

To our astonishment we found the war not over and were refitted and sent to the Western Transvaal. We were given English horses, and these were responsible for a number of fractures and sprains as, unused to prairie, they never looked where they were putting their feet, and if a hole was there they invariably put their foot in it with disaster to their rider. I was equally unfortunate in my ambulance mules, two of which died half an hour after starting and the remainder came into camp two hours later. There was a severe fight at Frederickstadt, where the Boers had a British general surrounded and cut off from his water supply. I saw several examples of bayonet wounds of abdomen. These were always fatal. The Boers were around the British hospital and one of the doctor's had his horse there. When the Boers were running away one of them took the doctor's horse with profuse apologies for so doing and promises of early return. However, that horse has not come back yet. During this battle, three Boers who were overtaken by the charging infantry threw down their arms and surrendered. After the line had passed they picked up their arms and shot a sergeant and man. They were tried by court martial and shot. It is necessary that a soldier's word should be trusted when he states he surrenders, otherwise there would be a large unnecessary slaughter.

After a couple of weeks' experience of night marches, we entered Polchesfstrom. I saw a case here where a man was shot about four feet distant from the mouth of a gun, the bullet entering the upper lip and leaving through the occipital bone, completely shattering the base of the skull. This shattering is a usual result of steel mantled bullets at short ranges. The children of the town were very eager for our army biscuits and obtained quite an amount, as we supposed they were hungry. But later we found they were collecting the biscuits to send to men on commando. Just before we entered Polchesfstrom, several of the townsmen returned home telling their wives and daughters that it was for their protection. However, they were told that their wives and daughters were well able to take care of themselves and back on commando they had to go. Our time in Polchesfstrom was pleasant; football, baseball, tennis and dancing, relieved the monotony of active service. Then a march into Klerksdorp, another turn at railroad guarding and then we went to the South of the Orange River Colony to join in the popular pastime of chasing De Wet. During the railway journey they halted us one night alongside an unguarded supply train containing unlimited supplies of rum, jam and biscuits. No army rations were required for quite a period afterwards.

We disentrained at midnight and started out for a supposed 36 hours march, taking neither blankets nor supplies. We were out six weeks. We had no field hospital, only two ambulances to a column of 1500