

ENGAGEMENT AT WEPENER

Boers Yesterday Attacked the Force Under Brabant, but Were Checked—Fight Continued To-Day.

HOSTILITIES ARE RESUMED IN NATAL

Buller Reported to Have Gained Command of One of the Passes—Movement of Burghers in Free State—Late News From Mafeking.

London, April 10.—The Boer attack on Gen. Buller's force at Wepener was resumed again at daylight to-day. The enemy's attack on the two or three sides on Monday lasted until 2.30 in the afternoon, when firing ceased and it was believed that the enemy had been beaten off, but it is announced this morning, from Alval North, that the fight had again begun. Brabant's force, numbering from 2,000 to 3,000, held positions in a rough country. The Boers are in unknown numbers and reinforcements are reaching them. Another body of two thousand Boers is marching towards Springfontein from Smithfield.

Basutoland. The detonation of heavy guns was heard at Maseru on Monday. Sir Godfrey Lagden, the British resident commander of Basutoland, has left Maseru for the border.

Movements of Troops. The events in the southeast portion of the Free State have caused the eighth division, which had been ordered to Fourteen Streams, to be diverted to Springfontein.

Mysterious movements of troops at Bloemfontein are proceeding. The reappearance of the Boers in the occupied country has caused a revival of the warlike feeling among the Free Staters of the Fauresmith and Phillips districts.

The federal agents are busy gathering details of the Boer movements, and owing to the British garrison being withdrawn from those districts, the British residents are uneasy and have sent delegates to Springfontein to ask for help. They were told that steps for their defence would be immediately taken.

In Natal. The Boers are reported to have turned up south of Biggarsburg and posted heavy guns four miles north of Elandslaagte. They are said to have fortified the vicinity of Wesese's Nek.

Sir F. Carrington has reached Capetown and is going to Edna, Portuguese East Africa.

Remoines. The war office proposes to land at Capetown before the end of May 20,000 troops, sailing from New Orleans, Buenos Ayres and Australian ports.

Buller's Success. In connection with the resumption of hostilities in Natal an interesting rumor is current that Gen. Buller has obtained command of one of the Drakenberg passes, whereby he hopes to take the Boers in the rear.

In the event of his being successful, Buller has enough troops to leave 20,000 men to hold Natal, while the remainder would be able to threaten the Boer positions at Bethlehem and Kroonstadt.

ENGAGEMENT AT WEPENER. Alval North, April 9.—An engagement took place to-day at Wepener. The Boers' Vickers Maxim did considerable execution at first, but the British guns soon got the range and made great havoc. The Rouxville commando has gone to Wepener.

Alval North, April 9.—Evening.—The fighting at Wepener was severe and lasted all day. The Boers received a check. The casualties were heavy on both sides. Another commando is advancing towards Wepener from Dewetdorp.

Fighting Resumed. Alval North, April 10.—Heavy fighting was continued at Wepener this morning. The result is unknown. Three Boer commandos are attacking the town.

FIGHTING IN NATAL. New York, April 10.—The Herald prints a dispatch from Ladysmith, dated Sunday, which says the Boers have posted a big gun on Knight's Hill, north of Elandslaagte, and another in the vicinity of Wesese's Nek station. The enemy are reported to be strongly entrenched at Helmskraal.

Pietermaritzburg, April 10.—Heavy cannonading commenced this morning in the vicinity of Elandslaagte.

No Details of Engagement. Ladysmith, April 10.—Heavy firing was heard early this morning in the direction of Sunday's River. It continued for a few hours.

No details of the engagement have been received.

RETIRING BEFORE BRITISH. Mafeking, March 27.—News was received yesterday of the advance of the southern relief column.

The Boers this morning opened fire at sunrise with seven guns, including one 100-pounder. This has been the Boer siege gun. It alone has already fired over sixty rounds.

Under cover of the fire the Boers advanced to the northern face of the forts, but retired on coming within rifle range. They also advanced to the southwestern posts but were repulsed.

plunderers at Bloemfontein describes the men of General Smith-Dorrien's brigade, in which is the Royal Canadian regiment. "These men," he says, "are taller and sturdier than infantry of the line. They are grim, solid men, straight as poplars, and wear a maple leaf upon their shoulder straps, and the British brigade is glad enough to have these maple leaves beside them, for the Canadians are the men of Paardeberg."

PLUMER'S RETIREMENT. Bulawayo, Tuesday, April 3.—Colonel Plumer engaged the Boers between Ramathlabama and Mafeking on March 31st. The Boers appeared in considerable force, some miles from Mafeking, and to prevent being outflanked on both sides Plumer had to withdraw on Ramathlabama, by retiring to his basis camp. The engagement lasted three hours, and the retirement was well carried out in good order under a heavy fire.

The above sketch is the British version of the affair, first announced on April 5th in a special dispatch from Lorenzo Marques.

Another Account. Gaborone, Sunday, April 1.—Yesterday, Saturday, Col. Plumer, with 270 mounted and a few dismounted infantry and one Maxim gun, arrived at Ramathlabama, where he left the dismounted men and proceeded along the railroad to within sight of Mafeking.

The advance guard, under Col. White, encountered a large body of Boers and almost simultaneously the left and the right flanks were attacked and sharp fighting followed.

The Boers were in crescent formation and outnumbered the British two to one, according to British information. They advanced with skill and stubbornness and persistently endeavored to encircle the British.

After holding his ground for an hour Col. Plumer retired, with the Boers slowly following him up.

The fighting continued throughout the ten miles of retreat to Ramathlabama, where the British Maxim gun was brought into play. After a stiff fight Col. Plumer reached his camp.

The British casualties were killed, 3 officers and 7 men; wounded, 3 officers and 24 men; missing, 11.

The Boers' loss was believed to be more.

PRISONERS AT ST. HELENA. St. Helena, April 10.—The Niobe and Milwaukee have arrived here with the Boer prisoners. The health of the men is good, with the exception of four cases of measles, which necessitated the Milwaukee being quarantined. They will probably land tomorrow.

The Governor has been notified of the desire of the authorities that the prisoners be treated with every courtesy and consideration.

Boers Near Bethulle. Bethulle, Orange Free State, April 9.—It is expected that the Boers will endeavor to retake and destroy the bridge over the Orange river, consequently extraordinary precautions have been taken. A force of Boers is located 12 miles east of Bethulle.

As a matter of fact the Boers again practically hold the Free State eastward of the railroad, and are greatly encouraged by their successes at Reddersburg and Kornspruit.

THE CANADIAN FIGHT. Col. Sam Hughes writing from the Orange River says: "By the way, didn't the boys get a peppering last week? The most idiotic thing I ever heard of. Sergeant Thompson and others described it to me last night. They and the Cornwallis fired a few rounds at from 900 to 800 yards and then charged. Imagine charging 800 yards! Why, before they got 100 yards they were scattered all over. The Cornwallis man first in the trenches!"

In less than 100 yards a bullet through the head rendered the payment a liability for some one else. The whole lot ran on until within a couple of hundred yards, when they halted for breath. It is said that one poor fellow, a Canadian, led by an enormous distance, and actually reached the trenches, only to be riddled. His body was found next day. If they had advanced by rushes of alternate sections or ranks, after firing a few rounds into the enemy, and held their wind until within 150 yards, there would scarcely have been a man hit, and then there would have been results. The boys displayed the greatest courage and endurance. They marched nearly all night; charged for hundreds of yards, and lay under a hot sun all day. At night both British and Boers fell back. Colonel Otter was as cool as a cucumber. He lighted his pipe and walked up and down before the lads, as did nearly all the officers; but some were not well up in the 800 yards' dash.

"The butcher's bill is very large—more than one in ten. Poor Arnold is sure to die. Mason, with a bullet in his chest from side to side, is doing well. He is a son of his father's—'pluck to the back bone.' Cronje must surrender. In a day or two, almost every hour brings news of Boers being cut up."

"Near here on the karoo at the foot of a kopje, lie the remains of young Charlie Wood, of Halifax, an R.M.C. graduate of a couple of years ago, lieutenant in Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, and also Keith-Falconer, a magnificent lieutenant-colonel, full of dash and judgment."

"They differ from many, many more in being buried side by side. Our fellows put a cairn over Wood, and also did the same for Keith-Falconer. In many another spot the poor fellows are not so carefully buried. However, it's all a game of chance. To-day, to-night, chatting and singing songs; to-morrow night toes to the roots of the karoo salt brush. The second night before the Australians made their heroic stand at Rensberg, I was with Major Ebbs and others, some of whom are checked out. Of the party of Seaforth Highlanders with whom I wandered all over Magersfontein, about the New Year time, three, including Capt. Cowan, were hit last Sunday, two being killed. Before this reaches you it may be our turn. But mark me, I will be most awfully disappointed if I am bowled out without making sure of sending a few Boers to a better land. You know they are so good now—such a canting, hypocritical lot—their country is full of psalm books and Hallelujah children—that it would be a good act to pass a few over Jordan now. They may fall from grace under British rule."

"Before this reaches you I hope again to be under the 'music.' I have had four very interesting small doses already. But this time the business will be more serious. In case you should succeed to the command of the old 45th in the near future, by my creating a vacancy, let me wish you and the old corps, in which I have been for 33 years, all success. My intention is to be with you in June, however."

To Sail on April 22nd. Ottawa, April 11.—Lord Strathcona's request for 50 more troops for his contingent in South Africa to take the places of those killed or wounded, has already been acted upon, and arrangements are about completed for the required number to sail from Halifax on the new Allan liner 'Canadian,' sailing from Halifax for Liverpool on the 22nd. All necessary equipment is ready.

May Go to Africa. Ottawa, April 11.—Inspector Strickland is expected daily at Vancouver from the Yukon. If he is here in time he will go to South Africa.

Shot in the Neck. Kingston, April 11.—Private Bradshaw, of "D" company first contingent, who was wounded at Paardeberg, writing to a friend here, says the bullet which struck him in the neck severed the vocal chords, thus depriving him forever the power of speech.

Powerful at Portsmouth. London, April 11.—The British first-class cruiser Powerful, whose brigade did such splendid service in the defence of Ladysmith, arrived at Portsmouth this afternoon and was received with immense enthusiasm by thousands of people.

A Boer Rumor. Pretoria, April 10.—It is reported here that Colonel Baden-Powell, the British commander at Mafeking, is dead.

Boers Reporting Fighting. Pretoria, April 10.—The latest news from the front is that fighting is continuing at Elandslaagte, Natal, and Dewetdorp, Orange Free State, but no particulars have been received.

TREK OF BOERS. An American Scout Tells of Boer Method of Range Finding. London, April 11.—A Morning Post dispatch from Bloemfontein, telegraphed April 9th, gives a description by F. B. Burnham, the American scout with Gen. Roberts, of the Boer trek from Kornspruit. Mr. Burnham says: "Owing to a report that the British had occupied Brandfont and were moving to Winburg, the course of the convoy was altered; and the Boers pushed forward with increased speed towards Winburg. They expected cavalry pursuit every hour, and the convoy was protected with the greatest care and subtlety, the road taken being between kopjes held and evacuated in succession by rear guards. The trek proceeded throughout Sunday, and on Monday morning the convoy was ten miles from Winburg."

Mr. Burnham, explaining the Boer method of obtaining the range for rifles, says: "One man fired successive shots and watched the dust raised by the bullets until accuracy was obtained, and then he communicated the range to his command."

GARRISON STILL HOLDING OUT

Lord Roberts Says Troops at Wepener Yesterday Inflicted Serious Losses on Burghers.

ENGAGING BOERS NEAR ELANDSLAAGTE

Naval Guns Bombard Their Positions—Forced to Retire—Reinforcements for Brabant—Gatacre Returning to England.

London, April 11.—Lord Roberts wires to the war office from Bloemfontein, under the date of Tuesday, 10th, as follows: "The enemy have been very active during the past few days. One commando is now on the north bank of the Orange river, not far from Alval North, while another is attacking Wepener."

"The garrison there is holding out bravely and yesterday inflicted serious loss on the Boers. Major Spring, of the Cape Mounted Rifles, was killed. "The troops are being moved rapidly. "A patrol of six men of the Seventh Dragoon Guards, under Lieut. Wetherley, who had been reported missing since April 7th, has returned safely."

Boer Reports Discredited. As the foregoing does not mention the alleged British reverse on Saturday at Meerkersfontein, the Boer telegrams are discredited at the war office, and they are further discredited on account of the discrepancies in the dispatchs, as Meerkersfontein in one message is located near Brandfont, and in another its location southeast of Bloemfontein. The places being 100 miles apart.

Gatacre's Return. Gen. Gatacre's return to England is accepted as being in the nature of a recall, though no reason is given for it, and it will be associated in the public mind as his lack of skill. Lord Roberts' criticism of his management of the Stormberg attack, and possibly Gatacre arriving an hour and a half too late to rescue the Reddersburg force may have decided his return.

No News From Wepener. Reuter Telegram Company's correspondent, at Alval North wiring this morning, says: "There is no further news from Wepener. Too cloudy to helicopter. More British troops are arriving."

Boer Protest. It is learned that the Boer government have formally notified Portugal that they consider the shipping of British troops and munitions of war to Rhodesia, by way of Beira, Portuguese East Africa, to be tantamount to hostile action. This, however, will not stop Gen. Sir Carrington's force from entering Rhodesia.

Whether or not the Boers will make reprisals upon Portugal remains to be seen, though best informed opinion here inclines to the belief that the Boers are not likely to back up their protest with action that would bring them into hostilities with still another power.

LOSSES AT WEPENER. Alval North, April 10.—The British losses in the fighting at Wepener yesterday were 11 killed and 41 wounded. The British are holding their own.

BRITISH CASUALTIES. London, April 11.—The war office issued this afternoon a return of the total British casualties up to April 7th. It was as follows: Killed in action—211 officers and 1,900 men. Died of wounds—48 officers and 4,005 men. Missing and prisoners—168 officers and 3,722 men. Repatriated invalids—288 officers and 4,934 men. Total—13,865, exclusive of the sick and wounded now in hospitals.

To the war office return of casualties must be added the losses of last week and the wounded, aggregating about ten thousand men, making a grand total of upwards of 23,000 officers and men put out of action.

BOERS NEAR ELANDSLAAGTE. Ladysmith, April 10.—The Boers opened fire this morning, sending shells into the British camp at Elandslaagte from three positions widely separated. The shells did no damage.

The troops moved out to reconnoitre and found the Boers in strong force and well fortified. A naval 4.7-inch gun replied to the Boers, who have a "Long Tom" in position.

Shelling the Burghers. Ladysmith April 10.—Evening.—When the Boers commenced shelling the British were drilling. One private was killed and another was wounded before the soldiers were withdrawn from range. Then the naval brigade opened fire, and drew a heavy Boer fusillade. Two of the cruiser Philomel's gunners were killed.

The naval men stuck to their positions, however, and the Boers unmasked six guns, including a 300-pounder, and the shells fell in all the British camps. After three hours' bombardment, the Boer fire slackened, and the burghers cleared from a kopje on the right, when a British shell alighted on the spot occupied by their gun.

Another commando was seen moving toward the British left, apparently with the intention of flanking them, but the British shells forced them to retire. The British advance pickets were continually sniped, but few casualties have been reported.

In the afternoon the naval brigade fired a few shells. It is rumored that a body of Boers have gathered southwest of Elandslaagte with the apparent intention of cutting the British line of communications. General Clery directed to-day's operations.

Gen. Buller visited Elandslaagte to-day.

LORD ROBERTS' WARNING. Colesburg, Cape Colony, April 11.—In view of the state of unrest across the border, Lord Roberts has proclaimed a warning to the Cape colonists that further acts of hostility will be treated with the utmost rigor of martial law.

GATACRE GOING HOME. Bloemfontein, April 10.—Gen. Gatacre, the commander of the third division, is about to return to England.

General Pole Carew has been appointed the command of the 11th division. Several changes are likely to be made in the brigade command.

BOERS AND PORTUGAL. London, April 11.—The British government, the Associated Press is officially informed, stands ready to take the part of Portugal in case the Boers attempt reprisals, but so far Portugal has not applied for British aid nor has she replied to the Boer notification.

With Great Britain at her back, it is said, she will not give way in the slightest in maintaining that the transactions at Beira are fully justified by the long-standing treaties between Great Britain and Portugal.

While the situation is admitted to be grave, the foreign office is not inclined to believe the Boers will take aggressive action. The consensus of opinion is that should the Boers attempt reprisals, it would react to the advantage of Great Britain, enabling her to use Delagoa Bay freely.

STRATHCONA'S HORSE. Montreal, April 11.—The Elder Dempster line agents here received a cable this morning announcing the arrival at noon yesterday at Capetown of the transport Monterey, with the Strathcona Horse.

One hundred and sixty-three horses died during the voyage. More Men Required. Ottawa, April 11.—Fifty extra men are required for the Strathcona Horse, and they are to be recruited in the West. It is likely they will sail from Halifax on the 22nd inst. Inspector Strickland will be offered the position of subaltern.

The Boer Prisoners. Simonstown, April 11.—In consequence of the unfavorable conditions for keeping the Boer prisoners, the authorities have decided to ship them all to St. Helena with the least possible delay. The sickness among the captured burghers is abating.

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