Boer spies, sympathisers at seaport towns, and to close to them this source of supply of munitions of war. The previous non-existence of Martial Law had enabled the enemy and his agents to carry on in security the introduction of foreign recruits and communications with Europe.



**GENERAL SIR BINDON BLOOD.**

Photo Elliott & Fry, London.

**FOOTNOTES:**

- [8] Colonel Benson, who has died of the wounds received in the attack, had played an active part in the present campaign, and had accomplished much good work. He belonged to the Royal Artillery, served in the Soudan, and was present in the engagement of Hasheen, where he was slightly wounded, and at the destruction of Tamai. He also took part in the expedition to Ashanti under Sir Francis Scott in 1895, and went with the Dongola Expedition under Lord Kitchener in 1896 as brigade-major of the mounted corps. He was twice mentioned in despatches, and was granted several decorations.
- [9] Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Davis Guinness, R.A., was the eldest son of the late Mr. Thomas Hosea Guinness, who married Mary, heiress of Mr. Charles Davis, of Coolmanna, county Carlow. He was educated at Eton, became lieutenant in the Royal Artillery February 18, 1880; captain on January 19, 1888; and major on September 23, 1897. He married in 1889 the Hon. Lucy Matilda, eldest daughter of the sixth Lord Massy, and leaves a son, Hugh Spencer, who was born in 1890.

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## CHAPTER XV

### THE CLOSE OF 1901—PROGRESS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

The establishment of constabulary posts from the Valley of the Modder towards Bultfontein and Boshof was being carried out simultaneously with the completion of a blockhouse line from Kroonstad to Coal Mine Drift on the Vaal. A blockhouse line from Kroonstad by Lindley, Bethlehem to Harrismith, and another by Heilbron and Frankfort towards Tafel Kop (a favourite Boer haunt and signalling station) and beyond it by Botha's Pass, promised to curtail the enemy's scheme of operations and push him into remote corners whence he would be unable to interfere either with the proposed extension of the rail from Harrismith to Bethlehem, or with another line working from Bloemfontein to the Waterworks and thence to Ladybrand.

### TRANSVAAL (EAST)

General Bruce-Hamilton at the end of October assumed the direction of operations in the Eastern Transvaal, and the columns under his command were those of Colonels Allenby and Campbell at Standerton, of Colonel Barter at Leeukop (forty-six miles west of Bethel), of Colonel Mackenzie (late Benson's) at Brugspruit. Colonels Williams and the Hon. C. G. Fortescue were moving west of Middelburg. Under the auspices of these troops and of those of General Spens, the Standerton-Ermelo line of blockhouses was constructed, and the constabulary posts to the line Brugspruit Station, Waterful Station, were established. At the conclusion of these useful operations General Bruce-Hamilton, having forced the enemy in a corner as it were and prepared for the further advance of his columns to the east, made Bethel his headquarters.

A concentration was afterwards arranged for the purpose of hemming the guerillas against the Eastern Transvaal Frontier, and consequently some of these struggled to break through the sweeping columns and the constabulary posts, while others, in knots, returned and pervaded the Delagoa Railway. They had of course to be dealt with, and Colonel Wools-Sampson, whose services had been invaluable to the lamented Colonel Benson, again applied himself to the locating of the offensive intruders. His information was brief and to the point. General B. Hamilton, with portions of General Spens' and Colonel Sir H. Rawlinson's columns, surprised the marauders at dawn on the 4th of December at Oshoek, twenty miles south-west of Ermelo. Owing to the dash and enterprise with which the 8th Battalion Mounted Infantry closed with the enemy and prevented their escape, the captures amounted to 93 prisoners, 116 horses, 26 waggons, 29 Cape carts, besides ammunition and telegraph and signalling apparatus.

While this exciting affair was going forward between Ermelo and Carolina, Colonel Williams was chasing some Boer banditti under Viljoen, Prinsloo, and Erasmus, who were fleeing westwards in the direction of Knapdaar. The pursuit was carried to Welte-Vreden, where the enemy (in a strong position and numbering some 500) commanded the passages over the Olifants River. Colonel Williams' small force was unequal to a decisive engagement, therefore he drew off, having killed 5 and taken 12 Boers, 8 waggons, and 3500 rounds of ammunition in the course of his westerly pursuit. On the 7th, Colonel Rawlinson made a grand night march from Ermelo (General B. Hamilton's headquarters), and took 8 prisoners, while at the same time Colonel C. Mackenzie, moving from Carolina to Waterval, vigorously chased the enemy towards the Komati Valley, capturing 16, together with their horses, mules, and cattle.

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While Botha's bands were kept in hourly dread of being driven east against the Swazi border, or west between the troops and constabulary posts, where they would have been more than ever isolated and doomed to destruction, Colonel Urmston, with a small column, played the Cerberus, watching the line of constabulary posts in case of attack by such desperate Boers as might have become wedged between the posts and the columns, and keeping General B. Hamilton well informed as to their whereabouts.

Viljoen, hovering between Pilgrims' Rest and Dullstroom, engaged the attentions of Colonel Park, while on the northern line Colonels Dawkins and Colenbrander hunted and hustled the enemy. By

the 13th of November Dawkins had secured 124 prisoners, and by the 19th (when he had returned to Warmbaths by the Mafeking-Rhodesia route) Colenbrander had captured 54 prisoners of Beyer's commando, including Field-Cornets Ross and Louw and Adjutant Pretorius, with their horses, waggons, and stock.

Colonel Colenbrander then devoted himself to the chase of Badenhorst's commando, a spirited and an exhausting affair which lasted some days, during which Kitchener's Fighting Scouts pushed perseveringly, through an almost waterless and decidedly uninviting region, on the tracks of the enemy. Eventually the column, almost spent with their prodigious activities, came suddenly on the quarry, and the 3rd of December found them in possession of all the waggons of the commando, and fifteen prisoners. Badenhorst and sixty followers tore into the jungle fringing the Poer Zyn Loop River, and thus escaped; but not for long. A large quantity of stragglers were driven up into the hills, and there seized by the 12th Mounted Infantry of Colonel Dawkins' column, who displayed considerable prowess in the achievement. The total results of these "well-planned and carefully-executed operations were 104 prisoners, 50 horses, 50 mules, 500 cattle, 6 waggons, 6000 rounds of small arm ammunition, and the serious discomfiture of the enemy in a district in which he had long considered himself immune."

## TRANSVAAL (WEST)

Lord Methuen and Colonel Kekewich continued with unabating zeal their co-operations in the Rustenberg-Zeerust region, capturing many prisoners during their various marches. On the 13th of November, owing to a squadron of Imperial Yeomanry of Colonel Hickie's force having been surrounded near Brakspruit, both officers moved by different routes to Klerksdorp to disperse the commandos threatening Colonel Hickie. But these rovers had quickly made off to the west. Still hunting them, Lord Methuen, with Hickie and Kekewich on his right, left Klerksdorp to operate to west of Hartebeestefontein and Kaffirs Kraal. He got in touch with the foe, chased him towards Wolmaranstad, and "doubled him up" at Rooiport. Liebenberg's adjutant, his horses, stock, waggons, and twenty-six prisoners were the rewards of a fatiguing excursion. Lord Methuen returned to Klerksdorp on the 4th of December. Thus Colonel Hickie, whose column was covering the construction of the Schoonspruit blockhouse line, was relieved of the unwelcome attentions of the Boers, and the work on hand terminated without further interruption.

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COLONEL PILCHER

(Photo by Robinson, Dublin)

## ORANGE RIVER COLONY

A magnificent programme for the sweeping up of infesting marauders in the region of Vrede and Reitz was planned out early in November. The difficulty and the extent of its plan may be gauged by the fact that the rendezvous and starting-points of the outermost columns engaged upon it were roughly at the angles of a parallelogram, whose diagonal was 175 miles in length, and of which no side was less than 100 miles, marked by the points Standerton, Harrismith, Winburg, and Heilbron; but of the details of this enormous movement, the energy and precision with which it was carried forth, nothing can here be said. It was arranged like an enormous and intricate game of chess, with tortuous and well-designed curves to keep the enemy from detecting the object of the manœuvres, but the whole thing was a failure. The weather, firstly, was atrocious, and highly favourable to such Boers who might wish to straggle and draggle to cover; secondly, the immensity of the converging movement rendered it impossible to entirely fill all gaps, and these gaps the Boers were naturally "slim" enough to discover and to make use of. Thus, when all the splendidly managed and patiently executed marches concluded by the arrival of the columns

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at their objective, they found most of the birds flown. But the Boer stock and transport had to be left behind, and there was some consolation in knowing that the machinations of the marauders would be hampered for want of supplies for some time to come. Ninety-eight prisoners were taken and twenty-two of the enemy were killed, and horses and cattle in large quantities were secured. The troops returned to their original points of departure without incident, save in the case of Colonels Byng and Wilson. On the 14th of November a party of 400 Boers, who had evaded the cordon before it was drawn, attacked the troops near Heilbron. Two hours of stiff fighting ensued, and the enemy, said to be commanded by De Wet, was successfully repulsed on all sides by Colonel Byng's rearguard, which was brilliantly handled by Colonel Wilson of Kitchener's Fighting Scouts. The Boers left eight dead on the field. Lieutenant Hughes was killed and three other officers of Kitchener's Fighting Scouts were wounded.

Colonel Rimington and Major Damant continued to pursue their special guerilla tactics from Frankfort to the Valley of the Vaal with a diamond-cut-diamond agility which was highly disconcerting to the Boers. Many captures they made, the most satisfactory of all being that of Commandant Buys, who, wounded in a skirmish with the "Railway Pioneers," fell afterwards into the hands of Colonel Rimington, who had gone to their assistance. The skirmish took place near Villiersdorp. Major Fisher's small patrol was attacked north and south by some 350 of the enemy. The British were overpowered; Major Fisher was killed, and Captain Langmore was dangerously wounded.

General Dartnell and the Imperial Light Horse Brigade—real veterans by now—were perpetually on the move in the Bethlehem and Harrismith region, but the Boers were wary, and, at the rumour of their coming, seemed to evaporate! The 2nd Imperial Light Horse, however, caught them napping on the 24th of November between Elands River Bridge and Bethlehem. In the attack they killed two of the enemy and captured twelve more. The bag was furthered replenished on the 27th by the addition of 24 prisoners, 150 horses, and 800 cattle, which were the prizes of a dashing raid of the combined force of the 1st and 2nd Imperial Light Horse under Colonel Mackenzie.

The end of November was spent in sweeping and hunting, surprising and night-raiding by General Elliot, who with three columns (Broadwood, De Lisle, and Lowe) moved gradually upward from Harrismith to Kroonstad. Here he arrived on the 1st of December with 15 prisoners, 89 carts, 2470 cattle, and 1280 horses (most of them worn-out). Colonel Barker from Bethlehem engaged the enemy frequently, thus protecting Broadwood's left flank and inflicting considerable damage. Colonel Rimington having effected a junction with Colonel Wilson (Kitchener's Fighting Scouts), south-west of Frankfort, on the 28th had some exciting experiences with the enemy, who pursued certain buzzing tactics for the purpose of drawing off attention to a proposed lunge by De Wet on the baggage and rearguard. The attack when delivered was brilliantly repulsed. The troops made a dashing charge on the enemy, during which Lieutenant Oliver (Inniskilling Dragoons) lost his life. Field-Cornet Klopper and 2 burghers were killed and 4 wounded, and 13 prisoners captured. Colonel Rimington then returned to Heilbron.



**MAJOR-GENERAL ARTHUR PAGET.**

Photo J. Russell & Sons, London.

Various groups of columns under General Knox and Colonel Rochfort harassed and hunted the remnants of the commandos of Brand, Ackerman, and Loetzee, which still hung and clung to their ancient haunts. The work was fatiguing and monotonous in the extreme, but the clearance of that part of the country was accomplished. One hundred and seventy prisoners were swept up in the course of the month.

West of the rail the establishment of constabulary posts between Boshof and Bultfontein went on apace, while Colonel Henry watched the country and kept the Boers at a distance.

## THE SWAZI BORDER

The troops clearing the east in the Piet Retief region and on the Swazi border were hard at work to press back the desperate and almost refugeless Boers. Major Wiggin, with a detached force of the 26th Mounted Infantry Battalion (Colville's column), surrounded a laager at a farm eight miles south of Mahamba (near Piet Retief), and captured Landdrost Kelly and Field-Cornet Van Rooijen, with fourteen of their party; and then this same officer, with another detached force, proceeded on the 16th to repeat his success. At Plat Nek (within the Swazi border) he pounced again on the foe, caught twelve of them, and secured nineteen waggons with teams and a number of Krupp cartridges.

General Plumer meanwhile worked considerable havoc among the scattered bands that hung south of the Wakkerstroom-Piet Retief blockhouses. After the 20th he was joined by Colonel Pulteney, and together they scoured the Randberg neighbourhood till the torrents should subside, and General Bruce-Hamilton, in his advance on Ermelo, could be assisted by them.

## NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

As before said, General French's operations in Cape Colony were making substantial progress, and small commandos only continued to rove about the south-east and south-west fringe of the colony. These were harried and worried by the troops, but their presence was now described as a serious inconvenience rather than as a menace of vital consequence. They confined their annoyance to the Barkley East district and the country to the west and north of the Cape Town-De Aar line. In the former area Monro and Scobell continued their hunts after Myburg, Fouché, and Wessels, who now and then skirmished, but who, owing to their losses, preferred to give the British a wide berth. The astute and indefatigable Hunter-Weston spent his time in chasing a gang of Boers under Naude, who, after shifting and doubling, finally burrowed into the Karee Kloof hills north-west of Philipstown.

More columns under General Stephenson had the wearisome task of chasing dispersed gangs over a vast tract of country; and December found Colonel Crabbe at Lambert's Bay, General Stephenson with Colonel Kavanagh at Clanwilliam, Colonel Capper at Piquetberg, Captain Wormald at Wagon Drift (north of Ceres), Major Lund south of Sutherland, and Colonel Doran between the last place and Matjesfontein. As a result of the month's united operations of these forces, 29 of the enemy were killed, 21 wounded, and 45 captured. The rinderpest continued to work havoc, but the process of inoculation and the care taken to prevent the spread of the disease prevented the movements of the troops from being seriously impeded. As regards the troops, despite the heavy rains, the incessant marching, the harassing and ticklish nature of outpost work in exposed and isolated positions, the perpetual calls on their patience, their pluck, their sagacity, and their cheerfulness; despite the wet bivouacs and the monotonous food, and sometimes the scarcity of it, the dangers they ran and the meagre amount of publicity their heroism received—despite all these inconveniences, they remained true as steel and full of grim determination "to see the thing through," or, as the Commander-in-Chief expressed it, "to relax no effort until the campaign had been brought to a successful issue."

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The Boers now, at the end of 1901, found themselves cooped by blockhouse lines into four definite areas: Botha's attenuated force hovered on the borders of Swaziland and the Brugspruit-Waterval line. Delarey and Kemp hung around the difficult country between the Mafeking Railway line and the Magaliesberg range. Steyn and De Wet with some dauntless desperadoes did their worst in the north-east districts of Orange River Colony, and various bands of rebels and adventurers clung to the north-west regions of the Cape Colony. Elsewhere were only insignificant knots of worn-out and listless stragglers. There was a gratifying increase of voluntary surrenders, and during the month three of the most trusted leaders—Kruitzienger, Opperman, and Haasbroek—disappeared from the fighting scene.

## TRANSVAAL (EAST)—DECEMBER

General Bruce-Hamilton, for the purpose of protecting the constabulary posts, was now operating in the country that had been so effectively cleared by General French in the beginning of the year. On the 9th of December he engaged in a brilliant converging movement over the old ground (see map, p. 20), with the result that 130 prisoners, 4000 cattle, and a large convoy fell into his hands. Briefly the tale is this: the General discovered that a large force of Boers had collected north of Bethel, and were moving south with a view to escaping round his left flank. Quickly, he summoned Colonels Wing and Williams (who were moving upon Kalabasfontein) to join him at Spioenkop, and by night the whole force made a secret march on the lair of the enemy at Trigardtsfontein. The movement was magnificently carried out, and the laager was rushed by the troops at dawn. In the scrimmage seven Boers were killed, and many who escaped pursuit were mopped up by Colonel Allenby, who was moving from Middelkraal to Onverwacht. General Hamilton's force after this successful action marched into Bethel, having covered sixty miles in

the previous forty-eight hours.

His repose was short-lived. The Boers who had escaped from the pursuit of his force gathered now, under Viljoen, twenty-five miles north-east of Bethel. He determined to secure them. With the troops under Colonels Sir H. Rawlinson, Wing, and Williams, he started on the 12th on another exciting march. He neared his destination in darkness, and then in the dim dusk of the morn galloped upon the objective. It was a splendid achievement, and seventy Boers, including Field-Cornets Badenhorst and Swanepool, closed their military career. Sixteen were killed in the engagement, and one of the two 15-pounder guns taken from Benson's force at Brakenlaagte was recovered. The other gun had been disabled by the enemy. The scattered remnants of this commando fled north, and were tackled by Colonels Mackenzie and Fortescue, who were operating in that direction. These officers captured more prisoners and stock.

On the 19th of December General Bruce-Hamilton left Ermelo, marching towards the east, while Colonel Mackenzie simultaneously moved from Carolina upon Lake Banagher (twenty-two miles north-east of Ermelo). Colonel Mackenzie on the night of the 19th made a forced march and attacked, at Schalk Meyer's farm, Smits' laager, and inflicted upon the enemy a loss of six killed. He took sixteen prisoners. He afterwards moved on Bothwell, and pursued for thirty miles a convoy which turned out to be Smits, and after a stiff engagement (on the 21st) secured 17 prisoners, 44 vehicles, and 2000 cattle. General Plumer and Colonel Pulteney co-operated in the vicinity of Spitzkop, and near there at dawn on the 23rd these officers engaged a gang of 500, and captured 6 prisoners.

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On the same day General Bruce-Hamilton's troops attacked Grobelaar's laager at Maryvale (fifteen miles north of Amsterdam). Owing to the denseness of the morning mist the majority of the Boers got off scot free, and only four were killed and eleven captured, but 700 cattle and a number of waggons fell into British hands. The captures were mainly due to the leading of Lieutenants Rendall and Huddleston, who, in spite of every obstruction, dashed in among the enemy before they could gather themselves together for more than flight. General Hamilton returned to Ermelo, and on the 29th pushed again to Maryvale. Again he repeated his manœuvres, again he pounced on the Boers and thinned their numbers by twenty-two (taken prisoners), capturing also their waggons and cattle. This was on the 1st of January. On the following day, with the columns under Colonels Simpson and Scott, General Hamilton followed the spoor of the Pretoria commando up hill and down dale, over circuitous bridle-paths and into deep kloofs in the sides of the hills north-east of Amsterdam, hunting, and chasing, and burrowing. As reward of his dogged patience and perseverance forty-nine Boers were hemmed in and taken (among this number General Erasmus and Mr. Custer, late J.P. of Amsterdam). Colonel Wing, who was at the same time engaged in identical exploits, brought in twenty prisoners and five waggons.

While these activities were going forward in the east, Generals Spens and Plumer, and Colonel Colville, on a line Beginderlyn-Rotterdam-Derby, watched the surrounding districts, and here on the 3rd of January Plumer's New Zealanders encountered the enemy at Twyfelaar. Fighting fast and furious, during which the commanding officer and twenty Colonials were wounded, resulted in the discomfiture of the foe and a loss to them of 300 cattle and a waggon-load of ammunition.

Another fierce engagement took place on the following day, when Major Vallentin with fifty mounted men were following up the band which had attacked the New Zealanders. Suddenly, upon the small party rushed some hundreds of the enemy, galloping at full speed. There were about a hundred in the first line, while about fifty were thrown back on each flank, the movement being covered by heavy fire from a crowd of dismounted riflemen in the background. Thus outnumbered, the British band realised that there was nothing for it but to sell life dearly, and in the desperate hand-to-hand conflict Major Vallentin and 18 men fell, 5 officers and 28 men were wounded, and indeed the small company would have been utterly annihilated but for the timely arrival of reinforcements under Colonel Pulteney, who forced the enemy to retire. But the Boer loss was considerable, for General Opperman, the leader of the eastern group of commandos, perished, together with nine others. Three wounded were left on our hands.

The enemy also had given considerable trouble to General Spens, who spent December working between Standerton and Ermelo. On the night of the 18th, the General detached the 14th Mounted Infantry under Major Bridgford to search the farms dotted around the junction of the Vaal with the Kaffir Spruit. After a long night's march he encountered at dawn a gang of Boers. These he chased with the utmost zeal, but while, as result of the pursuit, the troops were scattered on a wide front, they were assailed by a vastly superior force under Commandant Britz. The engagement was desperate and our losses were lamentable, many men being taken prisoners. These were fortunately recovered later, but the enemy escaped punishment. Lieutenant Stirling, Dublin Fusiliers, and the remainder of the party fought their way doggedly through the enemy, and returned to the nearest point on the Standerton-Ermelo blockhouse line. Among the wounded were Captain G. F. W. Brindley, 2nd Manchester Regiment (since dead); Captain B. H. H. Cooke, Rifle Brigade; Lieutenant P. S. Fryer, 2nd West Yorks Regiment; Lieutenant B. A. W. C. Moeller, 2nd Middlesex Regiment; Second Lieutenant L. P. Russell, 2nd West Yorks Regiment (since dead).

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**GENERAL BEATSON**

(Photo by Russell & Sons, London)

At the end of the month combined action was taken to dispose of Commandant Britz's guerillas, and to commence the pursuit the troops of General Plumer, Spens, and Colonel Pulteney assembled at Amersfoort on the 28th. Promptly some seven prisoners were captured near Schuilplaats, and Britz sent scurrying towards Platrand. Here General Spens came upon him again, and relieved him of twenty-four of his followers. The rest broke up into small knots running the gauntlet of the blockhouses, and some of them dropping wounded from their fire, while others sought shelter in the north along the Vaal River.

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Some Boers at this time had succeeded in bursting into the protected area to the east of Springs, and the pursuit of them occupied Colonel Allenby's troops and General G. Hamilton's Cavalry Brigade. These succeeded in capturing sixty, while others surrendered to the Constabulary. In the securing of these interlopers some very exciting and interesting adventures are related. Major Butler and the Carabineers on the 18th accounted for thirty-four who were running riot south-west of Brugspruit, and on the 5th of January, north of Bethel, the 13th Hussars, under Major Williams, brilliantly effected the surprise of Breytenbach's laager, taking 11 prisoners, 200 horses, 600 cattle, 50 mules, and 6 carts. The Commandant himself in the midst of the scrimmage made off with true Boer velocity, but Captain Tremayne (13th Hussars), who was better mounted than his men, spied the fugitive and engaged in a neck and neck race with the Dutchman and, single-handed, secured him.

Colonels Park and Urmston, in the midst of atrocious weather, made vigorous efforts to locate the so-called Boer Government, which was reported to be hidden north of the Delagoa line. Colonel Park on the night of the 19th was attacked in his camp at Elandspruit by a strong force under Muller, Trichardt, and Krieger. A tremendous amount of hard fighting took place before the guerillas were repulsed, and the losses on both sides were heavy. Of the British one officer and seven men were killed, and five officers and twenty-four non-commissioned officers and men were wounded. Of the Boers eight dead and three wounded were left on the ground. The number of those removed could not be ascertained. Among the slain were Commandant Krieger and Field-Cornet Malan. From the 21st to Christmas Day the two columns co-operated, skirmishing with and chasing the foe, who in small bodies flitted hither and thither in the dense mists that hung around Dullstroom. On the 22nd Colonel Urmston's efforts were almost crowned with success. He occupied a Boer laager some miles north of Dullstroom from whence the Boer Government *in a Cape cart* some hours previously had fled.

## **IN THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL**

To west of the Pietersburg line Colonels Colenbrander and Dawkins' co-operative system worked splendidly. Boers who evaded the one fled into the open arms of the other! In this way Commandant Badenhorst with twenty-two of his party was secured on the 11th December. Fleeing hot foot from the Fighting Scouts he dropped into the maw of the Mounted Infantry, who had been vigilantly preparing to "welcome the coming guest." Later in the month Colonel Dawkins started for Harrismith to reinforce General Rundle's command, while Colonel Colenbrander moved to Rooiberg, and from thence pursued Boers to Jericho, a place near the Crocodile River, where sixty prisoners and much stock were secured. Early in the year he passed on towards the neighbourhood of Waterval, made a brilliant night march on the Magato's Nek in the small hours of the 4th of January, and surprised the enemy at dawn. A stiff engagement ensued, in which five of the enemy were killed and twenty-nine made prisoners. Not many days after Colonel Colenbrander was fortunate enough in delivering from the hand of the native Chief, Linchwe, a number of Boer women and children. The Chief with a following of 2000 had started forth vowing vengeance on the Boers for having stolen his stock, and determining to recapture

his property. He was prevailed on by the Colonel, however, to retire to Pilansberg, and thus, much to the relief of the families of the enemy throughout the district, an awkward and probably disastrous complication was averted.

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## TRANSVAAL (WEST)

Lord Methuen and Colonel Kekewich continued operations from Klerksdorp. The former on the 13th December sighted a Boer convoy, gave chase with all available mounted troops, and after covering seven miles as hard as they could go, secured all the waggons. These were the property of Van Rensburg's men, and there was grim satisfaction in the knowledge that for a few days at least the marauders would be on short commons. A dash was made on the 16th for Potgieter's laager, which was comfortably posted on the southern slopes of the Makwassie range (near Wolmaranstad). The night march was splendidly managed, and dawn found Lord Methuen in possession of a tremendous haul of prisoners, horses, and cattle. His success was materially assisted by the operations of Colonel Kekewich at Korannafontein, who kept the commandos of Celliers and Vermaas engaged, prevented them going to the assistance of the captured laager, and blocked the roads to the north.

Further operations were continued south-west of Klerksdorp at the end of the month. Early in the year Lord Methuen's force engaged in an animated chase westwards after a convoy which unfortunately had had a long start of them. The chase appeared to be a failure, but subsequently it was discovered that Lord Methuen's tactics had caused the convoy to seek safety by a sudden double to the south, with the result that it ran straight upon the Kimberley column of Major Paris, who joyously took possession of 40 waggons and over 1000 head of cattle. Thus did one man sow and another reap!

Colonel Kekewich ended the month in keen pursuit of Potgieter's men. He had some exciting adventures, and made many small but useful captures. Colonel Hickie's column covered the extension of the new blockhouse line from Ventersdorp to Tafelkop, which point was occupied, much to the discomfiture of the Boers, who had made it a *pied-à-terre* for some time past.

## ORANGE RIVER COLONY

The Orange Colony was gradually becoming too peaceable for De Wet's liking. The great chief, after some deliberations at a Kriegsraad held on the 11th December, determined on a new plan. Finding that the system of scattering his forces resolved itself into a steady decrease of their numbers in consequence of the energy of our mobile columns, and discovering also that evasive and defensive tactics ended in his gang becoming hemmed in by the advancing blockhouse lines, he decided on concentration. He meant with his force to avoid direct collision with British columns, but decided to choose his own times and seasons for pouncing on and overpowering odd detachments on duty bound, whom he might chance to entrap. This new system brought about some unfortunate surprises and defeats of the British, but as our small but gallant little parties were not overpowered without deadly cost, there was every chance that the system would ensure an earlier collapse of the enemy's power to prolong the struggle.

A clever combined movement of the division under General Elliot, with the columns of Rimington, Byng, Damant, and Wilson, began on the 8th December. The enemy were given the impression that the six columns were bound for the east, consequently they made an attempt to break back through the columns in small parties to the west. But a complete countermarch of the British troops on a given date (the 11th) ended in their being driven to the west quicker than they intended, and hemmed into the angle marked by the main line of railway and the Wolvenhoek-Frankfort line of blockhouses. Of course many of them were "slim" enough to see in time the threatened danger and evade the bristles of the British broom, but the troops captured 43 prisoners, 780 horses, 3000 cattle, and 187 vehicles.

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It was now evident that a concentration of Boers was taking place at Kaffir Kop, north-west of Bethlehem. General Elliot's division from Kroonstad, General Dartnell's men from Elands River Bridge, and Colonel Barker's men from Winburg co-operated so as to close in on the Kop from west, north-west, and north-east. But unfortunately the Boers, smelling menace in the air, dispersed even as the troops approached. Still the action was not without results, for Colonel Barker at Vaalbank, in an engagement with 500 Boers on the 16th (Dingaan's Day), killed the Boer leader Haasbroek, and disposed of a formidable foe.

General Dartnell on the 18th, in the last stage of his return journey to Elands River Bridge, came into collision with De Wet, who, from a strong position along the Tygerkloop Spruit, disputed his further advance. Furious fighting followed, the Boers assailing General Dartnell's flank and rearguard, the Imperial Light Horse, spirited as ever, holding their own gloriously. Finally to their succour came General B. Campbell from Bethlehem (he had established signalling communication during the fight), and the Boers were forced to beat a hurried retreat in the direction of Reitz.

Nothing daunted, De Wet made a new effort, and, alas! a successful one. On the 25th, in the direction of Tweefontein (nine miles west of Elands River Bridge), he turned up again where a covering force was watching the construction of the Harrismith-Bethlehem blockhouse line.

This force, temporarily commanded by Major G.A. Williams, 1st South Staffordshire Regiment, consisted of the 34th, 35th, 36th, and 53rd Companies Imperial Yeomanry, and one gun of the 79th Battery and a pom-pom. It lay that night on the slope of a lonely kopje; the outpost line held the crest, the camp being situated on a gentle slope to north. The south side was steep. From this steep and apparently unprotected side the Boers by night, at 2 A.M. on the 25th, delivered their attack, scrambling up the heights exactly in the swift and silent way they had mounted Wagon Hill on the 6th of January 1900, and rushed the piquets in overwhelming numbers. The ridge secured, there followed a dash through the camp, and so swift was the movement that many of our officers and men were shot down before they had become aware of what had happened. It was a deplorable affair, and Major Williams paid for what mistakes he may have made with his life. Five other officers were killed and also 51 men; 8 officers and 81 men were wounded. Lieutenant Harwich himself fired with the pom-pom, and was shot through the heart in the act. Lieutenant Watney (Imperial Yeomanry) was killed as he headed the gallant charge on the enemy. A Boer prisoner gave the following account of the fight: Commandant Mears on the previous day spied round the camp, noting the exact positions of the guns. After sunset De Wet assembled over six hundred men and moved on Colonel Firman's camp, arriving within a thousand yards at two o'clock on Christmas morning unobserved. The Boers marched to the foot of the hill on which the camp was. There they left their horses, and scaled the precipitous height. When the sentry challenged them the Boers yelled madly, hoping thus to create confusion, and rushed into the British camp, shooting our men down point-blank as they came out of their tents. Our gunners, who were firing the guns at a range of forty yards, were overpowered, and the camp was captured after a fierce hand-to-hand conflict. Some Boers who lagged behind when the enemy charged the hill were sjamboked along by De Wet and Brand. The official casualty list of the Boers was fourteen killed, including Commandant Oliver, of Bethlehem, and Field-Cornet Lawrence, and thirty-two wounded.

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At this time General Rundle, with a small column, was encamped some 2½ miles to the east of this lonely hill. Hearing the firing he despatched Colonel Tudway, D.A.A.G., and his Mounted Infantry to ascertain the cause, and at the same time summoned two regiments of Imperial Light Horse from the neighbourhood of Elands River Bridge. Quickly the Boers discovered their peril, and made off into the Langeberg, carrying with them the gun and pom-pom they had captured in their attack on the camp.

General Elliot, on hearing of this unfortunate affair, promptly started off on a series of chases after De Wet, which chases were fraught with much fatigue and considerable danger; but they failed in their main object, though many captures of more insignificant kind were made. As an idea of the distances covered in a week by General Elliot's columns, the following table was given by Lord Kitchener:—On December 29, marched seventy miles in close pursuit of De Wet; on 31st December, twenty miles; on 4th January, sixty miles.

Before De Wet enjoyed the short-lived triumph of Christmas day, Wessels, in the neighbourhood of Tafel Kop, had distinguished himself on the 19th. The troops of Colonels Rimington and Damant were moving by night in a fierce thunderstorm by parallel roads three miles apart to cover an extension of the blockhouse line. Damant's advance guard beheld suddenly a force approaching. This force was kharki clad, and affected the formation usual with regular mounted troops. They also, as they advanced, fired volleys in the direction of some Boers who were escaping across the front of two British forces. Naturally our men were deceived, and this clever ruse enabled the Dutchmen to seize the crest of a kopje which commanded the whole field and also the guns and the main body of our troops. But even in their inferior position Damant's gallant fellows fought nobly and tenaciously to save the guns which accompanied the advance guard—so nobly, indeed, that every officer and man, except four, of the leading troops were shot down before reinforcements from the main body and Colonel Rimington's column came to the rescue. When these loomed in the distance the Boers wisely relinquished their attack, and fled over the Wilge pursued for many miles by Colonel Rimington's troops. Colonel Damant himself was wounded in four places, and many of his staff were killed and wounded as they fought gallantly with their revolvers till shot down. The casualties among officers were: Lieutenant R. G. Maturin, 39th Battery Royal Field Artillery (wounded); Captain H. J. P. Jeffcoat, Royal Field Artillery Pompoms (killed); Captain C. L. Gaussen, 91st Company Imperial Yeomanry (killed); Captain G. A. C. Webb, Royal Munster Fusiliers (attached Damant's Horse) (wounded); Lieutenant C. H. A. Wilson, Damant's Horse (wounded); Lieutenant W. J. Shand, Cameron Highlanders (attached Damant's Horse) (wounded, since dead); Lieutenant L. W. Armstrong, 91st Company Imperial Yeomanry (wounded). Out of a total force of ninety-five in action, we had seventy-five killed and wounded, while of three officers and forty-two men of the 91st Yeomanry, one officer and fourteen men were killed, and one officer and sixteen men wounded. Some truly heroic deeds were performed. Captain Jeffcoat, D.S.O., continued gallantly to work his gun under close and heavy fire till he dropped dead. Lieutenant Maturin, although wounded, collected some men and got the limbers out of fire; while Captain Webb and Lieutenant Shand charged boldly forward to a ridge, which they held till all save two of their men were killed or wounded. Captain Gaussen (91st Company Imperial Yeomanry) and Lieutenant Diving, who commanded the escort to the guns, displayed almost reckless gallantry, and the same may be said of Lieutenant Clive Wilson. Dr. Wedderburn pursued his deeds of mercy to the wounded, regardless of the rain of bullets that overtook him.

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**DE WET'S ATTEMPT TO CROSS THE RAILWAY.**

Blockhouse and Armoured Train at work.

The following particulars of this gallant fight were obtained from the men engaged in it by the correspondent of the *Central News*:—

"The columns under Colonel Damant and Colonel Rimington left Frankfort on the 19th inst. and proceeded in the direction of Vrede. The force trekked all night through a most severe thunderstorm, during which three of our men were struck by lightning and killed.

"On reaching the neighbourhood of Tafelkop, Damant rushed a Boer piquet, killing one man and capturing Commandant Gyter.

"At daybreak the transport waggons were laagered, and were left behind in charge of a small escort, while Damant with two guns of the 39th Battery, and one pom-pom and ninety-five men all told, rushed forward. The little force deviated on the left flank, where a number of Boers had been located.

"On reaching a ridge Colonel Damant observed a party of seventy men dressed in British uniform busily engaged driving cattle in his direction. The strangers were at first taken to be a part of Rimington's column which had gone out on the right flank. The mistake was soon discovered, however, and almost immediately another body of the enemy was located further to the left of the British laager.

"Our guns were speedily unlimbered, and quickly came into action. We had only been able to fire two shots when the Boers in charge of the cattle abandoned them and galloped boldly forward towards the British position.

"The enemy opened a galling fire on the gunners at a range of two hundred yards, and simultaneously another party of 150 Boers who had remained carefully concealed in ambush in the long grass at the foot of the ridge enfiladed the position.

"A large number of the gallant defenders fell at the first few volleys, but the survivors fought tenaciously, and the enemy were only able to rush and capture the position after all the men on the ridge had been either killed or wounded except three.

"Previous to this, however, some of the gallant gunners and the escort had succeeded in getting away the limbers of the guns, notwithstanding the heavy fire. The only gunner who had escaped the bullets then effectually destroyed the breech-blocks of the guns and rendered them utterly useless to the enemy. Out of a total force of 95 in action we had 75 killed and wounded, while of the 91st Yeomanry, one officer and 14 men were killed and one officer and 10 men wounded.

"The Boers, who were under Commandants Wessels, Ross, and M. Botha—the latter the son of the Commandant-General—also lost heavily. They had Commandant Vandermerwe and 30 men killed. Three of the Boer dead were buried by our men, and the remainder were carried away.

"Later in the day a Boer came in under a flag of truce and asked for an armistice in order to allow the enemy to attend to their wounded and bury their dead.

"The survivors on our side state that the Boers behaved badly to our wounded on the ridge after the position had been rushed. Every one who made a movement while lying on the ground was fired at. An officer of the Yeomanry asked permission from a Boer dressed in kharki to get water for our wounded. For reply the Boer discharged his Mauser point blank at the officer's head, but fortunately missed him.

"Several more of the enemy robbed and stripped our wounded and dead, and were only restrained from perpetrating further outrages by their commandants, who used sjamboks freely.

"The Boers were terribly angry when they discovered they were unable to move or use the guns which they had captured.

"Meanwhile Captain Scott had got together a small force and came up to the assistance of Damant's men.

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"Scott prepared to charge the position, when the enemy, mistaking his men for Rimington's column, hastily retreated. The fleeing Boers, however, fell right into the arms of Rimington's force, which was coming up to Damant's support. Rimington opened fire, and the enemy lost a few killed, while five were captured.

"Rimington, with the remainder of Damant's force, chased the flying enemy across the Wilge River.

"There appears to have been lately a large concentration of the enemy under De Wet at Tafelkop. Large parties of determined fighters under the immediate command of M. Botha, Meintjes, Tallvaard, Steenkamp, and Bucknill are now laying in ambush about the district, waiting to attack small columns."

In the south-western parts of the Orange Colony the process of clearance continued, the troops

bringing to the monotonous labour the utmost patience and cheeriness. In the north-western portion the troops under Major Pack Beresford (South African Constabulary) did a remarkable amount of work. At the end of December they made a dashing raid on Bothaville, which led to the capture of 36 prisoners, 80 horses, and 29 vehicles; and early in the new year, in Ukenaimier, they secured the whole of Field-Cornet Theron's laager and transport, with 35 prisoners, among them Field-Cornet Le Roux.

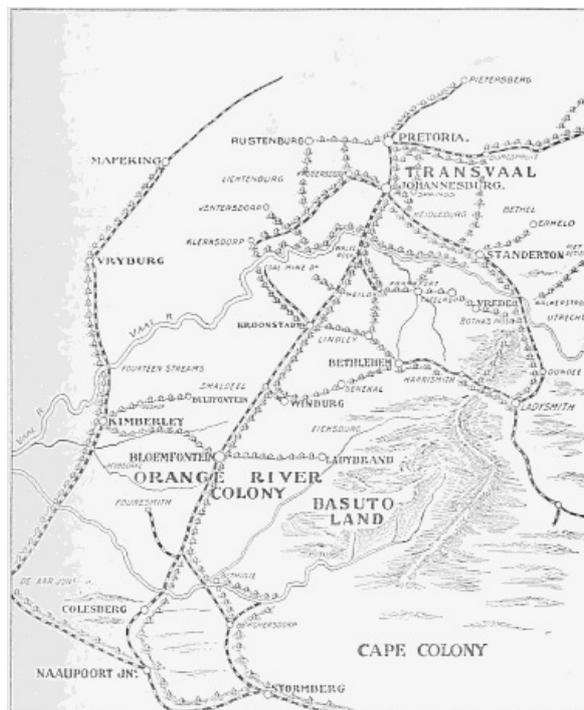
## CAPE COLONY

In the Cape Colony Major-General Sir H. H. Settle assumed command in succession to Major-General Wynne, who returned to England. Affairs otherwise remained as before, though the bands of Fouché and Myburg were disorganised and broken up by the excellent and continuous work of Colonel Munro and Scobell, and Lovat's invaluable Scouts. The guerillas were now fewer and farther between, spending their time lurking in the hills around Dordrecht, Jamestown, and Ladygrey, and indulging in acts of brigandage according to the state of their appetites. The great incident of the month was the capture of Kruitzinger. This was effected on the 16th of December. The raider, returning to the Cape Colony with an escort of one hundred men, came into contact near Hanover with the blockhouses held by the Grenadier Guards on the Naauwpoort-De Aar line of railway. The collision was sharp and short, and the commander and twelve of his men were wounded and finally captured. The rest of the escort escaped to the south, and were pursued into the Aberdeen district by troops under Colonel B. Doran and Major Lord W. Cavendish Bentinck.

A gradually widening line of blockhouses running 200 miles (from Lambert's Bay to Calvinia and Victoria West) threatened shortly to limit the raiders' sphere of operation, but till this was complete the chases continued. Colonel Doran, on the 9th, surprised and buffeted Nesser's rebels near Brandwagt, thirty miles east-north-east of Calvinia. One Boer was killed and eight were captured. The rest scuttled in small parties to the Clanwilliam district, in hope to reassemble and pounce on the next convoy coming their way. This much-desired prize at last appeared, and was attacked with intense energy at dawn on the 22nd. It was escorted by columns under Colonels Crabbe and Wyndham, who, despite the strength and desperate determination of the foe, managed to repulse them. But the next day the enemy, hungering after the tantalising supplies, betook themselves to a high ridge commanding the line of advance and there lay ensconced awaiting the precious convoy. But after all they went empty away, for the 16th Lancers, with tremendous dash, rushed the entrenchments and drove them at full gallop into space.

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## THE SITUATION—JANUARY 1902



**THE BLOCKHOUSE SYSTEM**

Over a year had passed since Lord Kitchener had embarked on the duties of Commander-in-Chief, and it was now possible to examine the system on which the war had been conducted, and the extent of progress made. The great and most important part of the work, which was still continuing, was the dividing of the settled from the unsettled portions of the country. The development of the blockhouse system, which effectually blocked the inroads of the marauders, went on apace, and already some 14,700 square miles of the Transvaal, and 17,000 square miles of the Orange River Colony were entirely shut off from their incursions. The area protected in the Transvaal was bounded on the north by a line from Zeerust to Middelburg, on the east from Middelburg to Standerton, on the south from Standerton to Klerksdorp, on the west from

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Klerksdorp to Zeerust. The Orange River Colony protected area went right across the colony south of the line from Kimberley to Winburg, Winburg to Bloemfontein, and Bloemfontein to Ladybrand. Within these boundaries the Boer could not exist, and beyond them the task of clearing the country and hunting down the enemy was pursued by means of small mobile columns.

The work and activity of these columns throughout the year had been enormous. Though about 10,000 Boers remained sprinkled in the field, some 53,000 (half of which number had been accounted for during the last year) had been either killed, wounded, imprisoned, or protected in concentration camps. In regard to these camps a great deal had been said by the enemies of the Government for the purpose of raising a cry of inhumanity against the Ministers, but in a speech made by Mr. Brodrick he lucidly and concisely examined and disposed of these charges. "So long," he said, "as every house in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony was used at once as a telegraph station, a recruiting office, and a refectory for the enemy, it became impossible for Lord Kitchener to ignore the necessity of relieving the country of the population which was rendering futile the exertions of our troops. Under these circumstances you have to consider not what their condition is now as compared with what it would be in time of peace, but what their condition is now as compared with what it would have been if they had been left on their farms. You have not got to consider the difference between luxury and privation, but between starvation and great suffering, and the less suffering we can arrange for." He further showed that to a large extent the disease in the camp was due to the fact that the majority of persons who came in (some compulsorily, but the greater number voluntarily) were already half-starved, their resources being at an end, and half-clothed, with their bodies in a condition fitted for the reception of disease. Under those circumstances a large death-rate was certain.

But, he asked, what nation engaged in war has at any time, in any country, or under any conditions, endeavoured to feed, clothe, house, nurse, doctor, and educate 150,000 persons, who have been left on their hands by the enemy, whom they had called on—as Lord Roberts did on two occasions—to take over and maintain their own belongings, but who said they would leave them on our hands. And again, he explained that far from any inhumanity being shown the enemy, many of the troubles had been prolonged by excessive leniency to men who, on many occasions, had violated the rules of civilised warfare. For the last year and before it there had been instances of firing on ambulances, professing to surrender and opening fire again, or firing on the wounded, breaches of parole and treachery, which had provoked no retaliation, no deviation from the usages of the civilised warfare on our part. He put forth reasons which accounted for the abnormal death-rate in the concentration camps, showing in the first place that a death-rate in a camp whence all the healthy males have been removed, cannot be looked on as an ordinary death-rate. He said: "If you look only at infants, it has been pointed out that in the thirty-three great towns of the Kingdom the mortality is 248 per 1000. Birkenhead goes up even to 362 per 1000. Therefore, those who compare the death-rate in these camps with the ordinary death-rate of the great towns are, of course, speaking wrongly. I have heard of people who think that measles cannot have much effect on the death-rate. But what of the *gardes mobiles* of Paris during the siege, whose death-rate was 40 per cent. in measles cases?" The critics who had discussed the camps had not taken the trouble to acquaint themselves with the ordinary statistics of Boer farm life, for, had they done so, they might have taken into consideration the fact that though many Boers had families of twenty children, as a rule, owing to the neglect, ignorance, or apathy of the parents, only two to a family survived. For this reason their population has not been equal to that of other nations in the same conditions. It is only by a study of the habits of life of these people prior to the English rule that it is possible to judge whether they had in the camps the comfort they were accustomed to. Luxury is but comparative, and, as has been shown, the luxury of soap and other sanitary precautions were ignored by the lower classes of Boers from earliest times. In regard to the matter of diet, that these persons received food at all was a marvel, considering that every convoy had to be protected from their marauding relatives by the lives of our own valiant men, men who themselves were not without anxiety as to how their own wives, mothers, and babes were faring at home in their absence, and who themselves, after a long career of hazard and usefulness, might share a less enviable fate.

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In addition to the accusations regarding the concentration camps, invented by traitors to the country that housed and sheltered them, there were other arguments to be met. "How is it, if you send this vast number of horses—if you have your columns—if you have good leaders who are well equipped—that our men cannot catch the enemy? Is your intelligence defective; is your system at fault?" The explanation given by Mr. Brodrick, one which showed a serious development of the war, was this: "The system of our country and people with regard to the Kaffir is different from the Boer system. The Boer columns have only too frequently in the last few months eluded our columns by hiding their tracks, by murdering the Kaffirs behind them. It is a serious charge, and I make it only for this reason, that I had occasion to notice that in the secret intelligence reports so many cases were mentioned of the murder of Kaffirs that I telegraphed to Lord Kitchener to ask whether this was a general practice, or whether it was the occasion of isolated persons. His reply was: 'Cold-blooded murders by the Boers have been frequent of late. It was only on the 10th inst. two dead infants were found with their hands tied behind them down a main shaft at Freylingstadt.' The leader of a column, whose letter I saw not long ago, mentioned that he was within two or three hours of a column of the enemy whom he had been pursuing for a considerable number of hours—that was at a Kaffir kraal—and he found the place deserted, but in one of the houses he found four little Kaffir boys, all under twelve, all with their heads battered in two or three hours before." Mr. Brodrick proceeded to explain that he did not bring this forward with the intention of making an impeachment against the whole

Boer nation. Indeed, the statement was forced from him by friends of the enemy who at one time jeered at the Government and our Military Commanders for not beating the Boers, and at another complained that negotiations and blandishments were not substituted for the slow system of physical pressure that was found by the Commander-in-Chief to be the surest means to the end—the peaceable end.

Both Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner decided that it was of no use either to threaten or to wheedle, the one and only thing was imperturbably to squeeze, reserving the policy of clemency for the proper season, when the surrendered Boers should have become our fellow-subjects. Accordingly we still continued to pour fresh regiments into the country. Four thousand trained mounted troops were now on their way out to replace those that needed rest, and India was providing four battalions and two more cavalry regiments in return for other troops which would take their place there. Some militia regiments were also being sent to the front, and further Colonial contingents, so that thus reinforced the tired veterans would receive a fillip for future operations.

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For reference in the future, when the resources of the Empire are studied, the following return of troops and horses sent out to South Africa between January 1, 1900, and December 31, 1901, may be found interesting:—

During	From Home and India.			
	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.	Horses
1900.				
January	1,099	45	28,072	10,229
February	1,362	47	32,356	5,701
March	1,130	63	26,539	5,501
April	480	18	11,692	4,522
May	321	4	7,020	2,481
June	271	7	10,092	2,649
July	120	6	2,107	1,277
August	93	7	3,137	832
September	128	3	4,644	1,187
October	113	4	2,337	2
November	125	18	2,331	895
December	106	9	1,080	591
Total for 1900	5,348	231	131,407	35,867
1901.				
January	288	12	3,333	2,471
February	275	3	5,225	1,495
March	782	9	21,591	2,328
April	366	12	4,498	2,724
May	304	15	3,509	2,801
June	287	11	5,532	2,481
July	99	3	2,055	2,314
August	179	13	3,546	1,672
September	197	4	1,958	2,128
October	191	13	1,466	2,401
November	270	7	5,350	2,856
December	619	16	11,686	5,024

Total for 1901	3,857	118	69,749	30,695
Grand Total	9,205	349	201,156	66,562

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During	Colonial Contingents.				Remounts from Abroad.
	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.	Horses.	
1900.					
January	134	2	2,080	2,145	840
February	69	3	1,313	1,384	2,703
March	149	1	2,739	3,065	10,341
April	45		834	880	7,879
May	81	1	1,349	1,690	7,761
June					12,551
July					3,305
August					5,293
September					8,680
October					2,213
November					1,120
December					5,272
Total for 1900	478	7	8,315	9,164	67,958
1901.					
January	17		567	580	4,224
February	77	1	1,424	1,391	5,991
March	162	6	3,806	2,722	9,022
April	86	3	1,672	1,951	4,850
May	3		2		4,384
June					4,742
July	9		7		9,130
August	21	2	324		7,800
September					7,550
October					10,728
November					8,099
December					15,463
Total for 1901	375	12	7,802	6,644	91,983
Grand Total	853	19	16,117	15,808	159,941

During	Totals.			
	Officers.	Warrant Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.	Horses.
1900.				
January	1,233	47	30,152	13,214

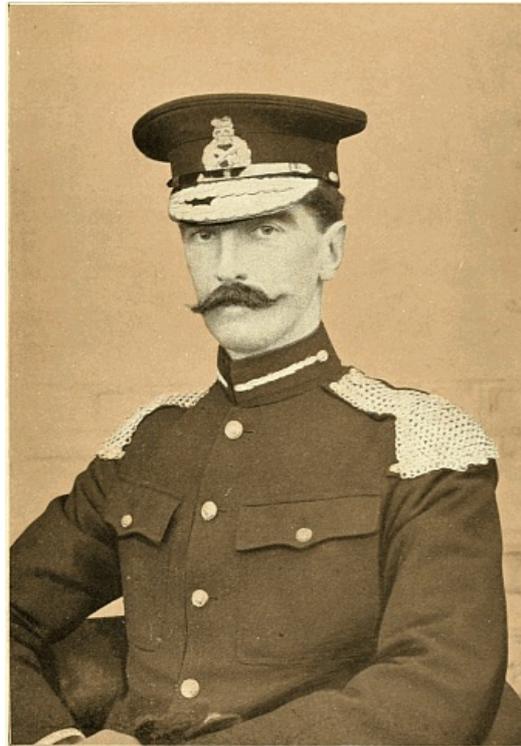
February	1,431	50	33,669	9,788
March	1,279	64	29,278	18,907
April	525	18	12,526	13,281
May	402	5	8,369	11,932
June	271	7	10,092	15,200
July	120	6	2,107	4,582
August	93	7	3,137	6,125
September	128	3	4,644	9,867
October	113	4	2,337	2,215
November	125	18	2,331	2,015
December	106	9	1,080	5,863
Total for 1900	5,826	238	139,722	112,989
1901.				
January	305	12	3,900	7,275
February	352	4	6,649	8,877
March	944	15	25,397	14,072
April	452	15	6,170	9,525
May	307	15	3,511	7,185
June	287	11	5,532	7,223
July	108	3	2,062	11,444
August	200	15	3,870	9,472
September	197	4	1,958	9,678
October	191	13	1,466	13,129
November	270	7	5,350	10,955
December	619	16	11,686	20,487
Total for 1901	4,232	130	77,551	129,322
Grand Total	10,058	368	217,273	242,311

Owing to the efficacy of Lord Kitchener's slow but sure efforts the railway disasters became fewer. In October 1900 the railway was cut thirty-two times, or more than once per day. In November thirty times, in December twenty-one times, in January sixteen, in February (after De Wet's incursion into Cape Colony) thirty, in March eighteen, in April eighteen, in May twelve, in June eight, in July four, in August four, in September two, and in October not at all. Thus it became possible for more than a hundred refugees per week to resume work at Johannesburg.

The supreme authority throughout the Transvaal rested with Lord Kitchener. Civil considerations had of necessity to give way to military exigency. The work of the civil authorities was naturally restricted and subject to limitations from which on the return to normal conditions it would be freed. Nevertheless they acted with foresight, preparing such seeds as would ensure a good harvest in time to come. In a report made to Mr. Chamberlain in December, Lord Milner spoke hopefully of this happy era: "We have come into possession of a magnificent estate, which has been woefully mismanaged. As far as local administration is concerned—I am not speaking of the political development of South Africa as a whole—it requires no extraordinary statesmanship, it simply requires ordinary decent government and reasonable liberality in public finance to ensure not only a great advance in material prosperity, but in all the essentials of civilisation." Lord Milner also expressed the opinion that, terrible as had been the ravages of the war, the great fact remained that the Transvaal possesses an amount of mineral wealth virtually unaffected by the war which will ensure the prosperity of South Africa for the next fifty years, and other resources, both industrial and agricultural, which, properly developed, should make it a rich country, humanly speaking, for ever.

Before constructing the blockhouse lines Lord Kitchener determined that the enemy must be deprived of his guns. His efforts in that direction were speedily rewarded. By June 1901 nearly

the whole Boer artillery was captured or had been destroyed by the Boers themselves. General French was responsible for the capture of guns in the Eastern Transvaal, and we know how effectively his work was carried out. General Babington deprived Delarey of nine guns, two were taken by Rawlinson and more by Dartnell and others. In all twenty-seven guns were reported to have been taken during the year; twenty-six of them during the months of February, March, April, and May. They included half-a-dozen pom-poms, seven or eight Maxims, several 15-pounders, Krupp guns of varying calibre, Creusot, Hotchkiss, and quick-firing guns. In addition to these armaments, more than half-a-dozen of our own guns taken from British positions at various times were recovered. Of rifles 7993 were captured, and during the year it was estimated that 8589 vehicles had been taken by the British. In fact the process of the gradual depletion of the enemy's resources had been most effective. The number of prisoners taken was about 27,000. The surrenders prior to Lord Kitchener's proclamation in August had averaged about 500 a month. During the later months the surrenders decreased, while the number of prisoners captured increased. Naturally at the close of the year there was a decline in the number of Boer casualties, for the continued attrition of the Boer resistance necessarily reduced the number of antagonists accounted for.



**GENERAL BABINGTON.**

Photo Charles Knight, London.

In an intercepted letter from Mr. Schalk Burger to Mr. Steyn, dated Tautesberg, March 21, 1901, stating that the condition of the Boers at that time was becoming very serious, the Acting President said:—

“The question is, what must we, what shall we do? May we, can we, continue the struggle further? I pray the Lord day and night to give us wisdom and light hereon, and cause us not to sin against His will, but also not to fall into disbelief. If we are convinced that our last resources are exhausted, our last strength broken, we must bow down and surrender ourselves to the power of the enemy, no matter how bitter this cup may be to us. I can, however, not yet decide upon this latter course. My hope and trust is still that we shall be delivered and saved; the sacrifices of lives, prayers, and misery, are too great not to be crowned with our hopes and expectations, according to our belief. As you will see for yourself, from the correspondence between Lord Kitchener and Commandant-General Botha, there is no mention of terms which meet us in any way, therefore I keep to the decision to surrender unconditionally if this must happen, which I trust God forbid. No, let us keep our nation unsullied, to receive no favour from our enemy, that the gulf which exists through former years and this cruel war remains and still widens. ‘Where there is a will there’s a way,’ and if we are not exiled, we can, by exerting our strength, form committees, and supported by loving gifts from Europe, again build up our country and people, to advance our language and religion, to educate our children, and to keep alive our oppressed national spirit and cause it to come to life again. This is my ideal.”

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Many months had now elapsed since the penning of that letter, and the condition of the Boers had gone from bad to worse. Their hitherto stubborn resistance was now little more than suicidal lunacy. A rough estimate of their losses for the year, so far as could be judged, is shown in the following table:—

1901.	Killed.	Wounded.	Prisoners.	Surrenders.	Total.
January					

February	{	Killed and wounded, 670		Prisoners and surrenders, 2,174		}	2,844
March							
April							
May		153	90	1,512	535		2,290
June		223	109	1,074	504		1,910
July		147	111	1,045	367		1,670
August		202	86	1,504	549		2,341
September		170	114	1,379	393		2,056
October		425	368	980	197		1,970
November		233	269	1,156	93		1,751
December		164	97	1,106	121		1,488
Total		1,717	1,244	9,756	2,759		18,320

Lord Milner, in reviewing the situation at the end of the year, commended the marked change which had come to pass:—

“Six months ago the enemy were everywhere, outside the principal towns. It is true they held nothing, but they raided wherever they pleased, and, though mostly in small bodies, which made little or no attempt at resistance when seriously pressed, they almost invariably returned to their old haunts when the pressure was over. It looked as though the process might go on indefinitely. I had every opportunity of watching it, for during the first two months of my residence here it was in full swing in the immediate neighbourhood. There were half-a-dozen Boer strongholds, or rather trysting-places, quite close to Pretoria and Johannesburg, and the country round was quite useless to us for any purpose but that of marching through it, while the enemy seemed to find no difficulty in subsisting there. To-day, on the other hand, a great quadrilateral, bounded roughly as follows: on the east by the Wilge River and a line drawn from its head-waters to Villiersdorp on the Vaal River; on the south, by the Vaal River from Villiersdorp to about Klerksdorp; on the west, by an irregular line drawn from Klerksdorp to the centre of the Magaliesberg Range; and on the north, by that range and the Pretoria-Delagoa Bay Railway, is virtually denied to the enemy. This area is more important, economically, politically, and strategically than all the rest of the Transvaal. It contains not only Pretoria and the whole of the Rand mining area, but one of the most important coalfields and a large extent of the best agricultural land. Similarly, a great improvement is manifest in the southern part of the Orange River Colony—the districts lying south of a line drawn from Ladybrand to Bloemfontein, and thence westward through Boshof to the colonial border. It would not be true to say that this region is entirely clear of the enemy, but great progress has recently been made in clearing it. Strategically this is a very important region owing to its central position, and to the fact that it connects the northern states with the ‘friendly and allied’ districts of Cape Colony.”

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In discussing the Cape rebels he declared that—

“If the enemy now find this region difficult to live in, and impossible to traverse in any considerable numbers, the circumstance is both militarily and politically important, for it means that their dwindling numbers in the late Republics are now deprived of that reinforcement from the south, which has all along been of such immense assistance to them. For even holding, as I do (though competent opinions differ on the subject), that the number of colonial rebels who have actually crossed the border during the past twelve months has not been large, it would be hard to overestimate the moral support which Colonial information, sympathy, and encouragement, and the touch with the outside world maintained by free communication with Cape Colony, has hitherto afforded to the enemy. Such communication is now greatly hampered, and may soon become absolutely impossible.”

On the 25th of January a Peace Movement was made by the Dutch Government, in which it was proposed that the British Government should give safe conducts to three Boer delegates in order that they might go from Europe to induce their fighting compatriots to conclude a treaty of peace. Since a treaty is a compact between two Governments, and since one of the Governments—the Boer Government—ceased, with the annexation of the Boer territories, to exist, there was only one reply possible to the British Government, and this reply was given. The following is the text of the document:—

“THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE TO BARON GERICKE.

“FOREIGN OFFICE, *January 29, 1902.*

“SIR,—You were good enough to lay before me on the 25th instant a communication from the Netherland Government, in which it was proposed that, with the object of bringing the war to an end, his Majesty’s Government might grant a safe conduct to the Boer delegates now in Holland for the purpose of enabling them to confer with the Boer leaders in South Africa. It is suggested that after the conference the delegates

might return to Europe with power to conclude a Treaty of Peace with this country, and the Netherland Government intimate that, in this event, they might at a later stage be instrumental in placing the Boer Plenipotentiaries in relation with the Plenipotentiaries who might be appointed by his Majesty's Government.

"The Netherland Government intimate that if this project commends itself to his Majesty's Government, they will inquire of the delegates whether they are prepared to make the suggested visit to South Africa.

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"It may therefore be inferred that the communication which I received from you was made on the responsibility of the Netherland Government alone, and without authority from the Boer delegates or leaders.

"His Majesty's Government have given it their best consideration, and, whilst they entirely appreciate the motives of humanity which have led the Netherland Government to make this proposal, they feel that they must adhere to the decision, adopted and publicly announced by them some months after the commencement of hostilities by the Boers, that it is not their intention to accept the intervention of any foreign Power in the South African War.

"Should the Boer delegates themselves desire to lay a request for safe conduct before his Majesty's Government, there is no reason why they should not do so. But his Majesty's Government are obviously not in a position to express an opinion on any such application until they have received it and are aware of its precise nature, and the grounds on which the request is made.

"I may, however, point out that it is not at present clear to his Majesty's Government that the delegates retain any influence over the representatives of the Boers in South Africa, or have any voice in their councils. They are stated by the Netherland Government to have no letters of credence or instructions later in date than March 1900. His Majesty's Government had, on the other hand, understood that all powers of government, including those of negotiation, were now completely vested in Mr. Steyn for the Boers of the Orange River Colony, and in Mr. Schalk Burger for those of the Transvaal.

"If this be so, it is evident that the quickest and most satisfactory means of arranging a settlement would be by direct communication between the leaders of the Boer forces in South Africa and the Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's forces, who has already been instructed to forward immediately any offers he may receive for the consideration of his Majesty's Government.

"In these circumstances his Majesty's Government have decided that if the Boer leaders should desire to enter into negotiations for the purpose of bringing the war to an end, those negotiations must take place, not in Europe, but in South Africa.

"It should, moreover, be borne in mind that if the Boer delegates are to occupy time in visiting South Africa, in consulting with the Boer leaders in the field, and in returning to Europe for the purpose of making known the results of their errand, a period of at least three months would elapse, during which hostilities would be prolonged, and much human suffering, perhaps needlessly, occasioned.

"I have, &c.,

(Signed) "LANSDOWNE."

Thus the situation remained much the same as before, save that the British more than ever realised the necessity of bringing home to the Boers the fact that the death-blow to their independence had been struck by Kruger's insolent ultimatum of October 1899.

## THE LOYALISTS OF THE CAPE COLONY



**MAP OF THE WESTERN PORTION OF CAPE COLONY**

Regarding this remarkable and long-suffering set of men, it would be possible to write a volume. Space limits us to a few lines. Yet, after all, deeds like theirs are best sung in the finest song of all—the song that has no sound. Some one has asked, What constitutes a State? The answer applies to those, the loyal and true, who have fought and suffered in the cause of home and country.

“Men who their duties know  
But know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain,  
Prevent the long-aimed blow  
And crush the Tyrant while they rend the chain:  
These constitute a State.”

And these bulwarks of Great Britain’s might were to be found in great strength in South Africa. Other colonies had contributed most generously in men and money, but no other colony had been called on to endure what the Cape Colony had endured, and thus enduring, to act and to pay as this colony had acted and paid. Almost from the commencement of hostilities the Colonial forces—the Cape Mounted Rifles, Cape Police, South Rhodesian Volunteers, and others<sup>[10]</sup>—had shown their grit and usefulness in the field and covered themselves with imperishable glory. If the burden of their maintenance had fallen hard on the resources of the country, the laurels they had won had clothed the harshness with an evergreen beauty, for the country must be eternally proud of the men who saved Wepener and of those who struggled and helped to save Mafeking. The outlines of Wepener’s story have been given, and a little has been said of the Rhodesia Regiment that was raised by Colonel Plumer to protect the border in case of war, and in looking back over their operations it is difficult to say whether by their usefulness or their dash the Colonial “Irregulars” rendered themselves most conspicuous. During the war, of the Rhodesians Colonel Spreckley, Captain Crewe, Captain Butters, and Lieutenant Anderson lost their lives, but the borders of Rhodesia were protected. During the siege of Wepener the Cape Mounted Rifles fought in more engagements than an ordinary General will count in a lifetime—yet they saved the place and came out of it to fight a renewed set of battles!

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It must be admitted that all the Colonial troops entered into their work with the same cheeriness and military ardour, though all had not the same chance to win fame. The Tabaksberg engagement on 29th January afforded the Kaffrarian Rifles an opportunity of distinguishing themselves, and the following quotation from a letter from Colonel Crewe (commanding the Colonial Division in the Field) to the Mayor of East London serves to show how they availed themselves of it:—

“I am sure you will be pleased to hear of the gallant conduct of the Kaffrarian Rifles at the recent engagement at Tabaksberg on 29th January last, when the force under my command, some 700 in all, were engaged by the forces of De Wet and Steyn. With odds of 2500 to 700 against us, we were able to successfully maintain our position owing to the extreme bravery of the men I have the honour to command. Where all did well, the Kaffrarian Rifles did especially fine service. To Major Price and Captain Fairweather much of this success is due, and amongst the non-commissioned officers and men it is difficult to pick out names for special mention where all did so well. I am sure East London will be prouder than ever of her gallant sons. Both General C. Knox and Lord Kitchener have expressed their admiration of the behaviour of all ranks on that day.”

It seems unfair to make special mention of any single branch of the Colonial Volunteer Service, when all the Cape loyalists behaved in some way like “trumps” or veterans. The permanent forces of the Cape Government were grandly supported almost from the very first by the Cape Garrison Artillery, the Duke of Edinburgh’s Own, and the Cape Town Highlanders, and these, when the “call to arms” came, were finally backed up by the Town Guards, the Peninsula Horse, and other irregular forces that had been raised practically at a moment’s notice—drawn straight from the hearth and home to throw in their lot with the soldiers in the field. It was thanks to these that the colony was saved, and thanks to the Town Guard that the regular and irregular forces and volunteers were freed to push on to the front. Indeed, at one period of the war, the Cape Town Guard (which enrolled for three months and hung on to the end) were left almost entirely alone for the protection of the towns.

Lord Milner, who was greatly impressed by the conduct of the volunteers, thus expressed himself on the subject: “It is indeed calculated to exercise a most important and, I believe, beneficial influence upon the South African politics of the future. Among the principal causes of the trouble of the past and present was the contempt felt by the Africander countryman, used to riding and shooting, and generally in possession of a good rifle and plenty of cartridges, for other white men less habituated to arms than he was himself. That feeling can hardly survive the experience of the past twelve months, and especially of the last six weeks. The splendid fighting of the despised Johannesburgers, of the Imperial Light Horse, and of the other South African Colonial Corps has become a matter of history, and the present levee *en masse* of the British people, including the townsmen, of this Colony, is proof positive that when the necessity is really felt they are equal to the best in courage and public spirit. In this respect the events of the past few months, unfortunate as they have been in many ways, have undoubtedly their brighter side. The mutual respect of the two principal white races is the first condition of a healthy political life in the South Africa of the future. It is possible that if the extreme strain of the most recent developments of the war had never been felt throughout Cape Colony the British inhabitants would never have had the opportunity of showing that they were inferior to none in their willingness to bear all the burdens of citizenship, including that of personal service.”

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It may be remembered that on the 6th of February 1901 Brigadier-General Brabant was appointed to the command of the force which was then being raised for the defence of the Cape Colony, with Colonel Girouard as his chief staff officer. His headquarters were at East London,

where the organisation proceeded, expanding eventually northward and westward, taking in district after district, so as to enable the Imperial military forces ultimately to concentrate in the Orange River and Transvaal Colonies. Colonel H. Cooper, C.M.G., A.D.C., commanded the Cape Town District, and Major Coke took a prominent part in the organisation of the irregular corps. The towns which provided guards were mentioned in a previous volume, but particulars were not then available.

The Stellenbosch Town Guard contained some of the smartest members of the Colonial Defence Force. Like one man they enrolled themselves, only too proud to assist in the national cause. Very soon there were collected over a hundred of them under the following officers: Captain Harry Beyers, Lieutenant H. P. Shepherd, Lieutenant J. L. Scott, Hon. Surgeon-Captain J. W. C. Macpherson.

On the 15th January 1901 the Commandant read the proclamation of Martial Law in the Stellenbosch Court-house. From that date, thirty members of the Town Guard were called out to do permanent duty. At first some difficulty arose as to where the men were to be housed, &c., but eventually the Masonic Building was placed at the disposal of the Permanent Guard. "In this building," wrote a colonial correspondent, "Captain Harry Beyers, the officer in command of the Guard, has his office, where all permits and passes are issued; the Commandant of the District, who, by the way, lives at the Remount Station about five miles out of the town, comes in three times a week to transact any military business. The barrack-room is a fine and large hall where the men have their meals and also sleep. The rifles are all in racks at the further end of the hall; these racks are all numbered, and every man knows his number. The place and its surroundings are kept scrupulously clean, and a sentry, who is always to be seen at the gate, stops any loiterer from entering the parade ground, where every morning at seven o'clock and every afternoon at six o'clock the men are properly drilled by the popular 'Jimmy' Hills, the Colour-Sergeant Major, who is, like his captain, an old hand at the game."

In the beginning of July, when the Commandant of No. 7 Area, Colonel Helme, inspected the Guards, he was surprised to note the efficiency and smartness of the men. In an address to them he complimented the commanding officer for the work done; he also mentioned that the Stellenbosch Town Guard was the best turned out Guard in his area.

A brief description of the Civil Service Company of the Cape Town Guards serves to give a general idea of the nature of these valuable protectors of the city. The Company was under the command of Captain Callcott Stevens, of the Civil Commissioner's Office, Cape Town, who had previously seen active service with the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles in the Basuto Campaign of 1880-81. The section commanders of the Company were Lieutenant Frank W. Waldron, A.M.I.C.E., of the Department of the Commissioner for Public Works; Lieutenant William A. Collard, Deputy-Assistant Treasurer, Treasury Department; Lieutenant Arthur A. Beck, of the Colonial Secretary's Department; Lieutenant Bertram E. Shepperson, of the Treasury; and Lieutenant Charles Murray, of the Department of Public Education. The nominal strength of the Company was 142 members. It was raised in one afternoon—immediately the ministerial authority for its enrolment was obtained. A similar degree of rapidity was manifested in many other companies of the Guards at the time of the crisis, and this martial impetuosity reflected immense credit on the manhood of the city—on its patriotism, its disinterestedness, and its pluck.

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The Civil Service Company consisted of five sections, and was fully representative of the Departments of the Prime Minister, the Commissioner for Public Works, the Treasury, the Colonial Office, and the Attorney-General, together with all the offices and sub-departments controlled by these ministerial divisions. An excellent spirit was manifested throughout by all ranks; and much laborious work was done in the way of guards mounted over important arsenals, magazines, and valuable stores. The original period of three months for which the Guards enrolled passed only too quickly, but their services were still urgently required, and they continued to be called upon for further periods of service, to which an excellent response was made—thus the military authorities were enabled to release many men of the regular forces for service in the fighting line, where they were much needed.

Among the various companies of the Town Guard were many prominent Government officials and business and professional men, whose names are familiar in the colony. It would be impossible to reprint the rolls of all the companies, but a list of names of some of the well-known persons who appeared in the new character of defenders of the Empire is here quoted:—

A. Allen, G. T. Amphlett, Kitchener Andersen, H. J. Andrews, H. Arderne, Robert Armour, R. H. Atwell, R. J. Austin, R. E. Ball, F. C. Berrangé, F. L. Bishop, J. J. Bisset, G. Bolus, W. H. Bond, J. Brydone, W. P. Buchanan, J. C. Carstens, J. D. Cartwright, M.L.A., J. H. Clark, Wm. Cleghorn, W. F. Colman, Sydney Cowper, C.M.G., Peter Davidson, A. Dawson, Theo. De Marillac, R. Dickson, Dennis Edwards, E. J. Edwards, W. A. Fairbridge, Dr. E. B. Fuller, J. Garlick, C. M. Gibbs, J. Gillett, C. G. Goodison, C. R. Goodspeed, W. Hanson, W. Hare, A. T. Hennessy, J. W. Herbert, T. Herbert, Dr. J. Hewat, J. J. Hill, Norman Hilliard, J. Hodgson, C. F. Hoffman, B. Hogsett, J. W. Honey, Alf. S. Hosking, J. W. Irwin, W. H. Johnstone, Howel Jones, Sir H. H. Juta, K.C., J. M. King, J. R. Lancaster, R. A. Lambart, H. G. Legg, E. B. Lewis, Alex. Lipp, J. E. Lloyd, W. B. Low, D. A. MacDonald, Walter Marshall, A. H. Mathew, Rob. M. Maxwell, D. E. McConnell, A. M'Corkindale, D. McKee, C. S. Meechan, Donald Menzies, Stavros Mitchel, R. H. C. Montague, E. J. Moore, W. E. Moore, J. Barry Munnik, C. S. Neave, E. T. M. Notcutt, A. Palmer, D. S. Pargiter, J. Parker, Dr. T. L. Parry, J. O. Paterson, W. I. Perrott, F. Plant, A. Plint, R. H. Pritchard, A. Ransome, P. Raphael, A. B. Reid, J. Richards, H. P. B. Rigby, A. J. Robb, H. D. Robertson, G. Crosland Robinson, D. D. Ross, Pierce Ryan, J. Sanderson, P. J. Savage, A. D. Scott, G. Scott, M. W. Searle, K.C., Fred. Wm. Smith, J. H. Smithers, C. E. Solomon, Will. G. Sprigg, W. Stableford, James M. A. Stephen, Calcott M. Stevens, P. Stewart, F. L. St. Leger, R. Stultaford, D. Tennant, N. P. Thesen, A. W. Townshend, Geo. Trill, T. Upington, E. H. Von Witt, Joseph

Among the number were many men of independent means who were contented to fill any place assigned to them, to take their share of duty as mere privates, and go through the same drudgery of drill as the ordinary raw recruit.

In February 1901 it was computed that 11,000 South African irregulars had been raised during the foregoing three months, and that of these Cape Town itself had contributed 5000, but finally, when, owing to the extension of the area of rebellion and the invasion of the Boers, a large augmentation of the defence force became necessary, further assistance was cheerfully given, the number of District Mounted troops and Town Guards amounting in a short time to over 18,000 men. This number out of a male (white) population of 114,000 speaks for itself.

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It is impossible in a few lines to do justice to all the 18,000 members of this remarkable Colonial army, this goodly band of loyalists, English and Dutch, who stood at attention, ready, every man of them, to shed his heart's blood in the defence of his home and the maintenance of the prestige of the Empire. Noble work was done by them in various districts, work sometimes of the quiet and unostentatious kind that looks for and meets with no reward. But for these men various small towns in different parts of the Colony must have fallen into the enemy's hands, and have made stepping-stones to still further conquest: but for them the country might have become chaos—looting and ruin would have spread wider and wider afield—but for them the idea of driving the British into the sea might have been more than an empty boast. *They* helped to turn the scale at a critical moment—the weight of their unanimous loyalty proved to the Boers the vanity of their dream!

British supremacy has been well maintained. The period of warfare is nearing an end, and all are thankful that a policy of generosity will be extended to the Boers. But there is an old proverb which advises us to "be just before we are generous," and it is hoped that in the coming by-and-by the great debt that the Empire owes her Cape loyalists may not only be ever remembered but adequately rewarded.

## THE SOLDIERS' CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

The work done by the Soldiers' Christian Association in South Africa has been so incessant and far-reaching that it deserves special recognition. In no previous war has so much interest and sympathy been manifested in its multifarious operations, and it is difficult to define exactly how far the ramifications of this commendable undertaking extended. Innumerable War Funds, Comforts' Committees, Soldiers' Work Committees, Soldiers' Home Committees, and various bodies of a similar nature were organised and set to work with the best results, whilst officers and men were united in their praise and gratitude for the splendid efforts which were made in order to ameliorate their lot in the field, in camp, and in hospital.

The Soldiers' Christian Association—the Military Department of the Young Men's Christian Association—was one of the first organisations in the field, and on the 9th of November 1899 the following notice appeared in "Orders":—

### LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS.

#### *Notice.*

Permission has been given to the Soldiers' Christian Association to send out tents and writing materials for the troops.

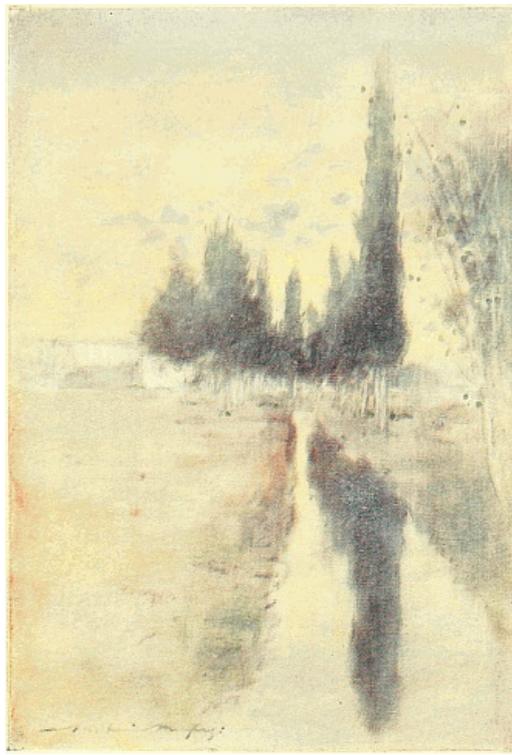
Facilities are to be accorded to the Association to put up tents at fixed stations as far as military requirement will permit.

THE CASTLE, CAPE TOWN,

*November 9, 1899.*

About the middle of December 1899 a fully-equipped and specially-qualified band of eight workers was sent to South Africa from the head office in London, Mr. A. H. Wheeler (who has since died) being in charge, and during the campaign thirty workers were employed on the staff of the Association, many of these signing on in South Africa.

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**A DUTCH VILLAGE NEAR  
EDENBURG.**

From "War Impressions" by Mortimer Menpes, by  
arrangement with Messrs A. & C. Black.

As far as was possible and practicable, workers were attached to the main columns, having with them large green canvas marquees, each capable of seating 250 men. In the daytime the marquees were utilised for reading, correspondence, and recreative purposes, and in the evening gospel meetings were conducted by the representatives of the Association, many of the soldiers taking an active part in the proceedings. Reading matter and stationery, and goods of that nature, were at all times freely supplied to the troops, it being an object of the Association to grant everything to the men free of cost. In addition to the eight marquees in the country, there were also four wood and iron buildings, with a seating capacity for 300 men. These were placed at fixed camps along the lines of communication. The building at the Woodstock Hospital Camp proved of immense benefit to the multitudes of invalided troops at that large and well-known military depot.

During the campaign several thousands of pounds sterling were contributed towards the work, whilst the Soldiers' Christian Association was directly represented at the following camps:—Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Orange River, Enslin, Kimberley, Dronfield, Sterkstroom, Dordrecht, Arundel, Boshof, Hoopstad, Bloemfontein, Kroonstad, Pretoria, Eerste Fabriken, Estcourt, Frere, Dewdrop, Ladysmith, Elandslaagte, Ingagane, and Newcastle, where active operations were carried on by the staff of thirty workers. The main base of operations was Cape Town, whence supplies to the numerous representatives were despatched all over South Africa by the officials at headquarters, supplies being sent from the London office at Exeter Hall at regular intervals to the Cape Town depot, and thus throughout the many months of the Association's work in the field every camp where the work has been conducted was kept fully supplied with goods for the troops. Gratifying expressions of appreciation were received from several of the Generals and many of the officers regarding the good work of the Association, while the men were at all times profoundly grateful for all the pains expended for their comfort and welfare by Mr. W. Gordon Sprigg and his devoted colleagues.

Before leaving South Africa for England, the Commander-in-Chief, Field-Marshal Earl Roberts, sent the following letter to Mr. Will Gordon Sprigg, F.R.G.S., General Secretary of the Cape Town Young Men's Christian Association, and Honorary Secretary in South Africa of the Soldiers' Christian Association, expressive of his lordship's interest in, and appreciation of, the work:—

*"CAPE TOWN, 11th December 1900.*

"I am desired by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to assure you of his lordship's high appreciation of the good work done by the Soldiers' Christian Association in South Africa. Lord Roberts has watched your work with much interest, and feels sure that the success which has attended your efforts in the past will continue in the future.

"His lordship wishes me to ask you to tender to all the members of your staff and co-workers his best thanks for their excellent services, and, in leaving South Africa to-day, he wishes you all good-bye and God-speed.

(Signed) "W. V. COWAN, *Lieut.-Colonel,*  
*Military Secretary.*"

## FOOTNOTES:

[10] See vol. iii. p. 161.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### THE NEW YEAR—JANUARY 1902

#### TRANSVAAL (EAST)

The troops of General Botha, weakened and disintegrated, still continued a species of opposition which was met by the persistent activity of the British commanders. The blockhouse system developed, enclosing vast areas which were first carefully swept by the British troops, and subsequently occupied by a network of Constabulary Posts. With the continued extension of the blockhouse lines, the strain of night duty, and the arduous labours of constructing fences, trenches, and ramparts, fell heavily on the lessening garrisons of individual blockhouses. Yet these overworked, fatigued troops never failed to respond with spirit and cheerfulness to every fresh call made upon them.

General B. Hamilton, after the capture of General Erasmus, returned to Ermelo. Knowing that a Boer laager was located in his vicinity, he directed Colonel Wing to make a night raid upon Witbank, some twenty-two miles to north-west of him. Simultaneously Colonel Mackenzie arranged a descent on the same objective from the neighbourhood of Carolina—a co-operative movement which acted splendidly and resulted in the capture of 42 prisoners, including Major Wolmarans, Captain Wolmarans, and Lieutenant Malan (all of the Staats Artillery), together with ammunition and camp equipment. Not completely satisfied with the haul, and suspecting that the Boers, scattered for the nonce, would return to their old haunt, General Hamilton, with great wiliness, planned a second night raid in the same locality. His surmises proved correct. The stragglers had returned, but, luckily for them, their outlying pickets gave the alarm in time, and enabled them to escape in hot haste. They secured a fair start, and though a spirited chase after flying burghers was carried on for seven miles, some of them managed to get off. Others were ridden down, and 32 prisoners were secured. Mules, cattle, and vehicles swelled the bag. On the 18th General Hamilton made a third night expedition in deplorable weather and over atrocious ground, and captured 27 prisoners. And yet another dash (on the 24th) from Ermelo towards Boschmansfontein put him in possession of twelve more of the enemy. The greatest triumph was achieved on the 26th, Colonel Wools-Sampson and his Intelligence Staff being mainly instrumental in procuring the success of the affair. Picked men and horses were drawn from the columns under General Spens, Colonels Allenby, Mackenzie, and Stewart. These, in ignorance till the last moment of the nature of their mission, were suddenly directed on Tafel Kop (ten miles north-west of Ermelo). It was now found that the Boer tracks forked in two, and therefore the force divided. General B. Hamilton's party proceeded one way in the pouring rain, and sure enough found a huge laager at Nelspan. This they charged grandly, and in a few moments a swarm of Boers fled through the tempest, followed for miles by the troops with ardour little damped by the nature of the weather. The other way was taken by a party under Major Pratt (Durham Light Infantry), who drove the Boers towards the Ermelo-Standerton line of blockhouses, where the luckless Dutchmen were forced to surrender. Other bands were also run to earth, and in all 82 prisoners—among them Field-Cornet de Villiers, Corporal de Jager (Staats Artillery), and Mr. de Jager, formerly of the First Volksraad—were the reward of this brilliant enterprise. General Hamilton by these dashing exploits (during the last his troops covered fifty-two miles in twenty-four hours) had considerably unnerved the enemy, who now, both by night and by day, lived on tenter-hooks, and consequently evaded as much as possible all contact with the British troops. In his operations the General was materially assisted by the activities of the columns under General Plumer, Colonels Pulteney and Colville, who effectually barred all exits to the south, and kept the enemy within range of General B. Hamilton's schemes. General Plumer scored on the 25th. Then, 24 prisoners were hemmed in and taken in the kloofs between Spitz Kop and Castrols Nek. Colonel Fry (West Yorkshire Regiment) seized thirty more straggling burghers who had run their heads against the Piet Retief-Wakkerstroom blockhouse line. Colonel Mackenzie was meanwhile guarding the northern avenues of escape leading across the Delagoa Railway in order to frustrate plans for a junction between Botha and Viljoen, but the last ruffian remained north of the railway at a farm between Boschoek and Kruger's Post, where, on the 25th, he was cleverly captured by a detachment of the Royal Irish under Major Orr. Thus the enemy lost one of his most prominent and trusted leaders, one who nursed a supreme hatred for the British. The weather continued deplorable—fogs, mist, and incessant rain baulked the best enterprises of the troops—but on the 21st 300 Boers were encountered by Colonels Park and Urmston, and in spite of the elements some captures were made. On the 24th, near Houtenbek, another guerilla gang, with whom the Boer Government was said to be, was encountered. But this will-o'-the-wisp disappeared at the first shot into the broken country north of Roosenekal.

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January closed with the departure from Lydenburg of Colonel Urmston, who escorted General B. Viljoen and other prisoners to the railway at Machadodorp.

Early in February, east of Springs, the columns under General G. Hamilton and Colonel Wing made an important haul. The Boers had broken back to the west of the constabulary posts, and clung tenaciously to their ground—most probably in fear of facing, in their efforts to escape, the fire-swept region of the blockhouse lines. They were exceedingly wary, and the reward of very hard labour on the part of the British columns was meagre until the 3rd February, when, at Grootpan, 31 burghers with their transport were captured, and 3 killed.

### **TRANSVAAL (NORTH)**

Operations here were handicapped by horse sickness. Colonel Colenbrander, having moved to the south, gave General Beyers the leisure to conceive a neat little plan for an attack on Pietersburg, and the simultaneous removal of such peaceably-minded burghers as occupied the refuge camp there. The attack on the town began at 4.20 A.M. on the 24th January, and continued hotly for some twenty minutes, after which Beyers was repulsed with the loss of three of his band, while three others lay dangerously wounded within 300 yards of the defence. The Dutchman succeeded under cover of darkness, however, in getting away a certain number of "neutral" burghers, who doubtless were acting in collusion with him. In the engagement the Volunteer Town Guard, who had turned out to the assistance of the troops, displayed grit and steadiness of a remarkable order. His attack having failed, Beyers retired to the south-east, but some eleven of his band were caught on the 6th of February by Major Vallancey and a small force, hunting from Pietersburg.

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### **TRANSVAAL (WEST)**

Colonel Colenbrander was now assisting (with Lord Methuen and Colonel Hickie) in the clearance of the western regions. Of Lord Methuen's raids and repeated successes it would be tedious to write, though each was carried out at the risk of life and limb, and with consummate dash and endurance. On the 16th of January a Free State laager, with twenty-four burghers, and mules, horses, carts, cattle, and waggons, was captured on the way from Vryburg to Lichtenburg. Near here, while a detachment of Yeomanry were reconnoitring, the Boers got their revenge. Celliers, with 200 men, pounced on the small British party, who, though they fought bravely, had 40 of their number captured: 8 were killed and 5 wounded. On the 30th, after a brisk engagement, Celliers was sent flying to the west by Lord Methuen, who returned to Klerksdorp on the 1st of February. His troops after a rest proceeded, under Colonel Von Donop, towards Wolmaranstad. On the way they effected the capture of 36 prisoners, 49 horses, 25 waggons, and 15 Cape carts by means of a neatly-contrived surprise for Potgieter, who narrowly escaped falling into their hands. By night they surrounded his laager, which was found at Rhenoster Spruit, and also an adjacent farm, and at dawn on the 8th came into possession of the prizes already enumerated.

Colonel Kekewich spent his time in night raids of the same nature, some profitable, some disappointing. Boers were growing scarce as a natural consequence of the effective operations for netting them. In February a smart expedition was arranged for the capture of Delarey, which failed in its main object, but was yet highly successful in other ways. Starting from Leeuwfontein on the 4th of February, Major Leader, with mounted men (from Kekewich's and Hickie's columns), proceeded north by night, taking a circuitous route towards Roodepan (fifteen miles north-east of Lichtenburg), where Delarey was reported to be. After the capture of a Boer piquet, he learnt that the Dutch general had moved his camp, but the laager of Commandant Sarel Albert was in the vicinity. A bird in the hand being worth two in the bush, this laager was surrounded just before daybreak. With a rush and a roar the Scottish Horse dashed on the Dutchmen, causing a scene of dire tumult, which was enhanced by the stampeding of the Boer horses, who had become alarmed at the fire of the British pom-pom. Brilliantly the attacking force, inspired by the gallant major and his spirited subalterns, Lawless, Selby, and Wallace, fought for their prize, and in the end they had the satisfaction of securing Sarel himself, with his adjutant, Landdrost Potgieter, Field-Cornets Jan du Plessis and Jan du Toit, two assistant Field-Cornets, and ten corporals. They took in all 132 prisoners (11 wounded), 130 rifles, 2800 rounds of ammunition, with horses, mules, and cattle in great number. Unhappily the gallant Scottish Horse paid for its triumph. Two officers and six men were wounded.

### **ORANGE RIVER COLONY**

General Elliot and his troops spent the early part of the new year in chases around Reitz after De Wet, but that skilful personage smartly evaded them. In spite of all efforts it was impossible to wedge him against either the Drakensberg or the Harrismith-Bethlehem blockhouses. Colonel de Lisle, at Kaffir Kop, to the west of Lindley and Bethlehem, kept an eye on Prinsloo, who threatened the safety of the blockhouses in course of construction. Colonel Byng's force was constantly engaged with parties of the enemy between Lindley and Reitz, while Colonel Rimington operated in the country south of Frankfort. (At Groothoop, on the 31st of January, he performed useful work by capturing a convoy and twenty-two prisoners, with their "effects.")

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Colonel Dawkins, with his own column and two regiments of Imperial Light Horse, joined Colonel Rawlinson (who had moved from Standerton after De Wet), and marched south on the left of Colonel Rimington's line of advance. On the 29th Colonel Rawlinson, with a portion of his force, doubled back from near Kaffirstad to Achalia (near the junction of Cornelis and Wilge Rivers), and at dawn on the 30th pounced on one of Mamie Botha's laagers. This night march and raid was a feat of remarkable endurance and dash, for the fighting force in the previous thirty-four hours had marched sixty-seven miles, the 2nd Battalion Mounted Infantry doing eighty-two miles in the same interval of time! The captures amounted to 11 prisoners, 120 horses, 2900 cattle, 20 waggons, and 25 carts.

## A BIG TRAP FOR DE WET

Meanwhile wheels within wheels of the military machine were revolving, and preparing a carefully arranged plan for the enclosing of De Wet should he, on approach of the columns, which were pressing him towards the Harrismith blockhouses, endeavour to break back to the west. Troops were quietly being passed to east and south-east of him in readiness for a general sweep to the west. It was hoped by the maintenance of perpetual close contact, with patrols and outposts along the whole front of the British line, to drive the smart Dutchman into the strongly held angle formed by the Wolvehoek-Kroonstad railway and the Wolvehoek-Heilbron-Frankfort blockhouse line. De Wet, as was expected, did break back. He ran within the cordon. He appeared to be doomed. He was first promptly pursued on the night of the 2nd of February by Colonel Byng, who on Liebenberg's Vlei (west of Reitz) had lain in waiting for him. Quickly flew the British troops in pursuit, and some fifteen miles to the east they came upon a convoy of De Wet's commando. The New Zealand and Queensland Imperial Bushmen brilliantly dashed into the rearguard, while the South African Light Horse as gallantly charged the centre, and with complete success. Such of the enemy as escaped tore off westwards, but twenty-six prisoners (among them Captain Muller, O.F.S. Artillery, Captain Villiers, and Field-Cornet Wessels, who was mortally wounded) fell into our hands. Many vehicles, cattle, horses, and mules were secured, and also a 15-pounder gun and two pom-poms. Nine Boers were killed and eight wounded in this brilliant engagement, which was a tug-of-war creditable to the stamina of both parties. De Wet himself had yet to be dealt with. Now began the working of the great plan for his capture. By the 5th of February our columns formed a continuous line of men (a movable chain of outposts in fact) extending along the west bank of Leibenberg's Vlei from Frankfort as far south as Fanny's Home and thence to Kaffir Kop (west of Lindley). Rawlinson's men on the right were flanked along the Frankfort-Heilbron blockhouse line by the troops under Wilson (Kitchener's Fighting Scouts) and Keir (Royal Artillery), and thence, in order from right to left, came columns under Rimington, De Lisle, and Major Fanshawe. From the south, Marshall and Holmes (detached from Colonel Knox's command) moved up to the Lindley-Kroonstad line, gradually connecting General Elliot's left with the Kroonstad railway line. This, from Kroonstad to Wolvehoek, had been specially strengthened for the occasion. In addition to the normal garrisons, the 2nd Battalion Seaforths were distributed along the line. Four armoured trains were also in readiness. The Wolvehoek-Heilbron branch line had, moreover, been reinforced by the 2nd Battalion Leinster Regiment and three armoured trains. At Wolvehoek itself General Cunningham held the 28th Mounted Infantry in readiness to pursue such marauders as might be driven across the railway!

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Here was a gigantic chain—every link firmly united to its fellow! On the 6th it began to move west. By night a British line was held from Holland, on the Heilbron-Frankfort blockhouse line, to Doornkloop, on the Kroonstad-Lindley line. This gigantic line was held by entrenched outposts fifty yards apart. Fires were lit in advance, to give the effect of a double position. Men were pushed along the flanking blockhouse line to watch for attempts to break through. Nothing could be more complete, and at every post were British eyes on the alert and British hearts beating with anxiety lest their part in the programme should be weakly performed.

At daybreak a further general advance was made. The line now reached the Heilbron-Kroonstad road, the left moving up, joined at America Siding on to the Kroonstad-Wolvehoek blockhouse line. The last night's arrangements were repeated, and every officer and man in the force remained on outpost duty. The piquets were constantly attacked, and Boers, struggling to escape and caught in the toils, caused a perpetual ripple of bullets to break the stillness of the night. In one case there was a desperate rush at the Heilbron line of blockhouses, which was bravely repulsed. The Boers lost ten killed and several wounded. At this time De Wet—finding himself cornered as it were—ordered his men in small parties to make each, independently, his dash for safety, leaving him and a few others to trust to their native wit for a means of escape. His well-known sagacity came to his aid. Riding with an immense herd of cattle, he made for Kroonstad-Lindley blockhouse line. Here, in the intense darkness, he gathered himself together for a desperate plunge. Racing full speed in the midst of the herd, he charged the line, breaking the wire entanglements and simply sweeping every obstacle before him by sheer weight of the impact! Thus he got away. Three of his followers were killed, and the mob of horses and cattle that had shielded him was shot—but his end was achieved! He had outwitted the British. He was free.

But though his freedom as an individual was maintained, the loss to his party and the wreck of his hopes were considerable. Two hundred and eighty-five of his band were either killed, wounded, or prisoners, the last having been gleaned from among the rushes and reeds in the bed

of the Rhenoster, where they had sought refuge after carefully divesting themselves of compromising articles of kharki uniform. These were found lying on the banks!

To the west of the railway, Colonel Rochfort spent January and February in tussling with commandos under Nieuwhoudt and Pretorius. On the 26th of January, Major Driscoll came in touch with the former leader. He pursued him to the Boshof road, about eight miles north of the Modder, and in a short, sharp engagement secured seventeen prisoners (including Field-Cornets Venter and Grobelaar), some waggons, carts, and riding horses. Nieuwhoudt, however, doubled back and joined Pretorius and 150 burghers, and then prepared to attack Colonel Du Moulin's column, which had been searching for him in the Jagersfontein region. On the 27th, Du Moulin's force was bivouacked on the south bank of the Riet, at Abraham's Kraal. The Dutchmen crossed the Riet from the north and rushed the piquet that was holding a kopje, behind which the camp was sheltered. Once in possession of this commanding point their success seemed assured. At the first sound of alarm Du Moulin, a brilliant leader who had done incessant and excellent service, dashed to repel the attack, and was instantly shot. Many of his men dropped by his side. Major Gilbert (Sussex Regiment) assuming command, set to work to repulse the enemy, and by 1.45 A.M. had so effectively reoccupied the defences that a second bold attempt on the part of the guerillas to carry a position held by one of the piquets proved a complete failure. But, besides the valiant Colonel, ten of our men were killed and six wounded in the hardly-fought engagement.

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Colonel Sitwell spent January in covering the passage of convoys in the Kimberley district. This, always a risky undertaking, on the 13th of January became more exciting than pleasant. De Villiers with 400 rebels held an entrenched position midway between Campbell and Griquatown, completely commanding the line of advance. Despite the energy and dash of the 22nd Battalion Mounted Infantry, who managed to establish themselves within a comparatively short distance of the defences, the foe was not to be routed. Finally on the scene came a small detachment of the Munster Fusiliers, and these, by a well-executed bayonet charge, carried the position. The engagement cost us 1 officer and 5 men killed, and 6 men wounded. The Boer loss was great, but they succeeded in removing their wounded, leaving 50 dead horses and 18 live ones behind them.

## CAPE COLONY

The operations of the raiders were gradually becoming confined to the comparatively waterless and inaccessible districts where, though politically less menacing, they were, in matters of transport and supply, decidedly obnoxious. The columns at this time were chiefly employed in covering the Lambert's Bay-Victoria Road blockhouse line, and in escorting convoys to supply depots now being established at Calvinia, Williston, Fraserburg, and Carnarvon.

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## CHAPTER XVII

### THE EVENTS OF FEBRUARY AND MARCH 1902

#### TRANSVAAL (EAST)

General B. Hamilton's three months' effective efforts resulted in the departure of Botha, and the complete clearance of the enemy from the district. It was now impossible to locate bodies of Boers in any part of that region. Rumour said that Botha had betaken himself to Vryheid to seek rest and change of scene for himself and his hunted horde. So, on his track went the British sleuth-hounds. The movement began on the 25th, and early in March they located their man in the neighbourhood of Vryheid.

Meanwhile General Plumer, Colonel Pulteney, and Colonel Wing, in the angle formed by the upper waters of the Vaal River and the Standerton-Volksrust Railway, gleaned remnants from Botha's sheaf of Boers, Plumer's Queenslanders bringing in twelve, and Wing's men eight. General Gilbert Hamilton, during his operations east of Springs, was sharply attacked on the 18th of February, and a lamentable incident occurred. Boers, estimated to number 500, had been hanging around Klippan (twenty miles S.E. of Springs), seeking an opportunity to take vengeance. A portion of the Scots Greys, detached to one flank, was cut off, surrounded, and partially captured. They made a gallant fight for it, during which Major Feilden and Captain Ussher were mortally wounded, while Lieutenant Rhodes and two men were killed, and six men wounded. The Boers lost eight killed, and Commandant Van Niekerk was shot in the knee.

After this sorry affair General Gilbert Hamilton was joined by the 28th Mounted Infantry, and from Springs he proceeded to hunt down the commando which had caused the trouble.

To make up for the mishap two successes were reported during the operations of General Fetherstonhaugh north of the Delagoa line. On the 20th February Colonel Park's column with 300 National Scouts, after a tedious night march, swooped down on two laagers at Nooitgedacht and Grootrivlei. Among the prisoners taken—164 in all—were Field-Cornets Du Toit, G. Joubert, H.

de Jager, Lieutenant A. J. Vilgoen. Hinton and Trichardt, two pernicious guerillas, succeeded in escaping. But there was a goodly haul of horses, waggons, mules, cattle, &c.

Colonel E. Williams' men on the southern slopes of the Bothaberg secured some more prisoners, and on the 21st they surprised a laager at Buffelskloof and captured twenty more.



**MISHAP TO THE SCOTS GREYS AT KLIPPAN,  
FEBRUARY 18, 1902**

Drawing by H. W. Koekkoek

A co-operative movement was now organised for the purpose of making a descent on Langkloof (near the junction of the Olifant and Wilge Rivers), where the Boer Government was shortly expected to arrive, but owing to the nature of the rocky and intersected country, the arrangements were impeded. The said Government, by the time the troops surrounded the place, had got some hours' start and were well on their way to Pietersburg. Colonel Park, who was unavoidably prevented from reaching his assigned position in time, proceeded to investigate the kloofs on the western side of Rhenoster Kop, and unearthed seventeen prisoners and many oxen, horses, and vehicles.

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## **TRANSVAAL (WEST)**

Operations continued in February as before, save that Colonel Von Donop at Wolmaranstad had succeeded temporarily to the command of Lord Methuen's mobile troops. On the 23rd an empty convoy of over one hundred waggons was despatched to refill at Klerksdorp and bring back supplies to Wolmaranstad. The escort was composed of 5th Imperial Yeomanry, three companies 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, two guns and a pom-pom, under Colonel W. C. Anderson (Imperial Yeomanry). Till the 25th all went well. Then, before dawn, as the convoy was moving from its bivouac ground ten miles south-east of Klerksdorp, a furious attack was made on the advance guard from the darkness of dense bush on the left. Flashes and forks of flame only showed where the enemy plied his rifles, but on this point the guns and pom-pom at once opened fire. The waggons of the convoy, which had stampeded back to the old camping-ground in the midst of the first shock of attack, were again closed up as rapidly as possible from the rear. A second and a third attack upon the rearguard were boldly and indeed brilliantly repulsed. Then Colonel Anderson, fearing the increased pressure on his rearguard, ordered the convoy to proceed towards Klerksdorp, instructing his transport officer to try and trot the waggons clear of the fire. He then made noble efforts to extricate his force, supporting the hard pressed rearguard, as it struggled to cover the retirement, with his guns and such troops as could be collected from the front. But without avail. The enemy under Delarey and Kemp, old and accomplished hands, kept the advantage. They had had the first word in the darkness; they were superior in numbers; they pressed triumphantly forward and caught the convoy where they had expected to catch it—in crossing the Jagd Spruit. The difficulty of the operation, the terror and stampede of natives and beasts in the hail of bullets that fell on them, contributed to the disaster. The convoy was lost. The escort, gallant and stubborn, was overpowered; 5 officers and 53 men fell, 6 officers and 123 men were wounded. The remainder, with the exception of 3 officers and 106 men, who reached Klerksdorp, were captured. They were subsequently released. Though the pursuit of the Boers was at once taken up, little could be done. The empty waggons were burnt, and the captors had dispersed as rapidly as they had assembled.

In order to intercept, if possible, the captured guns, and prevent Delarey from moving to the Marico district, Lord Methuen resumed the vigorous pursuit of him in which he had for sometime previously been engaged. To this end the column started from Vryburg on the 2nd of March. Colonel Kekewich was directed to send a column from Wolmaranstad towards Rooirantjesfontein, there to meet the column under Major Paris (R.M.A.), from Vryburg, while Colonel Rochefort was directed to cross the Vaal from Orange River Colony and drive Delarey towards the columns heading for Rooirantjesfontein.



### **LORD METHUEN RALLYING HIS BROKEN FORCES AT TWEBOSCH**

Drawing by C. M. Sheldon

The movement seemed excellently planned, and every precaution to avert surprise taken, but nevertheless Delarey and Kemp made an overwhelming and successful attack on Lord Methuen, with the result that this commander, who has worked with indefatigable zeal throughout the war, was dangerously wounded and taken prisoner. Since the details of this unfortunate affair have not yet been fully sifted, it is best to satisfy ourselves with reading Lord Methuen's own report of the events connected with the Tweebosch disaster:—

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FROM LIEUTENANT-GENERAL LORD METHUEN TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF.

*"KLERKSDORP, 13th March 1902.*

"SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that, with the object of preventing the force under General Delarey from moving northwards to the Marico district through the gap between Lichtenburg and Mafeking, I sent orders to Colonel Kekewich, C.B., at Wolmaranstad, to send a column towards Rooirantjesfontein, where he would meet a column under Major Paris, Royal Marine Artillery, from Vryburg.

I, at the same time, directed Colonel Rochefort to cross the Vaal from Orange River Colony, and to move northwards by the Bamboo Spruit, or the Harts River, and thus drive General Delarey towards the columns which were heading for Rooirantjesfontein.

2. Colonel Kekewich informed me, on the 2nd March, that he was sending a column, consisting of 1600 mounted men, lightly equipped; while Colonel Rochefort wired that the command would contain about 1000 mounted men.

3. The column, under Major Paris, which I accompanied, consisted of the following units:—5th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, 184 men, under Captain Jennings; Cape Police (including Special Police), 233 men, under Major Berangé; Cullinan's Horse, 64 men, under Captain Cullinan; British South African Police, 24 men, attached to Cullinan's Horse; 4th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, one section, under Lieutenant Venning, D.S.O.; one pom-pom 'GG' Section, under Captain Geoghegan, Royal Field Artillery. These units did not belong to Major Paris's column, but were an addition, placed under his command.

Major Paris's column before the fresh units were placed under his command at Vryburg:—86th Company Imperial Yeomanry, 110 men; Diamond Fields Horse, 92 men; Dennison's Scouts, 58 men, under Captain Browne; Ashburner's Light Horse, 126 men, under Captain Ashburner; 38th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, one section, under Lieutenant Nesham; one pom-pom, 'D' Field Artillery; 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, 200 men, under Captain Montagu; 1st Battalion Royal North Lancashire Regiment, 100 men, under Lieutenant Paul. The infantry were attached to the columns at Vryburg.

4. My written instructions to Major Paris were that I should give him daily the direction of the march, and the time of starting for the following day; in case of any fighting, that he should look after the mounted brigade, and that I would stand by the guns and infantry, and give him general instructions.

The mounted troops were the best horsed force that I have yet had under me, added to which the Cape Police, under Major Berangé, held an exceptionally high reputation, as did also the local corps. I remarked to Major Paris, on leaving Vryburg, that I could not believe in the numbers given to me. He again made inquiries, and satisfied himself that the numbers were correct.

5. I informed Colonel Kekewich, by wire, that I should reach Rooirantjesfontein on 7th March.

6. 2nd March.—The column under Major Paris left Vryburg at 5 A.M.; the Supply column consisting of 39 ox waggons, and the baggage of 46 mule waggons; owing to heavy rains which had fallen during the night the last waggon did not reach O'Reiley's Pan, a distance of thirteen miles, till 5 P.M. I therefore at once sent a message to Colonel Kekewich to inform him that I should be one or perhaps two days late at Rooirantjesfontein. I had previously informed him that the position of the enemy had rendered it necessary for Major Paris's column to bear more to the north-west towards Polfontein (254).

7. 3rd March.—Owing to the animals being exhausted by the previous day's trek, the column was only able to reach Grootpan (Bestersfarm), a distance of six miles. During the march the Police, forming the advance guard under Major Berangé, killed three local rebel Boers, by name Steyn, Bester, and 'Janson.'

8. 4th March.—At Grootpan I heard that large droves of cattle and Van Zyl's (rebel) commando had moved eastwards towards Doornbult (197). That morning Major Paris's column marched to Graspan, two miles beyond Mooiplatz (244 B), a distance of thirteen miles, where there was plenty of water. As there had been no rain in these parts it was very doubtful whether, if I trekked by Klipdrift (188), as I had told Colonel Kekewich I intended to do, I should find water at Vaalkop (183), or Rietvlei (279).

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9. 5th March.—I therefore moved to Boschpan (68) in the morning, which I found all but dry, and in the afternoon to Barberspan, a distance of twenty-one miles, where there was plenty of water. Here I was informed that there had been rain at Leeuwkuil (95), and that there certainly was water at Leeuwkuil (23).

10. 6th March.—The column moved off at 5 A.M., the ox convoy having moved at 4 A.M. The whole force reached Leeuwspruit (232) about 7.30 A.M. Here I sent on a detachment of Cape Police to Leeuwkuil (95) to make certain of the existence of water.

There had been some sniping at the rearguard by about 100 of Van Zyl's commando, and seeing some confusion, I went back myself, sending at the same time for a section of the 38th Battery.

I found the men forming the rear screen, which consisted of the 86th Company Imperial Yeomanry, very much out of hand and lacking both fire discipline and knowledge of how to act. There seemed to be a want of instructed officers and non-commissioned officers. Van Zyl's commando being accurately shelled by the section Royal Artillery, eventually retired and moved round our right flank to Tweebosch (247), while the column halted at Leeuwspruit (232).

On receiving information that there was no water at Leeuwkuil (95), I decided to move to Tweebosch (247), where Van Zyl's commando had taken up a good position in the bed of the Klein Harts River.

Major Berangé with the Police, the section 4th Battery, and the pom-pom 'GG' Section, were ordered to move straight on Tweebosch (247), while Dennison's Scouts, supported by Cullinan's Horse, were to move round the enemy's left flank.

The commando retired rapidly, the Police under Major Berangé working with the greatest quickness.

Much praise is due to Major Berangé for the way in which he handled his men.

Our casualties were one killed and two wounded.

As the day was hot, and it was then 11.30 A.M., I decided to remain at Tweebosch (247).

11. 7th March.—At 3 A.M. the ox convoy moved off towards Leeuwkuil (23) with an escort of 1 squadron Cape Police; 86th Company Imperial Yeomanry; 200 men 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers; 100 men 1st Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment; 1 section 4th Battery Royal Field Artillery; 1 pom-pom 'GG' Section. The whole was under command of Captain Montagu, 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers.

The main column moved off at 4 A.M. as follows:—*Advance guard*:—1 squadron Cape Police; Ashburner's Light Horse; 1 pom-pom Diamond Fields Artillery. *Main body*:—Cullinan's Horse; British South Africa Police; Detachment 5th Regiment, Imperial Yeomanry; 1 section 38th Battery, Royal Field Artillery. *Rearguard*:—Diamond Fields Horse; Dennison's Scouts.

Thinking there was a likelihood of an attack in rear, I had called Major Paris's attention to the necessity of putting thoroughly reliable troops in the rearguard.

The country through which we passed was flat and without brush. At daybreak (about 5 A.M.) a heavy fire was opened on the rearguard. The fire was so intense that the rear screen was at once reinforced by the section of the 38th Battery, and one pom-pom Diamond Fields Artillery. A portion of Ashburner's Light Horse, and the detachment of the 5th Imperial Yeomanry, were extended on either flank, round which the enemy seemed intent on galloping.

At this time (5.30 A.M.) the ox convoy was about a mile in front of the baggage, which was moving in four lines well closed up. I therefore ordered the ox convoy to halt, and the baggage to join it. Major Berangé was directed to move, with the police that were with him, towards a fresh body of the enemy, who now appeared on our right rear. The time was about 6 A.M.

I joined the ox convoy about this time, and found Captain Tilney, D.A.A.G., assisting Captain Montagu, 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, Commanding the Infantry, to extend the men to meet the attack on our right flank.

The section 4th Battery Royal Field Artillery and the pom-pom 'GG' Section had already taken up a position to meet this attack.

I could see no mounted men available, and could only assume that they had all gone to reinforce the rear screen, so I ordered the baggage to continue to advance, it being impossible to move the ox convoy, as the native drivers were lying under the waggons and refused to move.

I would here like to draw attention to the orderly manner and complete control exercised by Lieutenant Hartley, Transport Officer to Major Paris's column, over the mule waggons during the fight.

The Boers, attacking the rearguard, had come on with great determination right amongst the rear screen, but the support to the screen having been reinforced by Ashburner's Light Horse, Cullinan's Horse, and some of the 5th Imperial Yeomanry, held them in check till about 6.30 A.M. A heavy attack then developed on our rear and right flank, which caused, as far as I could see, all mounted troops then in rear (some of them which had originally been there had moved off towards the flanks to meet threatened attacks) to break, and they galloped in complete confusion past our left flank. The section 38th Battery was thus left unprotected, but continued in action until every man, with the exception of Lieutenant Nesham, was hit. I am informed that this officer was called upon to surrender, and on refusing to do so was killed.

The attack on our right flank was pressed home to within six hundred yards of the gun of the 4th Battery.

I then gave orders for a kraal about one mile along the road to Leeuwkuil to be occupied, and sent orders to rally the mounted men on the rising ground beyond the kraal. The kraal was occupied by Major Paris and Major Berangé with some forty men. The mounted troops in the meantime continued their retirement. I remained with the guns, 4th Battery, and Infantry until my horse was killed, and my thigh fractured by a bullet.

They held out in a most splendid manner until about 9.30 A.M., when all the men round the guns had been shot down and Lieutenant Venning, commanding the section, had been killed. In the meantime the two guns and a pom-pom with Commandant Cellier's commando had rendered the kraal untenable, when the men at the kraal and those remaining with the baggage surrendered.

The Boer Commandants present were—Delarey, Vermaas, Cellier, Kemp, Van Zyl, D. Botha, and Lemmer. It

is difficult to estimate the number of Boers on the field, but I should say about 1500. General Delarey treated myself and the prisoners with the greatest kindness, and left General Cellier to look after our wounded on the ground; they buried eleven of their own men at Kareelaagte, and, from what I can learn, their losses were heavy.

I beg to draw attention to the good work done by Major Paris in endeavouring to keep the mounted troops in hand, and to the promptitude with which Captain Tilney, 17th Lancers, D.A.A.G., assisted in placing the Infantry round the convoy.

I would also call attention to the gallant manner in which Lieutenants Nesham and Venning, Royal Field Artillery, stuck to their guns.

Captain Montagu, commanding detachment 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, and Lieutenant Paul, commanding detachment 1st Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, held on until further resistance was impossible. Civil Surgeon Prentice, with the rearguard, and Captain Thurston, Royal Army Medical Corps, with the guns, continued bandaging the wounded throughout the engagement.

Colonel Townsend, C.B., my Principal Medical Officer, remained in the fighting line until he had received three wounds; he has, from the commencement of the campaign, always acted most gallantly.

Captain Fernyhough did good work with the rearguard during the action. He has been of very great value to me ever since he has served under me.

A large number of the Boers were dressed in khaki, many of them wearing the chevrons of non-commissioned officers. This, in several instances, led to misapprehension by our troops, and to losses by death, wounds, and capture among us. Owing to having been wounded and taken prisoner, I am unable to give any list of casualties. This report is, for the same reason, based solely on what came under my own observation and what I have been able to gather from the few officers with whom I have had the opportunity of speaking on the subject."

Lord Methuen concluded by saying that should he have omitted to bring to notice some who had distinguished themselves during the action Major Paris would supply the deficiency.

Of the General's staff of six, five were wounded. Lieutenants Venning and Nesham, Royal Field Artillery, were killed while gallantly serving their guns with case. Lieutenant Hartley, Steinacker's Horse, also lost his life. Among the wounded were Colonel Wilson, 3rd York and Lancashire Regiment, Captain Outram, 3rd Highland Light Infantry, Lieutenant Dennis, Yeomanry, Lieutenant Nash, Cape Police, and Lieutenant Logan, Yeomanry. Lord Methuen was taken to the Boer laager, but was subsequently allowed by Delarey to proceed with Colonel Townsend, who was also wounded, to the hospital at Klerksdorp.



**BRILLIANT DEFENCE BY NEW ZEALANDERS AT  
HOLSPRUIT, FEBRUARY 23, 1902**

Drawing by Allan Stewart from Sketches supplied by a New Zealand Officer

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## **ORANGE RIVER COLONY—MAJUBA DAY**

After some days' rest, the troops which had formed the cordon to enclose De Wet's force were engaged in a new and far-reaching scheme of operations. This was divided into two phases, in the first of which two simultaneous movements were to be made to the east, one between the Heidelberg-Standerton Railway and the Wolvehoek-Frankfort-Tafel Kop blockhouse line; the other, from the line Kroonstad-Ventersburg-Doornberg up to the blockhouses between Lindley and Bethlehem. For the second phase, it was arranged that whilst the northern columns, then on a line between Standerton and Tafel Kop, made a right wheel on to Botha's Pass-Tafel Kop blockhouses, with Tafel Kop as a pivot, the southern columns should move east to the Wilge, and in conjunction with the troops at Harrismith, hold the line of the Wilge between Strydpoort and Majoor's Drift. Finally, with the line of the Wilge so held to the west, and the passes of the Drakensberg closed to the enemy from the east by the troops from the Natal command, the northern line of columns was to move south from the Tafel Kop-Botha's Pass position, right down to the blockhouses between the Van Reenan's Pass and Elands River Bridge, near Harrismith. These brilliant operations, on the principle of previous "drives," began about the middle of the month, and culminated on Majuba Day in the capture of 728 Boers, 25,000 cattle, 2000 horses,

200 waggons, and 50,000 rounds of ammunition. Various efforts were, of course, made to break through the encircling cordon, but none so violent as that which took place at the last stage of these proceedings. At dawn on the 23rd a general advance to the south was made towards the Van Reenan's Pass-Elands River Bridge blockhouses. It was timed to take four days. At night, at the close of the first day's march, another dashing attempt on the same principle as the last was made by De Wet to escape the net into which he had been driven by the advancing columns. In darkness, eighteen miles south of Vrede, at the point where Byng's right and Rimington's left joined, the noted chief, with his mob of cattle rapidly driven by natives, attempted his gallant rush. The New Zealanders of Garratt's column, commanded by Major Bauchop, with characteristic dash, gallantly resisted and repelled the attack made, and the 3rd New South Wales Mounted Rifles brought heavy fire to bear on the enemy, but De Wet and Steyn themselves succeeded in breaking through the toils. Still, the whole of the Boer cattle and vehicles were captured, and thirty-one Boers, while 160 horses were killed at the place where the gallant Colonials made their notable resistance. Our own casualties were severe, two officers and eighteen men were killed, five officers and thirty-three wounded, the majority of whom belonged to the New Zealand contingent. On the 26th Colonel Nixon repulsed a like attack made upon the line of the Cornelis River, but on the 27th the sweep down to Harrismith closed with the surrender to Colonel Sir H. Rawlinson of Commandant Truter and 650 men.

Colonel Lawley and Major Du Cane made more captures in the vicinity of the Doornberg, and Colonel Barker's troops groped for Boers in the kloofs and caves of the western slopes of the Wittebergen. Before the 25th, owing to Colonel Barker's various activities, he collected 30 prisoners, 725 cattle, and 280 horses. The Boers, as may be imagined, began to accept these convincing proofs that further resistance to the British was little else than suicide.

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## THE CAPE COLONY

On the 2nd of February the general disposition of troops in the Cape Colony stood thus: Those under Crabbe, from Beaufort West, and those under Capper and Lund, from Sutherland, converging towards Fraserburg, where a concentration of the enemy had taken place; those under Haig and under Kavanagh and Wyndham moving from Clanwilliam upon Calvinia; the intervening space watched by Doran, forty miles north-east of Clanwilliam, and by Callwell near Sutherland. Crewe's Colonial troops occupied both the Elandsvlei and Sutherland.

On the 30th January Colonel Crabbe's column (acting as a screen to a convoy of donkey waggons which, under its own escort, was some distance in the rear) was suddenly menaced by a swarm of Boers. Their attitude and their numbers warned the Colonel to take up a defensive position at Rietfontein (twenty-five miles east of Fraserburg). That done, he there fought tenaciously, determined to hold his own till Colonel Capper and Major Lund could arrive from Sutherland to his support. Foiled in their effort to overpower Crabbe's men, the Boers promptly decided to assail the convoy. This, guarded by 60 District Mounted Rifles and 100 men of the 4th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, under Major Crofton, was halted on the night of the 4th some forty miles south-east of Fraserburg. The Boers in great strength rushed on the British prize. All through the night fighting was fierce and sustained, and in the end the Boers were triumphant. They secured and destroyed the waggons. Though Colonel Crabbe promptly rushed to the scene he was unable to act. The waggons were wrecked, and the assailants too strong to be handled by his column unaided. He awaited the troops under Colonel Capper and Major Lund, and with them proceeded to trounce and disperse the rebels, and hunt them north-east of Fraserburg. The losses during these engagements were considerable, Major Crofton, another officer, and 11 men being killed, and 1 officer and 47 men wounded. On the 5th of February there was a tussle at Calvinia between Theron's men and Colonel Haig's, when the Boers were driven north with the loss of two killed and two wounded. Considerable loss on our side was sustained on the 6th. Colonel Doran, with 100 men, then on the hunt for Gelhenhuis, a rebel leader, was assailed by the enemy during his return march to Calvinia. In the pitch darkness his little band had to fight a prolonged rearguard action to cover their withdrawal over the mountains. This conflict led to the loss of 3 officers and 7 men killed, 17 men being wounded.

The main body of rebels—some 600 of them—heartened by their capture of the convoy on the night of the 4th, assembled on the 16th thirty miles east-north-east of Fraserburg, with a view to earning fresh laurels. But their hopes were nipped in the bud. General French had his eye on them. The congregating evil must be arrested, and the columns under General Stephenson were disposed upon a general line from Nelspoort Station, by Beaufort West, to Rhenosterfontein (fifteen miles north-west of Beaufort West), Colonel Doran on the right, Colonel Capper and Major Nickalls in the centre, and Colonel Crabbe and Major Lund on the left. An advance to north-west towards Williston was begun on the 17th—but the Boers were shy. No sooner did they come in contact with our troops than they dispersed. Some were wounded and some captured on the 18th, among them being Judge Hugo, who subsequently died of his injuries; but the rest got off. Malan's group doubled round Doran's right flank and scuttled over the rail towards the midlands, another gang fled north-west, and one J. T. Smith, with a rebel crew, broke through the blockhouse line, with some loss, to the north and then to the north-east of Victoria West.

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The pursuit of Malan to the east now occupied the column under Major Wormald and two squadrons of the 9th Lancers. This force had already chased the remnants of Kruitzingen's band, under Wessels, out of the midlands well to the west. Colonel Haig, with Colonels Kavanagh and Williams, skirmished and hunted in the Calvinia and Van Rhynsdorp districts, and on the 13th

Bouwer's laager was rushed by Kavanagh's braves, and eleven prisoners, with horses, rifles, and ammunition, &c., were secured.

In the midlands the enemy straggled about on the hills for the most part of the month. The rebels daily found an increasing difficulty in procuring food and necessaries from their quondam sympathisers, and their diminished popularity served somewhat to damp their activities; but early in March Fouché and Myburg made a dash across the East London Railway, whither they were chased to the south of Steynsburg by Colonels Price and Baillie.



COLONEL CREWE

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE CLOSE OF HOSTILITIES—MARCH, APRIL, AND MAY 1902

#### TRANSVAAL (EAST)

General B. Hamilton, as we know, over mountainous country followed Botha to the neighbourhood of Vryheid. The Boer force consisted of a concentration of some 800 men who had been hustled from other districts of the Eastern Transvaal. A laager was located east of Vryheid on the 10th of March, and General Bruce-Hamilton having blocked all exits in the Ngotsi valley, proceeded to attack it. The manœuvre was rewarded. General Cherry Emmett, Botha's brother-in-law, and seventeen prisoners were taken, and Botha merely escaped by concealing himself in a kloof near the spot where his relative was seized. Eighteen more prisoners, some of importance in the fighting roll, were secured on the 18th.

On the 1st day of April, near Springs, a laager was suddenly discovered by a party of Queen's Bays and some National Scouts under Colonel Fanshawe of Colonel Lawley's column. Immediately the Boers in great strength attacked the small British force, and in the close and spirited fighting, which lasted from dawn till dusk, Major Walker was killed, and Captains Herron, Ward, and Lieutenant Hill were wounded. As an instance of the hand-to-hand nature of the combat it may be mentioned that the butt-ends of rifles as well as the blades of swords came into play. Two squadron leaders and ten non-commissioned officers and men were killed and five officers and fifty-nine men were wounded. This concentrated body of the enemy was commanded by Alberts and Pretorius. Commandant Prinsloo, who was with them, was wounded. The Boers lost twelve killed and forty wounded.

The middle of the month was spent by General B. Hamilton in sweeping from Middelburg to Standerton between the blockhouse lines. The hard-worked columns of Park and Williams and Spens were engaged in the undertaking, which was, though always hazardous, fatiguing as it was monotonous. One hundred and forty-five Boers were killed, wounded, or captured in the course of the operations.

Beyers, a troublesome personage, had betaken himself to a fertile valley in the region of Pietersburg. He then proceeded to invest Fort Edward, a fortified post near Louis Trichardt, placing the small garrison of fifty souls in an unenviable quandary. To their rescue went Colonel Denny (Northamptonshire Regiment) with some 500 men, but he was so strongly opposed at various points that he had to fall back on Dwars River without effecting his purpose. Colonel Colenbrander, hurrying from Klerksdorp however, succeeded. He completely surprised the

enemy on the 29th and effected the relief of the Fort. Then Beyers himself had to be dealt with, and on the 8th of April Colonel Colenbrander and his warlike scouts, with the Inniskilling Fusiliers under Colonel Murray, started to ferret him out and attack him. Through the difficult and exhausting country, a wilderness of crags and steeps, the troops moved carefully, exercising the utmost perseverance and sagacity in stopping up all poorts or points of exit. They then secured a commanding position—one which the Boers had imagined to be inaccessible—and systematically delivered the attack. Their determination and dash and dexterity were marvellous. By night the Boers were driven out of their mountain stronghold, but only with great loss on both sides. Colonel Murray was seriously, Lieutenant Thompson slightly, wounded. Lieutenant Lincoln was killed. The enemy's loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners was 106. But Beyers himself escaped. Operations against him were continued in this region till May with excellent results, for though the Boer leader was not caught, his following was considerably reduced, and thus his power to be mischievous crippled.

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## FINISHING CLEARANCE OF THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY



CAPTAIN H. T. LUKIN



COLONEL DOUGLAS HAIG

(Photo by J. Edwards)

After the Majuba Day successes the lower part of the Orange Colony remained clear. Colonels Du Cane and Rimington in the region of Tafel Kop made some important captures. Among the prisoners were Adjutant Labuschaque and Viemann. Elsewhere, in the caves of the river bed, a large Boer supply depot was discovered by Major Ross (Canadian Scouts). A Krupp, a pom-pom, a Nordenfeldt, ammunition, heliographs, and other valuable supplies were taken possession of or burnt. Another of Lord Kitchener's big drives took place, the troops and tactics being the same as before. The columns were encamped in the neighbourhood of Harrismith, and the impression was given that they would sweep towards the northern blockhouses. De Wet, finding that Elliot and Rimington pushed him north, consequently flew west round Elliot, and in the very direction desired. By the night of the 9th there was a complete line of troops from Lindley to Frankfort, De Wet and Steyn being enclosed. Stray parties made rushes at Dunlop's and Scott's lines but were repulsed, and some Boers were made prisoners. On the 10th, all keeping touch, the advance continued. It was scorching weather, but the British stalwarts, under the blazing sun, maintained splendid courage and cheeriness. As an example of their endurance, it may be noted that Rawlinson's men on the 10th and 11th covered sixty miles. On the 11th the drive concluded, but not with the capture of the redoubtable one.

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De Wet and Steyn, it appeared, had escaped west of the main Orange Colony Railway by crossing the Heilbron-Frankfort line at night at an hour when some of the British troops were expected to cross. Mentz, to escape Colonel Cox and Rimington's Australians, adopted the same tactics as De Wet's former ones. He rushed the Heilbron-Wolvehoek line on the night of the 10th of March by furiously driving a herd of horses against the line held by the Leinsters near Gothenburg. Though these leaders got off, in the course of the operations, 127 Boers were taken and Commandant Celliers was wounded.

De Wet and Steyn remained west of the railway line endeavouring, it was presumed, to get into communication with Delarey. That some Boers had evaded the big drive was evident by the fact that a convoy was attacked between Kronspruit and Frankfort. The enemy was, however, beaten off by the Mounted Infantry, who had some of their number wounded.

The members of the so-called Acting Transvaal Government—Messrs. Schalk Burger, Reitz, Lucas

Meyer, Krogh, and Vanderwalt—proceeded on the 22nd of March, under flag of truce, from Balmoral to Kroonstad to interview Mr. Steyn, with Lord Kitchener's consent. The interview had reference to possible peace proposals. The delegates travelled by special train accompanied by Captain Marker, A.D.C. to Lord Kitchener, Major Leggett, Assistant Director of Railways, and four other staff officers. The meeting concluded a few days later, apparently without practical results. The commandos in the district were now much scattered and reduced, but on the last day of April, near Frankfort, Colonel Barker had the good fortune to capture Mamie Botha (a smart and resourceful ally of De Wet), his adjutant, and eleven Boers.

Early in May (the 6th) another rapid drive took place. A continuous line of columns left Frankfort-Heilbron-Vredefort Road line quite unimpeded by wheel transport, and drove swiftly to Kroonstad-Liebenberg-Vlei line, which was reached in the afternoon. The British casualties were nil. The prisoners taken were 208. Ten Boers were killed. From opinions drawn from prisoners it was obvious that these "drives" were heartily dreaded, and the fact of being thus chased from their own district was a fruitful source of surrender.

## TRANSVAAL (WEST)—MARCH

A new and original combined movement against Delarey was now conceived by Lord Kitchener. The Boers were dotted about recuperating in farms near Hartebeestefontein, and these had to be mopped up somehow before they had time to concert or to concentrate. The district was too vast for the usual cordon process, and there was great difficulty in arranging a plan which would dispose sufficient troops on the west. There, there were no blockhouse lines, but a line ran from the Vaal to Klerksdorp and thence up the Schoenspruit till it joined the Lichtenburg-Ventersdorp line. The programme was most concise. No wheeled transport and no guns were to be taken. The thing was to be accomplished "in the blink of an eye," so to say, at the rate of nearly eighty miles in twenty-four hours at most. On the night of the 23rd of March every one was to be under way, silent and secret as burglars, bold and resolute as lions. Kekewich, from Vaalbank, was to march west. Rawlinson, from Klerksdorp, with columns of Scott, Briggs, and Dawkins, was to march south of Hartebeestefontein straight through the enemy's lines—a thing the enemy would be at a loss till too late to understand—and arrive at dawn at a point thirty-nine miles to west. General W. Kitchener (with Keir, Lowe, and Cookson's columns) was to continue the line and march south of Rawlinson to a point some forty miles distant. Lord Basing, from south of the Vaal, was to fill in the more southerly place, and Colonel Rochfort was to form up to the south of him with his right resting on the Vaal. Thus working on the 24th in a line drawn from north to south, the columns were to start forth and then drive back the enemy against the Schoenspruit blockhouse line.... The midnight march was admirably executed under the brilliant rays of the moon, and a Boer convoy was even chased and captured by Dawkins' men by way of interlude! By dawn on the 24th, after a forty-mile march, the machinery was set in the appointed position. With sunrise the required revolution took place. The whole force turned right-about face and marched swiftly back again. It was not till 10 A.M. that Boers were discerned. Then, preparations were promptly made to welcome them, and Rawlinson's men, in spite of their sore and aching frames, advanced with alacrity. But the Dutchmen made haste to retreat. By arrangement a signal was fired to inform the British line that the quarry in force was sighted. Excitement prevailed. All got into the semi-crescent position—the military equivalent for "open arms." There were necessary gaps, however, before the troops could extend into touch on so vast an area, and these the Boers made for. But owing to the splendid activity of our men, the 2nd and 8th Mounted Infantry, the Scottish Horse, and others, the enemy failed to get away either their waggons or their guns. Lieutenant Herd (2nd Mounted Infantry), with the remnant of his company, pursued the fleeing band and expedited their race for the north, forcing them also to leave their valuables behind. They were now in the position of the traditional Derby dog—rushing helter-skelter, first north then south, not knowing where to find a loophole of escape. Finally, however, some of them abandoning everything did find it, and scurried towards Klerksdorp. The total results of this cleverly arranged movement, which concluded on the 25th, were 185 prisoners, 12 Boers killed; two 15-pounders, one 12-pounder, two pom-poms, a quantity of ammunition, over 1000 head of cattle, about 60 vehicles, and a lot of horses and mules captured.

That more of the enemy were not taken was accounted for by Reuter's correspondent, who stated:—

"One commando was disturbed very early near a spot where two columns had not yet extended into touch. One of these columns saw what appeared to be the next column getting into position on its flank, and pressed on in order not to be outdistanced, but the column on its right acted strangely, and soon it was discovered that the strange column was a Boer commando seeking to escape. As a pursuit would have resulted in making a larger loophole the enemy got away.

"In another place a large body was observed passing along our front, and it was greeted with a volley, whereon an officer in British uniform, complete in every detail, with 'K.F.S.' on the shoulder-straps, rode up and reported that it was a British column passing along to take up its allotted place in the line. The force was accordingly allowed to proceed on its way. The 'K.F.S.' officer, however, was a Boer and the column a Boer commando."

It was discovered after all that Delarey had not been within the radius of the big movement, and therefore General W. Kitchener, in hope still to entrap him, set to work to reconnoitre towards the Hart River. On the 31st of March Cookson and Keir struck track of guns, and presently they were attacked with great determination. A long running fight was continued for eight miles

through the bush and scrub of the region. A position in the open was taken, and both parties set to work. Delarey, Kemp, and some 1500 Boers fought brilliantly, but were outmatched by the dogged courage of the newly raised R.H.A. Rifles, who let them advance within 200 yards, and then repelled them with steady gusts of rifle fire; by the staunchness of Colonel Evans' Canadian Rifles, of which one party under young Bruce-Carruthers held their ground till every man was either killed or wounded; and by the dash of the 28th Mounted Infantry, Damant's Horse, Kitchener's Fighting Scouts, and the 17th and 27th Mounted Infantry. The enemy after losing tremendously refused to continue the conflict, in spite of being frantically urged forward by their leaders.

The columns of Von Donop and Grenfell under General Kekewich on the 11th of April, in the region of Rooival, had a hot fight with the enemy. These eventually were repulsed by the Yeomanry, Scottish Horse, and South Africa Constabulary, who fought with their accustomed coolness and brilliancy. Forty-four Boers were left dead on the field and thirty-four wounded. Twenty prisoners were taken. Captain Salter (7th Imperial Yeomanry) and five men were killed and fifty-two wounded. Lieutenant Bull, 3rd Inniskilling Fusiliers, died of wounds. The pursuit of the band was vigorously taken up, and General Kekewich had the satisfaction of securing two guns, a pom-pom, ammunition, and waggons. Among the Boer dead was Commandant Potgieter of Wolmaranstad, one of Delarey's right-hand men. About this time Colonel Rochfort's column made a night raid on a laager at Schweizerreneke, and secured fifty-five prisoners, with waggons and stock.

The columns under General Ian Hamilton continued their systematic sweeping of the Western Transvaal, and after clearing the central area to east of Harts River they formed a line, and in conjunction with Colonel Rochfort from Bloemhof, moved west on the 7th of May. They reached the railway on the 11th plus 357 prisoners and practically all the waggons and stock of the commandos in the district. The total reduction, therefore, in Delarey's forces since his success at Tweebosch amounted to 860 men. The process of exhaustion had been steady and sure.

## CAPE COLONY—MARCH

A spirited engagement took place at Buffelshoek between Fouché's commando and Colonel Price's men, with the result that Commander Odendaal and Captain Vanderwalt were killed and two Boers wounded. Major Wormald's and other columns meanwhile hunted Malan and Fouché in the region of the Camdeboos Mountains, where pursuit is difficult, sometimes impossible.



**THE TRAIN CONVEYING THE REMAINS OF MR. RHODES SALUTED BY THE BLOCKHOUSE GUARDS ON ITS WAY TO THE MATOPPO HILLS**

Drawing by Ernest Prater

And then, when negotiations for peace were being made between the two nations, while all the sad events of the last three years were apparently coming to a happy conclusion, the British nation lost a man whose like, one may safely say, will never be found again. On the 26th of March, at Muizenburg, Mr. Cecil Rhodes breathed his last. He had long been ailing, therefore this misfortune was not unexpected, and the effect of his loss on public affairs was minimised by the fact that with characteristic foresight he had arranged all his business matters, so that in his absence they might proceed without a hitch. His Will, when opened, proved to be a document for all time, one which might be studied with advantage by every British boy whose hope it is to leave his country greater than he found it. To this man's life-work we have already alluded. Of his influence in the future it is impossible at present to write. Certain it is that his name is writ large wherever the glory of Great Britain's greatest finds a place. He gave minute directions regarding his last resting-place. Neither St. Paul's nor Westminster Abbey were wide enough for his free spirit.

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"I admire the grandeur and loneliness of the Matoppo in Rhodesia, and I therefore desire to be buried in the Matoppo, on the hill which I used to visit and which I called the 'View of the World,' in a square to be cut out in the rock on the top of the hill, covered with a plain brass plate with these words thereon, 'Here lie the remains of Cecil John Rhodes,' and accordingly I direct my executors at the expense of my estate to take

all steps and do all things necessary or proper to give effect to this my desire, and afterwards to keep my grave in order at the expense of the Matoppoos and Buluwayo fund hereinafter mentioned. I direct my trustees, on the hill aforesaid, to erect or complete the monument to the men who fell in the first Matabele War at Shangani in Rhodesia, the bas-reliefs for which are being made by Mr. John Tweed, and I desire the said hill to be preserved as a burial-place; but no person is to be buried there unless the Government for the time being of Rhodesia, until the various states of South Africa, or any of them, shall have been federated, and after such federation the Federal Government, by a vote of two-thirds of its governing body, says that he or she has deserved well of his or her country."

His wishes were carried out with reverence and to the letter. His body was conveyed to Groote Schuur, where it lay in state till it was removed to the Houses of Parliament in Cape Town, where it lay all night. Next day the procession started for the Cathedral. All business was suspended. The streets were draped with black—the thoroughfares were lined with troops and sorrowing crowds. A more wonderful service, a more impressive ceremony, has never been seen in South Africa. Finally the remains started on their last voyage. Of this melancholy journey the correspondent of the *Standard* wrote:—

"Not the least striking feature was the reception given to the train by the garrisons of the blockhouses as we passed them in succession. As we glided slowly out of a station away ahead of us would stretch the long vista of the line, dotted here and there with the little fortresses. We would gather speed, and the sun glinted on steel as the garrison of the nearest blockhouse began to fix bayonets and fall in. Then as we swept swiftly forward the little squad of men came abreast of us, and the bayonets rose and fell symmetrically amid the solemn solitude. Then the blockhouse was whirled away behind us and lost to sight. So it went on for mile after mile, the fireman busy at his duties and the driver, one of the oldest servants of the railway department, steady and watchful at his post. Down into De Aar we swept at such speed that as we passed the blockhouses the saluting rifles seemed to rise and fall mechanically and without intermission."

Buluwayo was reached on April 8th, and the coffin placed in the Drill Hall and guarded by two Rhodesian volunteers with drawn swords. Finally it was borne, on the 10th, to its lonely bed in the almost inaccessible steeples that he loved.

Early in April the trial of Krutzinger was concluded, and the prisoner was acquitted of the charges of murder or train-wrecking that were brought against him. He therefore fell into the category of prisoners of war. From intercepted despatches forwarded by the commandant to Scheepers it was discovered that he had seriously condemned the inhuman practices of his countrymen. The raiders continued their mischievous activities, the columns their incessant chases and hunts. Lovat's Scouts engaged Bezuidenhout at Kaal River on the 26th of April, and in the scrimmage two of the rebels were wounded. On the 1st of May the town of Ookiep (in north-west of Cape Colony), which for some time had been invested by the Boers, was practically relieved by the appearance of reinforcements from Namaqualand under Colonels Cooper and Caldwell. These relieved the column at Klipfontein (fifty miles from Ookiep), and thus took the pressure off the neighbouring places.

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Further particulars were given in the *Morning Post*:—"General Smuts demanded the surrender of Ookiep on 4th April. Colonel W. Shelton refused to entertain any terms whatever, saying that he would hold out to the bitter end. He must, however," the letter proceeded, "have a relief column if the place is to be saved, as he has 6000 people to feed and provisions for only three weeks. Colonel Shelton brought in the Mesklip and Nababeep garrisons with all their arms and ammunition successfully. Nababeep has since been looted. Springbokfontein made a gallant fight, but had to surrender to overwhelming numbers, our casualties being four killed and six wounded. It is reported that Concordia surrendered without firing a shot. Colonel Shelton ordered the Concordia Town Guard to Ookiep, but they refused to go. The Boers seem to be bent on doing as much damage as they possibly can. They have destroyed miles of railway and are burning the sleepers as they take them up. The dynamite which they seized at Garrakop, eight miles from Ookiep, they are now using to destroy the blockhouses by dropping charges on the roofs from the kopjes above. Colonel White and his column are at or entrenched near Gassies, and cannot get out. Anenous, Kookfontein, Steinkop, Ooboop, and all outlying stations are deserted. Two trains of refugees arrived at Port Nolloth this morning during a heavy shower of rain. Lilliesfontein refugees are also here, making the number over fifteen hundred. The inhabitants of Port Nolloth are feeling very uneasy, for they greatly fear that an attack will be made on the port; but our defences are perfect, and with the assistance of his Majesty's ship *Barracouta* we mean to give the Boers a warm reception. During a thunderstorm that broke over Ookiep a few days ago a party of Boers was seen on the mountain to the east of Ookiep making a blockhouse in good position, but Major Edwards with a small patrol soon put them to flight."

A member of the garrison of the Springbokfontein blockhouse, commanded by Lieutenant Dorrington, reported as follows: "The Boers were gallantly kept at bay for twenty-four hours, when they succeeded in making a rush on the village. They first made a raid on the Civil Commissioner's house, which they found locked, the magistrate, Mr. J. A. Van Renen, being at Ookiep at the time on his way back from Port Nolloth, where he had been to fetch his family. Lieutenant Dorrington, seeing a fire at the Residency from the blockhouse, thought the Boers were setting fire to the house. He ordered his men to open fire on them, whereupon the Boers rushed the kopje on the top of which the blockhouse was built, and demanded its immediate surrender. When Lieutenant Dorrington refused to surrender he was greeted with charges of dynamite. The Boers then crept under the hill, making it quite impossible for our men to fire on them, and began to place dynamite underneath the blockhouse. They again sent to tell the officer in command that if he did not surrender he and his men would be blown up. A message was sent back to them to say that he would surrender on condition that they did not harm his men. This

was agreed to, and the men came out. They were all promptly lodged in prison. The same informant states that Mr. Stuart, the resident magistrate's clerk, Mr. Van Coernden's son, and two others were killed by charges of dynamite thrown on the top of the blockhouse from a kopje."

A second letter, which was dated 12th April, announced that transports had arrived at Port Nolloth and that reinforcements were pouring into the town. A third letter was written on the following day, and it said: "Lieutenant Meyrick, with his party of N.B.S., has so far gallantly defended the viaducts and the mountain pass above Anenous. A native who has just come in reports that the Boers have, however, come round the mountain and destroyed the railway on this side of Anenous as far as the 37th mile. Mr. F. Phillips, of Concordia, son of the superintendent, arrived at Port Nolloth yesterday, having obtained a pass from the Boer Commandant Smuts. He states that the Boers who have got possession of Concordia are mostly Transvaal men. Ookiep is evidently giving the Boers a warm time, for many wounded are brought into Concordia, others going back to take their place. They say that they are quite determined to take Ookiep at any cost, and seem to have quietly settled down at Concordia. They have their doctor and chaplain, and hold services twice daily. The Commandant Smuts lives in the doctor's house, the doctor being absent in Cape Town. He has his secretary with him, a Frenchman, whom they have nicknamed 'Roberts,' and who has a great reputation for ability among them."

On the 27th of May Major Collett, with the Jansenville District Mounted Horse, encountered the Boers, who thought this a fine opportunity for attacking raw material. But the local force was tougher than they thought, and moreover Lovat's Scouts, who had been pursuing Malan for a long time, were at hand. These promptly came to the rescue, upon which the enemy fled, leaving Malan—one of the best of the Boer leaders—in their hands. Malan was one of the "irreconcilables," and he had rejected the offer of a safe conduct to attend the Vereeniging conference, which at this time was taking place with a view to the signing of peace.

### THE SITUATION—APRIL AND MAY

It was officially computed that by May 1902 the British forces had been reduced through the South African war by 1055 officers and 20,520 men who died in South Africa, 1 officer and 131 men returned as missing and prisoners, 7 officers and 487 men who died after having been sent home as invalids, and 5531 invalided men who left the Service as unfit. These figures represent a total of 27,732. The following figures, taken from a table published by Colonel Henderson, Professor of Military Art and History at the Staff College, in his "Life of Stonewall Jackson," may be found interesting for purposes of comparison with the British losses:—

	<b>Strength.</b>	<b>Killed and wounded.</b>	<b>Percentage.</b>
Talavera, 1809	20,500	6,250	30
Albuera, 1811	8,200	3,990	48
Barossa, 1811	4,400	1,210	27
Salamanca, 1812	26,000	3,386	13
Quatre Bras, 1815	12,000	2,504	20
Waterloo, 1815	23,991	6,932	29
Firozshah, 1845	16,000	2,415	15
Sobraon, 1846	15,500	2,063	13
Chillianwallah, 1849	15,000	2,388	15
Alma, 1854	21,500	2,002	9
Inkerman, 1854	7,464	2,357	31

Of the Boer losses no exact total could be arrived at.

In April, a careful computation of the strength of the enemy in the field put it at about 10,000 men. The commando of Delarey and Kemp was the largest, their following being about 900 men; but concentration was marvellously quickly accomplished, and near at hand on the west were odd bands of perhaps a hundred, commanded by Potgieter, Klassen, and Cronje. Beyers, with less than four hundred, hung about Zoutpansberg, and other leaders near Lydenburg were practically dependent on fragments from their master's table, otherwise the escaped ones and twos from Botha's and De Wet's hunted forces. In the Eastern Transvaal, east of Springs, were Alberto, Opperman, and Van Niekirk, with small yet enterprising gangs. Klassen and Badenhorst were fairly well supported at Ermelo, and 200 Boers hung occupationless about Piet Retief. Minor leaders were sprinkled about the Orange Colony, clinging mostly to the sheltering region of the Brandwater Basin.

In the Cape Colony they were equally scattered. Malan and Fouché north of Murraysburg, Maritz and Bowers near Garees, Theron north of Calvinia, Van Reenan north-east, near Fraserburg, had each a small trail of troublesome rebels at his heels. Raking and combing was taking place everywhere. Since the 22nd of March, when the question of peace came to be discussed, the Boer forces had been reduced by about 860 in killed, wounded, and prisoners. A conference between Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner was held in Pretoria, the result of which was digested on the 20th by the Boer leaders, who then took themselves off to rejoin their commandos. Meanwhile Lord Kitchener maintained his vigilant tactics, knowing that the wily ones if given an inch would take an ell, and General Ian Hamilton in the west, General Bruce-Hamilton in the east, and Colonel Colenbrander in the north, continued their sweeping operations.

It was now decided that the Boer leaders, who had again met together at Klerksdorp on the 11th of April, were to reassemble on the 15th of May to deliberate among themselves and arrive at a decision as to the terms of surrender they would be prepared to accept. The conference, which opened at Vereeniging in due course, included the representatives of all the bodies of Boers throughout the two colonies. The delegates chosen by the conference at Vereeniging arrived at Pretoria on the 20th May. They were six in number, consisting of members of the two "Governments," with Generals Delarey and De Wet, accompanied by their secretaries. They were lodged in the house next to that occupied by Lord Kitchener. Lord Milner also arrived.

There was an interval of great suspense, which was shared by the whole civilised world. All parties watched the telegraph wires with bated breath, then on Saturday, May 31st, the great Boer War came to an end. The conference at Vereeniging had brought forth good results! The Peace Agreement, long anxiously looked forward to by both belligerents, was signed!

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## APPENDIX

### THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS—COMMENCED MARCH 12, 1902—CONCLUDED MAY 31, 1902

The following is the text of the draft agreement signed by the Boer representatives in Pretoria on the 31st of May after it had been approved by his Majesty's Government:—

His Excellency General Lord Kitchener and his Excellency Lord Milner, on behalf of the British Government, and Messrs. M. T. Steyn, J. Brebner, General C. R. De Wet, General C. Olivier, and Judge J. B. M. Hertzog, acting as the Government of the Orange Free State, and Messrs. S. W. Burger, F. W. Reitz, Generals Louis Botha, J. H. Delarey, Lucas Meyer, Krogh, acting as the Government of the South African Republic, on behalf of their respective burghers, desirous to terminate the present hostilities, agree on the following articles:—

1. The Burgher forces in the field will forthwith lay down their arms, handing over all guns, rifles, and munitions of war in their possession or under their control, and desist from any further resistance to the authority of his Majesty King Edward VII., whom they recognise as their lawful Sovereign. The manner and details of this surrender will be arranged between Lord Kitchener and Commandant-General Botha, Assistant Commandant-General Delarey, and Chief Commandant De Wet.
2. All Burghers in the field outside the limits of the Transvaal or Orange River Colony, and all prisoners of war at present outside South Africa who are Burghers, will, on duly declaring their acceptance of the position of subjects of his Majesty King Edward VII., be gradually brought back to their homes as soon as transports can be provided and their means of subsistence ensured.
3. The Burghers so surrendering or so returning will not be deprived of their personal liberty or their property.
4. No proceedings, civil or criminal, will be taken against any of the Burghers surrendering or so returning for any acts in connection with the prosecution of the war. The benefit of this clause will not extend to certain acts contrary to usages of war which have been notified by Commander-in-Chief to the Boer generals, and which shall be tried by court-martial immediately after the close of hostilities.
5. The Dutch language will be taught in public schools in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony where the parents of the children desire it, and will be allowed in courts of law when necessary for the better and more effectual administration of justice.
6. The possession of rifles will be allowed in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to persons requiring them for their protection on taking out a licence according to law.
7. Military administration in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony will at the earliest possible date be succeeded by civil government, and, as soon as circumstances permit, representative institutions, leading up to self-government, will be introduced.
8. The question of granting the franchise to natives will not be decided until after the introduction of self-government.

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9. No special tax will be imposed on landed property in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to defray the expenses of the war.

10. As soon as conditions permit, a commission, on which the local inhabitants will be represented, will be appointed in each district of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, under the presidency of a magistrate or other official, for the purpose of assisting the restoration of the people to their homes and supplying those who, owing to war losses, are unable to provide themselves with food, shelter, and the necessary amount of seed, stock, implements, &c., indispensable to the resumption of their normal occupations.

His Majesty's Government will place at the disposal of these commissions a sum of £3,000,000 for the above purposes, and will allow all notes issued under Law 1 of 1900 of the South African Republic and all receipts given by officers in the field of the late Republics, or under their orders, to be presented to a judicial commission, which will be appointed by the Government, and if such notes and receipts are found by this commission to have been duly issued in return for valuable considerations, they will be received by the first-named commissions as evidence of war losses suffered by the persons to whom they were originally given. In addition to the above-named free grant of £3,000,000, his Majesty's Government will be prepared to make advances on loan for the same purposes free of interest for two years, and afterwards repayable over a period of years with 3 per cent. interest.

No foreigner or rebel will be entitled to the benefit of this clause.

The correspondence relating to the last stage of the South African War was published as a Parliamentary Paper. As the future policy of South Africa will be directed by the considerations which influenced the wording of the final agreement, the important part of the correspondence is quoted in its entirety. A series of brief despatches passed between Lord Kitchener and the Secretary of State for War between March 12 and April 11. The first despatch announced the desire of Mr. Schalk Burger, after receiving from Lord Kitchener a copy of the correspondence connected with the Dutch Government's negotiations, to obtain safe conduct in order to meet Mr. Steyn with a view to making peace proposals. The meeting of the Boer commanders, as is known, was arranged, and it took place at Klerksdorp. On April 11 Lord Kitchener received permission from the Secretary of State for War to accede to a request from the Boer representatives for permission to lay certain proposals before him. This Boer request was addressed to Lord Kitchener in the following terms:—

"After quoting at length the correspondence between his Majesty's Government and the Netherlands, they are of opinion that it is a suitable moment to do everything possible to put a stop to the war, and therefore decide to make certain propositions to Lord Kitchener which can serve as a base for further negotiations in order to bring about the desired end. They further decide that, in their opinion, in order to accelerate the desired aim and prevent misunderstanding, Lord Kitchener be requested to meet them personally, time and place to be appointed by him, in order to lay before him direct peace proposals, which they are prepared to submit, and in order to settle at once, by direct communication with him, all questions that may present themselves, and thereby to make sure that this meeting will have the desired result."

## PRELIMINARY OVERTURES.

Then followed the succeeding telegraphic correspondence.

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *April 12, 1902, 9.22 P.M.*

All Boer representatives met to-day and wished the following telegram sent:—

"The Boer representatives wish to lay before his Majesty's Government that they have an earnest desire for peace, and that they consequently decided to ask the British Government to end hostilities, and to enter into an agreement by which, in their opinion, all future war between them and the British Government in South Africa will be prevented. They consider this object may be attained by providing for following points:—

- "1. Franchise.
- "2. Equal rights for Dutch and English languages in education matters.
- "3. Customs Union.
- "4. Dismantling of all forts in Transvaal and Orange River Colony.
- "5. Post, Telegraph, and Railways Union.
- "6. Arbitration in case of future differences, and only subjects of the parties to be the arbitrators.
- "7. Mutual amnesty.

"But if these terms are not satisfactory they desire to know what terms the British Government would give them in order to secure the end they all desire."

I have assured them that his Majesty's Government will not accept any proposals which would maintain independence of Republic, as this would do, and that they must expect refusal.

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR TO LORD KITCHENER.

WAR OFFICE, *13th April 1902, 2.30 P.M.*

His Majesty's Government sincerely share the earnest desire of the Boer representatives for peace, and hope that the present negotiations may lead to that result; but they have already stated in the clearest terms, and must now repeat, that they cannot entertain any proposals which are based upon the continued

independence of the former Republics, which have been formally annexed to the British Crown.

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *14th April 1902*, 6.10 P.M.

The High Commissioner and I met the Boer representatives this morning, when I communicated to them the substance of your telegram. We then endeavoured to induce them to make fresh proposals, but President Steyn, who throughout acted as their leading spokesman, immediately took the line that while the Boer Governments were competent to make peace they were not competent to surrender the independence of their country; that only the people could do this—the people, as explained, meaning the Burghers still in the field. If he was to suggest anything involving the abandonment of independence, it would be a betrayal of their trust.

Schalk Burger and General Botha took precisely the same line. As no progress could be made the meeting was adjourned by mutual consent till this afternoon. The Boer representatives then suggested an armistice in order to consult their people; but I pointed out, with Lord Milner's full concurrence, that we had not got nearly far enough in the direction of agreement to justify such a course. Finally it was agreed that I should send you the following message, which was read over several times, and fully agreed to by the representatives, to whom I have given a copy of it:—

"A difficulty has arisen in getting on with proceedings. The representatives state that constitutionally they have no power to discuss terms based on the surrender of independence, inasmuch as only the Burghers can agree to such a basis; therefore, if they were to propose, it would put them in a false position with regard to their people. If, however, his Majesty's Government would state the terms that, subsequent to a relinquishment of independence, they would be prepared to grant, the representatives, after asking for the necessary explanations, without any expression of approval or disapproval, would submit such conditions to their people."

## THE QUESTION OF INDEPENDENCE.

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR TO LORD KITCHENER.

WAR OFFICE, *April 16, 1902*, 2.20 P.M.

We have received with considerable surprise the message from the Boer leaders contained in your telegram of April 14.

The meeting was arranged at their request, and they must have been aware of our repeated declarations that we could not entertain any proposals based on the renewed independence of the two South African States. We were, therefore, entitled to assume that the Boer representatives had relinquished the idea of independence, and would propose terms of surrender for the forces still in the field.

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They now state that they are constitutionally incompetent to discuss terms which do not include a restoration of independence, but request us to inform them what conditions would be granted if, after submitting the matter to their followers, they were to relinquish the demand for independence.

This does not seem to us to be a satisfactory method of proceeding, or one best adapted to secure, at the earliest moment, a cessation of the hostilities which have involved the loss of so much life and treasure.

We are, however, as we have been from the first, anxious to spare the effusion of further blood, and to hasten the restoration of peace and prosperity to the countries afflicted by the war, and you and Lord Milner are therefore authorised to refer the Boer leaders to the offer made by you to General Botha more than twelve months ago, and to inform them that, although the subsequent great reduction in the strength of the forces opposed to us and the additional sacrifices thrown upon us by the refusal of that offer would justify us in imposing far more onerous terms, we are still prepared, in the hope of a permanent peace and reconciliation, to accept a general surrender on the lines of that offer, but with such modifications in detail as may be agreed upon mutually.

You are also authorised to discuss such modifications with them, and to submit the result for our approval.

Communicate this to High Commissioner.

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *April 17, 1902*, 6.40 P.M.

I communicated your telegram to the Boer representatives this morning. They immediately asked for adjournment to consider it. We met again at 2 P.M., when they pressed for the return of the Boer delegates and for an armistice to enable them to consult their burghers. I refused both on military grounds, but promised facilities for them to hold meeting of their Burghers. Lord Milner impressed on them necessity of coming back with definite powers and determination to make peace at once, which they promised to do. The meeting then broke up, and I had a short meeting with Generals Botha, De Wet, and Delarey, to arrange details of how they are to carry out meeting. These were settled satisfactorily, and they will probably leave to-morrow to get vote from their people.

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *April 18, 1902*, 10.55 A.M.

Have now arranged with the generals all details as to holding meeting, and representatives of both States will leave here to-night to carry out the arrangements.

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR TO LORD KITCHENER.

WAR OFFICE, *April 19, 1902*.

Yours of yesterday. We fully realise the necessity of giving the Boer leaders all due opportunity of consulting their commandos, but we trust that no arrangements will be come to which will make it necessary for you to suspend operations until some definite arrangement is in view. We are continuing to send reinforcements.

## **SURRENDER OF INDEPENDENCE.**

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *April 19, 1902, 11.40 A.M.*

The Boer representatives have all left. The meeting of elected representatives from commandos is arranged to be held at Vereeniging on 13th or 15th May. I did my best to hasten, but it was found impossible. I am not allowing facilities for meeting of commandos in Cape Colony, and none will be there. I have arranged with Boer leaders that foreigners serving with them shall have no vote, and that votes will be by ballot. Each commando will be represented by two Burghers. It is thought probable that the meeting at Vereeniging will take two days, after which, if favourable decision is arrived at, Boer representatives will come here to arrange final settlement.

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FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *May 17, 1902, 6.55 P.M.*

Following telegram just received:—

“From State Presidents Burger and Steyn to Lord Kitchener.

“We have the honour to communicate to your Excellency that, as a result of the Burghers assembling here, a commission has been appointed by our Governments to negotiate with your Excellency with a view to finishing the present hostilities. This commission consists of Louis Botha, Christian De Wet, Hertzog, Delarey, and Smuts. If your Excellency is agreeable to meet this commission we request you to appoint time and place of meeting.”

After consultation with Lord Milner I have sent following reply:—

“I have the honour to acknowledge your communication, and should be glad to be informed if the commission you announce have plenary powers to agree to terms for the cessation of hostilities. If so, Lord Milner and I will be prepared to receive them here. Colonel Henderson will arrange to put a train at their disposal directly they inform him when they wish to start.”

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *May 18, 1902, 2.15 P.M.*

Following is reply from Burger and Steyn:—

“In reply to your Excellency’s telegram of this morning, we have the honour to inform you that commission, appointed in accordance with instructions by the Burghers assembled, has power to negotiate with your Excellency, subject to ratification by the Burghers.”

After consultation with Lord Milner, I have informed the Presidents we will be glad to meet the commission here to-morrow.

LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *May 19, 1902, 7.20 P.M.*

Meeting took place at 11.30, and Boer commission made following proposals:—

1. We are prepared to surrender our independence as regards foreign relations.
2. We wish to retain self-government under British supervision.
3. We are prepared to surrender a part of our territory.

Lord Milner and I refused to accept these terms as basis for negotiation, as they differ essentially from the principles laid down by his Majesty’s Government. After a long discussion nothing was decided, and it was determined to meet in the afternoon. Commission met again at 4 P.M., when Lord Milner proposed a form of document that might be submitted to the Burghers for a “Yes” or “No” vote. There was a good deal of objection to this, but it was agreed finally that Lord Milner should meet Smuts and Hertzog with a view of drafting as far as possible an acceptable document on the Botha lines. They will meet to-morrow for that purpose. Lord Milner stipulated for the assistance of Sir Richard Solomon in the preparation of the draft documents.

## **FOR A “YES” OR “NO” VOTE.**

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *May 21, 1902, 4.50 P.M.*

Commission are prepared to submit the following document to the Burghers assembled at Vereeniging for a “Yes” or “No” vote if his Majesty’s Government approves of its terms:—

“His Excellency General Lord Kitchener and his Excellency Lord Milner, on behalf of the British Government, and Messrs. M. T. Steyn, J. Brebner, General C. R. de Wet, General C. Olivier, and Judge J. B. M. Hertzog, acting as the Government of the Orange Free State, and Messrs. S. W. Burger, F. W. Reitz, Generals Louis Botha, J. H. Delarey, Lucas Meyer, Krogh, acting as the Government of the South African

"1. The Burgher forces in the field will forthwith lay down their arms, handing over all guns, rifles, and munitions of war in their possession or under their control, and desist from any further resistance to the authority of his Majesty King Edward VII., whom they recognise as their lawful Sovereign. The manner and details of this surrender will be arranged between Lord Kitchener and Commandant-General Botha, Assistant Commandant-General Delarey, and Chief Commandant de Wet.

"2. Burghers in the field outside the limits of the Transvaal or Orange River Colony, on surrendering, will be brought back to their homes.

"3. All prisoners of war at present outside South Africa who are Burghers will, on their declaring their acceptance of the position of subjects of his Majesty King Edward VII., be brought back to the places where they were domiciled before the war.

"4. The Burghers so surrendering or so returning will not be deprived of their personal liberty or their property.

"5. No proceeding, civil or criminal, will be taken against any of the Burghers surrendering or so returning for any acts in connection with the prosecution of the war.

"6. The Dutch language will be taught in public schools in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, where the parents of the children desire it, and will be allowed in Courts of Law when necessary for the better and more effectual administration of justice.

"7. The possession of rifles will be allowed in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to persons requiring them for their protection on taking out a licence according to law.

"8. Military administration in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony will at the earliest possible date be succeeded by civil government, and, as soon as circumstances permit, representative institutions, leading up to self-government, will be introduced.

"9. The question of granting the franchise to natives will not be decided until after the introduction of self-government.

"10. No special tax will be imposed on landed property in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to defray the expenses of the war.

"11. A judicial commission will be appointed, to which Government notes issued under Law No. 1 of 1900 of the South African Republic may be presented within six months. All such notes as are found to have been duly issued in the terms of that law, and for which the persons presenting them have given valuable considerations, will be paid, but without interest. All receipts given by the officers in the field of the late Republics, or under their orders, may likewise be presented to the said commission within six months, and, if found to have been given *bonâ fide* for goods used by the Burgher forces in the field, will be paid out to the persons to whom they were originally given. The sum in respect of the said Government notes and receipts shall not exceed £3,000,000 sterling, and if the total amount of such notes and receipts approved by the commission is more than that sum there shall be a *pro rata* diminution. Facilities will be afforded to the prisoners of war to present their Government notes and receipts within the six months aforesaid.

"12. As soon as conditions permit, a commission, on which the local inhabitants will be represented, will be appointed in each district of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, under the presidency of a magistrate or other official, for the purpose of assisting the restoration of the people to their homes, and supplying those who, owing to war losses, are unable to provide for themselves with food, shelter, and the necessary amount of seed, stock, implements, &c., indispensable to the resumption of their normal occupations. Money for this will be advanced by the Government, free of interest, and repayable over a period of years."

## MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S EMENDATIONS.

FROM MR. CHAMBERLAIN TO LORD MILNER.

COLONIAL OFFICE, *May 27, 1902, 3.45 P.M.*

I have to inform you that his Majesty's Government approve of the submission to the assembly at Vereeniging for a "Yes" or "No" vote the document prepared by the commission, and forwarded by Lord Kitchener on 21st May to the Secretary of State for War, subject to the following alterations:—

Clauses 2 and 3 should be put together, and will run as follows:—

"All Burghers in the field outside the limits of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, and all prisoners of war at present outside South Africa, who are Burghers, will, on duly declaring their acceptance of the position of subjects of his Majesty King Edward VII., be gradually brought back to their homes as soon as transport can be provided and their means of subsistence ensured."

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The object of this alteration is to make clear that Burghers in the field outside the two States will, like the Burghers inside and the prisoners of war, declare their acceptance of the position of subjects. It was clearly not intended that they should be in any different position to their countrymen elsewhere.

We have also inserted words to explain that return must be gradual.

Clause 5. We add at end of clause the words:—

"The benefit of this clause will not extend to certain acts contrary to usages of war which have been notified by Commander-in-Chief to the Boer generals, and which shall be tried by court-martial immediately after the close of hostilities."

Clauses 11 and 12 must be omitted and the following clause substituted:—

"As soon as conditions permit, a commission, on which the local inhabitants will be represented, will be appointed in each district of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony under the presidency of a magistrate or other official, for the purpose of assisting the restoration of the people to their homes and supplying those

who, owing to war losses, are unable to provide themselves with food, shelter, and the necessary amount of seed, stock, implements, &c., indispensable to the resumption of their normal occupations.

"His Majesty's Government will place at the disposal of these Commissions a sum of £3,000,000 for the above purposes, and will allow all notes issued under Law 1 of 1900 of the South African Republic, and all receipts given by officers in the field of the late Republics, or under their orders, to be presented to a judicial commission, which will be appointed by the Government, and if such notes and receipts are found by this commission to have been duly issued in return for valuable considerations, they will be received by the first-named commissions as evidence of war losses suffered by the persons to whom they were originally given.

"In addition to the above-named free grant of £3,000,000, his Majesty's Government will be prepared to make advances on loan for the same purposes free of interest for two years, and afterwards repayable over a period of years with 3 per cent. interest. No foreigner or rebel will be entitled to the benefit of this clause."

In making this communication to the delegates you must inform them that if this opportunity of an honourable termination of hostilities is not accepted within a time fixed by you the conference will be considered at an end, and his Majesty's Government will not be bound in any way by their present declarations.

Lord Kitchener should have a copy of this telegram.



**SURRENDERED BOERS AT BELFAST  
ANXIOUS TO JOIN THE NATIONAL SCOUTS  
AFTER BEING ADDRESSED BY LORD  
KITCHENER**

Drawing by F. de Harnen from Photographs

**THE SUBJECT OF BANISHMENT.**

FROM MR. CHAMBERLAIN TO LORD MILNER.

COLONIAL OFFICE, *May 27, 1902, 5.10 P.M.*

We understand that the terms of surrender offered in my telegram of to-day are confined to Burghers of the Orange Free State and South African Republic at the date of the outbreak of the war. His Majesty's Government are unable to make any pledges on behalf of the Governments of the Cape or Natal as to the treatment of rebels. You have no doubt kept in mind that any favourable terms accorded by either of these Governments will have to be sanctioned by the Legislature of the Colony.

His Majesty's Government must place it on record that the treatment of Cape and Natal colonists who have been in rebellion and who now surrender will be determined, if they return to their colonies, by the Colonial Governments and in accordance with the laws of the colonies, and that any other British subjects who have joined the enemy will be liable to trial under the law of that part of the British Empire to which they belong.

The Cape Government have informed his Majesty's Government that the following are their views as to the terms which should be granted to British subjects of Cape Colony who are now in the field, or have surrendered, or have been captured since the 12th April 1901:—

"With regard to rank and file, Ministers advise that upon surrender they shall all, after giving up their arms, sign a document before Resident Magistrate of district in which surrender takes place acknowledging themselves guilty of high treason, and that the punishment to be awarded to them, provided they shall not have been guilty of murder or other acts contrary to usages of civilised warfare, shall be that they shall not be entitled for life to be registered as voters or to vote at any Parliamentary, Divisional Council, or Municipal election. Legislation will be required to give effect to this recommendation. With regard to Justices of the Peace and Field-Cornets of Cape Colony and all other persons holding an official position under Government of Cape Colony, or who may occupy post of commandant of rebel or Burgher forces, Ministers advise that they shall be tried for high treason before the ordinary tribunal of country or such special court as may be hereafter constituted by law, the punishments for their offence to be left to the discretion of court, with this proviso, that in no case shall penalty of death be inflicted."

The Natal Government are of opinion that rebels should be dealt with according to the law of the colony.

FROM MR. CHAMBERLAIN TO LORD MILNER.

COLONIAL OFFICE, *26th May 1902, 6.50 P.M.*

Have any promises been made to Boers by you with regard to the leaders liable to banishment under the proclamation of 7th August, some of whom have been specially named in notices issued subsequently? This proclamation, you will recollect, was the result of a strong representation from Lord Kitchener, and supported by minute of Natal Government of 25th July. The exact terms were finally settled by you. If you now think that this proclamation should be disregarded I have no objection to make.

FROM LORD MILNER TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

(Received Colonial Office 3.30 P.M., 27th May 1902.)

Referring to your telegram of 26th May. No promises have been made or asked for. The Boers are no doubt aware that legislation is required to give effect to banishment, and feel that we would not introduce such legislation if Article 3 of proposed agreement is accepted. This is obvious, and it follows that if surrender comes off banishment will be tacitly dropped. I was in favour of banishment proclamation, and was prepared to go even further, as I thought, and I still think, that resistance of Boers had ceased to be legitimate at that stage, and that it was our duty to impose special penalties upon those responsible for adoption of guerilla methods by which the country was being ruined and by which alone the struggle could be kept up at all.

So far from regretting the proclamation I believe it has had great effect in increasing the number of surrenders, and in inducing the Boers still in the field to desist from further fighting. That has certainly been Kitchener's opinion, as he has always pressed and given the greatest publicity to the lists of banished leaders. But it would be a mistake if the Boers now give in in a body and live as British subjects to continue a prescription which would only keep up bitter feelings and tend to prevent the country from settling down.

Kitchener agrees entirely.

FROM LORD MILNER TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

(Sent 7.55 P.M. Received Colonial Office 7.45 P.M., 27th May 1902.)

My telegram of to-day, No. 1.

I made it clear, I hope, that what I said applied only to banishment, not to sale of farms. Smuts did allude to this point in committee, though not to banishment, but I gave him an emphatic negative, and the subject was then dropped.

## THE FIRST DRAFT AGREEMENT.

FROM LORD MILNER TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

(Despatched 11.10 P.M., May 28. Received Colonial Office 5.5 A.M., May 29, 1902.)

Referring to your telegram No. 1 of May 27. Commander-in-Chief and I met the Boer delegates again this morning, and I communicated to them the alterations and additions to their draft contained in your telegram under reply, and informed them that his Majesty's Government approved of the draft so altered being submitted to the Burghers at Vereeniging for a "Yes" or "No" answer. I added that if this opportunity of an honourable termination of hostilities was not accepted within a time fixed by us the conference would be considered at an end, and his Majesty's Government would not be in any way bound by the present declarations. I handed them at the same time a copy of draft agreement in accordance with your instructions. There was no discussion of it. Commander-in-Chief stated that before fixing definitely the time by which we must receive an answer he would like to know their opinion. He thought forty-eight hours would be ample, but he did not wish to rush them.

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The delegates, who it was agreed should return to Vereeniging this evening, asked for an adjournment before giving an answer as to time. To this we agreed.

Before they left I read to them a statement based on your telegram of 27th May, No. 2, and was obliged to modify slightly your message in order to bring it into harmony with the latest communication I have received from the Cape Government on the subject, according to which fresh legislation will not be necessary; but essential points, viz., the degree of punishment to be awarded and the classification of rebels, were given absolutely in your words.

The delegates asked for a copy of my statement, which I handed to them. The meeting then adjourned.

This afternoon we met delegates again for a few minutes. They asked us to give them until Saturday night for their answer, to which we agreed. We then shook hands and parted.

They returned at 9 P.M. to Vereeniging.

FROM LORD MILNER TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

(Despatched 6.5 P.M., 30th May. Received Colonial Office 8.30 A.M., 31st May 1902.)

After handing to Boer delegates a copy of draft agreement which his Majesty's Government are prepared to approve with a view of terminating the present hostilities, I read to them the following statement and gave them a copy:—

His Majesty's Government must place it on record that the treatment of Cape and Natal Colonists who have been in rebellion and who now surrender will, if they return to their colonies, be determined by the Colonial Governments and in accordance with the laws of the colonies, and that any British subjects who have joined the enemy will be liable to trial under the law of that part of the British Empire to which they belong.

His Majesty's Government are informed by the Cape Government that the following are their views as to the terms which should be granted to British subjects of Cape Colony who are now in the field, or who have surrendered, or have been captured since April 12, 1901:—

"With regard to rank and file, they should all, upon surrender, after giving up their arms, sign a document

before the Resident Magistrate of the district in which the surrender takes place, acknowledging themselves guilty of high treason, and the punishment to be awarded to them, provided they shall not have been guilty of murder or other acts contrary to the usages of civilised warfare, should be that they shall not be entitled for life to be registered as voters or to vote at any Parliamentary, Divisional Council, or Municipal election. With reference to Justices of the Peace and Field-Cornets of Cape Colony and all other persons holding an official position under the Government of Cape Colony, or who may occupy the position of commandant of rebel or Burgher forces, they shall be tried for high treason before the ordinary court of the country or such special court as may be hereafter constituted by law, the punishment for their offence to be left to the discretion of court, with this proviso, that in no case shall penalty of death be inflicted."

The Natal Government are of opinion that rebels should be dealt with according to the law of the colony.

## THE SIGNING OF THE TERMS.

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *May 31, 1902*, 5.15 P.M.

It is now settled that the Boer representatives will come here immediately, and also the High Commissioner from Johannesburg. It is possible that the document will be signed to-night. I have received from them a statement saying that they accept and are prepared to sign.

FROM LORD KITCHENER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

PRETORIA, *May 31, 1902*, 11.15 P.M.

Negotiations with Boer delegates. The document containing terms of surrender was signed here this evening at 10.30 P.M. by all Boer representatives, as well as by Lord Milner and myself.

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FROM LORD MILNER TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

PRETORIA, *June 1, 1902*, 10.15 A.M.

The agreement, as amended by his Majesty's Government in your telegram of May 27, was signed just before 11 P.M. last night by Lord Kitchener and myself and ten Boer delegates, six representing the Transvaal and four Orange Free State. A resolution of Burgher assembly at Vereeniging authorising them to sign was put in by them before signing it. Names of signatories are the same as those in original draft sent in Lord Kitchener's telegram, except that the initials had been corrected in some cases and Mr. Steyn's name was omitted. He was too ill to come up, and had already taken his parole. The order of signatories is chiefly the same, except that De Wet signed first of the Orange River Colony delegates, Hertzog next, and then Brebner, the reason being that De Wet was nominated "Acting President" by Steyn on retiring.

## OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE AFTER THE BATTLE OF COLENZO, DECEMBER 15, 1899

Since the conduct of General Sir Redvers Buller in regard to the Relief of Ladysmith has been much discussed, it seems necessary for the sake of the completeness of this Record of the War to reproduce, without comment, the Official Correspondence which followed the defeat at Colenso. General Buller himself forwarded the Despatches to the Press Association, accompanied by the following letter:—

"17 LOWDNES SQUARE, W., *July 7, 1902.*

"I send you the enclosed document in the exact form in which it has been supplied to me by the Secretary of State for War for publication, and I shall be much obliged if you will kindly circulate it to all newspapers, together with this letter, as I wish to supplement the document by the remark that I was delighted to receive the answer of the Secretary of State for War of the 16th December 1899, because it assured me that forces which I had been apprehensive were pledged in another and less important direction would be at my disposal for operations in Natal. Thanking you in anticipation, I am, sir, yours faithfully,"

REDVERS BULLER, *General.*"

FROM SIR R. BULLER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

"CHIEVELEY CAMP, *December 15, 1899.*

"A serious question is raised by my failure to-day. I do not now consider that I am strong enough to relieve Ladysmith. Colenso is a fortress which, if not captured by a rush, could, I think, only be taken by a siege. Within the eight miles from the point of attack there is no water, and in this weather that exhausts infantry. The place is fully entrenched. I do not think we saw either a gun or a Boer all day, but the fire brought to bear on us was very heavy. The infantry were willing enough to fight, but the intense heat absolutely exhausted them. I consider I ought to let Ladysmith go and to occupy a good position for the defence of South Natal, and so let time help us. But I feel I ought to consult you on such a step. Twenty thousand men, I consider, faced us to-day; both in arms and in position they had the advantage. They admit, indeed, that they suffered severely, but my men are dispirited because they have not seen a dead Boer. My losses have not been very heavy; much heavier, indeed, I could have made them, but the moment I failed to get on the run the result would have been the same. I was beaten. I now feel I cannot say that with my available force I can relieve Ladysmith, and I suggest that for me to occupy a defensive position and fight it out in a country

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR TO GENERAL SIR R. BULLER.

“WAR OFFICE, *December 16, 1899.*”

“The abandonment of White’s force and its consequent surrender is regarded by the Government as a national disaster of the greatest magnitude. We would urge you to devise another attempt to carry out its relief, not necessarily viâ Colenso, making use of the additional men now arriving if you think fit.”

FROM SIR R. BULLER TO SIR G. WHITE.

“*December 16, 1899.*”

“I tried Colenso yesterday but failed; the enemy is too strong for my force, except with siege operations, and these will take one full month to prepare. Can you last so long? If not, how many days can you give me in which to take up defensive position? After which I suggest you firing away as much ammunition as you can and making best terms you can. I can remain here if you have alternative suggestion, but unaided I cannot break in. I find my Infantry cannot fight more than ten miles from camp, and then only if water can be got, and it is scarce here.”

NOTE.—In his subsequent message of 17th December Sir R. Buller said the above message had been signalled correctly, but asked to make the following corrections:—

“Strike out from ‘If not how many’ down to ‘after which’ inclusive, and substitute ‘How many days can you hold out?’ Add to end of message, ‘Whatever happens recollect to burn your cipher, decipher, and code-books, and all deciphered messages.’”

Message of 16th December, as altered by that of 17th December 1899:—

“I tried Colenso yesterday but failed; the enemy is too strong for my force, except with siege operations, and these will take one full month to prepare. Can you last so long? How many days can you hold out? I suggest you firing away as much ammunition as you can and making best terms you can. I can remain here if you have alternative suggestion, but unaided I cannot break in. I find my Infantry cannot fight more than ten miles from camp, and then only if water can be got, and it is scarce here. Whatever happens recollect to burn your cipher, decipher, and code-books, and all deciphered messages.”

FROM SIR G. WHITE TO SIR R. BULLER.

“*December 16, 1899.*”

“Yours of to-day received and understood. My suggestion is that you take up strongest available position that will enable you to keep touch of the enemy and harass him constantly with artillery fire, and in other ways as much as possible. I can make food last for much longer than a month, and will not think of making terms till I am forced to. You may have hit enemy harder than you think. All our native spies report that your artillery fire made considerable impression on enemy. Have your losses been very heavy? If you lose touch of enemy, it will immensely increase his opportunities of crushing me, and have worse effect elsewhere. While you are in touch with him, and in communication with me, he has both of our forces to reckon with. Make every effort to get reinforcements as early as possible, including India, and enlist every man in both colonies who will serve and can ride. Things may look brighter.

“The loss of 12,000 men here would be a heavy blow to England. We must not yet think of it. I fear I could not cut my way to you. Enteric fever is increasing alarmingly here. There are now 180 cases, all within last month. Answer fully; I am keeping everything secret for the present till I know your plans.”

## RECIPIENTS OF THE VICTORIA CROSS

(*Continued*)

King Edward VII. was pleased to confer the decoration of the Victoria Cross on the following officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, whose claims were submitted to his Majesty’s approval, for their conspicuous bravery in South Africa, as stated against their names:—

**Captain H. N. Schofield**,<sup>[11]</sup> Royal Field Artillery.—At Colenso, on December 15, 1899, when the detachments serving the guns of the 14th and 60th Batteries Royal Field Artillery had all been killed, wounded, or driven from them by infantry fire at close range, Captain Schofield went out when the first attempt was made to extricate the guns, and assisted in withdrawing the two that were saved.

**Private C. Ravenhill**, 2nd Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers.—At Colenso, on December 15, 1899, Private Ravenhill went several times, under a heavy fire, from his sheltered position as one of the escort to the guns, to assist the officers and drivers who were trying to withdraw the guns of the 14th and 66th Batteries Royal Field Artillery, when the detachments serving them had all been killed, wounded, or driven from them by infantry fire at close range, and helped to limber up one of the guns that were saved.

**Lieutenant (now Captain and Brevet-Major) J. E. I. Masterson**, 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment.—During the action at Wagon Hill on January 6, 1900, Lieutenant Masterson commanded, with the greatest gallantry and dash, one of the three companies of his regiment which charged a ridge held by the enemy and captured their position. The companies were then exposed to a most heavy and galling fire from the right and left front. Lieutenant Masterson undertook to give a message to the Imperial Light Horse, who were holding a ridge some hundred yards behind, to fire to the left front and endeavour to check the

enemy's fire. In taking this message he crossed an open space of a hundred yards which was swept by a most heavy cross fire, and though badly wounded in both thighs managed to crawl in and deliver his message before falling exhausted into the Imperial Light Horse trench. His unselfish heroism was undoubtedly the means of saving several lives.

**Privates R. Scott and J. Pitts**, 1st Battalion Manchester Regiment.—During the attack on Cæsar's Camp, in Natal, on January 6, 1900, these two men occupied a sangar, on the left of which all our men had been shot down and their positions occupied by Boers, and held their post for fifteen hours without food or water, all the time under an extremely heavy fire, keeping up their fire and a smart look-out, though the Boers occupied some sangars on their immediate left rear. Private Scott was wounded.

**Sergeant W. Firth**, 1st Battalion West Riding Regiment.—During the action at Plowman's Farm, near Arundel, Cape Colony, on February 24, 1900, Lance-Corporal Blackman, having been wounded and lying exposed to a hot fire at a range of from four to five hundred yards, Sergeant Firth picked him up and carried him to cover. Later in the day, when the enemy had advanced to within a short distance of the firing line. Second Lieutenant Wilson being dangerously wounded and in a most exposed position, Sergeant Firth carried him over the crest of the ridge, which was being held by the troops, to shelter, and was himself shot through the nose and eye while doing so.

**Corporal J. J. Clements**, Rimington's Guides.—On February 24, 1900, near Strijdenburg, when dangerously wounded through the lungs and called on to surrender, Corporal Clements threw himself into the midst of a party of five Boers, shooting three of them with his revolver, and thereby causing the whole party to surrender to himself and two unwounded men of Rimington's Guides.

**Captain N R. House**, New South Wales Medical Staff Corps.—During the action at Vredefort on July 24, 1900, Captain House went out under a heavy cross fire and picked up a wounded man and carried him to a place of shelter.

**Sergeant H. Hampton**, 2nd Battalion Liverpool Regiment.—On August 21, 1900, at Van Wyk's Vlei, Sergeant Hampton, who was in command of a small party of Mounted Infantry, held an important position for some time against heavy odds, and when compelled to retire saw all his men into safety, and then, though he had himself been wounded in the head, supported Lance-Corporal Walsh, who was unable to walk, until the latter was again hit and apparently killed, Sergeant Hampton himself being again wounded a short time after.

**Private E. Durrant**, 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade.—At Bergendal, on August 27, 1900, Acting-Corporal Wellar having been wounded, and being somewhat dazed, got up from his prone position in the firing line, exposing himself still more to the enemy's fire, and commenced to run towards them. Private Durrant rose, and pulling him down endeavoured to keep him quiet, but finding this impossible he took him up and carried him back for 200 yards under a heavy fire to shelter, returning immediately to his place in the line.

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**Private C. Kennedy**, 2nd Battalion Highland Light Infantry.—At Dewetsdorp, on November 22, 1900, Private Kennedy carried a comrade, who was dangerously wounded and bleeding to death, from Gibraltar Hill to the hospital, a distance of three-quarters of a mile, under a very hot fire. On the following day, volunteers having been called for to take a message to the commandant across a space over which it was almost certain death to venture, Private Kennedy at once stepped forward. He did not, however, succeed in delivering the message, as he was severely wounded before he had gone twenty yards.

**Farrier-Major W. J. Hardham**, 4th New Zealand Contingent.—On January 28, 1901, near Naauwpoort, this non-commissioned officer was with a section which was extended and hotly engaged with a party of about twenty Boers. Just before the force commenced to retire Trooper M'Crae was wounded and his horse killed. Farrier-Major Hardham at once went under a heavy fire to his assistance, dismounted and placed him on his own horse, and ran alongside until he had guided him to a place of safety.

**Sergeant W. B. Traynor**, 2nd Battalion the Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment).—During the night attack on Bothwell Camp on February 6, 1901, Sergeant Traynor jumped out of a trench and ran out under an extremely heavy fire to the assistance of a wounded man. While running out he was severely wounded, and being unable to carry the man by himself he called for assistance. Lance-Corporal Lintott at once came to him, and between them they carried the wounded soldier into shelter. After this, although severely wounded, Sergeant Traynor remained in command of his section, and was most cheerful, encouraging his men till the attack failed.

**Lieutenant F. B. Dugdale**, 5th Lancers.—On March 3, 1901, Lieutenant Dugdale, who was in command of a small outpost near Derby, having been ordered to retire, his patrol came under a heavy fire at a range of about two hundred and fifty yards, and a sergeant, two men, and a horse were hit. Lieutenant Dugdale dismounted and placed one of the wounded men on his own horse; he then caught another horse, galloped up to a wounded man and took him up behind him, and brought both men safely out of action.

**Lieutenant F. W. Bell**, West Australian Mounted Infantry.—At Brakpan, on May 16, 1901, when retiring through a heavy fire after holding the right flank, Lieutenant Bell noticed a man dismounted and returned and took him up behind him. The horse, not being equal to the weight, fell with them. Lieutenant Bell then remained behind and covered the man's retirement till he was out of danger.

**Sergeant James Rogers**, South African Constabulary.—On the 15th June 1901, during a skirmish near Thabanchu, a party of the rearguard of Captain Sitwell's column, consisting of Lieutenant F. Dickinson, Sergeant James Rogers, and six men of the South African Constabulary, was suddenly attacked by about sixty Boers. Lieutenant Dickinson's horse having been shot, that officer was compelled to follow his men on foot. Sergeant Rogers seeing this, rode back, firing as he did so, took Lieutenant Dickinson up behind him, and carried him for half a mile on his horse. The sergeant then returned to within four hundred yards of the enemy and carried away, one after the other, two men who had lost their horses, after which he caught the horses of two other men, and helped the men to mount. All this was done under a very heavy rifle fire. The Boers were near enough to Sergeant Rogers to call on him to surrender: his only answer was to continue firing.

**Lieutenant W. J. English**, 2nd Scottish Horse.—This officer with five men was holding the right of a position at Vlakfontein on July 3, 1901, during an attack by the Boers. Two of his men were killed and two wounded, but the position was still held largely owing to Lieutenant English's personal pluck. When the ammunition ran short he went over to the next party and obtained more; to do this he had to cross some fifteen yards of open ground under a heavy fire at a range of from twenty to thirty yards.

**Private H. G. Crandon**, 18th Hussars.—On July 4, 1901, at Springbok Laagte, Privates Berry and Crandon were scouting towards a kopje when the Boers suddenly opened fire on them at a range of one hundred yards. Private Berry's horse fell and became disabled, and he was himself shot in the right hand and left shoulder. Private Crandon at once rode back under a heavy fire to his assistance, gave up his horse to the wounded man to enable him to reach shelter, and followed him on foot having to run for one thousand one hundred yards, all the time under fire.

**Sergeant-Major Alexander Young**, Cape Police.—Towards the close of the action at Ruiter's Kraal, on the 13th of August 1901, Sergeant-Major Young, with a handful of men, rushed some kopjes which were being held by Commandant Erasmus and about twenty Boers. On reaching these kopjes the enemy were seen galloping back to another kopje held by the Boers. Sergeant-Major Young then galloped on some fifty yards ahead of his party, and closing with the enemy shot one of them and captured Commandant Erasmus, the latter firing at him three times at point blank range before being taken prisoner.

**Lieutenant L. A. E. Price Davies, D.S.O.**, King's Royal Rifle Corps.—At Blood River Poort, on September 17, 1901, when the Boers had overwhelmed the right of the British column, and some four hundred of them were galloping round the flank and rear of the guns, riding up to the drivers (who were trying to get the guns away) and calling on them to surrender, Lieutenant Price Davies, hearing an order to fire on the charging Boers, at once drew his revolver and dashed in among them, firing at them in a most gallant and desperate attempt to rescue the guns. He was immediately shot and knocked off his horse, but was not mortally wounded, although he had ridden to what seemed to be almost certain death without a moment's hesitation.

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**Driver F. G. Bradley**, 69th Battery Royal Field Artillery.—During the action at Itala, Zululand, on the 26th September 1901, Major Chapman called for volunteers to carry ammunition up the hill. To do this a space of about one hundred and fifty yards swept by a heavy cross fire had to be crossed. Driver Lancashire and Gunner Bull at once came forward and started, but half-way across Driver Lancashire fell wounded. Driver Bradley and Gunner Rabb without a moment's hesitation ran out and caught Driver Lancashire up, and Gunner Rabb carried him under cover, the ground being swept by bullets the whole time. Driver Bradley then, with the aid of Gunner Boddy, succeeded in getting the ammunition up the hill.

**Private W. Bees**, 1st Battalion Derbyshire Regiment.—Private Bees was one of the Maxim-gun detachment which at Moedwil on the 30th September 1901 had six men hit out of nine. Hearing his wounded comrades asking for water he went forward, under a heavy fire, to a spruit held by Boers about five hundred yards ahead of the gun, and brought back a kettle full of water. In going and returning he had to pass within one hundred yards of some rocks also held by Boers, and the kettle which he was carrying was hit by several bullets.

**Lieutenant L. C. Maygar**, 5th Victorian Mounted Rifles.—At Geelhoutboom, on the 23rd November 1901, Lieutenant Maygar galloped out and ordered the men of a detached post, which was being outflanked, to retire. The horse of one of them being shot under him, when the enemy were within two hundred yards, Lieutenant Maygar dismounted and lifted him on to his own horse, which bolted into boggy ground, causing both of them to dismount. On extricating the horse, and finding that it could not carry both, Lieutenant Maygar again put the man on its back and told him to gallop for cover at once, he himself proceeding on foot. All this took place under a very heavy fire.

**Surgeon-Captain T. J. Crean**, 1st Imperial Light Horse.—During the action with De Wet at Tygerskloof, on the 18th December 1901, this officer continued to attend to the wounded in the firing line, under a heavy fire at only one hundred and fifty yards' range, after he had himself been wounded, and only desisted when he was hit a second time, and, as it was at first thought, mortally wounded.

**Surgeon-Captain A. Martin-Leake**, South African Constabulary.—During the action at Vlakfontein, on the 8th of February 1902, Surgeon-Captain Martin-Leake went up to a wounded man and attended to him under a heavy fire from about forty Boers at a hundred yards' range. He then went to the assistance of a wounded officer, and while trying to place him in a comfortable position was shot three times, but would not give in till he rolled over thoroughly exhausted. All the eight men at this point were wounded, and while they were lying on the veldt Surgeon-Captain Martin-Leake refused water till every one else had been served.

## FOOTNOTES:

[11] See Author's remarks, Biographical Record, vol. vi.

## TRANSCRIBERS' NOTES

General: Corrections to punctuation have been made but not individually noted

General: Variable hyphenation of pom(-)pom and women(-)folk as in the original text

General: Variable accenting of depôt and bonâ as in the original text

Page iv: Arril corrected to April in first section of chapter XVII

Page v: Klersdorp standardised to Klerksdorp

Page vii: Herschell standardised to Herschel

Page x: Ookief standardised to Ookiep

Pages 9, 105, 106: Variable spelling of Boesman's Kop/Boesmans Kop/Boesmanskop as in the original

Pages 19, 148: Lambart's Bay standardised to Lambert's Bay  
Pages 31, 34, 113: Venterdorp standardised to Ventersdorp  
Page 39: prisoners corrected to prisoners  
Page 41: Commandant Brester corrected to Bester; Luneburg standardised to Luneberg  
Page 45: Steelport standardised to Steelpoort  
Page 72: Lydenberg standardised to Lydenburg  
Page 82: Luckkoff standardised to Luckhoff; Frederickstad standardised to Frederikstad  
Page 85: Presidents corrected to President  
Page 91: Bothasberg as in the original. Left as part of a quotation  
Pages 95, 120: Middlekraal standardised to Middelkraal  
Page 101: livlihood corrected to livelihood  
Page 109: spendidly corrected to splendidly  
Page 114: maurauders corrected to marauders  
Page 123: sevitute corrected to servitude  
Page 135: splended corrected to splendid  
Page 138: Laingsberg standardised to Laingsburg  
Page 145: neighbourhood corrected to neighbourhood; Lieutenant-General corrected to Lieutenant-General  
Page 162: Colonel corrected to Colonels after "by columns under"  
Page 189: Cornelius River standardised to Cornelis River  
Page 194: columus corrected to columns

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