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GENERAL FRENCH IN HOT PURSUIT OF THE FLEEING BOERS

The Demoralized Enemy Abandon Their Laagers, Supplies and Ammunition in Their Desperate Attempts to Escape From the Pursuing British.

Jacobsdal With all its Wounded Falls Into the Hands of Lord Roberts—General Kelly-Kenny is Chasing a Large Boer Convoy Towards Bloemfontein—The Boer Works Around Kimberley are Now Occupied by the Garrison—Magersfontein Abandoned by the Enemy—Cronje's Forces to Escape May Have to Disperse.

London, Feb. 16, 7.44 p.m.—The war office makes public a despatch from Field Marshal Lord Roberts, saying:—
"Jacobsdal, Feb. 16.—The following morning—'I have completely dispersed the enemy from the southern side of Kimberley, from Alexanderfontein to Oliphantfontein, and am now going to occupy their ground."
"Have captured the enemy's laager and store-depot supplies, and supplies of ammunition."
"Casualties about 20 of all ranks, wounded."
"Kimberley cheerful and well."
"BOERS TRYING TO ESCAPE."
London, Feb. 16.—General Roberts sent the following despatch:—
"Jacobsdal, Feb. 16.—I have good reason to believe the Magersfontein trenches have been abandoned and that the Boers are endeavoring to escape."
General French is scouring the country north of Kimberley.

The Opening Year finds us Well Equipped in Every Department Our assortment of Sterling Silver will in a few days be filled up Late arrivals of Watches give us a finer stock than is usual at this time of the year! In anticipation of the advance in Precious Stones our purchases were unusually large! To all of which we invite your attention!

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One of Gen. Kelly-Kenny's brigades of infantry is in pursuit of a large Boer convoy moving towards Bloemfontein.

PREVIOUS MOVEMENTS

London, Feb. 16, 9.30 p.m.—The following despatch from Gen. Roberts falls in gaps in the earlier despatches:—

Modder River, Feb. 16.—The Sixth Division left Waterfall drift early yesterday morning and reached here, going on the same evening to Rondoal drift to hold the crossing of the Modder River and leave Gen. French free to act.

Shortly after arriving here the mounted infantry visited Jacobsdal and found it full of women and children, with four of our wounded men doing well.

On the way back the mounted infantry were attacked and nine men were wounded. Col. Henry and Major Mitchell and ten men missing. Both officers were subsequently found at Jacobsdal, slightly wounded.

The cavalry division is moving in a northerly direction, and has apparently already reduced the pressure on Kimberley, as Kekewich, signals the enemy has abandoned Alexanderfontein and that he occupies it.

French has advanced as far as the Abrahams, with slight loss, and is pushing on the posts, his road being held by mounted infantry.

Gen. Roberts adds:—
Clements, having been pressed by the Boers, has retired to Arundel to cover Naauwpoort.

The war office points out that the word "here" in the above despatch, means some point on the Modder river other than Modder River Station.

Outside Jacobsdal, Orange Free State, Thursday, Feb. 15.—Jacobsdal is now in possession of the British. Yesterday a small cavalry patrol entered the place and found it full of wounded, including several British from Rensburg. The place was occupied by only a small force, which fell back before the patrol. After a series of small skirmishes a battery of artillery shelled the environs and drove out the last of the Boers.

Early this morning a large force of Boers from Colesburg, with ten guns, attacked a convoy of 200 wagons at the Riet River, shelling vigorously and doing damage. But strong reinforcements have been sent hence, and it is hoped they will bring in the whole convoy in safety.

Gen. French's division seized three drifts on the Modder River. At the third drift the Boers were fairly strongly entrenched. General French bombarded them and drove them off. To-day he moved rapidly in the direction of the central railway.

The Boers have left Alexanderfontein, which the British occupy.
Gen. Roberts is in excellent health and spirits. The hardships and rapid marching appear to agree with the whole army, who are in splendid spirits, under the leadership of "Bobs." The road between Modder River and Jacobsdal is now open. The distance is only nine miles. The road is

valuable for sending reinforcements and supplies.
When the Boers evacuated Jacobsdal, they were obliged to pass over a ridge, where they afforded a splendid mark for the British guns, which showered shrapnel upon the retreating enemy.
The convoy attack at Riet River had been countermanded, but the order did not arrive in time, and the experience



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was a very warm one, though the Boers did little material damage.

As Gen. French, with the strengthened division, pushed forward towards Kimberley, he found the beleaguering Boers deserting their position at Alexanderfontein, thus allowing a portion of the Kimberley garrison to occupy and entrench the place.

BOERS GETS THERE

London, Feb. 16, 10.55 p.m.—The War Office has just issued the following from Lord Roberts:—

Jacobsdal, Feb. 16, 7.45 p.m.—Much gratified on arrival here to find a desirable hospital arrangements made by the German ambulance corps under Doctors Kaetner and Hildebrand, who with their staffs, have shown the greatest kindness to our wounded. "Some of our wounded have been here since December. Some were brought in yesterday."

FRENCH IN KIMBERLEY

London, Saturday, Feb. 17.—The Standard publishes the following dispatches from Wedraai, dated Thursday at midnight:—Official news has been received here that Gen. French arrived at Kimberley to night and dined at the club this evening.

THE BOER SIDE OF IT

Pretoria, Feb. 15.—The Transvaal Government has made public the following official despatch:—
Yesterday, at Rondoal Drift, in the

neighborhood of Jacobsdal, the Federal troops were engaged in a severe fight with 2,000 British, who were trying to reach Kimberley.

Commandant Delarey continued the engagement until this morning, the Federal casualties being five wounded.

After another two hours of hard fighting, it is reported that the British retired, leaving Colonel Henry dangerously wounded. Col. Henry with his servant, was taken to Jacobsdal.

An official despatch from Colesburg says that fighting was resumed on Tuesday, Feb. 13, and that the British had 60 killed and wounded and lost 80 captured. The Federal forces had no casualties during the fight.

FRENCH IN HOT PURSUIT

London, Saturday, Feb. 17, 4.30 a.m.—Gen. Cronje, with a start of a day or two, is seemingly in full retreat from Lord Roberts, moving northward. Gen. French, with the cavalry, simply stayed over night in Kimberley, and then pushed on to get into touch with the retreating enemy.

A long Boer wagon train is moving toward Bloemfontein, followed, presumably, by a large force of British infantry. In their hasty departure, the Boers lost quantities of supplies and ammunition. Military expert opinion is that Lord Roberts will not push far after the Boers immediately, because of transport problems and the need of rest for the troops.

He has to feed 70,000 persons in his army and the whole Kimberley population. He must rebuild the railway from Modder River town to Kimberley and re-occupy the latter. Gen. French lost a few men only in action, but the forced marches and heat have probably made many ill. Numbers of recruits must be provided. Lord Roberts has wrought a genuine military success, and the impression is that he has done enough for the present. He will need to prepare for

ANOTHER STRIKE

All over England there has been evidences of public joy. In every theatre and public meeting, around the railway stations and in the streets, there have been expressions of gladness and jubilation over the news. The newspapers, editorially, rejoice. Those who read the news closely see only one disturbing factor in the Cape situation, and that is the pressure of the Boers towards Lord Roberts' line of supply through the Kar, which was never more important than now. The Boers under Commandants Delarey and Grobler, are making a persistent effort to penetrate to the railway. They have pushed Gen. Clements back to Arundel and have outflanked him. They are within 60 miles, or two days' hard march, of the central railway. Doubtless Lord Roberts has left considerable forces along the line and can send back more if necessary. More artillery is to be sent to Lord Roberts from Cape Town.

CRONJE'S TIGHT PLACE

Spencer Wilkinson, discussing the military situation, in the Morning Post, says:—"It may be necessary to wait a day or two in order to fill in the details of the first act of Lord Roberts' operations. In recent days the Boers have been driven back to their centres in the attempt of the Boers to retreat, or, failing that, in the attempt to pursue them. Gen. Cronje has probably chosen to retreat, which, if successful, would take him across the Vaal River. The purpose of Lord Roberts' strategy undoubtedly was to surround Gen. Cronje's force and to cut his retreat. A few days will clear up the fate of the Boer commander."

FOUR MONTHS OF SIEGE

Fighting around Kimberley began Oct. 10, with desultory skirmishing. An armored train, while reconnoitering near Syntfontein, engaged the Boers on Oct. 16, killing five and wounding seven. On Oct. 20 the Western Union Telegraph Company Traffic Bureau notified the great Northwest-ern Telegraph Company that telegraphic communication with all offices beyond Orange River, South Africa, is interrupted. Thereafter all information from Kimberley came by way of native runners.

On October 21 the Boers had practically surrounded the town, and with a view to breaching this cordon the troops, five hundred strong, issued forth. Seven hundred Boers, who opposed their advance, were routed, and entered severe fighting. They were entrenched seven miles north of Kimberley, at McEwan's Farm, but Col. Scott-Turner compelled an evacuation at the point of the bayonet.

The British lost two men killed and 21, including two officers, wounded. The conflict apparently had little effect on the Boers, and they drew their lines around the town. A strong reconnaissance, made by Col. Scott-Turner, posted on a kopje. The Boers fired fifteen shells, none of which took effect, and the reconnoitering party returned to Kimberley.

Col. Kekewich, in a despatch from Kimberley, dated Nov. 5, said there had been no serious attack on the town up till then. The Boer guns were in position on commanding points around the town, and slight bombardment had been made, though no damage was done. Another despatch next day showed the gallant com-

mander to be in a comfortable position, and not at all hampered by the contraction of the enemy's lines. A bombardment of the town on Nov. 7 did practically no damage, and there were no casualties. Since this bombardment the Boers have maintained an almost daily cannonade at long range on the town.

On Nov. 22, Gen. Methuen, to whom was assigned the relief of Kimberley, had reached Witteputs, half way between Modder River and Kimberley, and to these brilliant successes was added news of another sortie on Nov. 27 from Kimberley, in which the British attacked the Boer positions on the east side and inflicted considerable losses. Hopes ran high in the beleaguered town, particularly when the enemy's forces, which were circumventing the town, began to thin. Col. Kekewich's forces made frequent sorties, but generally without much damage, as the majority of the Boers had gone south to fight the Boers at the Modder River.

On Dec. 4 communication by search-lights was established between Modder River and Kimberley. Then came the disastrous repulse at



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Magersfontein on Dec. 11, and the consequent lowering of spirits among the besieged at Kimberley. Gen. Methuen retired to Modder River again and the relief of the town was as far off as ever. After his defeat Gen. Methuen made no forward move, and was engaged on strengthening his position.

After the battle of Magersfontein the Boer lines about Kimberley were drawn tighter than ever, and the Boers made renewed attempts to take the place. The bombardment of the town was resumed with redoubled energy. All the Boer big guns from Mafeking were brought to bear against Kimberley, and in addition heavy reinforcements of men to the Boer ranks from other points were sent. But notwithstanding numerous attempts the Boers failed to break the town, and the inhabitants were even said to be eating horseflesh when Gen. French raised the siege.

OVERHAULED 'EM.

General Kelly-Kenny Captures the Flying Boer Train.

It was Made up of 78 Wagons Containing Stores, (Launder Rifles and Explosives).

London, Feb. 17.—It is officially announced that Gen. Kelly-Kenny has captured the large transport train which was trying to escape towards Bloemfontein with Kelly-Kenny's division in close pursuit. The capture includes 78 wagons, containing great quantities of stores and Mauser rifles and 10 barrels of explosives, belonging to Gen. Cronje's army.

MORE APPRECIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

An extensive shipping house in St. Louis, under date 15th inst., writing to our local exporters of grain, J. B. Stringer & Co., have this to say, among other things:—"Our country owes Great Britain lasting gratitude for her manifest friendship to us during the Spanish war in 1898, preventing as it did, effectually, the French coalition with the principal European governments towards intervention, and we know the best manhood in this country will ever cherish the warmest feelings towards our liberty-loving English cousins for this and other evidences of their friendship, and if the need ever arises show a substantial sympathy."

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