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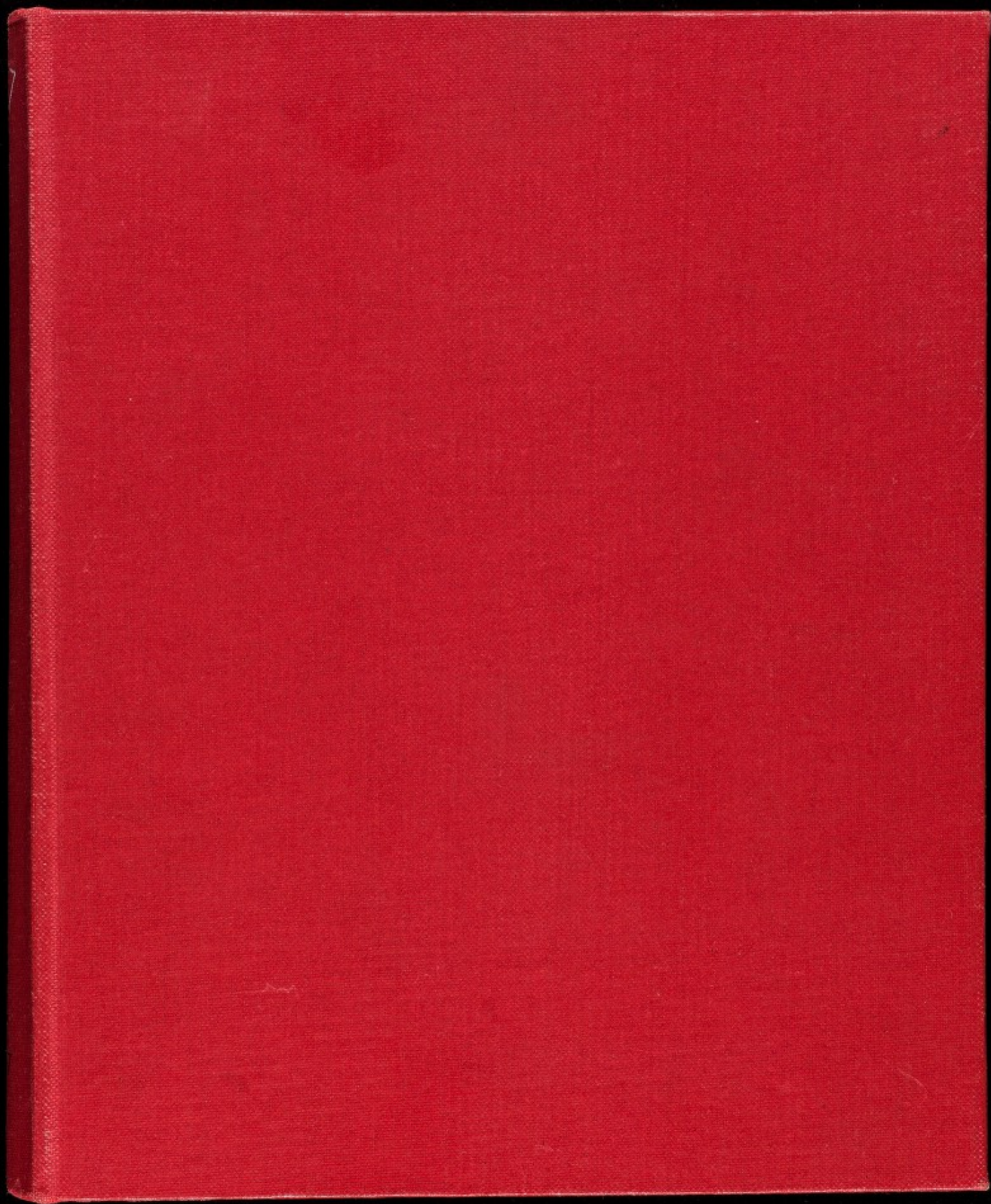
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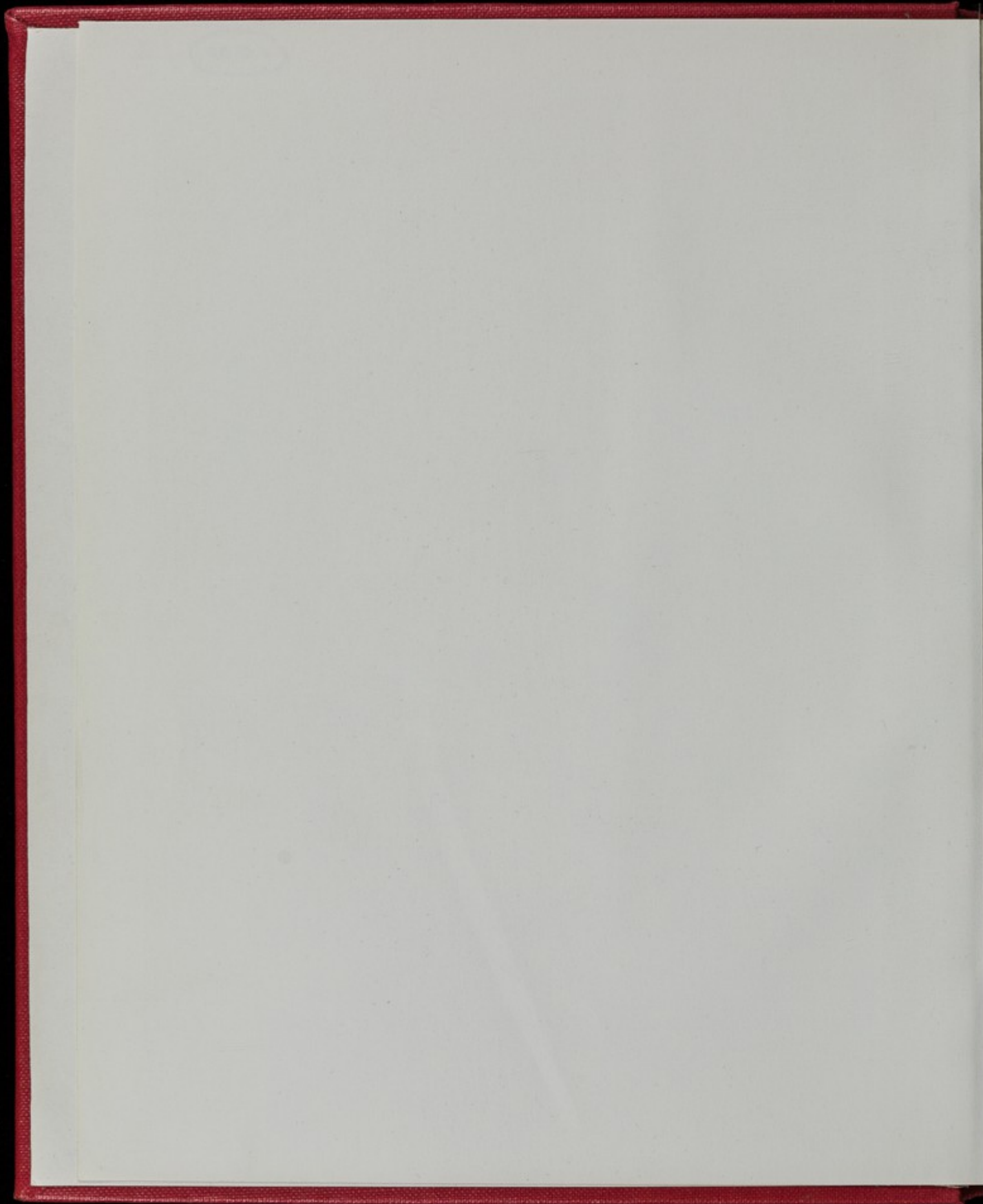


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JUNE 29. We marched at 7.30. It was a very cold and windy night. The tent ropes all became loose in the middle of the night and I had to get up and tighten them. It has blown hard all day and has been very cold. We came to the Vaal about 12 o'clock and crossed into the Free State or Orange River Colony at a place called Villiersdorp. It is a very small village, not more than 20 houses. Those which were not occupied had a bad time, the troops were mad for firewood and they were quickly stripped of doors and windows. I managed to get 2 sacks of what is called "Mist", or cow dung fuel, so we were all right. The troops were standing about 20 deep outside the store waiting for goods. I took some flour to the Padre's wife and she is going to get some bread made for us to-night and we are to send for it the first thing in the morning. We had a big grass fire in our camp to-day and put it out with difficulty owing to the high wind. We are not moving till 9.30 to-morrow morning, and we may not then unless the convoy has made good progress in crossing the drift here. There is a Committee sitting at Pretoria to consider the field hospital equipment and also the pattern of the ambulance. Tate has been asked for his opinion. As I have had a good deal of experience now in the working of both units he has advised me to write on this subject a Thesis for promotion exam. I am going into the whole matter very thoroughly and hope to put a decent thesis together during the next few days. I shall then send it home to the D.G., and also a copy to the P.M.O. at Pretoria, for submission to the Committee there. I amuse myself writing at night before I turn in, only my

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 there. I must write up at least before I can do any more.

feet get very cold over the job.

30th. The orders were that we should not start before 9.30 a.m. and that then the time would be settled by the progress made by the Ox convoy in crossing the drift. The river bed is very good but the far bank is very steep, and soon gets wet from the drippings of the animals as they leave the water, and gets very slippery and muddy. However, we started at 12 o'clock and went about 8 miles. I had to abandon another mule, and picked up a sore backed pony which I put in instead. I got a fine lot of bread baked and sent 2/6 to the cook for doing it, enough to last a week and it is not a bit sour. I tried to capture a pony coming along, but could not manage it. Some men and I commenced a drive through a lot of wire fencing, but they broke through and got away. We are only about 8 miles from Frankfort, so will reach there to-morrow. The grass is very thick and matted where we are encamped and we have to be very careful of fire.

JULY 1st. We started at the absurdly early hour of 7 o'clock, considering that we had only 6 or 7 miles to do. I think they expected fighting for the baggage was kept back till 9 o'clock. Shortly after leaving camp I saw a lot of ponies near a Kaffir Kraal. The natives said they belonged to a Boer who was on commando. There were also about 50 head of cattle, and yet we were leaving all behind. Some Tommies came up so we helped ourselves. I got the quiet ones for the wagon, and then after a lot of trouble, got a beautiful black mare who will foal in a week or

or two, so I am bringing them along. We had no opposition in entering the town and are now encamped outside. We expect the Highland Brigade the day after to-morrow, who are coming from Heilbron. I hope they bring our mails with them. We will probably halt here for a couple of days, and I am going to try and get my broken ambulance repaired. I got 6 lbs. of butter at 1/3 a lb., not very good, but better than nothing. The General asked me to go over this afternoon and tell him a few things about the ambulances as he had to write a report. I told him I was writing my thesis on it and asked him if I might bring it. He said "certainly", and he is keeping it for a day or two. I think he was rather pleased with it.

2nd. It was frightfully cold last night, a very thick hoar frost. I was quite warm enough and had a Tommies water bottle filled with boiling water for my feet. They get so cold that I can't get to sleep for an hour with them. I got the A.S.C. wheeler early to look at my broken wagon, and he said it would take 2 days to repair, and he could not spare the time. The General said that I might leave it behind with the garrison, which would probably remain, and take on a light spring cart instead. I took it into the town and found it was not at all certain that a garrison was going to be left, and also that it could be mended quicker than that, so I got the necessary wood and brought it back again. Then I got 4 wheelers, at 2 o'clock, and they started on it, and by dark had almost finished it. I gave them tea and they were very pleased. The General passed by in the evening

and was glad to hear of the progress. We sent out a force this morning towards Heilbron and they came in touch with the Highland Brigade about 10 miles off. Their Mounted Infantry thought that they were Boers and fired on them, but soon discovered their mistake. They will be here to-morrow and we shall probably move on Wednesday towards Bethlehem. This is about 80 miles off, due south, and then we shall most probably move on to Harrismith, which is on the Natal border. We hear that our mails are due to arrive in Heilbron to-day and as we are not going there, I don't know when we are going to get them. We got a large supply of mealies in the town. I have just been sent 5 skeletons of mules. At least one was abandoned by Tate a few days ago. They often get colic and have to be left on the veldt early in the morning, but they sometimes recover, and are picked up by some other unit which is following. I saw one of my castaways this morning in an A.S.C. wagon in the town, and the poor brute was dying of pneumonia. The bread I got at Villiersdorp has turned out a sell. 4 loaves were not bad, but the rest has been made of inferior flour and we can't eat it. I expect the good lady was making for other people as well as for us, and the flour got mixed.

JULY 3rd. It has been a beastly cold day. Gen. Gordon came and saw the wagon which had been repaired and was very pleased with the job which had been made of it. The Highland Brigade turned up at noon and brought a mail. I have been very busy all day writing out my Thesis. It looks very well as far as it goes. I don't fancy we shall go on to-morrow. I hope not, for I should

like another day's rest here.

JULY 4th. We did not start till 8.30 a.m., so we were able to send all our sick into the town to go back to Heilbron by empty wagons. There was a nasty drift near the town, and I got behind my proper place owing to a Battery getting in front of me. The Highland Brigade had also got in front, and as we came up they halted. I heard Fighting Mac say to my Staff Sergeant "what thing is that?" I was just behind, and so I answered, "that thing is a Cavalry Brigade ambulance". Then I noticed that he was a General, and so I added "Sir". He at once became very civil and said: "You are very far behind". So I explained what had happened

We had a fairly easy trek, and I rode my new black mare. She had foaled months ago, she is a very pretty beast and everyone stares at her. I had her fore feet shod, but no-one could go near her hind ones. She is very nervous, but improves every day. The Sergt. who was with me when I got her has been nicely sold. Next day a Rimmington's Scout brought a kaffir along and he claimed the pony. Like a fool, he believed the story and let them take her. The scout promptly went to the 16th Lancer Lines and sold her to one of the men for £6. The sergt. found this out and reported it to the Provost Marshall, who has the mare at present. We had a very long and steep drift to cross before getting into camp, and the country which we have passed through lately has had stone pillars instead of wooden fencing posts. The result has been great scarcity of fuel. I sent some men ahead to get some posts

which I saw in the distance and so we are all right for to-night. I got four sacks of mealies out of a deserted house to-day, and I picked up a ripping pony which had been abandoned; it is one of the most willing beasts I have seen. A swingletree broke just before we got into camp, but fortunately we had got over the drift and so 6 mules were able to bring it into camp. Another of my wagons is breaking up, but I think we shall be able to bring it along. The Highlanders have all discarded their helmets and are wearing slouch hats. I must get some photos of them, and one of Macdonald if I can. We are now breaking up one of the wheels of every wagon which we come across so as to render them useless to the enemy.

JULY 5th. We had one of the coldest nights we have yet experienced. No orders were issued to march, and so we stayed in bed till 7.30 a.m.. At 9 o'clock we got sudden orders to march as soon as possible. We got under weigh and soon heard 2 pom-poms firing in the distance, but none of our column appeared to know whose they were. We came to a fine lot of posts, and laid in several. We dawdled along and got into camp just before dark. A fine herd of Blessbok passed and repassed several times and I was wishing that I had a Mauser. Several officers' servants went after them and killed 3 or 4. They are a little bigger than black buck, but with lighter coats, and horns like Chinkara; one had had its leg blown off some days ago and one of the Lancer officers speared it. It fell into the hands of two gunners and when I came

up they didn't quite know how to get it to camp. I told them to put it on my wagon and I would take some when I got in. I took a leg and the liver. The saddle was too thin. One driver had been in the 6th F.B. at Sauger and knew me well. We came to some small farms and got a lot of forage. The looting of hens and pigs was something awful. The provost blokes - as the men call them - just turn their backs and don't pretend to see. After all, it is rather hard to expect men to leave food alone as they pass along. I picked up a ripping pony and turned a rotten mule loose.

JULY 6th. Last night was the coldest yet. A jug of water on our table froze. We started at 7-30 for Reitz. It was supposed to be 8 miles but turned out to be 15. On the way we came to a nice farm tenanted by an old Boer and his wife. There was a 4-wheeled cart - something of a van -. The Col. in charge of a Battery wanted to take it for his Mess cart, but one of our fellows named Thomson, said it ought to be kept for an ambulance. The officer of the Household Cavalry who was taking it, asked me if it would be any use to me, and I jumped at the offer. He told me to take it and give a receipt for £64 for it. It holds about 10 seated inside and is very nicely done up and cushioned; 4 mules draw it easily. When I came to take it away, this Col. said "have you got 6 good horses to put in this cart?" It is very heavy and will stick at drifts and you will have to abandon it later on and unless you have the horses there isn't much use

in you taking it now." He also said that he wanted it for his Battery and I told him it would be far more use to me than to him. Then he changed his tune and said that he had proposed it as an ambulance. I thanked him and said that I should be able to manage to take it along. I picked up two good ponies to-day, one just after leaving camp, it was a Boer mare which had been caught and ridden by one of the Household Cavalry and he had given it a sore back and then turned it loose. I caught her after a lot of trouble and later on put her in the pole of one of the ambulances. She took it very kindly. I have now 11 ponies in the teams and they all work well. Only for them, I don't know what I should have done. We got to Reitz about 2 o'clock and are in a very nice grassy field. We shall probably stop here for to-morrow at any rate. It is a very small, dusty little village. There are about 45 sick and wounded here of our's, who were captured at different places. They are chiefly Irish Yeomanry who were wounded at Lindley when they were surrounded, and fought for 5 days. They were left here in charge of one of their number who happened to be a doctor. Hunter with the infantry is about 10 miles behind us, so we are pretty certain to wait for him to catch us up.

JULY 7th. To my great disgust we marched at 7-30. I picked up 2 sore-backed ponies just after we left camp, but I had to cast my little black mare. I noticed that there was a creaking in the spine and thought it might be rheumatism, but to-day she began to drag her hind leg and I had trouble in getting her along. It was

obvious that she had had some injury to her back some years ago and is only fit for breeding purposes. I gave her to a Boer on the road who had brought in his arms and pony and was going back to his farm which was close by. He was very poor and couldn't pay anything for her. We had a long tiresome day, but halted about 1 o'clock near a farm and I managed to get some food. This farm was occupied by an old chap and his wife and there was quickly not a fowl left to them. Some of the men got into his vegetable garden and took what there was. Then they got digging for potatoes and struck a box which was buried a few inches below the surface. They had it out and found it full of clothing and other stuff. It was quickly divided and taken away. I heard about it and went and told the old chap and asked him if he had any other things buried to go and stay in the garden. He said that he had been told that our men robbed and looted all before them, and as he hadn't been on commando he didn't know the difference so he put his wife's clothes and some of his own in the box and buried them. I explained that everything would have been quite safe if he had left them in his house, and he quite saw that it was so.

The place where we are to-night is full of horses and cattle, consequently we are getting into a rich part of the country. I must make some bread to-night.

JULY 8th: We marched at 7 o'clock and it froze hard for about half an hour after we started. My moustache was full of ice from my own breath. However it soon warmed up and got quite comfortable. I picked up 3 excellent Boer ponies and took 2 photos to complete

another dozen. We got to Bethlehem about 12 o'clock and found Clement's force there. They had licked the Boers, including both the De Wets, and captured a 15-pounder which they took from us some time ago and a lot of ammunition. We hear that there was a Council of War and they only decided to fight by a majority of 2. Now they have retired to the hills. We shall probably halt here till to-morrow and wait here for Hunter. The 9th Lancers sent me 2 English horses with sore backs. So now I have my teams complete. I am pegging the skin of a bullock (which has just been killed) out and am going to make it into strips of raw hide called reins, these are greatly used by the natives for tethering cattle, horses and mules and we can't get them. I got a cheque for £13.2.9. from the Pay people at Capetown to-day for allowances to end of January. My bread was a great success last night.

JULY 9th: I rode into Bethlehem this morning. It is a very quiet, pretty little place and the houses are well built of stone. There is absolutely nothing to be bought in the place in the shape of stores, but we are getting a good deal of forage for the animals. On the way back we met Hunter and the rest of the Highland Brigade. I heard that the Boers themselves looted the town. They told the inhabitants that we were about to shell the town and that they must look out for themselves. They went out and bivouacked on the veldt and in the meantime the Boers helped themselves to what they wanted. We have taken up a good many buildings as hospitals and there is a German ambulance there as well. I saw a very fine post on the way back and sent back a couple of natives for it.

We are still short of firewood.

JULY 10th. I sent the Thesis on to Williams, the Australian P.M.O. who is acting as P.M.O. of this Force and asked him to forward it on to the P.M.O. at Bloemfontein. I prepared it for his signature and wrote "forwarded" leaving place for his signature. He sent it back and had written also: "Recommended that this carefully thought out paper be accepted as a thesis for promotion". He had read it through. I sent it off in the afternoon with the other letters. We march to-morrow for Heilbron. The orders run as follows: "Owing to the difficulty of rationing horses at this distance from the Base, the G.O.C. has decided to reduce the number of mounted men with his force to one Cavalry Brigade and 1300 Mounted Infantry. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade and about 300 M.I. will proceed to Heilbron to-morrow. The force will be accompanied by a convoy of 100 ox wagons, 22 of these will carry 112 British sick and wounded. 40 prisoners will be handed over to you." We march at 8-30 and the ox wagons with the sick will head the baggage so that our marches will be slow and short. I believe that a convoy carrying mails for us is on the way here, so we shall meet it half way and that will be good business. At Heilbron we shall be on the line, and so be more comfortable, if only they leave us there. I hear a good many of our senior majors have been sent down or passed over for promotion. M----- whom we met on the Malabar is one of the passed over. I had a long chat with Carr the Vet: to-day, and he sends his love to the kids.

JULY 11th: We started at 8-30. A nice hour. We had a very

peaceful trek, but the veldt has been burnt all the way and it was very dusty. I went to a deserted farm which we passed the other day and took an ambulance. I got 6 sacks of wheat and a fine lot of wood. Wheat is not very good feeding, but it helps the bran and mealies. I picked up two good Argentine horses to-day with sore backs, so my teams are now looking quite respectable. We came about 15 miles and got in about 3 o'clock. We got a fatigue party and pitched 12 tents for the sick which came in the convoy, 125 in all. The prisoners are encamped just behind us, they are a funny lot and among them some very old men and a parson. They say they don't know why they are being brought along, but it is suspected that they knew where a lot of our captured wagons are. They say that if a force is marching up from Ficsburg, that De Wet has no chance of escaping. They were very hungry when they arrived just now, but we soon gave them a good feed. It was amusing to see them sharpening bits of stick to eat their food with, and pulling grass for mattresses. The Australian in charge of the sick is a pretty rough specimen, but a good, hard-working fellow I believe.

JULY 12th: An Australian major who is on Lord Chesham's staff of Yeomanry turned up last evening. He had been taken prisoner 10 days ago near Heilbron. He and another were just beyond their own outposts and they were surprised and made to surrender. They were taken to Bethlehem and kept there till the fight began. They had got Steyn to give them permission to remain there after the fight was over and rejoin us, but some Boers made them prisoners again and took them to the position to which the enemy had retired on

leaving the town. After a couple of days Steyn let them go on the understanding that they did not disclose what they had seen. They had robbed them of everything they possessed, and this chap had no bedding. The General sent him on to us to see if we could do anything for him. I gave him 3 blankets stitched together which formed my Tent D'Abri, and a stretcher. Then we found that he had had nothing to eat, and so we gave him and an Australian our dinner. He was a very interesting man and said that the Boers have a marvellous system of patrols and pickets. He thought that we should finish the war in the next 2 or 3 weeks. We came along to Reitz to-day and got here about 3 o'clock. There is a big stock of supplies in the town and it is guarded by a Highland Regt. and some artillery. The whole country between here and Bethlehem is burnt up on account of our carelessness. There was a big veldt fire in our camp and it took the whole Brigade to put it out. The grass is long and dry as tinder and it is very dangerous to light a fire. I heard that the Boers have raided the farms of those who have surrendered and driven off their cattle, and now we are going to evacuate this place to-morrow and leave them to their fate. All the supplies and troops are to go on to Bethlehem where they are going to assist in fighting De Wet. We go on to Heilbron.

JULY 13th. We started at 8-30 with about 150 sick. I had to give up my wagons and we packed the rest in partly loaded buck wagons. I travelled with the column all day and it was very slow after what one has been accustomed to lately. We took the Bethlehem parson along in our wagons to-day. A deputation of his relatives went to

the General and said that he had had an operation performed lately on him and his health was suffering from being brought along on a buck wagon. This was a lie, but we had to put him on an ambulance and bring him along. He is not a bad old chap, so we made him comfortable. On the way I saw a lot of posts and so I detached an ambulance which I had kept empty in case of anything, and went for the posts. We filled the wagon and I got back to the convoy. Soon after the owner of the place came up and presented an order which had been signed by one of the A.S.C. on the Staff, to the effect that none of the man's goods or stock was to be touched. I said that this could not apply to posts which were always taken. The A.S.C. Officer in charge of the convoy who was a captain said: "that I had better give up the wood"; I said "all right, there it is, but let him take it". The man said it was too heavy for him, and wanted help. I refused to give him any help and said: "in 10 minutes the wagon would move on." He then offered to sell it, so the A.S.C. chap gave him a chit for it for 30/-. This fellow was fighting against us for 3 or 4 months and now we must not take his wood. However, I got it in the end. I hear that we are to entrain as soon as we get to Heilbron, for some place or the other. Our mules have gone on to Lindley, for Bethlehem, and a wire has been sent there for them to go back. I trust they may meet us at Heilbron. The reason why Reitz has been evacuated is that the veldt has been so badly burnt between there and Bethlehem that the ox convoys can't find grass where there is water as well, and so convoys will have to go via Lindley. The Landrost of Bethlehem is a jovial old chap. He is

also among the prisoners and is going to send Holt a flag of the Transvaal and of the Orange Free State for me.

JULY 14th: This has been one of the most unpleasant days we have ever had. We started off over very hilly country at 8-30, and a very high wind sprung up, quite $\frac{3}{4}$ of a gale, and it has blown hard all day. Being a head wind it must have kept us back a good deal. The dust was perfectly awful and our eyes are smarting like blazes. We are filthy dirty, and like sweeps. We had a long halt in the middle of the day and got food and cocoa for about 150 sick and wounded. Then just as it was getting dark, some Boers were seen on the skyline to our left, and a squadron of 9th Lancers went after them. We were halted for a while and then went into camp. The grass was so thick that we were afraid to camp on it and so had to move on ^{to} another site. It was just dark as we got the tents pitched and made ourselves comfortable. I hear that this wind blows like this every day for the next 6 weeks. We have 18 miles yet to go into Heilbron, and start at 8 a.m. to-morrow.

JULY 15th: We started at 8 a.m. It was much warmer than it has been, and quite still. In fact a beautiful day. About 12 noon the wind sprang up and it blew very hard. We went along steadily on a good road and got into Heilbron about 3 p.m. I rode ahead and went to the Stationary Hospital to find out about the disposal of 150 sick and wounded we were bringing. The C.O. got a bit of a fright when he heard the number. I met X--- of our batch. Poor chap, he only married just before he came out, and his wife has

died in the meantime. I got rid of the sick and came back to camp. Then we were told that we had to go to Winburg via Kroonstadt, but as we had got a mail, and two others waiting to be sorted, I was quite prepared for anything. We had great work sorting and re-directing to the other half. Mine are directed 3rd Cavalry Brigade at last, but they have always come to us first, even though directed to 1st Cavalry Brigade, and then we have to re-direct them to the others. They must be very sick, for theirs were properly directed, and ours were not. We march via Kroonstadt as there is no object in sitting up all night to write letters which won't go any quicker. 2 parcels came for Cottell containing cardigan jackets and Balaclava caps, and socks and handkerchiefs. I distributed them among the Bearer Company and being in command took a cardigan and 2 doz. hemstitched handkerchiefs.

JULY 16th: We did not leave until 9 o'clock. I got up at 6-30 and went over and helped to sort the mails. There were still 3 weeks letters, parcels and papers. We worked hard and about 20 men as well and got all the parcels and letters sorted and distributed by 7-30. I got 3 more weeks' letters. Then I had to re-sort ours for the men, and put those for the other half Bearer Coy. and Field Hospital into a sack. Then breakfast, then off to the station and get rid of a broken ambulance and a 10-span set of harness and back to camp - so you may guess I had a busy morning. I rode on the wagon until I had read all my letters, and then walked to get warm again. We got into camp about 4 o'clock

after crossing a big drift. Then I went through all the letters and papers again, and re-directed those which required it. We still have some papers to get. I wonder whether we are going about as a flying column and whether we shall be sent on to some other place, patrolling the country. All our prisoners were shoved into the jail at Heilbron, including the parson, who wept bitterly. The C.I.V's are guarding the whole place. They have 2 cow guns with them, and the place is very open, so there won't be much chance of its being rushed.

JULY 17th: We had a very pleasant trek of about 16 miles.

Happened to get water, about 12-30. We had lunch and watered the animals. About 2 we saw the herd of ² Messbok streaking away in the distance. The Cavalry shot about 6, and I followed the herd with a Cavalry carbine and ordinary ammunition, but they went past like lightning. I chanced a shot at about 400 yards, and hit one. He lagged behind and lay down. My horse bolted off to the convoy, and I was quite close to the buck when he got up and went off. When we got near the camp we were met by an officer and a signaller who had come out from Kroonstad. They told me that we are off to Lindley to-morrow, to head off De Wet. I'm trying to get them to take my mail back with them.

JULY 18th: We marched at 8 a.m. and I went ahead with the Brigade, taking 5 ambulances. We travelled fairly fast and halted from 12 till 1 p.m., so that I had time for lunch, and to feed the mules. We reached camp at 2-30 p.m., and I made some

bread. We have not seen any sign of De Wet, and couldn't get into heliographic communication with Lindley. A dispatch rider has gone in this afternoon to try and get news. We are only 16 miles from that place.

JULY 19th: We started at 8 a.m. About 11-30 word came that Lindley was occupied by Boers, and that they had 200 men there. We pushed on with the intention of turning them out. At 2-30 I halted to feed the mules, and lunch. I had almost finished when I heard guns. I got under weigh as soon as possible and found that the Boers had opened fire with 2 guns from the top of a Kopje on our left front. They were using black powder, and so were distinctly seen. We got a Pom Pom on to them and they soon ceased. Then we noticed that about 200 mounted Boers were streaming across our right front and trying to surround us. Two guns were sent against them, and a lot of Cavalry. As soon as the guns appeared the 2 Boer guns which had been moved to the right into some Kraals, opened fire on them. We then turned two more guns on, and got a proper shelling in return. Meanwhile about 800 Boers attacked us in rear and a tremendous Mauser fire was opened on us. Things looked very black for us at one time, for we were quite surrounded. However, we moved our Pom Pom to the rear, and, all the dismounted men assisting, we drove them off. Nightfall put an end to the fighting, and we bivouacked where we were. We had only about a dozen casualties, and none of them were very severe. I did all the dressings, and then went back and brought in 2 wounded Boers. One had been shot through the chest and the other through the abdomen.

We had shelled a farm heavily during the afternoon and had unfortunately killed a Dutch girl. We don't know where Broadwood is, but we evidently came in touch with De Wet's main army. He will probably clear during the night, but I hope he won't knock up against our convoy which is coming out from Kroonstad. If they had been a little quicker this afternoon they would have done our supply column and baggage a lot of damage.

11-30 p.m. I have just finished operating on a wounded officer, uniting a divided tendon in one hand, and also removed 2 pieces of segment shell from his thigh with the enveloping canvas. I had to work by the light of 3 candles tied together, and which gave a most excellent light. Then I ligatured a piece of Omentum which was protruding from a Boer's chest in front. He must have been shot low down in the back, and the bullet passed upwards and forwards through the abdomen and chest, forcing the piece of Omentum before it. The Brigade interpreter came and got a lot of information from this Boer. He is only 19 years old, and says that his Commandant had told him that they were bound to win, because a European Power was shortly going to interfere. He also said that they had sent two Kaffirs to our camp the night before to tell us that 200 Boers were in Lindley, and to show us the best road there. Fortunately our General was too cute, and went by another way. We were to have been led into a valley, and the Boers, who were all round, would have given us a very bad time. They were supposed to number about 5000. We have these Kaffirs and they will probably be shot as spies.

We are ready to move at 8 a.m. to-morrow, but whether the Boers will attack us, or will have cleared out, time alone will tell. They know exactly how many we number.

JULY 20th: We were ready to move at 8 a.m. Our patrols went out and got fired on, and one was wounded. We hung about till 11-30 a.m. and then got orders to move back to our last camp. We heard that half De Wet's force was engaging us yesterday, while he got Steyn away. We left the two wounded Boers at the first farm-house we came to, and 3 dead were found. Shortly after leaving camp, a Yeoman rode from Lindley and said that our garrison had evacuated the place and left 40 sick and wounded. The Boers came in the same day and looted all that had been left for them. He said that the Boers were starving, and he wanted us to go back to Lindley. This was of course out of the question, but we are sending them food. Our convoy has arrived, and we hope there is a mail with it. We shall now have to follow up De Wet and see what we can do.

JULY 21st. There is no mail on the convoy. We are filling up from it. Some ambulances and wagons are going to Lindley to bring in the sick, and we are getting rid of our wounded to Kroonstad. A patrol of 17th and a Pom Pom has gone out to reconnoitre and I just hear some Mauser fire on our right front. We probably march at 10-30 to follow up De Wet. I am sending this in by the convoy and hope it may reach safely. Our Pom Pom has just loosed off about 20 rounds quite close. We advanced about 11 o'clock, and the baggage went by a road to our left. The Boer rear-guard ~~had~~

fell back as we went on. We came to a farm, and the Provost Marshal went inside. The women said "there is no-one here", but the youthful Provost pushed on. Then she said, "my husband is there very ill". The bed-clothes were pulled off and he was found fully dressed with his boots on. He was removed, and his farm was pretty well wrecked. Methuen's column had passed this way some time ago and there were 5 or 6 sore-backed horses about. I got a very fine horse and had him trotted, to see if he was sound. Then I had him put in the pole of an ambulance with a nice white horse which I also got. As soon as the ambulance moved, he became so lame that I thought he would fall. I had him turned loose and he trotted off, apparently quite sound, and kept up with the Brigade for miles. I can't help thinking he was very cunning, or else was lame in the shoulder and couldn't pull. Farther on we came to another farm owned by a man who had been excused fighting owing to short sight. He gave us information as to the Boer position, and his farm was left untouched, but he had to come along with us until to-morrow. I got a good pony here. About 3 o'clock we saw the Boers about 6 or 7 miles away on a hill and so we halted. The day was too far gone to push on and attack and they were in superior force to us. While the General was deliberating, a Basuto scout came in with a message from Kránstad which is about 30 miles. He had left early this morning. It was to the effect that if we did not come in touch with Broadwood, or if De Wet's force was found too strong for us (and then the rest was in cipher) we were to fall back on

Kroonstad or Heilbron, whichever was most suitable. Evidently Bobs was a bit nervous about us, but when he hears we have already given De Wet the knock, he ought to be pleased. We are bivouacking in a strong position and will hardly be attacked at dawn, as occurred near Pretoria the other day. I got the loan of June 2nd "King" from the 17th Mess Sergt who had seen 2 of my De Wetsdorp photos in it. They are awfully clear and artistic, at least Tate says so, and he says they are the best he has seen of mine. I took 2 or 3 more, and have nearly another roll ready.

JULY 22nd. The 9th and a pom pom went out early and found that the Boers had gone. We started at 12-30 and marched to the same camp which we left last Tuesday. A patrol of the 9th came in touch with the enemy about 16 miles off and got chased. They are probably in a position on the Rheinoster River and we shall probably take up a position on one of his flanks and wait for infantry. Our Engineers were taken from us when we left Hunter's Force and given to Broadwood, so when we came to the telegraph line which the Boers had cut, we were unable to communicate with Kroonstad. 5 despatch riders came in this evening from that place, so we shall know what to do. We had a big grass fire in camp just before we started and a lot of men lost their kits. It just escaped our camp fortunately, but the wind being high it spread like lightning. It has been very cold all day and looks like rain. Oh how sick I am of this perpetual trekking! I wonder when it is going to end? One of our men bagged 16 geese at the last camp, so we shall be well off for poultry for

a few days.

JULY 23rd. Nine months to-day since I left England. We had a most comfortable night. About 11 o'clock it rained very hard and woke me up. I found that nearly all the pegs on the windward side had drawn, and a good gust would have blown it down. Tate went out, and I held a candle close to the tent wall so that he could see to drive the pegs, and so we soon had all secure, but it was a narrow shave. We were off at 7 o'clock and it was very cold after all the rain, but the going was not very heavy. At mid-day we halted near a farm which was occupied by Boers who had given in their arms and had chits to that effect. One fellow had a chit to say he had several times given valuable information as to the whereabouts of the enemy and that his cattle etc. were not to be touched. They had a lot of very decent butter which was all sold. I got some of it and our men took a lot of his mealies. Then we got word that Broadwood was near, and so we pushed on. We came to the line at the place where our mails had been burnt and here were the graves of 7 who were killed on June the 7th. I took 2 or 3 photos. An armoured train came on from Rhenoster river while I was there. The station buildings were level with the ground. We went on to the Rhenoster and crossed by a very bad drift getting in in the dark. Owing to the exposure of last night our animals were much done up. Tate didn't arrive, and I was lucky to have brought my blankets and bivouac.

JULY 24th. We moved at 8-30. I went and took a photo of the bridge, but the waggon did not arrive in time for me to post a letter and films. The mules and ponies were worse than ever to-day. Soon after starting we heard heavy firing to our left front. I had to cast 3 ponies, and we simply crawled along. About 2 o'clock we got word that De Wet was holding the hills for about 10 miles and had a lot of guns, some say 15, so he must have dug them up. They must be in the habit of burying guns when hard pressed, and making us believe they have got them away. We halted opposite the Boer position, and at about 4 o'clock Broadwood's force came across the plain and bivouacked alongside us. They captured 5 waggons to-day and the 17th had two advanced scouts captured. We have the Derbyshire Regt. as well in camp to-night, so if the Boers are still in their position to-morrow morning, it is very likely that we shall attack them. Most likely however they will - as usual - bolt.

JULY 25th. It is blowing half a gale of wind at present. We hear that the Boers are still in position and that unless something special happens, we shall remain here to-day. Our mail was sent up from Kroonstad, and a cape cart has gone in to bring out the letter part of it. A Bullock wagon is going in at 12 o'clock, so we shall be able to send off a letter or two.

JULY 26th. We had a big storm last evening. It came on about 5 o'clock and rained and blew hard until about 9-30. Fortunately

the wind stopped while it was raining. The condition of the men and animals must have been terrible. We had quite made up our mind to go to bed supperless when, at 7-30 Tate went outside and found a good fire burning at our kitchen. We had a kettle of boiling water and made chocolate and milk. This, with a cold fowl, and bread and butter and raspberry jam put us in a very good humour. Then we found that 3 pegs had drawn, and as I lost the toss earlier in the evening, I had to go and drive in some pegs. Tate went out and I held the candle while he made all secure. Then I put my bed on the ambulance cushions and put the table over my head and went to bed in my clothes. It blew frightfully hard and one can't understand how the tent help up at all; however, we had a good night. This morning I found 2 mules dead of exposure, and a pony. We halt here to-day. I have just had a tent pitched over the oven and I am going to make a lot of bread. I hope we get our mail to-day but I am a bit doubtful. We hear that Methuen is at Potchefstroom and we are supposed to be keeping De Wet from retreating, but probably he has gone already. We also hear that he has taken up a strong position 10 miles from here but I don't think he would be such a fool. It looks very like another storm. The bread was a great success and we had 6 fellows to tea from different regiments. Some had not had milk in their tea for 3 weeks, so they rather appreciated ours and also the bread. The rain didn't come after all. I got 2 ripping Boer ponies to-day and I hear of a lot more near one of our outposts, which I am going

after to-morrow, if we still halt. Three or four more of my mules will probably die to-night.

JULY 27th. We have been told that there would be a halt to-day, but at 7-30 a.m. we got orders to march at 9 o'clock. We were in bed at the time. Then the question arose how to get our waggons along with the awful animals we had. I left Tate to bring them along and went off with 3 of our Non-Commissioned Officers to look for some ponies. I got 4 about 2 miles from the camp but they were not much good. I also got 2 good headstalls off a baby mule and donkey. I sent these back to the column and went on another 2 or 3 miles. Here I found a splendid horse with a slight sore back, evidently cast by the Boers. Farther on I got 2 more excellent animals, one quite fit to ride and worth about £15. Then I got 2 at a farm and gave a chit for them for £6 the pair. I cast several wretched beasts and put in the new animals. Then we went off on the other flank to see what we could pick up; we found a number of ponies and were trying to capture some when I saw a Cape boy coming along. He presented a chit to the effect that the bearer was permitted to stay on his farm and keep his ponies and cattle. We let them go, and then he said he knew where there were two good ponies belonging to some Dutchmen. We went off and came to them. They were 2 very fine animals, one was knee haltered and they had cut into his knee somewhat. We took these and drove a lot more about three miles towards camp but

owing to a gap in the wire fencing they got away. However, we did not come back empty-handed, for we got an old brood mare who will do quite well for the wheel. I found the 2nd and 3rd Brigades halted behind a low hill about 4 miles from the extreme right of the Boer position. I was having some food when they opened fire on us, we quickly had some guns in action and for the next 3 hours there was an artillery duel. We had 8 guns playing on their 3 but theirs were so well placed that although they were firing black powder and two were quite in the open they continued replying to ours off and on till dark. They were short of ammunition, so didn't fire anything like the number of rounds we did. We had many narrow escapes amongst the gunners but no-one was hit. They often put shells between the guns but their ammunition was very bad compared with ours. There was a rumour that Mrs Steyn had come in from the Boer lines during the afternoon but I don't know yet whether it is true or not. Just at dusk we moved on two miles leaving the 2nd Brigade where they were. My waggons are looking quite respectable now and we should never have got here only for the remounts.

JULY 28th. My official birthday, nine years' service to-day. It has been a glorious hot day and we got all our camp things dried and some washing done. The convoy turned up but only had a few bags of mails and there were none for us. We were awfully disappointed. However, we learnt that 6 bags have gone to the Mounted Infantry 12 miles off, by mistake, and a cart has gone

for them. Another complete mail for the 3rd Brigade has been sent on by mistake to Johannesburg. It is very sickening that so little trouble is taken to ensure us getting our mails. The 2nd. Brigade joined us this morning and is camped alongside. The Derbyshire Regiment has been left on the hill where the fight took place yesterday. About 12 o'clock we heard two explosions and to-night hear that the line has been blown up again. We are to be reinforced by 2 - 4.7 guns, 3 half battalions of Infantry and a Field Battery. I had planned another cattle-lifting expedition for this afternoon but about 1-30 I got orders to send out an ambulance with a party to bury a Lancer who was supposed to have been shot yesterday about 6 or 7 miles away. I thought it better to go myself, so mounted a very large Red Cross flag on the brake and went off with 2 men and the Kaffir guide. As I got near the kraal where the man lived who had seen the body, I saw a number of men with something on their backs which flashed in the sun, and which were evidently rifle barrels, , move towards the back of the houses. I had to dismount owing to wire fencing, go with a small red flag in my hand. I went to the group of Kaffirs who were in front of the Kraal and found the man I wanted. The Boers didn't come out and I didn't pretend that I had seen any. We then went on about 2 miles and thoroughly searched the place where the man was supposed to have been shot but didn't see anyone. It was getting dark and I had just time to get across the veldt and on to the track before night fell. The Kaffir guide, who is a spy of ours, was very

frightened and kept on thinking he saw Boers. Once he declared there were two riding towards us and wanted to know if he might run away. I wouldn't allow this, of course, and the Boers turned out to be trees. Just before dark, I saw about 50 Boers ride into some kopjes, but no-one interfered with us and I got back safely. I rode one of the Boer ponies and he was very comfortable.

29th JULY. Our hopes of a mail have been turned to disappointment. We heard this morning that the cart which had been sent for them had probably been captured by the Boers, for they had nearly captured General Ridley, and had taken a dispatch rider. However, the cart came back with the mail bags, but they only contained letters etc. which had been re-directed some time ago and which should never have come this way at all. We had a certain amount of sniping this morning, but otherwise a quiet day. I got 3 more ponies, so now am all right.

JULY 30th. This morning we heard the glorious news that Prinsloo and 5,000 men with guns and waggons had surrendered unconditionally. About midday 450 remounts arrived for our Brigade and with them came a Battalion of the 5th Fusiliers and cow guns. We got orders to move to a place 8 miles farther on. The 2nd. Brigade and the Infantry remained where they were, and some more have gone to where we first bivouacked. We have now a very big force round this chap De Wet, and the next few days ought to see a big fight, or else his surrender. Every morning some of his

men come out and snipe at our outposts which are being withdrawn after the night, but they won't venture nearer than 2,000 yds. and so nothing happens.

JULY 31st. We didn't hear the usual sniping this morning, but punctually at 8 o'clock a gun opened fire on our right. We went on a kopje near the camp and saw that the Boers were firing at the 2nd. Brigade camp and bursting shrapnel over there. After about an hour our two 4.7's came into action and threw a good deal of lyddite at them, but they still went on gaily for a couple of hours and then shut up. Then about 11 o'clock we heard tremendous Mauser fire away to the left and five shots from a Pom Pom. We had sent a squadron and a Pom Pom out in that direction early this morning, and they were evidently in difficulties. However, as the General was with them, nothing much was thought of it, but about 1 p.m. sudden orders came to saddle up and away went a lot of Lancers and 2 guns. I prepared to follow, but saw the whole lot coming back. The squadron had come in contact with about 200 Zarps who had tried to surround them, but it didn't come off. Off and on the whole day orders have been coming to the 9th who are next door to us, to "saddle up", and a few moments afterwards, "all right, off-saddle". The language of the men became very bad after a few of these false alarms. About 4 o'clock I got word that a man of the 9th was lying out about 3 miles away. An officer and 4 men were on patrol, and were surprised. The officer's boy came back and said that he had

seen a man drop and lie on his face, and that the Sergt. Major was a prisoner. He also said that he and a man had galloped for it and got away. I was on my way out when I met the supposed dead man and the prisoner coming along, and leading a wounded horse. so I came back. We hear that Brabant is coming up on our left. We hope that he will be in time, for we greatly fear that De Wet and Co. will trek to-night and get away. I have put a batch of bread with the new yeast in a bucket to-night. It looks all right but I am rather curious to see how it will turn out to-morrow.

AUGUST 1st. At one o'clock this morning the Brigade Major woke us up and said that he had just had orders from Broadwood that we were to march at 5-30 a.m. sharp, back to the camp we were last in. This meant getting up at 4 o'clock. Then we were told we were to proceed to a place called Shepstone about 12 miles from where we were and that Broadwood would march for that place at 5-30 a.m. Our baggage was to be left at his camp in charge of the Infantry. When we got there we heard that Broadwood had heard from two or three reliable sources that De Wet was going to break out last night in the direction of a place called Paris, on the Vaal. Most of us thought that he had spread the report diligently and that he would break out in exactly the opposite direction after we had left it open for him. The mounted infantry were after him, then came Broadwood, and then we came. We had to leave 2 guns at his camp for want of horses to bring

them along. We reached the place about 12 o'clock and found the 2nd. Brigade on their way back. We were told that it was all rot and that De Wet had not broken out at all. We were then ordered back to the original camp and here we are again after being about 25 miles. Fortunately they sent a hundred men of Marshall's Horse to hold our Kopje Aileen while we were away, for shortly after we left it, the Boers tried to take it. It is a flat kopje in the centre of a huge plain, and naturally would have been rather useful to the enemy. Our people were rather hard pressed and helio'd for help. Two Infantry regiments - Dublin Fusiliers and Somersets - went out, and a Field Battery, and we met them coming home. There were three wounded among Marshall's Horse and they killed one Boer. When passing through the Infantry camp this morning, I heard that there was a big mail for our Brigade and I hurried back expecting to get some letters. To my great disappointment I found that there were no letters for any of us, only a few papers. However, there ought to be another in to-morrow when our supply column returns, so I live in hopes. We have a large force of Infantry here now and it looks as though we intended clearing them out of some of their Kopjes and warm them up a bit. Prinslee has written to De Wet telling him about his surrender and we are forwarding it to him to-night. I'm afraid my batch of bread will be spoiled owing to the jolting it got in the wagon after being kneaded. I lost three ponies to-day, so must go on the prowl to-morrow if we halt. I took a very funny photo coming home. The battery mess cart was being

brought along with two ponies and one got done up. The man in charge got hold of a little donkey which couldn't have been more than 18 months' old and had harnessed him in with the remaining pony. The combination was so funny that I couldn't resist a snapshot.

AUGUST 2nd. I woke up at midnight and heard four distant explosions. This morning we hear that the line is blown up again. There was a sharp frost again last night. I had a great job on my riding breeches this morning. To my horror I found that one knee was split so I took out the spare bit of cloth that was in each seat and patched the knee. Then I had to put two seats of khaki instead. I also put in a small patch in one thigh as well. We are getting ragged and it is quite a common sight to see lords and honourables walking about with leather seats and knees or patches of tweed over holes in their khaki cord breeches. The convoy has come in and there is no mail, but one is promised to-morrow. I am sending the stamps home by this mail. This has been a peaceful day and no firing has occurred.

AUGUST 3rd. Another peaceful day in camp but no mails have arrived. The post office Sergt. here says he will wire to Cape Town to send Tate's and my letters always with the 3rd Brigade's. Kitchener is somewhere about here so something may happen in a day or two. Either Prinslee or one of his boss officers has gone to De Wet to try and reason with him to chuck it. We

also hear that every other force has given in, but we are a bit sceptical about it. I hear to-day from the Medical Officer of the Battery, that an extra colonial allowance of 1/6 has been sanctioned since April 1st., so that is good business. I think it most likely that this allowance of 3/- instead of 1/6 would be continued after the war, and would help one to live out here. The flour we got last is splendid and my batch of bread to-day was a great success.

AUGUST 4th. About 9 o'clock this morning we heard heavy firing from the direction where Knox's Brigade was. He had six guns in action and was shelling the big kopjes which lie to our front. We were turned out and went about 4 miles towards these kopjes. Kitchener sat on top of our hill and was talking by helio to Knox. Then he went over to his camp. Knox had turned the Boers out of these kopjes and had occupied them, with only two casualties. I heard that we were coming back to this bivouac, so, as there was no chance of our Brigade being in action, I came back and had a ripping bath. The rest of the troops returned about 5 p.m.. The sun was very hot to-day and I saw several large blue flies, so I suppose we shall soon be troubled by these pests. I expect we shall leave this camp to-morrow, and go back towards Broadwood's, for now that we have taken these kopjes to-day, we have narrowed the Boer line somewhat, and we ought not to be needed just here.

AUGUST 5th. We moved off at 7-30 and fondly imagined that we

had only a short distance to go. We passed the 2nd Bde. under Broadwood moving in the direction from which we had just come, and I think the object was to get round the other side of the kopjes which we took yesterday. After passing his camp we had a beastly drift to cross and had to make part of it. Then we did not come across water, and went trekking along till about 3 o'clock. We then found the Brigade halted about a mile ahead and so we halted and had some food. Here I got the Post Office people to sort the mail which we had brought along, and gave them 2 ambulances for the purpose. I helped, but was frightfully disgusted to find none for any of us. We had just finished sorting when the Brigade moved on. I got 6 splendid mules handed over to me here, and badly they were wanted. We went to some ground just in front of where we had first camped when we came to these parts. This was the place where we had such heavy rain, and lost so many mules from cold. The result is that we have about 20 dead horses and mules lying all round us, and the wind blowing from them makes the atmosphere rather poisonous. If we halt here to-morrow we shall have them all drawn away and buried. Just as we had pitched our tent, the Post Office Sergt. brought us a bag of letters which had gone to our other half, and had been re-directed to us.

AUGUST 6th. It blew hard all day so I had a tent pitched, and the Congo stove put up. I had put a very large quantity of yeast into the flour last night, and stirred it up amongst the flour.

I kneaded it, and divided the dough into 8 loaves. It hardly rose at all, so I had the fire lighted and the oven gently warmed. Then I put the bread in to rise for about half an hour. At the end of this time I took it out and made up a big fire. The result has been splendid bread, enough for a week at least. Don't the fellows who come to see us stare when they see a pile of bread like to-day's. The M.O. with the Battery showed me his mess bill since he landed in the country 2 days before us. It came to £52 and then he was not charged for nearly a month while he was in hospital. This is rather a contrast to ours - £8.

AUGUST 7th. Halt at Vled Spruit.

AUGUST 8th. De Wet has escaped and is making for the Vaal. We have started in pursuit. Kitchener is superintending the operations. We have reached a place near (?).

AUGUST 9th. Marched to Lindeque Drift. We can see the dust of the Boer force about 6 miles from us and we don't seem able to get ahead of them. Several shells have dropped near us to-day.

AUGUST 10th. Crossed the drift and marched towards the Losberg.

AUGUST 11th. Marched to Welveden Railway Station.

AUGUST 12th. Marched to Uitkyk

AUGUST 13th. Marched to Groenfontein. The pursuit is very hot and we have passed several ammunition wagons which the enemy have blown up. This evening about 400 prisoners got away and about 50 of them came to our hospital. We managed to give them some

grub. Poor devils, they were very ragged and had had nothing but meat and mealies for some time. My horse came down with me to-day and my knee is much swollen and very painful.

We are to march at 3 o'clock to-morrow morning and I am going to try and go on with the Bearer Company. Have just had $\frac{1}{2}$ grain of morphia and put my knee on a back splint.

AUGUST 14th. Marched at 2 a.m. and crawled along in the darkness. I had to ride on the box of one of the ambulances. Knee very painful and swollen. At 5 a.m. the force which consisted of 1st and 2nd Cavalry Brigades was held up by a heavy mauser fire, and we had to wait until daybreak. One of the 10th Hussars was shot through the knee joint, and Phipps (the medical officer) crawled up to him under a heavy fire and put a tourniquet on the limb. This is one of the very few lives which I have seen saved by a medical officer going under a heavy fire to render first aid.

As soon as the enemy retired, the Sergeant was brought to me on a stretcher. There was no sign of the 2nd Brigade Bearer Company so I had to attend to him. I put his stretcher on 2 biscuit boxes in the shade of an ambulance and examined the wound. I found that the knee joint was smashed up and that the main artery and vein at the back were cut. I at once amputated the limb through the lower thigh. The man was filthy, and I was not much better. The water from my water-cart was not of the cleanest and yet this case healed up by first

intention. I got a number of other wounded within a couple of hours and they kept me busy for several hours. The 2nd Brigade Bearer Coy and Field Hospital arrived this evening and took over all the wounded from me. The drive has ended in failure as usual. Someone left Oliphant's Nex open and De Wet waltzed through. (Said to have been Baden-Powell.) !!!

AUGUST 15th. Marched to Tweefontein to relieve Hore's. Laager country very hilly and difficult.

AUGUST 16th. Arrived at Elands River camp and found that the siege had been raised. This camp had been pitched on the top of a very flat hill and was used as a Supply Depot for columns moving towards Rustenburg. It was held by about 300 Bushmen under command of Colonel Hore. There was a great deal of provisions in the place and as there were no natural defences the Boers ought to have taken the lot with the greatest ease. 1500 Boers with several guns appeared suddenly and opened fire on the place. The first day they threw over 100 shells into the laager and there was not a single entrenchment made. That night the defenders worked tooth and nail. The ground was very hard and rocky, and picks and shovels were few in number; biscuit boxes were piled up to make a protection for the wounded. The water supply (which was from the river) was guarded by a small outpost under the command of Captain Butters. They had a maxim here. The bombardment went on daily, but each succeeding night found the place more difficult to take. When we

arrived, the place was impregnable. This was one of the most gallant defences made during the war. In one corner of the camp were a number of women and children - families of surrendered Boers. The whole of the oxen and horses were killed and were laid out in rows at one end of the camp. The stench was awful.

AUGUST 17th. We halted here to-day and got some flour from the laager. All the troops helped themselves to as much stuff as they can carry; the rest will be destroyed.

AUGUST 18th. The 2nd Bde. and all the ^{Mounted} Infantry went off this morning. A sick convoy went off to Krugersdorp and I got the Medical Officer to take the letters and films for me. They ought to reach safely, and I think the "King" will be the only paper which will get photos of this laager. I heard to-day that the mail which we sent off on the day that we left Vlei Spruit chasing De Wet, and which was sent back to General Hart's camp to be sent from there to Rhenester River Station, has been brought along and was seen in this camp yesterday. This has been done quite regardless of the fact that we crossed the line from Krugersdorp to Johannesburg on our way up here, and they could have been sent on from there. The result will have been that you have had no letters for at least 3 weeks. Methuen has just arrived, we don't know where we are going, but probably towards Mafeking. Goodness knows where we shall get our mails now.

AUGUST 19th. We had to march at 4-45 a.m. so were up at 3-15. There was a little moon to help us, and our road now lay through

the laager lately bombarded. The stench as we passed the dead horses was perfectly awful. The road was good and we soon got into a very pretty valley, lots of trees about and very fine farms. The winter wheat and barley is now a fair length, and also the oats, so our animals have a good time. At our last camp there was a very large field of this stuff and in less than 12 hours there was not a blade of grass left. If we could only stop and eat up all these farms we should soon end the war. By 10-30 a.m. we had reached the end of our day's march, and had done only about 12 miles. We have been in a very nice camp all day, and the scenery is very lovely. The climate is perfect and only man is vile. I hear that the country we are in has been handed over to Methuen to subdue, and that we are likely to patrol between Mafeking and Pretoria. We are moving at 5 o'clock to-morrow I hear, but why Methuen should turn us out at 3-15 in order to be in camp by 11 or 12 o'clock, I can't make out.

AUGUST 20th. We didn't march, so have had another quiet day in camp. I had my horse clipped to-day. We can't hear why we are halting here, nor any news of what is happening. We march at 5-15 to-morrow.

AUGUST 21st. We have marched through awfully pretty country to-day. It was so like the Indian jungle that I had hard work at times not to think I was on the march from Sangor to Jubbulpore. Any amount of trees, and bushes, and long grass. We were on the main road between Mafeking and Pretoria, and going along the

same road which Jamieson the raider took some years ago. About 5 miles from Camp we came to a Boer house which had just been deserted. There were a lot of good things in it, so the people must have thought it best to run away. We got a lot of mealies, and a couple of buckets, and an iron tripod for cooking. About 2 miles farther on I found a herd of donkeys and took 9 good ones. We halted here for a bit and Tate came and told me that one of the ambulances which I had left with him had been run into and the axle bent, and that he couldn't bring it along. I went back and found that the axle of the front wheel was badly bent and that my wagon orderly was taking the fore-carriage out, and was going to strengthen it. Some engineers were passing at the time, so I got the Officer to tell off 3 men with hammers to do the job for me. We got the axle off and a big fire lit and in a couple of hours we were on the road again. I met Burtchaell here and he seemed glad to see me. I also saw a big head of cattle being driven along by some Colonials so I thought it was a good chance to get a cow. I saw one with a calf about 2 months old, and a fair udder. While trying to catch her I saw one which was going to calve in a few hours, so after a lot of trouble we caught her, and she was like a wild beast. However we managed to get her to camp, about 6 miles on, and she calved at once. She is a splendid cow and I hope she will soon get tame. At present she is a devil and we have to keep clear of her horns. I have told off one native to attend to her and hope she will turn out all right.

I'm sorry I didn't think of getting a cow before. This Camp is very pretty and oranges are so abundant that the men have brought them in in blankets.

AUGUST 22nd. We marched at 5-30 through the rest of the valley and although fighting was expected, we met with no opposition. It was a very dusty, trying march. The position at the end of the valley was a very strong one, and 50 men could have held up our whole force for a day at any rate; instead of this the Boers didn't wait, but abandoned a small laager and cleared out. We got a lot of our own ammunition and some waggons and food-stuffs. Zeerust is a nice little place and we got to it about 1 p.m. A lot of school-girls were outside one house, and they sang the Transvaal hymn with great vehemence and fairly spat the words at us as we passed. A Sergeant of the 17th Lancers was shot dead just outside our present bivouac. He was an advanced guard, and a solitary Boer came riding towards him. He told the Boer to surrender and dismount, but instead of so doing, he shot him; I expect our man had his carbine in the bucket, and very likely it was not loaded. We are such fools, but you never catch the Boer tripping. My cow arrived safely, she gave a lot of trouble at the start, so she was driven along with the slaughter cattle. She was awfully glad to see her calf again and is very much tamer than she was. I hear that Carrington has behaved very badly, and burnt a lot of stores here, and retreated before 70 Boers. We hear that he drinks and is a

rotten General so hope he will soon be Stellenbosched.

Stellenbosch is the name of a place just outside Cape Town where they had a remount depot, and any General who did badly in the beginning of the war used to be sent there for some billet, hence the word. We passed a lot of houses to-day from which the owners had run away, so there was great looting. The men take the most ridiculous things: one fellow had a Dutch clock, another a sewing-machine (Singer's) and quite new. They all threw them away shortly after, but they can't resist taking them at the time. We have marched over 20 miles to-day, and the Infantry must be a long way behind, so I hope for a halt to-morrow and some bread baking. I got some fine donkeys to-day on the road. We are about 36 miles from Mafeking, and getting lots of mealies and oat hay. My horse went lame to-day, but I hope he will be all right in a few days.

AUGUST 23rd. The yeast was tremendously up last night, and when the cork was taken out it hit the wall of the tent and wasted a lot. I had got hold of some yeast cake and put a bit in the jar, hence the goodness this time. The wind sprang up and I had to pitch a tent over the stove, but the bread was splendid. A man of the 16th was shot and died in hospital this afternoon. The horse is much better, and the cow is quieter. I went into town to try and get a Transvaal flag, but didn't succeed. One of the 9th got the one which was flying over the Landrost's office yesterday.

AUGUST 24th. We halted here again to-day. A Force went out and brought in a convoy which was sent out for us from Mafeking. We have just got word that we are to march for Pretoria ??? The way they have humbugged this Brigade has been scandalous. It is quite enough to make one inclined to mutiny. When we had relieved Col.Hore's force, we were then only 40 or 50 miles from Pretoria. There were several hundred mounted Colonials and Yeomanry and we had not 300 mounted men in the whole Brigade. We could very easily have been dispensed with and allowed to go to Pretoria to refit. Instead of this, they send us along towards Mafeking, and when 2 days from that place, they find that they have only enough horses for Methuen's force, and we have to go all the way back again. Our mails have probably been sent round to Mafeking by rail and now goodness knows when we shall get any. It is awfully disgusting. This has been a beastly windy and dusty day, one calculated to make one twice as angry with the news one has just heard.

AUGUST 25th. We left bivouac at 2-30 p.m. About 4 o'clock we arrived at a farm which was on the edge of the road, and at the entrance to a narrow pass between some low hills covered with bush. I saw a number of Lancers dismount and run up the hillside, and knew that something was going to happen. Then the firing began. After a few minutes I saw 3 Civilian Guides come out of the pass at a gallop and calling out "The Brigadier is wounded, where is there a Doctor?" I said, "I am one", and went off up

the road. I found Col. Little of the 9th Lancers walking his horse slowly towards me (Col. Little was held in his saddle by Capt. Sadlier Jackson - now Brig. Genl. and M.P.) and he looked so bad that I thought he was mortally wounded. I just had time to lift him off his horse and lay him down, or he would have fainted. Thompson came up just then and we carried him a bit further on, and then dressed him. I found that he had been hit with a sporting bullet which had gone through the thigh, just missing the bone. We carried him out of the pass and laid him under a tree. He couldn't believe for a long time that his thigh-bone wasn't broken. I gave him some Morphia, and then got a bed fixed up with clean sheets, etc., in the farmhouse. He was carried there. It was a very fine house and orders were issued for its burning, but it wasn't carried out until next day. It belonged to a man named Botha, leader of those who were opposing us. I got Little undressed, re-dressed the wound and extracted 2 pieces of nickel coating, then put him into pyjamas, and into bed. There was only one other man wounded - through the arm, and this is marvellous considering the nature of the ground over which the fighting took place. We are going to send Little into Mafeking to-morrow with Methuen's force. This makes the second Brigadier which we have lost, and now we shall get a third, and one probably who knows not Joseph. Little was very grateful for what I had done for him. I had to wash my coat and pants for they were smothered with his blood. We had to halt and bivouac where we were.

AUGUST 26th. (Sunday) We started at 7 o'clock and went by a different road to a place called Jacobsdaal. We reached here at 9 o'clock, and then outspanned, and waited till 12 o'clock. From this time until we got into bivouac, we had continued fighting. There were only about 60 or 70 Boers in front of us, and they had no guns. The country was very bushy, and it took 4 guns and a Pom Pom of ours to drive them out. They poured in a very stiff rifle fire and we had 5 casualties, and strange to say 2 of these were through the bladder. We had driven them back and got into open country about 4 o'clock. I saw one dead pony, but no other signs of Boer casualties. We passed a lovely orange grove and took hundreds of oranges. I hope we have now got into open country, and that we shall be able to push ahead more quickly. The P.M.O. of Methuen's force took one of my ambulances and it's orderly to carry Little in. It was rather a rotten thing to do considering they were only 2 days from Mafeking, and we have over 120 miles to do, with fighting in store for us.

AUGUST 27th. We marched at 5-30, and halted later from 9-30 till 1 o'clock. There were lots of deserted horses and any amount of fowls were taken. I got a splendid Indian tablecloth out of a deserted house, and Tate and I have given it to Moore for his wife. He is such a good servant and has made us very comfortable all the time we have been on this show. No poultry were left on the line of march, and one store was looted by

order of the General. It has been a very dusty, windy day, and we have come about 16 miles. We got into bivouac about 4-30. It is very nice getting in early, but quite a different matter getting up at 4 a.m. Boiled Turkey for dinner to-night. Cow is doing well.

We are on the Jamieson Raid Road, and passed one of the stores which he had built before the raid was commenced. It was not on the Zeerust road as I thought at first.

AUGUST 28th. A few drops of rain fell at 4 o'clock and woke me up. I got up and dressed at once and rolled up my bedding. There was every promise of a storm, and one didn't want the tent to come down on one unprepared. However, it all blew over and we started at 6 o'clock. About 3 miles on, we pushed through a very bad defile, near an old lead mine. The Boers could have held us up easily, but nothing happened. There was a nice farm at the centre, and we got about 10 wagons of oat hay out of it. There was a very plentiful water supply and all the fields were green with the new crop. Practically nothing grows in this country unless constantly irrigated.

After this we came to a very barren tract of country, and were unable to halt and water until we had done about 18 miles, then we arrived at a Kaffir Location. It is a very neatly built village inhabited by Kaffirs, on the top of a hill, and it looked very nice and clean. Children and pigs swarm in it. We reached here about 12 o'clock and halted for the rest of the

day. My clothes had got very dirty coming through that long valley up to Zeerust, so I had a change and some washing done. The red dust combined with perspiration makes one very dirty. My riding breeches will hardly last until we reach Krugersdorp or wherever we are going. The turkey we had last night was the fattest I ever saw. We had Thompson to help eat it, and he was awfully pleased to eat at a table. It is hardly credible that they are content to eat off their knees, but they are. The cow's milk comes in very useful and it is very nice for the 2 bladder cases which we have in hospital at present. We have got out of all the bad country and there is nothing but rolling veldt ahead of us. There is hardly any likelihood of any further fighting. If the Boers had any pluck or wit they could easily harass our column, and shoot our baggage animals, but they do nothing.

AUGUST 29th. We had a heavy thunderstorm last night, and it passed directly over our camp. The lightning was very vivid, but fortunately it did not rain much. We marched at 5-30 a.m., and it began to rain heavily before this. It cleared up about 6-30 and was quite bright for a time. Then a storm began to creep up behind us and it got as dark as it does at sunset. By this time we had got nearly to Eland's river (6 miles). I saw that the storm was about to burst, so pushed on and just reached a house near the drift as the rain began to fall. I took the saddle off and put it in the verandah, and held the bridle.

Then the most awful storm I ever experienced burst. The lightning was perfectly awful, I was under a corrugated roof, and men's rifles all round, so one didn't feel very safe. The rain was fearful. The storm passed immediately over our heads, and one flash struck just above us. A bullock in one of the teams passing was killed. We were very glad when it was all over. Then we crossed the river and halted till 12-30. It was quite fine and has been a very pleasant afternoon. Then we came to a place called Kleinfontein - another 10 miles -. We passed this place before we reached Hore's laager. When we came through the day after I did the amputation. As I write this there is a thunderstorm coming up. Fortunately we have a good road to travel on from this to Krugersdorp.

AUGUST 30th. We had an awful night. The storm came up about 9 o'clock. I was asleep, but woke up at once when the rain fell. I had gone to bed in my breeches, so put on my boots and a coat and a waterproof. Then the wind began to blow very hard and the lightning was fearful. The wind got under the flap of the door and we were afraid it would blow the tent over from the inside. I leant against the tent on the windward side and pulled on the loose flap. Tate hung on to the tent pole. We had both rolled up our bedding at the start in case of accidents. I had paid special attention to the pegs and had trenched the tent before going to bed, and not a single peg drew. I believe we could have taken things calmly but we

remembered our experience at Keedresrand, and thought it better to be on the safe side. Fortunately the patients' tents held. The water poured through the tents owing to the wind. The M.O. of the 9th Lancers came in the middle of the first storm, for his shelter had blown down; so we gave him a night's lodging. After about an hour the rain ceased and I made the pegs more secure. Then we turned in again, but from this till 2 o'clock we had a succession of thunderstorms. They seemed to travel round and round in a circle. At 5-30 we got orders to march at 7-30 instead of 6-30. It rained till about 9 o'clock and then cleared up. The road was very bad, and we only came 9 miles. It was mainly over old camping grounds of ours, and the sights were very dismal; empty tins, dead horses, and mules, houses torn down for the sake of the wood, etc., etc. We have had a very pleasant afternoon and have got all dry again. About 2 o'clock, some Boers crept up to within 300 yards of our camp and began firing at our mules who were out grazing. Several bullets passed over our heads. We turned some Colonials on to them and they bolted. They were seen to go to a farm, so we sent out 3 guns and some mounted men later on. The guns were trained on the farm, and the troops advanced and surrounded the place. I haven't heard yet whether they caught anyone. I have just heard that we burnt the farm because a pass was found belonging to the husband, and he was on Commando.

AUGUST 31st. We marched at 6-30 from Vlakfontein and about 4 miles on, firing began on our left, and became very heavy. Two

of the 17th Lancers were wounded and I sent an ambulance for them. Then we lined the ridge and got a maxim and a pom pom up there. The baggage was sent off about a mile to the right. I had to take my wagons under shelter of the ridge, but couldn't get near any of the wounded owing to the fire. A Colonial Major lay where he was for about 2 hours, and then crawled away and came to me. He had been shot through the neck, making a long wound - about 3 inches, and the bullet was under the muscles over his shoulder. I had to tie 3 vessels in his neck, sew it up, and then cut the bullet out of his back. I got a few more men soon after. One chap had a little finger smashed, and when it had been dressed, he wanted to go again into the firing line; I sent him back to Tate with a message and soon after he came riding up with a box of ammunition which he took into the firing line again. Plucky chap. Later on, my position got too hot, so I moved a bit to the left. None of our men could move from where they were. They were lying behind ant heaps and in the long grass, and when they moved, the Boers who were above them immediately fired. About 3 o'clock there was a bit of a lull and I thought I would try and get some wounded away. I knew that any stretcher party would be at once shot, so I thought I would try if they would respect an ambulance. I moved one up, but they fired on it, or rather the firing began again. I waited for five minutes and then moved it up the hill. It hadn't gone more than 50 yards when they opened a hail of bullets on it. It was obvious that they wouldn't let it go on, so it was turned and trotted back.

As luck would have it, we only had one pony wounded; after this it was plain that nothing could be done till dark. I moved farther on the left, near where 2 Cape Guns were firing. Most of the casualties were in this direction. I formed a dressing station here and dressed several bad cases. Then I sent 3 teams of mules to water, the enemy thought they were Cavalry and sent 2 shells at them, but didn't hit any. Then evening began to come and I sent for my other 2 wagons which had wounded in them. Then I loaded up the light brake with 4 and sent it off towards camp. The others I put into the wagons, for I saw that we were retiring the guns and I was afraid I should be left. Then the Cavalry fell back and I got an order from Col. Dalgetty that I was to retire as soon as I had collected all the wounded. I galloped after him and told him that I couldn't bring in the wounded, and must have help. He said that the dismounted men had been told to bring their wounded back with them. I had to be content, although I knew that it was impossible for them to do so. I went back to my wagons, and soon the bullets began to whistle over them. I saw that the Boers had got on to a ridge on our left and were firing at our men who had fallen back. We came right in the line of fire, so I got the team into a trot and made for a burnt farm just below us. Here we were sheltered from rifle fire, and as the men fell back, I shouted that they were to keep up to their left as they were causing us to be fired on. Soon afterwards it got dark, and all firing ceased. Then I went out with a native and began calling to the Boers that I was a

Doctor and wanted to get to my wounded men. We got no answer, so after a bit I went back and got 2 ambulances and some lanterns and went up on to the field. About every hundred yards I halted and called out to the Boers, but got no answer. Then I left the wagon and spread out my men, and began calling to the wounded. The first one I came to was an officer of the Kaffrarian Rifles, he was lying on his face and had been shot through one thigh bone. After morphia I fixed him up with his rifle as a splint and put him on a stretcher and called up a wagon and put him in. Then I went off to others and found some truly awful wounds. While I was attending to these, some Boers rode up. They were very civil and helped us all they could. Then I found that Thompson had come up, and was attending to others. We were not allowed to take them away, so I went and saw the Commandant who was on another part of the Field. I begged to be allowed to take my wounded away to our Camp, as several needed immediate operation. He said that their General had given orders that we were not to be allowed to go, but we were to go to a farm first; then would be sent into Rustenberg. He said that they had heavy reinforcements coming during the night, and that early next morning our laager would be shelled and taken, and that he thought the wounded would be much better off outside. I then asked if he would let me go and bring up my other 2 wagons with 3 wounded in them who were at the burnt farm, and whether he would send a burgher with me. He said I might go alone. I went back and found that the 3 buck wagons which I had asked for had turned up, and that one man had died in the meantime. I then told the Corporal who had come with them that he was to take 2 of them

back, and told him and a Corporal of my own what I had heard from the Commandant. I said they were to go at once to our General and tell him, and that if they fell in with any Boers, they could say that they had come out to look for wounded and had lost their way. In this manner I did the enemy out of 2 wagons. They all got to camp safely. I sent a Colonial Corporal back also, but he lost his way and came again to us. Then we collected all the wounded and were taken over awful ground to the Boer laager. The moon had gone down and it was very cold. They watched Thompson carefully lest he should escape. (Col. Harry Thompson, R.A.M.C., M.O. with 16th Lancers. He had left his Regt. to look after the wounded and didn't know that I was about). We reached the laager about 1 a.m. I asked where the farm was and they said there was none. Their Commandant was asleep, but I woke him up and told him that it was necessary for us to get the wounded to some place of shelter as quickly as possible. He said that nothing could be done until the morning and then he would see De la Rey, their General. We lit a small fire and made some hot Bovril, but we had no blankets, and it was frightfully cold. The Guard was put round us and we tried to sleep, but the cold rendered it impossible; I had only the blanket from under my saddle, everything else was with the Field Hospital. Fortunately I had some supplies on each wagon, in case we were ever detached, and they proved a perfect godsend. We made hot milk, and biscuit and Quaker Oats for breakfast. Our great difficulty was cups and spoons, but we managed to feed them in reliefs. We were both

much happier when the sun got up, and it was very interesting to be behind the scenes and watch Boer life from within. They had no wagons, everything they required was on their ponies. We only saw one small fire lit, the majority did not eat at all. Their ponies were in splendid condition and one can quite understand their mobility. They had plenty of oat straw and mealies for them. There were about 200 men, and parties kept coming and going. They seemed to be a very respectable, well dressed lot, and had a prosperous appearance. None of them ever put their rifles down, they were always ready against a surprise. There were very few Mauser rifles amongst them and this explained the fearful nature of most of the wounds we have seen. The bulk of this Commando consisted of men who had given up their horses and received passes. They had got Martini rifles and sporting rifles from somewhere, and one could in this way pick out every man who had a pass from us. They felt no shame at having broken their oath. They said that we had promised them protection and had left them on the farms, then a Commandant came along and gave them a copy of Kruger's proclamation which was to the effect that they were traitors, and that unless they rejoined at once, they would be given 2 days food and sent to the nearest British Camp. After this they would be shot at sight by the first Burgher who saw them, their property would be confiscated, and they would never be allowed to return to their country. Naturally they chose to fight, and now they are desperate fighters, having nothing to lose and everything to gain. We saw 2 or 3 Greybeards among them

men who were probably contemporaries of Kruger. I went again to the Commandant and told him that every minute was of importance, and that I wanted to get away to some farm and attend to my wounded. He said I must wait for the General's arrival. I asked him for the money which one of the Officers had given him at his request last night on the field for safe custody, but he said he must ask the General about it. My Staff Sergeant's saddle was stolen, and a pony. I saw the saddle and took it back. It was an Officer's saddle and rather a good one. After a few minutes a Boer came up and said that the Commandant had told him to take it. I explained that all my property was sacred, but that if he insisted, of course he must have it. He didn't press the matter. Then the Commandant came and asked why I had arms in my wagons (referring to a bandolier which had been found.) I told him we were ordered to pick up all wounded men's arms, and although it might not be considered a proper thing for one to have arms in one's ambulances, it was not a matter for me at all. Then I showed him that I had a rifle on one as a splint, and also another bandolier as a bandage. Then he wanted my papers to prove that I was a doctor. Of course I had none. I showed him my identification ticket stitched into the back of my jacket and also my R.A.M.C. badges and brassard. Then he required explanation as to how I could be an Officer as well as a Doctor. Altogether he was a pig, and very suspicious. About 8-30 De la Rey and his staff arrived. All were dressed in ordinary clothes and carried rifles. No respect was paid to him by any

of them. He went to a place apart from the rest, and about 20 went and sat round him. The place was a most picturesque one, a great number of pillars and caves, a place which could hardly be taken without heavy shell fire. I went to him, and his Secretary who was a very polished and well-educated man, told him I wished to see him. He asked what he could do for me, and I explained that I wanted permission to go out at once to some farm and attend to my wounded, and then return to my Brigade; and asked him to name a farm. He said I might do so, and when I had buried my dead, go away. Then I was asked by the Commandant if I was in the habit of collecting arms from the battlefield. I knew at once what he referred to. On the buck wagon was a lance, it had been put there when the wagon was used to convey stores, and they had forgotten to remove it before they sent it out. I said at once that I knew what he meant, but that the wagon was not part of my Bearer Co., and that I was not responsible for anything which might be found on it. Then I thought I would have a slap at him, so I told De la Rey that this fellow had taken an Officer's money and papers under the pretence of taking care of them for him, and that he would not return them until he had asked his permission. A long conversation ensued in Dutch, and Frau and Kinder were mentioned and I gathered that he was most reluctant to return the cash. However, De la Rey told him to, and the letters having all been read were handed over to me. Then I asked

that a horse might be returned, and got it. Altogether I scored off the Commandant. I said Good-day to the General, and proceeded to the farm. One man went with me as interpreter, and an escort as well. This chap was a "Pass Man" and was most anxious to get the Lee Metford which was acting as a splint. He told me that they were very short of rifles, and that lots of men who return, have to wait for rifles until they can capture them from us. He never left us until he had the rifle, and he begged me not to hand it over to any of the other Burghers. He was most useful to us later on in getting supplies etc. The farm was about 3 miles away, up a very fertile valley and the road was very bad in places. At the farm was a 9-pdr. Krupp gun with its detachment, and some splendid mules were grazing near it. The women of the farm were very angry at our coming, and abused the man for bringing us. He told her that it was the General's order. At first she refused to give us any help, but subsequently relented and gave it grudgingly. There was a shed about 50 feet long near the farm. It was used for drying skins under, and was roughly divided into partitions. The wounded were put under it at one end, and the other was converted into an operating theatre. There was a splendid stream of water flowing through the farm. I had 5 cases of fractured thighs, and splints had to be made and padded for 4 of these. One poor fellow had to have his thigh amputated, and another his arm. I found a piece of wainscotting, and one of the Boers who was a carpenter, made some

splints. For padding we used up one of the ambulance cushions, and a Boer youth helped in teasing out the horsehair. There were about 20 men and several women and children about the place and they exhibited the greatest interest in the proceedings. Even the women who were suckling babies looked in. They had an excellent object lesson of the horrors of war, and one did not forget to point out the difference between the wounds made by the Mauser, and those made by Martini, Sporting and Explosive bullets. The Civil Surgeon from Rustenburg arrived during the afternoon. He was of the greatest help to us, and was able to soften the heart of even the woman of the farm who had refused to help us. He got us a present of 50 oranges from a neighbouring farm, and very soon we had bread, chickens and mealies coming in. Then the surrounding farmers saw the chance of making a little money; they were not slow to seize it. Two of them brought a load of chaff which they were anxious to sell at about 3 times the market rate but we didn't take it. One Frau sold us two old sheets and some calico for 12/- and offered to let our mules graze on a field of young barley for an hour for 12/6. By 6 o'clock we had finished our work and the patients had been fed. It was very hard on the amputation of the thigh case to have to put him into a jolting wagon 4 hours after the operation, but we had the others to think about as well, and we had to get back. The Colonial Corporal had been out all day with the native driver and buried our dead on the

field.

(In operating on the thigh case - when the flaps had been retracted - I found that my saw (which was new and had probably been made in Germany) would not cut!!

Lying on the ground was a big rip saw which the Boer woman had lent me to make splints. I washed it in a bucket of water and sawed the bone with that. I flushed the stump with 1 - 1000 Perchloride of Mercury and sewed him up. He healed by primary union !! What luck !)

The Colonial Corporal had seen some Dutchmen, and gathered that it was practically impossible for our Brigade to reach Krugersdorp owing to the various Commandoes which were around them. Our ambulances had been searched, but nothing was found in the way of arms and ammunition. There were 4 or 5 clips of Mauser Cartridges in one. They had been collected as curiosities by the wagon orderly, and carried there. My Staff Sergt. was as cute as the Boer, and managed to get hold of them while he was busy with another wagon. The Buck wagon was found to contain a good deal of loot, among which was a Singer's Sewing Machine nearly new, also some books with the name of some well-known Boers inside. As bad luck would have it, 50 rounds of ammunition were found here as well. All this and the loot was taken. Our interpreter friend, having got his rifle, was now disposed to give us some trouble. He had promised to put us on the main road by a short cut, but now he

refused, owing to the lateness of the hour. He also wished to confiscate the wagon and team of good mules, but I told him that I had explained to De la Rey in the morning that it was a transport wagon, and not under the Red Cross. We followed the road by which we had come in the morning and managed to get on a good road which in time led to the main road. We trekked along until about 10-30 and then pulled off the road and halted for the night. We had come about 10 miles, and passed the Boer position on our right, but we had not seen any of them. The night was bitterly cold, and we were all very uncomfortable.

SEPTEMBER 1st. At 6 o'clock we were on the road again, and halted at 9 o'clock for breakfast. Soon after this we passed an English store and farm, and I got some bread and eggs, an axe and some wood. We heard that our Brigade would probably be in Krugersdorp that night, and that although there had been some opposition, the enemy had not succeeded in holding us up and had not taken our laager. Now we began to see parties of Boers riding about the country, but no-one interfered with us. We passed a store which had been burnt by our Brigade and was still smoking. The Jewish owner was in great trouble over it, and didn't know why it had been destroyed. About noon we passed through the nek where the enemy had held up the Brigade for a short time. There was an abundance of oat straw lying about, and a dead Kaffir. Just beyond was a very nice farm

which had been looted by our people. The wagons continued on the road, and Thompson and I, with a couple of men, went to get a little wood. I was going back to the wagons to get some boys to carry it, when I saw a Boer ride up. He didn't see me, and it was very interesting to watch his movements. He got off his pony, pulled the bridle over its head, and left him standing in the road. Then he got on to some stony ground at one side and proceeded to stalk the wagons as he would a deer. I yelled to attract his attention, held up my arms, and then cantered towards him. I explained who we were and he went round the wagons. He remarked that our people had made a nice mess of this farm, and volunteered the information that 30 Boers had held up our whole force at this nek. I replied that this was not at all wonderful, considering the position, and that we could easily have done the same under the same conditions. I afterwards learned from a Kaffir that there were 250 men at this place. He allowed me to take the wood which I wanted, but he set longing eyes at my saddle, and said that he would like one of that pattern. I went on with the wagons, and 3 villianous-looking Boers joined him. Thompson had a talk with them, and one of them wanted him to give him his field-glasses. Considering that they had cost him about £9, he wasn't inclined to oblige him. All the farms we passed had Boers on them; they were lounging about, smoking their pipes, but they never interfered with us. We saw one or two

on the top of every Kopje. We outspanned at 2 p.m. and soon had some excellent chicken stew for the patients and ourselves. At 4 p.m. we inspanned and were just moving off, when a Boer patrol came up on our left. They disappeared behind the Kopje about 300 yards from us, and a few minutes afterwards we saw them lining the top. They unslung their rifles and were apparently preparing to shoot. Then another came down the road, with his rifle at the ready. I moved out to meet him, and then there was a Mauser shot. He got very excited and called out in perfect English "Who fired that shot?" I pointed out the Boers on his left and asked him to tell them that we were an ambulance full of wounded, and that they were not to shoot. He rode towards them and they beckoned to him to join them. I now thought that they were Boers who were enraged at the destruction of their farms, and were going to take their revenge on us. It looked as though they were calling the fresh Boer out of the line of fire before commencing to shoot. I ran towards them with a handkerchief in my hand, and called to them not to shoot. Then they beckoned to me to come. I said "couldn't you see that it was an ambulance that you were firing on?" One fellow, whom I afterwards heard was a general, said that they had not fired on us, but at the man who was riding towards us. They had challenged him, and he had not replied, so they had fired at him. They said: "Who is he?" I replied that I supposed he was one of their people.

This they admitted. I then apologised for accusing them of firing at us, and asked them if they would like to inspect the wagons. The General asked if I had any arms, and when I replied in the negative, he said I might proceed. I noticed that he glanced very suspiciously at the wagons as he passed, and until they had got several hundred yards away. Thompson says that the bullet passed him, and went about 20 yards to our left rear.

About 5 p.m. we passed a very nice farm. The roof had been pulled in by our men for the sake of the wood it contained. There was a nice grove of gum trees round it and about 20 had been cut down to 4 or 5 feet from the ground. The place looked very desolate. Here we found a very fine horse, which had been left that morning by one of the 16th Lancers. He was then done up, but by evening he had quite recovered. A Boer was taking him away, and he said that he would be riding him in 3 or 4 days. We must have furnished them with hundreds of remounts in this way. We have always been counting on the war being finished in a few months, and then we should collect all these animals, who have recovered. It would be much better to shoot every animal which is not fit to come along. In the same way all soldiers who were captured might break off the back sights of their rifles, or throw away the bolt if they got the chance. Here we heard that we were 18 miles from Krugersdorp, and that there was no water for 12 miles. We determined to push on to the water

and halt there for a couple of hours. We reached this place at 9 p.m. and got some food for the patients and ourselves, and for the mules. We marched again at 11 o'clock. The moon set at 12-30 and found us half way up a steep hill. However, we lit a candle and managed the rest of the road into the town. We arrived at 3 o'clock and found our Brigade after much trouble. We could not get to our proper place without a great deal of manoeuvring, and we must have roused a good many by the noise we made. They seemed very glad to see us, and I don't think they minded being called.

The Brigade was marching at 6 o'clock for Johannesburg, and it was obvious that we couldn't go with them.

SEPTEMBER 3rd. At 9 o'clock I took all my wounded to the Hospital in the town and got them all admitted. It is in very nice order and well run. They let me dress the two operation cases, and they looked extremely well. I saw the 10th Hussar whom I operated on on August 14th. He is almost well. I also saw some of the others and they were very glad to see me. They had all heard of the capture of my Bearer Company; in fact it is all over the place. Everyone is very nice and all say nice things about my returning. I found that the other arm of the poor fellow whose fore-arm had been removed had become gangrenous and that it had spread almost to the shoulder joint. The fellow allowed me to take it off at the shoulder joint, but I am afraid that it won't do much good. I marched at 2 p.m.

for Johannesburg and bivouacked 12 miles from there at 10 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 4th. Got to camp and found the Brigade not marching to-day. Thompson has written a very flattering report of what I did during the last few days, and Tate acting as S.M.O. of the Brigade is sending it through Dalgetty with some strong remarks. If I can get Little and Gordon who used to command the Brigade to also say something nice about me, I may get something out of it. I don't suppose, however, that anything will come of it, and at any rate I shan't be disappointed. I am recommending my Staff-Sergt and 4 men for some recognition on account of what they did. We have been told off for the Kroonstad District, and shall spend our time there probably until the end of the war. Perhaps it won't be long, now that severer measures are to be taken against these people.

A NOTE IN INK FACING TYPESCRIPT (page 118).

All my teams consisted of donkeys and sore-backed ponies, and yet I did a forced march of 56 miles in 28½ hours! I had also, by sending information to our Brigade, got it out of a trap.

They had marched at 3 a.m. and the tail end of the column had just got through a defile where the hills came down on each side to the road, when the Boers were galloping to line the position.

I think probably this got me my D.S.O.

SEPTEMBER 4th (continued).

Everything is frightfully expensive here. I shouldn't fancy living here unless I was a millionaire. I should think

it was also very hot here in summer. All our letters etc. have been ordered to be sent to Kronstad, so let us hope we will soon get some. If we remain in that District we shall at any rate get our mails regularly. Our tract of country will be the triangle between Kroonstad, Vereeniging and Bothaville, and will include the post where we sat down to round up De Wet.

SEPTEMBER 5th. We left camp at 9 a.m. and reached Elandsfontein at 12 o'clock. The Colonial remained behind. Thompson met Osborne yesterday in Johannesburg, his hospital is there. He sent me a box of cheroots: I wonder why? During the fight on Friday last a Colonial came to me early in the day with a bullet smash of one finger. After I had dressed him I jokingly said: "Wouldn't you like to have another shot at them?" He said: "I will, if I may"; I said "You have done your bit", and sent him back to the hospital. He had crawled about 50 yards in front of all the others and did good work. He took a note back to Tate, and shortly afterwards I saw him ride into the firing line with a box of ammunition. He was too plucky to live, for he was shot through the chest and killed. It is one of the saddest but most splendid things one has seen.

I met Edge on my way here. He is P.M.O. of these lines of communication. We probably entrain here to-morrow. Porter is to command our Brigade, and I am very glad, for he is a good man.

SEPTEMBER 6th. We have not been able to entrain to-day, no rolling stock being available. I have had a busy day writing letters. I have sent a copy of the part of this diary which relates to my recent adventures, to the Bloemfontein Post. I do not suppose they will pay anything for it, but they may publish it. The English mail-bag is made up here to-morrow, so I am posting to-night. I sent a draft of £64 to Holt through the Standard Bank. I had to pay 18/6 for it.

SEPTEMBER 7th. The 9th Lancers got off to-day, but there were no trains available for anyone else. Our post office Sergt. left yesterday for Kroonstad to sort our mails and have them ready for us. I don't expect we shall be ready to leave this for 2 or 3 days yet. I went in by train to Johannesburg to-day and arrived at No. 6 General Hospital just in time for lunch. Four of the wounded officers whom I brought in were there, and I wanted to see them. I saw Osborne and he was really glad to see me. I went round the Hospital and it is a picture. I wish I could spend a month in it. I met Maxwell who was House Surgeon at our Hospital when I was there last for operative surgery. I find they have formed the same opinion as I did about the fractured thigh in one of the officers. I met an officer who escaped from the Boers near Machadodorp about 10 days ago. He was very interesting and said that the Boers lost frightfully, especially the Zarps, who were nearly wiped out. Then I went to the Rand Club and read the papers. Finally I

got home in a coal truck and arrived very hungry and a bit tired. I wish we could get to Kroonstad soon and get our mails. Osborne was only home a month before he was sent out here. It is all over the General Hospital that I took a leg off with a carpenter's saw. The saw in the capital case was useless, so fortunately I had a long carpenter's saw which a Boer lent me to cut splints and I used that. The other patients were evidently looking on and are talking about it. They, of course, think it was a tremendously clever thing to do. I hear that Palmer is still with the Carbineers and they like him very much.

SEPTEMBER 8th. This morning I thought I would go on to Kroonstad in advance of Tate, and try and get some things together, also get my mails a day or two earlier. I got away in the train which took mainly mules of the Battery, and we overtook that train at Viljoen's drift. We passed a train which they burnt just a week ago. The line was very well guarded, and it was very interesting passing all the places which we had seen on our march to Pretoria. The bridge over the Vaal has been cutely repaired. The centre span had been blown up, so all the spans were unbolted and drawn across to one side. Then on the land side a wooden pier has been put in. The approaches are very strictly guarded. It is wonderful how cunning our men have now become in excavating bombproof shelters. At the approach to the Vaal Bridge there were nice little rooms cut out of the bank, and roofed and walled in front with galvanised

iron. Many had made flags and other devices out of bits of coloured glass stuck into the soft bank, and very pretty they looked. I wish I could have had a few minutes to take some photos. We got to Viljoen's Drift at 4 o'clock, but there were no engines to take us further on. There were 3 other trains waiting so we had to remain till morning. No trains are run at night and a good thing too. One doesn't mind facing danger in daylight, but it is quite another thing in the dark.

SEPTEMBER 9th. We spent a quiet night. Heath, a captain in the R.H.A., and I, had the Guard's van to ourselves. We got away at 6 o'clock, and when we reached the next station, we heard that the line had been blown up just below Vredefort Road Station. We had to stop where we were until 4 o'clock and then pushed on to Vredefort Station, where we remain for the night. Just before we got in one of the mules jumped off the train which was going at the rate of about 15 miles an hour, and was brought in to the Station and put on board again, none the worse. I took a photo of him. This is very slow work, but it is better than being held up by the Boers and looted.

SEPTEMBER 10th. We overtook the Battery at Kopjes Station, they were wanted to disentrain there, and chase De Wet, but the C.O. said he couldn't, and just put out a pom pom. We also put out 3 buck wagons and 50 mules, and then went on. I got such a quantity of mails at Kroonstad, also 57 splendid mules, and some clothing. They are in a great hurry to get us away

again, but I hope to get all we want to-morrow. I am staying with the A.S.C. man, who is a very decent chap.

SEPTEMBER 11th. Have had a busy day. Got most of the clothing. Saw Wade Brown whom I found by accident doing duty at No.2 General Hospital and I am dining with him to-night. I got a splendid box to pack my Mauser &c. in and am going to leave it with the Quarter Master at that Hospital. Tate hasn't yet arrived. We changed the site of the camp this afternoon, and are now near the Scottish Hospital. I wrote about 10 letters and sent off the chocolate and stamps, and insured for £50 each lot.

SEPTEMBER 12th. I dined with Wade Brown last night, and met Wood, who is in charge. He is the husband of the woman who was staying in Sangor with the Mapletons. He is an awfully nice man and was very civil to me.

SEPTEMBER 13th. The Hospital and Bearer Company arrived yesterday afternoon. I relieved Tate and he went to camp and read his papers. We had great trouble in getting the train unloaded owing to the fact that the yard was crowded, and there was only one engine to do all the shunting. However, we reached camp at daylight.

SEPTEMBER 14th. We sorted the mules and arranged the teams of the wagons. Then inspanned and fitted the harness and sent them out for a little exercise. They went wonderfully well

3 lumps of shell, and stitched a tendon for, near Lindley, got
considering that they had never been in harness before. My
grey team excited great admiration. Then Tate and I went to a
meeting of O.C's at the General's tent. After this we were
inspected by the Chief Veterinary Officer, or rather our mules
were. I repacked my carbines and oiled them well, also packed
my great coat, and a new short British Private's warm coat,
which I got hold of, and all the kit I am not likely to want
this hot weather, and screwed the lid down. This is going to
Bloemfontein to-morrow and into the Cav.Divn.Store there. I
am sending a N.C.O. with it and he is going to bring up our
inner flies of tents and some stores for us. We are likely to
be here a week longer. After lunch, Tate and I went to give
in our sick mules, get pay for the men, and new horses for our-
selves. We couldn't get any horses from the remounts, but we
went to the sick horse lines. I saw a number of likely-looking
horses there so asked the Vets whether they had any which were
fit. They had about 20 which they were going to return to
remounts to-morrow, and said if we could get an order, they
would give us our choice. Off we went, and found Hastie whom
Tate knows very well. He at once gave us the necessary order
and we shall get two splendid mounts to-morrow. Vet in charge
is going to keep the Irish horse for me and blister him. He
will probably recover in about 3 weeks, and I shall have 2
chargers then. We are going to the Scottish hospital to tea
to-morrow, and I shall hear how Nicholls from whom I removed

2 lumps of shell, and stitched a tendon for, near Lindley, got on. It is very hot here.

SEPTEMBER 15th. We got up early and went off to the sick lines. I got a ripping horse from the Vet. and left my own horse there. I expect he will be right in about 3 weeks. It is still very hot and some clouds are coming up. I wish it would rain and clear the air. My Tommie's coat looks quite smart. The pants are thick and will be rather hot, but it can't be helped. We are getting on well with fitting the harness. We went to the Concert at the Scottish Hospital last night and it was really excellent. We were inspected by General Knox this morning; the usual farce. Then I got rid of the receipt for my horse which was abandoned and got my allowance claims made out for the months April-September. This comes to £71.16.6. I have a cheque coming up for £19 for February and March; so we are getting rich. Strolled round to the General Hospital in the evening, and then on to the Station. A train-load of Boer prisoners had come in and were waiting all night in the Station, I had a long talk with a Chemist who has been all through the war, and was taken prisoner because he left Pretoria without a pass. He was most interesting. He says that if Kruger leaves the country it will very soon be over. They are awfully sick and tired of the war. Our mail is lying at Bloemfontein but they won't send it up till the 10th inst. Nothing but food is being sent up and they grudge even a truck for mails. I hope

we shall be here when it arrives.

SEPTEMBER 16th. I went down to the Scottish Hospital this morning and saw Welch of the R.Irish. He had been shot through the thigh near Lindley about 3 months ago, was in the Boer Hospital for two months and developed a large traumatic aneurism of the thigh. Then he came in here and was operated on and his leg saved. The Chief Surgeon - Clarke by name - was very nice and showed me several other cases. I got 2 lanterns, some socks handkerchiefs and tea cloths out of the Store. This hospital is being presented to the Government and all the stuff in it will be handed over also. I didn't go with the force which left after all, another Bearer Co. was sent. At 6 o'clock we got word to shift camp and we were very angry. A storm was coming up and it was dark before we had finished, but the rain has passed off for the present.

SEPTEMBER 17th. It didn't rain after all last night, but it has been a beastly windy day. We were very glad that we had shifted on to the new ground for the dust was awful near the old one. Owing to Buller having captured such a lot of stores, our mails are going to be sent up to-morrow from Bloemfontein. We got our tent-linings and stores to-day. Things cost just half there what they do here. The news is very good in to-day's paper, the Highland Brigade having captured a lot of stores, and French a lot of engines. We think it must be over soon. It

is very tiresome sitting down here with nothing to do. One has got so used to trekking about that it is quite painful having nothing to do. I bought about £5 worth of Free State Stamps to-day, and when my next cheque comes I shall turn most of it into stamps. The 2½d. stamps have all run out and so they are using a Cape 2½d., surcharged Orange River Colony. These must be only a temporary measure and I think ought to be valuable later on.

SEPTEMBER 18. General Porter came over this morning. He said that he had heard that we were namesakes, and wanted to make my acquaintance. He also said that he had seen a good many photos of mine in the papers, and could hardly believe that they had been taken with my small kodak. He said that General Knox had had a conference with De Wet yesterday, and that he could hardly believe that Kruger & Co. had bolted, and Porter seemed to think there was some chance of his chucking it. Our remaining 2 guns went off to Rhenoster to-day, so we can't move until the other 4 come back, which will be in a day or two. I believe the line was blown up south of us to-day, so we haven't got our mails yet. We were very comfortable in our double tents all day.

SEPTEMBER 19th. Another monotonous day. A lot of the papers say and parcels came up to-day, but owing to bad management the letters are still at Smalldeel, and we shan't get them till to-morrow. I wish we could get on the trek again and stop out until the whole show is settled. I miss the exercise I have

been accustomed to for the last eight months. We heard a yarn from Pretoria to-day to the effect that Russia has sent us an ultimatum to clear out of China, and that France is backing her, and Germany and Japan us. Goodness grant that it may not be true, for I don't want another year of active service quite so soon. I hear that we are to move out again on Monday next and this is Wednesday. I suppose we shall then take De Wet on again. I should like to be in at his capture. I had a very nice letter to-day from Nicholl who was on his way home. He is the Captain whose tendon I stitched, and extracted two pieces of shrapnel shell from his thigh. I consider it one of the best things I have had, and a great triumph for my favourite antiseptic, viz: Perchloride of Mercury 1 in 1000 poured freely out of a bottle over the wound before suturing. I have done all my amputations in the same way and they have all done well. I'm afraid that the shoulder joint man has died, I forget his name, but see a name and date in the papers which will correspond to his case.

SEPTEMBER 20th. The mail has not yet arrived. Goodness knows why not. We get the Bloemfontein paper every day, and so get to know more or less about what is going on. Lots of saddles and other kit are coming up daily for the Brigade, so I expect we shall be off by Monday next.

SEPTEMBER 22nd. Another gusty day, and the dust is awful. These sort of days make one wretched, very hot and sultry, and I

think are the only drawback to the climate. I got a cheque for £19.0.7. allowances for February and March. I bought another £13 worth of stamps and will get £12 more to-morrow if possible. It is very cloudy and promises to rain. I wish it would. Got orders that we are to march at 6-30 to-morrow, leaving camp standing. Direction probably towards Heilbron. Our mail arrives to-morrow and we shall miss it by 2 or 3 hours. It is very hard luck.

SEPTEMBER 23rd. We marched at 6-30 a.m. I went on and posted my letters at the Railway Station. They couldn't register the stamps, so I wrote on your envelope that I wasn't sending them. Then on my way back to Camp I found that our Brigade Post Office was open and our Sergeant registered the parcel for me. I also gave him £12 to buy more stamps for me, and keep them till my return. I found that all the letters for the Brigade had arrived and that there were none for any of us. It was most sickening. We left Kroonstad by the same road which we travelled over last May. The stench was very bad here and there, and in some places was awful. The Asvogel is quite useless and is not to be compared to the good old Indian Vulture. They seem quite incapable of dealing with anything beyond the eyes and internal organs. I got 2 chickens for 2/-. We halted from 10-30 till 2 p.m. Tate found an old friend of his, a Captain in the Oxford L.I., and brought him to lunch. We have done about 25 miles to-day and are supposed to be cutting

off De Wet. The infantry are about 9 miles behind us, and De Wet would have no trouble in getting between us if he wanted to. It is so warm now that we are not having a tent pitched. Sleeping in the open is much nicer.

SEPTEMBER 24th. We were off at 6 o'clock, but before we left we knew that the Boers were not where they were expected to be. De Wet had got wind of our march and trekked yesterday. We got to a place called Vaalbosch, and halted there. After about two hours we saw the Colonial Division coming towards us, and then we went into bivouac. It was so nice getting a tent pitched and a nice bath and change. We hear that £5000 has been put on De Wet. Its rather infra dig, but I don't see how we are going to catch him by any other means in this country. We trek towards Heilbron to-morrow.

SEPTEMBER 25th. We left Camp at 6 o'clock and trekked very cautiously. About 9-30 we passed a farm and recovered 4 men of the 17th who were taken prisoners yesterday. Farther on we burnt a farm for having ammunition on it. We now heard that there were about 800 Boers about 6 miles from us. It had been reported to Gen.Knox, but we still moved on towards Heilbron. Shortly afterwards there was some firing from a kopje about 2 miles ahead. Our 4 guns and Pom Pom trotted the whole way, and came into action very smartly and shelled the place. I suppose there were three Boers here, and we wasted over an hour over it. Then we went on and burnt the farms belonging to the

boss of this particular lot. We camped at 2 p.m. and had just got comfortable when we heard a gun. I ran out of the tent and saw a shell burst about 300 yards from us. It had just cleared the supply column. Then there was great excitement. The cavalry saddled up and the guns hooked in. The next shell landed among the transport, but did no damage. The next was amongst the guns, and smashed a man's face, but I don't think he will die. The next carried away the nose of the horse which belonged to the serjt.major of the 17th Lancers. By this time the 9th Lancers had saddled up and got away, opening out as they galloped to get round the Boer gun. The Boers turned their attention to them and left the camp alone. Our guns soon got into position, and the enemy fell back. They had only the one gun, and they fired black powder, so that it was easily localised. They burst one Shrapnel just over us and the head of it came rolling through our wagons. Total damage done by this was one man shot by one of the bullets which entered his chest near the spine, and which ultimately killed him. If they had only had 2 or 3 guns, and had worked them quickly, they had a splendid chance. As they had the range of the camp and might possibly shell it during the night, the general thought it advisable to shift the camp 500 yards farther on. The ground had been occupied before, and lots of dead animals were lying about. I had to drag 2 dead mules away before we could live on it, and cover the ground with fresh earth, and even now the smell is awful. We march at 5 a.m., but it is rather jumpy

having to stop here to-night. One youth, who had just joined the 17th Lancers, crawled into his shelter tent when the firing began, but I suppose it soon struck him that the canvas was not much protection against shells, for he soon came out again.

SEPTEMBER 26th. I spent a beastly night. First of all, some of the men of the men of the 9th Lancers were relating their experiences of the day in loud tones. Then about 11 o'clock a strong wind sprang up, and it was so cold that one could only lie on one side and pull the blanket over one's head. Then awake fully at 3-45 a.m., so you can imagine that one did not spend a very restful night. We were off at 5-15 having sent a squadron of the 16th and a Pom Pom on ahead. They came on the enemy quite unexpectedly, and they fled. The Pom Pom jambed at the critical moment, and instead of getting a belt of 25 shells into them, only single shots could be fired. These did no damage beyond stampeding some of their horses. At the first rise that our advanced scouts came to there was a very heavy Mauser fire. They fell back, and our guns came up and got into action. This was followed by the advance of cavalry, and was one of the prettiest things I have seen during the war. Our flankers were miles out on both sides. Presently we came in sight of Heilbron, and to our disgust found that one of the column commanders, whose duty it was to have come up on the side of the town opposite to us, and who should have pushed his flankers out on each side to have met ours, and so have

completed the circle, had come up on our left. The result was that the enemy calmly walked away. We heard that De Wet had stopped the night in an hotel in the town, and so we have lost another chance. However, we have again routed De Wet, I suppose! We halted till about 11 o'clock and then trekked in the direction of the Kroonstad Pretoria line. We left no troops in Heilbron. It blew a gale right in our teeth and the dust was maddening, and the effect on one's eyes and temper was very bad. We reached one of our old stinking camping grounds about 4 p.m. and managed to get a nice clean piece of turf. We remain here for two days, while supplies come out. It looks like rain. I wish it would, and clear the air.

SEPTEMBER 27th. De Lisle had to move his camp this morning. The Boers had been sniping him since daybreak. They chased our rearguard yesterday and some narrowly escaped capture. This is a delightful spectacle. About 300 Boers, with one gun harassing the Cavalry Brigades. It is calculated to make one feel proud of belonging to the British Army. A report has just come in to the effect that one of our shells yesterday carried off two legs which belonged to Commandant Steencamp. This fellow has fought most of De Wet's rear-guard actions. It is probably only a native rumour, "to please master".

SEPTEMBER 29th. Marched at 6-30 and halted at 9-30 till 12-30. I got a couple of chickens on the way. Then we moved over a rise and saw Knox's camp about 2 miles off. We passed this and

went 3 miles farther, getting into bivouac at 2-30 p.m. I hear to-night that all the towns are to be occupied permanently. Plans are continually being altered. I suppose that our duty will now consist in escorting convoys of food to the different towns along stinking roads !

SEPTEMBER 30th. We have only come about 6 miles from our last camp, and nearer to the railway line. A convoy is just starting, so I am sending off a mail. We spent a most unpleasant day in camp. The wind was frightful, and threatened to blow the tent down several times. We have sent our wagons to Rhenoster Station, to fill up, so shall have to wait here for a couple of days. We are on sandy ground, and the dust is awful. I have put down some bread and hope that we shan't be moved until it is ready. We have only been eating biscuit for two days, and are tired of it already, so what must Tommy feel like ? And yet our biscuit is excellent. This is one of the places from which the Boers were in the habit of blowing up the line, which is only about 6 miles off. The other place was the camp which we left last night, called Uitkijh, and pronounced something like optcake. The water is very muddy, but we brought a good supply from our last camp. How nice it will be to be able to drink a glass of unboiled water once more.

OCTOBER 1st. The bread was a great success. Parties of Lancers went out to-day early to visit all the farms which are near. They are to burn all the forage which they can see, and take the

chickens for themselves. They have not yet returned. What a surprise the wily Boer will get when he comes home for his usual week-ends and finds all his forage burnt, and his cattle driven off. A fine lot of cattle have just come in. The sheep are lambing, and so they can't be driven. This plan of campaign ought to have the effect of making the Burghers very tired of De Wet, and more likely to give him up. We heard that 500 deserted from him at Heilbron. Our convoy has not yet returned, and we shall most likely stay here for another day. We have got a lot of forage from this farm, and now I see them burning the rest, and also a lot of mealies which are in the cob.

OCTOBER 2nd. The Lancers came back, laden with geese and chickens, and driving a lot of cattle and a few ponies before them. I got a splendid pony, but she got loose during the night. I found her in the morning and chased her for a few miles, but couldn't catch her. The cattle were driven off towards the railway line, but no escort went with them, and so the Boers will probably recapture the lot. We marched at 6 a.m. for a place 4 miles south east of Heilbron. It was very cloudy and quite cold. We did the whole 20 miles, practically without a halt and arrived here at 8 p.m. It was rather a badly arranged march, for if we had halted at a dam about 11-30 we could have watered the animals and fed ourselves. There seemed to be no great urgency in our getting here quickly. Our mail arrived at the Station just after our convoy had left, so

we shall have to wait for it a few days longer, and then get it by rail probably to Heilbron.

OCTOBER 3rd. Have had a quiet day in camp. The rain has not yet come and the sky has quite cleared. The armoured train ran into Heilbron to-day, getting fired on en route. About 2 o'clock we heard that De Wet was threatening the line near Rhenoster Station, and we start for there at 6 o'clock. Why we didn't at once move in that direction one can't make out. Yesterday we were only about 7 or 8 miles from the line. We don't know why we came here at all. Now we have 26 miles to march to-morrow and will arrive too late to do anything. This Colony seems to be swarming with Commandoes, so the end is evidently not yet.

OCTOBER 4th. It was very cold last night, and a bitter wind blew this morning. We left at 6 o'clock with the wind behind us. We crossed the Rhinoster about 10 o'clock and halted for half an hour while the baggage came up. One of Tate's buck wagons took too sharp a turn at the drift and went clean over. Our pannier of stores containing several bottles of pickles also went over, and we quite made up our minds that they were all smashed. However, all we lost was a small bottle of rum, our accumulated ration of a few days, and as I never drink it, it was no loss. We re-crossed the Rhinoster again at 12 o'clock and by the same drift which we crossed on our way up country. It was frightfully steep. Tate's water cart got out of hand and went over, smashing the pole in two places. Not bad luck

for one day. We moved on again at 2-30 and got to Kopjes Station about 5 o'clock. No signs of a Boer all day. No letters for us, so I went down to Rhinoster Camp and got them to telephone to the bridge and enquire for the mail. None there either. Then I saw a wire which showed that our postman had gone on to Heilbron, on the 2nd., after us. We left word there this morning about the mails, so that if we wait a day or two here we shall probably get them. We had a very long day and covered about 28 miles. Not an inch less. We have such fast walking mules. They often walk $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour. I got a ripping goose to-day. We have eaten nothing but poultry since we left Kroonstad.

OCTOBER 5th. Mail arrived from Heilbron by 8 o'clock train, great luck, we are expecting another soon.

OCTOBER 6th. Firing began again about 5-30 this morning in the direction of Kopje Aileen, and went on till 7. Then again from 11 till 1 o'clock, and again from 4 to 5 o'clock. Our Brigade never moved, and goodness knows why not. The guns were obviously ours and it was very probable that De Lisle and Dalgetty had rounded up De Wet, and that we could have been of great assistance. We hadn't orders to remain where we are, and so it seems to me that there is no excuse for our not having at once turned out when we heard continuous firing. I believe that a wire came this evening from Hunter at Kroonstad telling us to

remain where we are for the present. It has been very cloudy all day, and we had a little rain about 5 o'clock but when I got out my gum boots and waterproof it all blew over. It always happens so. The most certain way to make rain go away is, we find, to trench our tent.

OCTOBER 7th. The rain came at 10-30 p.m., after all, and a good deal of wind with it. Visions of the Mafeking tornado came before us. So we got up and dressed, and rolled up our bedding. It was quite unnecessary, for the storm soon passed over, and the rain was very little after all. We heard some firing this morning, and at 2-30 p.m. we marched south. Two scouts came in and reported that Dalgetty had taken a gun and smashed another, and surrounded 500 Boers yesterday. We also heard of a big laager not far from where we were going, and lots of Boers moving parallel to us, who had been shelled from the other side of the Kopjes. We bivouacked at sundown as usual. Missed getting our mail owing to our march. I picked up 3 mules which had been abandoned by Roberts' Column when it marched north. They are in very fair condition and will fill the place of the 3 which I have lost.

OCTOBER 8th. At 6-30 a.m. the Pom Pom and 16th Lancers went to occupy Kopje Aileen, and the rest of the Brigade marched at 8 o'clock. We got there about 10-30 and bivouacked on fresh ground. It is a little over 4 months ago since we were here,

and now we are back on the same ground again and about 10 miles from the line. We had been in about an hour, and had got all fixed up, when the order came to turn out. One of our Colonial Scouts had stumbled across about 500 Boers 5 miles from us, and they had taken everything from him, including money, watch and spurs. Then they let him go. We went to try and cut them off and trotted about 4 miles, but as usual they weren't at home, and we had our journey for nothing. We had left Camp standing and got back about 3 o'clock. I paid my respects to a most excellent chicken friccassee made by my Staff Sergeant who is an old cook. He had put some sliced chillies into it and they were a great improvement.

OCTOBER 9th. Another quiet day in Camp. Dalgetty's force appeared among the hills on our right rear about noon and they are still there. The cart went in for our mail at 6 a.m. and we got them about 6 p.m. One of our fellows went out to a farm to see some sick Boers and he gave us part of the fee which he received in kind: A duck and 10 eggs. We had 6 duck eggs for supper. A wire came to-day from Donovan asking for names of our R.A.M.C., who were considered worthy of notice by the Commander in Chief. This looks a good sign of the times. I sent in my Staff Sergeant's name and expect he will get the Distinguished Conduct Medal. It is Gibbons whose wife you went to see at Colchester. Tate had a letter from Irving, he is going home sick.

I got my £12 worth of Free State stamps to-day. We are halting here again to-morrow, so I shall make some more bread.

OCTOBER 10th. A foraging party of the 9th Lancers, with a wagon, went out this morning. This is the game we should have played all along, and it would have been much more profitable than chasing De Wet about the Country; it would soon have got to the ears of the men on Commando, and they would soon have got tired of De Wet and given him up. As it is now the majority of these farms have not been touched at all. I sent a man with them on my horse and he brought back 6 chickens, of which 2 came to us. I had a great job with the bread to-day. There were no sods of turf to be had, so they made clay and plastered the top and sides. I suppose this made the oven more difficult to heat, and there was a very strong wind in spite of the tent which was pitched over the oven. It turned out all right in the end, and I think it is the best batch yet. Only 2 loaves at a time could be baked so it is very slow work. Next time I shall try and get it baked altogether in one of the big ovens if we stop near a farmhouse. All these places have large Bakers' ovens built outside, and the vrows are very good at bread-making. Our last batch was made 10 days ago, and it is good still - what is left of it. We had a large swarm of locusts this evening pass over the camp. One of my men goes home to-morrow, time expired. I wish I was going

with him. I must get a man from one of the Regiments, as I am now reduced below one man per wagon; quite a swagger Bearer Company to be in command of; but I have found that so long as I have one man per wagon, that I can do everything I want, and I expect all bearer companies will be reduced to that strength in future wars, if they don't combine them with Field Hospitals altogether.

OCTOBER 11th. Still at Kopjes Aileen, and likely to remain here so far as one can make out. It is getting rather monotonous. Blew very hard all day, but we are on the windward side of the Camp and so do not get any dust. I took out a very bad wisdom tooth this morning for Lord Douglas Compton of the 9th.; he was awfully pleased and astonished. I am glad that I brought my own instruments with me, there are only 2 forceps supplied in the equipment, and one is supposed to take out any tooth with them. We had the battery M.O. to lunch and gave him a ripping fricasseed duck, new bread, coffee, and tapioca boiled in milk. His messing costs about £10 a month, so he had something to think about after lunch. I have got one of the 17th Lancers to replace the man who left this morning. I heard that troops are to be sent home by Army Corps in the order they came out. I hope it is so, for we should go home among the first.

OCTOBER 12th. We were all prepared for another day's halt when at 10-30 orders came to march for Kroonstad as soon as

possible. We got off at 12 o'clock. It was very sultry and a tremendous hot wind was blowing, making things unpleasant. It was 24 miles as the crow flies and no-one thought that old Porter would do it in one march considering the hour we started and that there were no urgent orders. But he made up his mind to go straight in, and so we have had a very long and tiresome march. He does not consider his horses or transport mules one bit. It was pitch dark when we got in and we had some very difficult ground to get over to reach our old camp. We got there about 8-50, found that the Cavalry Depot Camp had been pitched quite close, and that our old ground has been encroached upon and is thick dust. Goodness help us when the wind gets up to-morrow, but if we are to stop a few days we will turn Tate on and try and get to fresh ground. I got 7 chickens on the road and meant to bring them in alive and kill as required. I found 3 dead when I got in. The nigger had knocked them on the head when catching them. I only paid 7/- for the seven. This is a wonderfully cheap country for poultry, if one only gets away from the Towns and main roads. The Kaffirs never ask more than 1/- each, and 1/- a dozen for eggs. We are wondering why we have come in. Many think that the Brigade is going to be broken up, and that we are going home. However, we shall know to-morrow. Fricasseed chicken at 9-50 p.m. and a bed in the open.

OCTOBER 13th. I didn't sleep a wink all night. First of all the dogs began to bark in the Kaffirs' location, which is quite

close. Then the cocks began to crow as soon as the moon rose. After a bit, to my horror, one of my cocks began to crow like blazes and threatened to wake up the whole camp. This wasn't good enough, so I got out and wrung his neck. About half an hour after this one of the hens started a row, so I got up and killed her. I thought that this was surely the end of it, but it was not to be. I had 2 more cocks and they started after a bit. The result was no sleep, and 4 corpses in the morning. I got up about 5-30 and went off to look for the mail. The line had been badly blown up south of this, so no mail, and we have been brought in to patrol the country south of this. That ends all going home at present. Then I went and found my Irish horse quite recovered, and so I got him back, and now have 2 chargers. He is as fat as a pig and very fit. I had both shod. A high squally wind soon got up and we have been miserable all day. The Camp was greatly excited by my production in the Bloemfontein Post. It takes up half one side. I got 2 dozen copies from the Agent and have posted them to different people: 6 to you, several to Saugor, and Mapleton, and one to Donovan's Secretary. I think it is rather rot that the paper hasn't offered me anything seeing that it fills up such a lot of their issue. Tate cashed a cheque for allowances and we settled up. I borrowed some of it and am buying £10 more Orange Free State stamps. Private Jones who used to be my factotum in in No.2 Ward at Colchester turned up to-day. He has just come out with 30 others, to take over

the Scottish Hospital. He gave a dreadful account of the way that Colchester Hospital was run after we left, and his criticisms of several officers were very funny. I hear that "Bobs" goes home at the end of the month and Kitchener gets the command. He is expected to do great things by means of stern measures. About 5 o'clock a dreadful storm seemed to be about to burst, but it all swept round and passed over. At 7 o'clock another series of frightful gusts struck the tent and our discomforts commenced again. I do wish it would pour to-night and make things more pleasant. We hope to get our mail before we march at 8-30 a.m. to-morrow. I hope we never return to this stinking place. We had Thompson and Wynn to lunch to-day. Fresh bread, and boiled chicken, with coffee ad lib. It is frightfully thirsty weather.

OCTOBER 14th. The rain didn't come after all, but it had rained a few miles away, and the air was very fresh and cold. I went for the letters but the mail hadn't come, and we left without it. The wind was blowing very hard and we were thankful to get out of the dust. We only came as far as Boschrand, 7 miles, the place where we were in action before we got into Kroonstad. We camped on nice clean fresh grass and are very comfortable. The Boers had dragged about a mile of telegraph posts down by bullocks and took them away about 5 miles and left them there. This took place about 4 miles from where we are, and they were sniping our pickets last night at this

place. I imagine that we are going to burn farms round here. I heard a good story to-day. One of our people was taken prisoner early in the war and a Boer said: "You know we are going to win because the Lord is on our side." And the Tommy said "Don't you make too bloody sure about that, we have 3 Lords on our side, and 2 of them have made a good many mistakes already." I saw a cow with a fine udder going past our tent this afternoon, so I had her rounded up and caught. We were proceeding to milk her when a Kaffir came and claimed her as belonging to a Loyalist in Kroonstad. We went on with the milking but she only gave about half a pint. It was a bit of a sell.

OCTOBER 15th. A quiet day in camp, perfectly calm, and such a treat not to have a tent flapping. One of the 17th, who was with a party going out to burn farms, got thrown, and dragged for some distance. I brought him in, but he died in about an hour. Poor fellow. He was a reservist of the 21st Lancers, and had letters from his girl who was soon expecting him home. I hear that Hunter has been ordered to send a letter to De Wet, and tell him that "Bobs" is tired of this species of warfare and means to devastate the country unless he gives up at once. We blew up and burnt 4 farms near here to-day, and I believe all the farms for 10 miles on each side of the line for the for the next 10 miles are to be destroyed, and we begin tomorrow. I think this ought to make them chuck it.

OCTOBER 16th. We marched at 7-30. About a mile from camp we

halted and blew up a farm (2 houses) with guncotton. All the chickens, pigs etc. were taken and just a few things allowed to be taken out first. This place was owned by a man who is out on Commando. It was very sad to see the women and children sitting a little way off and watching that house being blown up. I got 2 photos as the place went into the air. All the women and children of the farms we are destroying are being sent into Kroonstad and kept and fed there. This ought to worry brother Boer. Soon after this a very fine farm was burnt because 200 Boers slept there last night. Then we got word that the Boers had left the place where they were last night, and from which they chased the 17th and had gone in the direction of Bothaville. We halted from 12 till 2 and then changing direction went towards that place. About 4 or 5 miles to our left was a long kopje covered with bush. A troop of the 9th went and reported Boers there. Porter sent them back to make sure, and just after we had got into bivouac about 4 o'clock, we got word that some of the 9th had been wounded and that there were lots of Boers there entrenched. Forrest, the 9th Doctor, went out with his Cape cart, and soon after I went with an ambulance, but met a sergeant coming back who said that only one man had been hit, and he was coming in with Forrest. Why we didn't at once move on and get round these fellows I don't know, but perhaps Porter does. It may be considered a much safer thing to let them slip away in the night as usual. The man was shot through the back and abdomen, the bullet then going

in through his arm and lodging under the skin. He seems very well and may do all right. I spotted a fine cow coming along with the other captures, so I nailed her and got a fine lot of milk out of her. I think she will turn out much better than the last. I have just heard that the Boer position will be reconnoitred to-morrow morning, and if found occupied (which it almost certainly will not be) will be attacked. I wish they would give us the chance. A Boer woman who thinks she will have her house blown up to-morrow has just sent in word that she is dying. One of our fellows is being sent out to see her. The people of the farm near us buried a whole lot of farm produce and clothing. Our Tommies found it and soon had the most of it. We had some green peas in our chicken stew to-night. Porter's head scout told us to-night that we were taking part in a very extensive rounding movement, and that the Boers were being pushed towards the Vaal River north of Bothaville. We are at present about 20 miles due west of Kreenst Kroonstad. I expect we shall soon reach the river and get into the Transvaal, when we expected we were going in the direction of Bloemfontein. Our cocoa was delicious to-night, made almost entirely on new milk. The sufferings of the troops in the food line are simply horrible. They never get any other meat than poultry and pigs.

OCTOBER 17th. We have had a grand series of muddles to-day. First of all the 16th and Pom Pom were sent to reconnoitre the kopje where the Boers were last night, and told to rejoin the

Brigade as quickly as possible and assume their place as advance guard. This meant that the reconnaissance was hurriedly done and then the whole Regiment had to trot about 7 miles to reach the Brigade, and another mile to get to their proper position in front. If another regiment had been told off out of its turn to take advanced guard, and the 16th had been told off to rear-guard, it seems to me at any rate that the horses would have been spared a good bit and some of our subsequent calamities would not have occurred. Then we burnt 3 farms and were moving only about a mile from a large force of Infantry and Convoy on our right. It looked so absurd for a Cavalry Brigade to be hugging another large force on its right, and leaving the whole of the Country to our left unexplored, when our object was to drive all the Boers in the direction of Bothaville. About 12 o'clock Porter got an order to make a wider sweep to the left. We had just started to do this when we had heavy firing on our left flank. A troop of the 17th had gone to burn another farm, and stumbled into about 250 Boers. Some of the 16th who were coming along on tired horses were surrounded, 3 taken prisoner, and 1 shot in the leg. One of the 17th had 6 bullets into him - nearly all sporting - and one broke his spine. The 3 of the 16th had everything taken, but were let go when we began to shell them. The 17th, poor fellow, died while I was bringing him in. I gave him a good dose of morphia, and he just went to sleep and went out. The bulk of these Boers went back and are now behind us to cut the line or

do what they wish. We are alongside the other force all in a great hollow, and the whole of the Country to our left is quite open. The Boers are very angry with the prisoners and threatened to blow out their brains in the same way that we blow up their farms. If it goes on much longer I expect they will shoot and not take any prisoners. The whole of to-day's show was a disgusting exhibition of incompetence, and all the officers are very sick about it.

OCTOBER 18th. The Brigade turned out here at 8 o'clock, with the mounted infantry, and went out farm-burning. The bivouac was left standing. We burnt about 7 or 8 farms and many more were destroyed by the M.I. who were operating about 6 or 7 miles parallel to us. We only met a few Boers. There seems to be no system about the destruction of farms at all. I went to one small house and found a subaltern turning a family out because 8 or 9 men had been seen leaving the place. There was a Mother, daughter about 17, another of 12, 2 boys and several little children. None of them knew any English and they were weeping. They had simply been allowed to take some bedding and a little meal, and they flew from the place, expecting it to be blown up. I got hold of a man who spoke Dutch and went after them and explained why the house was being burnt. She said that her man had been wounded in the arm some months ago, and couldn't fight. He was employed by some man near Smaldeel to look after horses here, and that a week ago the Boers, suspecting that he

was giving us information, put him into jail at Bothaville. It may be all a lie, but if true, we haven't played the game. I got some Tommies to go in and pull out a sack of mealies and a sack of meal, and have told them to go back after the troops had left and pull out as much as they could. The burning was very badly done and I don't think much damage will ensue. It is sickening work, but if it ends the war - All right ! I believe we halted here to-day to give the "feet" a bit of a rest. It is very trying for Infantry these days and they were pretty well done up. All the wounded of yesterday are doing well. One of the 9th was shot in the thigh last night on picket, because he didn't hear the challenge. He wasn't badly hurt fortunately. We hear they have some guns in position near Bothaville, and wish they would make a stand and get the knock. We heard at a farm to-day that General Philip Botha was injured by one of our shells yesterday, but don't know whether it is true or not.

OCTOBER 19th. We marched at 6 o'clock to the Valsch River, getting there about 12 o'clock. Our baggage came along slowly with the Infantry. We didn't see any Boers and blew up a few farms. We saw an Englishman near here on his farm and he said that about 50 Boers have gone from near here on Commando for the first time. Also that there are only about 800 or 900 of them, and that about 150 of them have no rifles at all. We also hear that they left Bothaville to-day, and that each man has several ponies, also that the Convoy and Infantry stop here,

and we go on a 4 days trek and come back, but don't know yet whether that is true or not.

OCTOBER 20th. A regiment and Pom Pom went on to reconnoitre Bothaville at 5 o'clock, and the rest of the Brigade didn't start until we had been informed that there were no Boers there. This was about 10 o'clock, and we had a very hot march of about 8 miles. I don't know on what principles Porter made one regiment to reconnoitre a place which he means to occupy with his whole force. It doesn't seem sound to me, but we don't think much of him in the Brigade. This is a rotten little village, and has been a great Boer stronghold for the last 5 months. A civilian surgeon, a nurse, and an orderly were left here 5 months ago by Methuen with his sick, and the Boers would not let them go. They were awfully glad to see us, and say that the enemy are in an awful funk of us, and run like blazes when there is a rumour of our coming. Many of the houses were looted by order to-day, and I hear that the whole place is to be blown up. At our last bivouac was an Englishman who was lame and Porter found him a cape cart and allowed him to go in and spy out this place. The Boers collared him, and are going to shoot him. He had been suspected of playing the spy before, and they had taken his cape cart and horses away, and ordered him to stay on his farm. I can't make out why he was mad enough to go into Bothaville. We are going to start at 4-45 a.m. to-morrow and march 30 miles, and must be at the journey's end by 4-30 p.m. I don't know what

is up, but we shall have a trying march. Tate stops here. We are expected to be back on Tuesday night and to-morrow is Sunday. We had a big dust storm to-day and it looks like rain to-night, but I'm afraid it will blow over as usual. My yeast went off as I was loosening the cork and went all over the place. It was lucky the cork didn't hit me. The Englishwoman in the hotel will bake the bread for us I think. The Civilian and the Nurse are going to try and get to Kroonstad as soon as possible. I don't know whether they will be allowed to go alone, or wait for the return march of the troops. In case they go before I get back I'm having my mail ready for them to take in.

The Force marched at 5 a.m. but did not get across the drift before about 7-30. The country very soon became sandy and the going was very heavy. Farms were very few and far between and there was practically no water in the line of march. About mid-day we reached a deep pool near a farm house and there was a halt for 2 hours. The animals were led into the pool, and very quickly the water became liquid mud. I suppose it was better than nothing. Commando Nek -- pushed on about 2 p.m. and reached the drift about 5 p.m. Our advanced scouts had a few shots at some Boers who were on the far side of the Vaal. We were just going into bivouac when a body of men with wagons were seen a few miles to our left. The guns went off at a trot but after about a mile it was discovered that it was part of Gen. Settle's force. We then went back to our bivouac and I went and had a good swim in the river. No sign of the Boers who we

went from Bothaville to bag.

OCTOBER 21st. Left at 6 a.m. and marched to the farm where we had watered yesterday. There were large herds of blesbok to be seen, and as there were no Boers about, several officers were allowed to ride in front of the advanced scouts and try their luck on the deer. We had only the same filth as yesterday to give the animals to drink and there will be very little left for the Dutchmen's cattle after we leave. I saw a sick woman here and got some poultry as a fee.

OCTOBER 22nd. Marched at 6 a.m. and reached Bothaville about 10 o'clock. We found that the place was in flames and that most of the buildings had been blown up by guncotton. There were only 4 buildings left standing. We marched again at 2 p.m. taking with us the civil surgeon and the sister who had been here so long.

We fell in with a large body of Hunter's force which was marching across our front after De Wet. Camped on a nice ground about 5 p.m. and pitched a tent for the sister.

OCTOBER 23rd. Marched to Nordebeeste Kraal and halted for the night. Nothing eventful to record.

OCTOBER 24th. We left camp at 6 o'clock and had a very slow march. I pushed ahead, and was just in time to knock a little pig on the head at a farm which was being burnt. It was

deserted, and the people had buried a lot of stuff in the garden, and which was quickly found by the Tommies. I saw a Bible of 1792, which I would like to have got hold of. Then I pushed ahead as far as the advanced scouts and got 3 fowls and 16 eggs on payment. We reached bivouac at 11-30 and have had a quiet day. We are burning all farms, even those of British subjects. These will be compensated and are all going into Kroonstad with us. Lots of Kaffirs with all their stock are also coming. Tate got a chance of getting our letters off by a runner this evening and they will catch the next mail, so that you won't be without a letter.

We won't get to Kroonstad till Saturday afternoon, and from there I hear we are going south towards Bloemfontein.

OCTOBER 25th. We have had such a rotten day. We started at 5-30. It had rained a fair amount last night and so it was pleasantly cool. It was intended to march into Kroonstad in 3 marches, and at about 10 o'clock we were told to push on and were marching till about 2 o'clock, covering about 27 miles. The mules, etc., were pretty well done up. To mend matters I had to send 2 wagons back for men, and one will have to cover an additional 10 miles at least. A stupid officer sent a chit to the Adjutant of his Regiment which was in front, instead of sending to me direct. The result was that my wagon had to go back 5 miles. We burnt every farm we came to and are driving all the stock before us. Even our English guide's house was burnt and it had just cost £3,000 to build, so he will get

compensation for it. I got some rhubarb and onions out of the garden near where we halted this evening. We ought to get in early and get our mail in order to answer it.

OCTOBER 26th. Left camp at 6-30 and got to Kroonstad about 11 o'clock. I put all the sick into the late Scottish Hospital. Got a mail, but the latest has not yet arrived, owing to the line being blown up. I got a couple of towels at the Hospital. Sister True and the Civil Surgeon were awfully pleased with the way we did them on the road in, and were very grateful. We came back to our old camping ground, but this time we went away well to the left flank and got on to clean ground. We leave to-morrow for Bloemfontein, I believe. Not much sign of the end of the war yet. I had a good deal of trouble in getting my 4 mules from the Remounts. I picked out a pony in place of one of my horses which went lame and he was just going to be shod when one of the daffadars said "he was no good and that he had a good horse which he would let me have if the officer would allow it." He produced the horse and I got him. I had a long talk with a couple of the Indians and soon had a great crowd of them round me, all delighted to hear a sahib talking their own lingo.

OCTOBER 27th. We marched at 8 o'clock for Boshrand and now have completed the circle on which we started a fortnight ago. I went and saw Wade Brown and Sister True, and Wood and his wife and son. Mrs Wood was very nice and wished to be

remembered to you. She lives in a bell tent in the Sisters' lines. Wood got a pass up to Bloemfontein for her and then she smuggled herself on to Kroonstad. They were going to send her back, but here she is, and Wood needn't care very much how long the war lasts. She advised me to try and get stationed to Wynberg. We don't know quite what we are up to at present. Hunter has wired for permission to burn Ventersberg, which is about 20 miles from here, and then go on and burn Lindley. We may have to go on with him, or we may continue our march straight on to Bloemfontein. I'm thinking very strongly of going to see Wilson the P.M.O. of the force, and ask to be sent to Cape Town. If I got there I might get posted to one of the Hospitals at Wynburg and stop there, and perhaps get a couple of months' leave to go home for you. I fancy that for the next year or two it would be better to be stationed at the base. I don't think Wilson would refuse to transfer one to the base after a year's trek. There must be lots of men at the base who would be delighted to come up to the front. Anyhow, I think I shall see about it. I was glad to see they had accepted my Thesis. There now only remains the Military Law, and that won't be very much of a job, and then I'm done with exams for ever I hope. I bought a couple of hens yesterday on the way in, and as we didn't want meat I tied them by a string to the wheel of a wagon and had them fed. They are quiet and sensible hens and both of them laid me an egg to-day after we got in. Now we shall spare their lives until they have finished laying.

OCTOBER 28th. We had rather a beastly night. It began to rain at 7 o'clock, and went on hard till 12 o'clock. A fair amount of water flowed through the tent. Then when I had just managed to get to sleep, I felt some animal crawling over my arm. I knocked him off and, striking a light, found it to be a tortoise. When we went to turn him out he stank most frightfully and nearly made us sick. I suppose it was his way of retaliating. Later on we were awakened by loose mules rubbing themselves against the tent ropes. Then we had to be up at 4-30, so on the whole we didn't get much of a night's rest. Just as we were ready to move off we heard shelling down the line about 6 miles off. We went on quickly and found that about 400 Boers had surprised a post of 88 Berkshire Volunteers 6 miles from where we were, and that they had all surrendered. Not a shot was fired on either side. They couldn't have had any pickets out or sentries posted, although they had been warned that they would probably be attacked last night, and had been told to entrench, and had been sent 5,000 extra rounds by the force stationed on the line near them. It is a most extraordinary and disgraceful affair. They were sent about 100 yards from the line and hidden. Then the Boers lay in wait for the train which was coming. This was broad daylight, about 5-30 a.m. They held up the train and an Officer on board shot one of the Boers and killed him. They then set fire to one of the trucks of oats. While they were doing this they heard another train approaching, and must have chuckled like blazes at the prospect

of more loot. However, it turned out to be the armoured train and they opened fire with a naval 12-pdr. into the Boers at 200 yards. They must have got a nasty fright. As they galloped away, 10 more shells were put after them, and the Officer in charge of the gun says he emptied many saddles. All the maxims on the train jammed, otherwise much more damage would have been done. They couldn't take away the prisoners or their rifles, and only broke a few. On the whole they didn't score much. We couldn't get near them, so turned back to Geneva Siding and halted to wait for Hunter, and the feet, and some more guns. There are two large Laagers near Ventersburg, 1500 and 800 Boers each, and I suppose we are going there to-morrow, but of course Brother Boer won't wait. I believe our mails and "Bobs'" despatches were on this train, so they had a narrow escape. I also hear that the Cavalry Division is to be broken up, and that French is to command the Transvaal.

OCTOBER 29th. We started at 5-30 and reached Ventersburg Road about 11 o'clock. It was a beautiful day and we have been quite comfortable in camp. About 5 o'clock we got orders to prepare for a night march at 8 o'clock. We are to make a circle of 20 miles and get behind the Boers. The feet start at 12 midnight. Nothing but fighting kit is to go, and all the baggage and my ambulances are to go on to-morrow to Ventersburg. I was to take one ambulance only, but as that would be quite useless and a nuisance in the dark, I have borrowed 2 pack mules to carry a

pannier and stretchers, dressings, and comforts. I have also borrowed 3 horses from the Engineers who are not going, and am mounting 3 orderlies. I have also borrowed a cape cart which is very light and handy. I hope it will all go off well. It is my first night march, and it is of course jumpy work.

Well, the night march is over, thank goodness, and we didn't come to grief. We got away at 8-15, and went very slowly. The moon was in its first quarter, but gave a fair amount of light. It was very jumpy work. We couldn't have advanced scouts out far from the head of the column otherwise they would have lost touch with the Brigade and have got lost. Every farm-house we came to we had to leave sentries so that the occupants should not slip off and warn the enemy. At any moment we might have stumbled across the Boers, and in the dark there would have been as much chance of being shot by our own men as by them. I was frightfully sleepy and I don't think there is a worse punishment than not being allowed to sleep when one wants. The moon went down at 12 o'clock, but the stars gave a wonderful amount of light. About 3 o'clock we halted for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour, and most of us lay down in the road and got a few winks. Old "Porter" wasn't a bit keen on running his Brigade into a trap, so he waited for the dawn. Then we got into a long defile and goodness help us if there had been Boers on either side. We couldn't put out scouts, and didn't know what might be there. We went through at a quick walk, and just when we reached the middle, off went a

gun in the direction of the Infantry, and then others, and a most tremendous rattle of musketry. I have heard nothing like it since Paardeburg. We immediately went ahead at full lick and got through the rest of the defile, and sweeping round a corner saw Ventersburg Town about 2 miles away. It was awfully exciting, so much so that some of the Lancers threw away 5 chickens which they had picked up during the night, and haversacks and water-bottles fell about and lay where they were. I wasn't quite so excited that I missed getting the chickens, and very good ones they were. One regiment now went forward to cut off the retreat of the enemy, and the rest of the Brigade were seen in action and firing like mad. It wasn't quite daylight and we couldn't make out friend from foe. We certainly thought we had surrounded the Boers, and would bag the lot. The 17th Lancers got into the town and opened fire on our own infantry. Each man loosed off 50 rounds before the mistake was found out, and the feet replied in style, but no damage was done on either side. We shelled some kopjes which had actually been occupied by Rimington's Scouts, and also shelled the M.I., but no harm was done. The Infantry field guns in shelling the Boers, very nearly landed some shells amongst us. Finally we saw the Boers streak away to our right and pass right across the defile which we had come along, and got clear away. I don't think we wounded or killed a single one. When we got into the town subsequently we heard that we had passed their laager in the dark and had missed it, and that the Boers

we were firing at only numbered about 100. The feet had very bad luck. They stumbled on the enemy in the dark, while searching in close formation, and got it hot. The Battery was halted at the time and got opened on at 200 yards. The Major was shot dead, and their horses stampeded, but fortunately were stopped very quickly. Several men were hit and run over by the guns. The Cow-gun oxen stampeded also, but 2 got shot and acted as a drag and pulled up the remainder. We had 11 casualties altogether, including 2 killed. One of the 9th was on rear-guard and didn't wake up when the rest moved on. The flying Boers came across him and riddled him. I sent back 5 miles and got him, but he died in a few hours. I dressed all the Infantry wounded for Tate, and had to pad and fix 2 broken thighs among them. They were sent in to the Railway. We halt here 3 days I believe, and are going to burn this town and all the farms round. I shall have to go out to-morrow but shall lie in a wagon and have a rest. One of the Buffs got his arm smashed a few minutes ago by a pal who loosed his rifle off accidentally in camp. I'm beastly tired to-night, and sincerely hope there won't be any more night marching.

OCTOBER 30th. This has been a great day for Ireland. The Brigade went out at 6 a.m., farm burning. I had had a good night and was quite fit again. We burnt about 4 farms and took away all the men on them. Then we went on to the fattest farm I have yet seen. Well built, occupied by several families and

packed full of mealies, burnt the houses and wagons and collared all the poultry. My Staff Sergeant and I got 10 ducks and 4 fowls, also a lot of onions. We put all into a sack and then Gibbons held the sack in front of his saddle, and I led his pony back to the Brigade. I had 6 ducks kept alive and loosed them in the wagon, so now we can kill as we want them. We began our return march about 11 o'clock and when we got near the town I went off to look for loot. I found Infantry Tommies rifle in hand breaking open all the closed houses and looting them of what they wanted. I got hold of a nice cape cart and put 2 of my mules into it. Then I went on the prowl for harness. I eventually found myself at the Parson's house, and it had been looted already. He is a swine and has preached against us and had to bolt. He had a beautifully furnished house, and it was a great pity to see all the things thrown about. In his coach house I found a splendid cape cart, almost new, and it had cost about £120. I left the other and took this, also a large wagon sheet and a deck chair. Then a Tommy came to tell me he had found 2 good sets of harness in another house, so we went and got them. We then went back to camp very pleased with ourselves. There I heard of a fine set of harness which one of the Lancers had got hold of and he swopped it for mine. It is a black set, silver mounted, and with large heart-shaped appendages of yellow satin covered by celluloid; in fact quite a state set of harness. I shall carry some patients in it when

we are crowded.

NOVEMBER 1st. I went again into the town this morning driving in the cape cart. I took some flour to the people whose son I saw yesterday for consumption, and they are making me some bread. I got some developing dishes and printing frames, and a red lamp. All the houses of those Boers who are on Commando were burnt. I re-lined a tea-cosy which Moore got from the Parson's house. I believe we march towards Wynburg to-morrow. This is on our way to Bloemfontein.

NOVEMBER 2nd. It began to rain last night about 6 o'clock and it has gone on without ceasing for 24 hours, and is still at it. There has been a strong wind blowing all the time and it has made it very cold. We are sheltered all right in a double fly tent, but the men of the Brigade are in a very parlous condition, and the animals are very wretched. We were just preparing to march at 7 o'clock this morning when orders came that we should wait till the rain ceased; so here we are and I don't suppose we shall be able to move to-morrow as the ground would be too heavy for the wagons. The Infantry all have tents and it is a beastly shame that our Brigade haven't brought theirs. It would be only 3 more wagons to what we have already. It has been such a long day sitting listening to the rain beating against the tent, but one is thankful to be sheltered.

NOVEMBER 3rd. It left off raining about 11 o'clock, but it looked very threatening this morning. We left camp at 7 o'clock

and marched to Virginia Siding on the Zand River. We burnt a number of farms en route and it was very sad to see women and children being turned out on the veldt in the rain, but it can't be helped I suppose, and some of these women are far worse than the men folk. Someone bagged my 3 ducks last night. Two of them were laying, so it was hard luck. We couldn't cross the river when we got here, but hope to be able to to-morrow. This is the same place we crossed on our way up. The bridge has been rebuilt sufficiently to allow all trains to run over. There are all sorts of rumours about the Brigade. Some think it will be broken up, and that regiments with 2 guns each will go out. That would mean the Bearer Company and the Field Hospital being broken up. I'm going to get Tate to go down to Bloemfontein by train, when we get within 2 days' march and see the P.M.O. there and see if we can't get down to Cape Town.

NOVEMBER 4th. We were to march at 8 o'clock, if the drift was passable. At 6 o'clock we were told that it was not possible to cross the drift and so made up our minds to a day's halt at Zand River. At 8 o'clock we got orders to march at 9 o'clock, it having been discovered that we could cross the drift. It took us about 2 hours to get all the wagons over, and it was very funny to sit on the bank and watch them crossing. The current was so swift last night that a team of mules was carried off its feet and over a small cataract, but they got to shore all right. We came about 10 miles and are now in bivouac near the railway

line. It is quite refreshing to see the trains running up and down. I hear we are to go to Smaldeel and wait for orders. We ought to get there to-morrow and find a mail waiting for us. It has been a perfect day, no dust and quite cool. I got a loaf of bread from the Hospital at Zand River, and another at Welgelegen, which we passed about 2 o'clock.

NOVEMBER 5th. We left camp at 6 o'clock, thinking we were going to Smaldeel, but after half a mile we were suddenly turned off to the East and found ourselves going to Winburg. This meant a march of 24 miles. About 500 guards with a construction train are working up the line from Smaldeel to Winburg, and repairing it. We passed a lot of barley on the way and helped ourselves very freely to it, but the extraordinary fact is that we didn't set what we didn't want on fire. The Boers filled 2 wagons with forage at this place only 2 days ago, and yet we left more for them later on. We halted for an hour and a half in the middle of the day, and then pushed on to Winburg, getting there about 3 o'clock. It is one of the strongest positions we have yet seen. We are holding the place with about 1500 men, 300 of whom are mounted, chiefly Queenstown Volunteers, and yet they were practically beseiged there. We shall probably halt here to-morrow and get our mails, fill up with supplies, and then there is some talk of going towards Ficksburg. Beastly country I believe. I'm sorry we are not going to Bloemfontein first; it is quite a disappointment.

NOVEMBER 6th. Tate and I drove into Winburg and saw Hamilton

who is running a stationary Hospital there. He is not the man we knew in Sangor. The Hospital is in some of the schools and churches, rather scattered, but everything very nice. It is an awfully nice and clean little town, and I have not seen any place I should more like to be stationed in than this. Essex who used to be Sergt. Major at Colchester, is quartermaster here. He came out to see us this morning and is looking very well. The train hasn't come in yet, and so we have not got any mail so far. 6 p.m. The construction train came in about 2 o'clock and was followed by an armoured train. Our mails were on board this, but they didn't manage to send a cart for them till 6 o'clock. No orders yet for the next move of the Brigade. I suppose they will take some time to learn that it is quite useless sending a Cavalry Brigade about the country with a large baggage column to hunt Boers. What are wanted are small bodies of mounted Infantry, or Police, under dashing young officers, who will suddenly raid farms and villages and collar prisoners. The oat straw is now fit to cut, and although there is extremely little in the shape of crops sown this year, still small parties would always find enough for themselves and their horses.

NOVEMBER 7th. This morning we were ordered to send the dismounted men, with their saddles, by rail to Bloemfontein. They were to get remounts and join us at Smaldeel. Then I heard that the Hospital train was coming up so I got leave to go to Bloemfontein and rejoin at Smaldeel. At 1 p.m. just as we were

going to lunch, orders came to march as soon as possible to Bloemfontein. I had just posted my English mail and I hope it got away alright in time. We marched through the town and past the Kaffir location. This is built in parallel rows of houses and is very clean and nice. We went past the Kaffir school and heard about 50 kids singing God Save the Queen. The country we passed over was very hilly, and about 3 miles out of the town I heard 2 explosions, or else guns in the distance in the direction of the railway. I expect they have blown up the line again. We marched till 7-30, but had a full moon to help us into bivouac. We march at 6 o'clock to-morrow.

NOVEMBER 8th. We marched at 6 o'clock and had a very easy trek till about 12 o'clock and then went into bivouac. We burnt 3 farms to-day. One belonged to a Field Cornet who is fighting against us, and it was simply packed with clothing etc. which had been looted, at times from us. The women had taken a good deal of it out, but it was all thrown back again and burnt, and they were brought along to Bloemfontein. 300 Boers followed our rearguard to-day and nearly cut off 20 of the 9th who went back to burn a farm. They got one man. The party got back at 2 o'clock and reported the circumstance, but although they are only 6 miles back, we sit still and make no effort to bag them.

NOVEMBER 9th. We left at 6 o'clock, and trekked till 10-30. We halted till 1-30 and went on again. It was very cloudy up till this time, and some Thunder. Thompson very nearly got

struck by lightning. We have done over 26 miles to-day and are now encamped by the Modder River about 14 miles from Bloemfontein. I shall go ahead to-morrow and try my luck with the P.M.O. and see if I can't get left here. There is of course the chance that the Brigade will be broken up as such here, and then they won't want a Bearer Company or Field Hospital.

NOVEMBER 10th. I left camp at 7 o'clock and went into Bloemfontein in the cape cart. I did quite a lot of business before the Brigade came in. Porter told me that the Brigade had been broken up. 9th go to Modder River, 17th to Orange River, and the 16th remain here. There is no word yet about the Battery or us. It is very hot here, the place looks quite smart and prosperous. There are a good many ladies in the place, I think the bulk of them are Officers' wives.

NOVEMBER 11th. I went to the Dentist at 11 o'clock and he filled 4 more teeth for me. The large filling which Old Cooper put in one molar 17 years ago had given way a bit, or rather the tooth round it had, the filling itself was quite firm, so he drilled all round it and then patched it with new amalgam making a splendid job of it. He also found 2 fresh holes in other teeth. I'm awfully glad I struck him, for he is the best man I ever came across, and now my teeth are in great order. He only charged me 3 guineas for the lot. Then I went and saw Skeffington-Smyth of the 9th whose thigh was fractured that day at Quaggersfontein. He was treated by a civilian in No.6 General

Hospital at Johannesburg. He told me that they had skiagraphed the limb, and that they said it was not fractured at all. The same man said that my other case also was not fractured, but had to change his diagnosis. I examined him and found an enormous amount of thickening of the upper part of the thigh bone, evidently new bone thrown out, also that his foot had been allowed to fall outwards, and is now fixed at an angle of quarter past four o'clock. I advised him to let a good London man see it, and to let me know what he thinks about it. I am perfectly certain that my diagnosis was correct; the bullet is still in, and it has been very badly treated. Thank goodness not by one of the R.A.M.C. (Skeffington-Smyth saw Treves and a year afterwards wrote me "Of course you were right, and thanks to the rotten civil surgeon at Johannesburg, I am lame for the rest of my life." He had behaved well on the day he was wounded and I brought it to the notice of his C.O. He got a D.S.O.). Then I went and had a jolly good lunch with my friend the grocer man. It has been an awful day, blowing hard, and the dust frightful. It has been a treat to be in a house. In the evening I went to go to Church, but found it was later than I thought so I looked up G----- He is in charge of the Convent Hospital, and Mrs G. is with him. They have 2 rooms in a cottage in the grounds and are very comfortable. She is very husky and evidently has some ulceration of the larynx, but was looking very well. They were very glad to see me and talk over old times. She has been here now for about 3 months. G-----

tried to get her here before, but - as usual - our people wouldn't help him. Kelly Kenny worked it for him later on. I am lunching with them to-morrow. They don't mind how long the show goes on now. Berrie is 13 and away at school. She is very clever at music they say. They were delighted with the kids, and your photos, (the old ones). I lost my way in the park coming back and fell into a mullah, but fortunately it was not a deep one. We don't move to-morrow.

NOVEMBER 12th. This morning I heard that there were 4 Base Hospitals to be formed in connection with the Police. One here, Pretoria, Potchefstroom, and Belfast. Baden Powell won't have a civilian in charge, but one of the R.A.M.C., Beevor of the Guards, has got the P.M.O-ship at £1200 a year, and he offered one of the other billets to Thompson. He told him to consider it for 3 days and then let him know. Thompson doesn't want it, so told me about it. The pay of a Captain would be £6, with rations and a horse. A Major will get £900, and Beevor said there would be a house thrown in as well. Tate wrote a letter to General Ridley, who commands one of the Divisions of the Police and he sent it on to Baden Powell with my application. I wrote and asked McGill who is P.M.O. of the Guards and knows Beevor, to put in a good word for me, and Thompson is also going to write. I don't expect very much to get the billet, but it would suit me down to the ground. They might give me the local rank of Major and then one would get

£900. I lunched with Greenways. They have all their food cooked by the Convent people and pay them so much a month. It saves them all trouble with servants and is very economical. Even after the Hospital is closed they are going to live and mess in the convent as at present. Porter is not allowed to go home, and so it looks as though they were going to keep the Headquarters here of the Brigade, in case they wanted to reform the Brigade at any time. We shall probably remain here, doing nothing. We had a big dinner here to-night at the Club. The whole of the Officers of the Brigade were present, and it was a sort of farewell dinner, prior to the Brigade being broken up. It went off very well and there were any number of toasts. The R.A.M.C. were heartily toasted and Tate made a very nice speech in reply. I got the kids' photos this afternoon. One is very good indeed - the full-faced one - but the photographer is not an artist.

NOVEMBER 13th. The 17th were to have gone South this morning, but they were sent back and now fresh orders have been issued and the 9th go with them a certain distance, and then they separate. I also hear that the 16th are going out in another direction. We have had no orders yet, but as the Brigade Major asked for orders for us, I'm afraid they won't forget us as we had hoped they would, and that we may be sent on our wanderings again, perhaps to-morrow. I got my cheque for allowances to end of last month and am thinking of sending a draft of £100 home to Holt. I don't know whether to do this, or open an

account with the Standard Bank here.

NOVEMBER 14th. We went and saw Exham the P.M.O., this morning and he told us it would be better to be prepared to move at short notice, so I went and bought £4 worth of stores. The Bank was closed, so I couldn't open the account there. Then I went on to see Sister Webb who was in Dublin with us. She is at No. 8 General Hospital and is in charge of 16 nurses. They only have about 260 patients at present so are not killed with work. She was pleased to see me and was delighted with the kids photos. In the afternoon my gold-crowned tooth ached frightfully. It was very uneasy all night, and has been for several days past. I rode in on the Bike determined to have it out. He slit the crown and removed it. Then took out the filling which I got the apothecary to put in that time in Sangor through the hole which came in the cover. He found 2 branches of the nerve dead, and the third dying. He is going to kill this and fix it up again for me. The pain is almost gone now, but it was frightful while it lasted. I bought a Waterbury watch to-day. I have been without a watch for over 10 months. That little one went wrong at Naauwpoort. I wish I had brought the gold one out. Tate did, and had the greatest comfort from it. Orders have just come for us to see the P.M.O. to-morrow. I do hope we haven't to go until I can get this tooth fixed up. I think the Camera was sold to-day for £10 or £11. English mail is due here to-morrow.

NOVEMBER 16th. I got £12 for the Camera, so opened an account in the Standard Bank and put £107 in. No orders have yet come for us. The 9th and 17th went to-day, and the 16th go to-morrow. I saw the dentist again about my tooth, and he has put creosote in this time. In the afternoon I took one of my horses and inspanned him in the Thresher's Cape Cart, with a horse of theirs, and then drove Mrs T. and her husband about 6 miles. They went beautifully. I stayed at their home till 9 p.m. They are very nice people.

NOVEMBER 17th. It was a beastly night, blowing and a dust storm all the time. My tooth started aching most frightfully about 10 o'clock, and I couldn't stand it, so had half a grain of morphia. This just stopped the pain, but I got no sleep and feel a bit of a worm this morning. We had very heavy rain to-day and the inside of our tent got fairly wet. We are going to shift camp to-morrow to a more suitable place. I got a very nice letter from McGill this morning, saying that he would certainly back up my application, and that he would see Beaver on the 13th at Springfontein. I ought to hear the result in a day or two.. Our mail didn't arrive to-day though that for the rest of the Brigade did. We hope to get it to-morrow. I had another fairly rotten day with the tooth, but think it is somewhat better this evening.

NOVEMBER 18th. I rode into town early and got our mail. Then we shifted our camp into a hollow where we are quite concealed, and hope we shall get lost. We shall be protected from the dust at any

rate, but I fancy it will be rather a warm spot in a few days' time, at present it is beautifully cool after the rain. Went to the Cathedral this morning; not a nice service at all. Prayers gabbled through by the Dean, poor singing and a rotten sermon by the Bishop. Went again in the evening. It was crowded, and the music was much better. Didn't wait for the sermon. We got orders to hand in all our transport and ambulances to-morrow, so it looks like the end of this Bearer Company.

NOVEMBER 19th. Went to the Dentist again, and I think I shall save the tooth now. In the afternoon I went and called on Capt. and Mrs Walsh of the Berkshire Regiment. They are great friends of the Greenways and they happened to be there also. They are very nice people. They draw 7/6 a day as lodging allowance, to compensate for the expense of living here. They also get the 3/- Colonial allowance, but considering they have to pay £150 a year for the little furnished house they have, they want it all. We had a Bank Manager to dinner to-night and gave him a feed which surprised him rather. He had done a bit of dealing in stamps, and told me that a sheet of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. V.R.I. is selling at £6 here - £5.10.0. profit. I hope you have not sold yet, and will wire to you to-morrow. It would be better to hang on to them as long as possible. I shall buy as many more as I can here. Tate saw ~~xxx~~ Ridley this morning, and he said he had sent on his letter and my application, and stated that the information contained in Tate's letter, was from a source he could thoroughly trust.

NOVEMBER 20th. I bought £29 worth of stamps, and am sending them home by this mail. The climate is so dry that they are all wrinkled, and I had to roll them into a bundle. I expect they will all straighten out in the damp climate of Norwich. You might look carefully through each sheet I have sent home for "faults". Perhaps a dot is left out between the V.R.I. or the V and R may be close together, or the figure may be deformed. All these make the stamp much more valuable. I sent the wire to Joe to-day, to tell him not to sell the stamps. I hope it reached you in time. I shall borrow the amount from someone, and give them the stamps as security, and in this way we shall be able to hold on to them for a year or two, until they are more valuable. I am going to try and find out to-morrow what stamps are nearly run out, and perhaps buy some more. No news yet about the billet. We are fighting the fight of "sit down" as the Zulus call doing nothing, but it is beginning to get wearisome to me. If only I could get the billet I would soon have you all out here, and then I care not how long the war goes on.

NOVEMBER 21st. I went into town and saw Connolly who used to be Staff Sergt. at Colchester and is now a Quartermaster. He told me of a master tailor who will make a suit of Khaki Drill for me at less than half what we can get it here. The khaki can be got from the Ordnance Stores.

Tate and I went and saw a cricket match at the Ramblers Club this afternoon, and afterwards went for a ride. Tate's pony

came down with him and gave him a nasty shaking. The pony lay quite still for several seconds and we thought he had broken his neck, but no harm was done. I posted the stamps to-day, registered.

NOVEMBER 22nd. I got measured for my khaki drill this morning and then went to the office of the S.M. Police. Legge, who is Ridley's A.D.C., hadn't heard anything about my application, but he said Baden Powell is coming here next week and would settle a lot of similar appointments. I hope I shan't get sent away in the meantime. I shall see Exham and try and get left till he comes, if any move is on the board. De Wet is making for Bethulie with 7000 and 5 guns and we are rushing a good many troops South after him. I shouldn't think he was quite fool enough to go into the Colony, where he would surely be bagged. I went and had tea with Sister Webb. She is awfully pleased with the kids and your photo, and sends lots of nice messages to you. She is a nice old thing. I got 4 Mauser carbines done up in a case to-day.

NOVEMBER 23rd. A very long and squally day. Tate and I dined with Tate the Bank Manager at the Club, and went to the Theatre afterwards. A rotten Company and a poor audience. We managed to sit out two of the Acts out of four, and then came home. Its wonderful how tired and sleepy one gets if one stops up later than 8-30 or 9 p.m. We have become children in this respect. This is the worst month of the year, hot and squally and dusty. It will be better in another 3 weeks' time when the rains break.

NOVEMBER 24th. The dentist hasn't quite finished with me yet. Another hot and squally day. I am to try on my Khaki this afternoon. I am buying £21 more of 1d. and 2d. stamps O.F.S. They are the next to run out. I shall keep them here and watch this market. I don't think I shall go in for any more.

NOVEMBER 25th. I went to the Cathedral this morning. The music and sermon were much better than last time. It has been a frightfully squally day and about 2 o'clock there was a tremendous dust storm. It got quite dark. We were very well sheltered by the kopjes around us but it was bad for all that. A little later on we had a very heavy shower. Then I went and had tea with the Walsh's and then went on to the Greenways: I spent the evening there, and had supper. They are very kind, and you ought to write to Mrs Greenway again.

NOVEMBER 26th. I went down to Greenway's hospital this morning and saw some cases. Then went back and sat in the shade in their garden. Its awfully nice to have some place like that to turn into and kill time. In the evening we went for a long ride, and Mrs G. rode my horse and was greatly pleased with him. She rides a little pony as a rule, so the change to a big horse was very pleasant. Poor woman, she looks very seedy and I was rather afraid lest she wouldn't be able to hold him, but she enjoyed herself immensely. I got back to their place about 7-15 p.m. and sent the horse home, then went to Gray's College Hospital and dined there with Wyatt, one of our fellows who used to be in Dublin. I met one of the

S.A.C. Officers there and he is going to let me know when B.P. comes down here.

NOVEMBER 27th. I got my tooth finished this morning. He put the old gold crown back, and then scaled my teeth. I never saw them so white before and you would be quite pleased with them. Killed time as usual for the rest of the day. I got my feet measured in case I have to send home for boots.

NOVEMBER 28th. At 1 p.m. I got orders to go to Dewetsdorp and bring back 60 wounded. I am going to start this evening and get clear of the town, and then get off very early in the morning. I am taking 7 ambulances, and 2 buck wagons and the water-cart, and young Webb who was with our Battery is coming with me. I hear that Baden Powell is not expected for a few days more, and that he will most probably stay for a week, so that I shall not miss him. It is 42 miles from here and I ought to get back on Sunday afternoon. I'm afraid I shall not be in time to answer your letter which will reach here on Saturday, so I shall send this off before I go. Briggs our late Brigade Major is off to Johannesburg to-morrow for duty and is going to see if he can do anything for me. He spoke to Ridley a few days ago, and he told him he would do what he could for me. There is a storm blowing up and I do hope it may rain before we start. Its bad luck this business at Dewetsdorp happening. Its bound to set the Boers tails up and prolong the war.

NOVEMBER 27th: I got the ambulances all ready to start by 6-30 p.m.

but one buck wagon which had gone for the forage had not returned. I got away before dark and just entered the town and waited for the other wagon. It didn't arrive before 8 o'clock, owing to the pole having got broken. Then we went through the town and as far as the transport lines near the pickets. The A.S.C. made us very comfortable and ordered breakfast at 3-45 a.m. Nearly all the mules and boys are quite new to the work so we shall have a lively time to-morrow.

NOVEMBER 28th. Got to bed about 10-30 p.m. but could not sleep. I was up at 3-15, got Chote Hazri and got away by 4-15 a.m. We marched along till 9-30 and reached Leeuwkop. We then had breakfast and a bath in the open, also fed and watered the animals. We started again at 11-45 and went on till 4-55 p.m. We have done 30 miles and there are only 18 miles to be done. I ought to be able to get back to this place by 7 p.m. to-morrow, and in that way will be in Bloemfontein about 10 a.m. on Sunday. We haven't seen a Boer all day. I have been buying eggs and have got $5\frac{1}{2}$ doz. so far at 1/- per dozen. I shall take back some chickens if possible. It has been a perfect day for trekking and we could have done the rest of the journey quite easily if there had been any necessity.

NOVEMBER 29th. We got away by 4-45 a.m. I left a sick mule here to be called for on our way back. About 3 miles from the town Webb and I cantered on ahead of the wagons and got in about 6-45. The wounded were all in 8 houses in charge of a man named Simpson, a London Hospital man. He had had a bad time and was under a hot fire

most of the time. A shell blew up his surgical panniers at his dressing station, and they fired on his ambulance and on his stretcher bearers. There were 6 Officers and among them one of the 17th Lancers named Baring, a great friend of mine. He had been shot through the lower jaw and shoulder. He was very glad to see me, and complained of his bad luck in being shot, after Tate and I had left the Brigade. I had breakfast, and then started and dressed every case. There were 13 bad cases and as I dressed every one I made a list and put those who had to go on stretchers, into one. In this way I had everyone ready by about 12-50 and from my list had been able to classify and tell them off to the wagons which I numbered with chalk. Simpson thought that I would take about 5 lying-down cases, but I took every case except a native and one man who was badly wounded through the abdomen. I had tent poles lashed alongside the buck wagons and the wagon sheets tied over them so as to make an awning. Their boxes and kit were placed along the sides, and seats made for more cases. It was awfully hard work to make room for them all. There was an ambulance which the Boers had left (one of ours) but no mules or harness. I reduced my other teams and made up a team for this one. This was a great help. I began leading at 12-30, after they had all been fed, and was ready for the road by 1-45 p.m. Then after a lot of milk all round, we started. It was very hot and sultry. We marched till 4-30 p.m. and then halted till 6 o'clock. We watered and grazed the mules, and made tea for the patients. Then marched till 10-30 p.m. It was very cool and we covered many miles. It

had rained a good deal in Basutoland, and made it very pleasant for us. At this time it was blowing very hard and looked like rain, so we halted and pitched 2 tents and served hot Bovril all round. I lay down in an ambulance with an Officer and got 3 hours good sleep.

NOVEMBER 30th. At 3 a.m. I was up and had the mules fed and at 3-45 all were up and packing up. Then after hot coffee we got away at 4-45. It was a perfect morning and we went on till 9-15 a.m. Here we halted alongside a dam till 11 o'clock and had a good breakfast. We were now about 10 miles from Bloemfontein. I sent Webb on to tell them to expect us for we were not due till 6 p.m. to-morrow. We reached the town by 2 p.m. having done 48 miles in exactly 84 hours and having marched 84 miles since 4-45 a.m. on Thursday. I think this is a record march. There was a storm coming up and I was glad to be in. By 3 p.m. all the patients were in No. 8 Hospital. I rode back to camp and found that Tate and his hospital had been ordered to Bethulie, and now I am all alone. He took all the stores and the table as well, so I am writing this on the top of a packing-case and very uncomfortably. I must try and fix up a table. All the double fly tents are with him and I shall find it pretty hot in a single tent. I am going to help with several operations to-day, 2 head cases among them. I am Ridley's Adjutant and he said he was afraid there wasn't much chance of my getting the police billet. That B.P. wouldn't see anyone, and that he had selected his men probably in Pretoria.

I suppose that is off anyhow, and probably shall find myself away with a column in a day or two. I wish I could get into a Hospital here. Its very bad luck that we lost those guns and rifles and ammunition at Dewetsdorp. It will prolong the war. Steyn, Botha, De Wet and 3 other Generals were there. I am very tired and am turning in about 7-30. It is a bit lonely without Tate, after being with him for over a year.

(Baden Powell gave me the post of Medical Officer to his northern division which policed the whole of the Northern Transvaal and which I held for 3 years.

My headquarters were at first in 2 wards of the Johannesburg General Hospital. Subsequently I moved to Pretoria and built up a large hospital in tents.

Afterwards a permanent hospital was built for me).

DECEMBER 2nd. I had a ripping night's sleep, and got up about 7 o'clock and wrote my mail letters. Then I went to No.8 Hospital to see the operations. While waiting there I got urgent orders to go and see the P.M.O. From him I got orders to draw wagons and equipment and proceed to Bethulie by the 1st. train next morning. The P.M.O. was very pleased with the way I had brought in the wounded from Dewetsdorp, and everyone who heard of the distance and time were rather astonished. I saw the Greenways and had lunch at No.18 Hospital. Then I drew my wagons etc. and left camp at 6-30 for the station. I went and dined at No.10 and bought some stamps from them, as all the shops were shut. Then went back and got all entrained

by 10-30 p.m. My bed was made down in an ambulance and I got into it about 11 o'clock. Young Webb has been attached to me for duty and we are to act as a combined Hospital and Bearer Company. We are to be attached to some irregular force of Cavalry. I got the postal people to wire to Cape Town and have our letters sent to Springfontein and when we get there I shall direct them where to send them. I'm afraid we shan't get our letters as regularly now for some time. There seems some big movement on to try and finish the war.

DECEMBER 3rd. Had a nice cool railway journey, with nothing eventful. Got some food very comfortably. Passed another Hospital train going north. Arrived at Springfontein about 4 p.m. No one at the station knew where we were for, or if we were to go on to Bethulie. However, I poked round and found out that we were to be attached to the Body Guard, and that they would probably march tomorrow. I detrained and after a good deal of trouble, got a buck wagon, but no mules. It looked awfully threatening and was nearly dark. I put one of the ambulance teams into the Buck wagon and reached camp in a frightful dust storm. We just got a tent up when the rain came down, but soon cleared up. We heard that the Force had no transport mules, and that we should probably not march tomorrow, so we turned in.

DECEMBER 4th. At 2 p.m. we were waked up by one of the Officers and told that we marched at 4-30 a.m.. I got all ready, and then sent over to ask again when we were moving. I was told that we

didn't march till 7-30 a.m., so went to bed again. At 5 a.m. orders came to march at once, so we struck the tent and put the mules in. It now began to rain. Then we got orders to stand fast and wait for wagons. At last we started at 7-30 in pouring rain. It kept on pretty well all day. We had to halt at 10-30 on account of the mud. Our C.O. halted in a swamp which was surrounded by hills, within rifle range all round, and he formed a laager with the wagons, making part of it with my wagons. We pitched 2 tents and tried to be comfortable. We were crowded with men trying to get water out of our cart. You would hardly credit it, but ours was the only water-cart with the Force!!! I had to put a man on guard over the cart. About 5 p.m. the C.O. thought it would be wiser to move up under the shelter of a hill, so we had to strike tents and inspan. I told him that it was not right that my wagons should form part of a laager and asked that I might bivouac outside. I had previously asked him if we were moving and he very shamefacedly replied that everyone seemed to think that we were in an unsafe place, and that we had better move. I thought I might stick out for a place of my own, and he said I might go where I liked. The result is that I am in peace to-night. All the transport wagons stuck in the valley and they will have to send gun teams to get them out. Everyone is very sick with the way we have been humbugged about, and the sooner I can get away from the Bodyguard the better pleased I shall be. It is pouring now and I don't see how we are going to march to-morrow. I shall probably have a fight over my water cart, but I shall certainly not hand it over for the use of

the troops. It is the most unpleasant day I have yet spent in this pleasant land.

DECEMBER 5th. It was an awful night. About 9 o'clock the Adjutant came and begged for a tent. Webb was smoking and playing Patience, and we must have looked very comfortable to him. This morning there were orders for an early march, but after the experience of yesterday, and seeing most of the transport bogged on the plain, we sat tight. It turned out that we were wise, for the Column was unable to move. It was fine for a few hours but has been very showery for most of the day, and I don't see how we are going to move to-morrow. The patrols saw a few Boers to-day, but nothing very much.

DECEMBER 6th. We left camp at 9 a.m. and were ordered to Springfontein. To get on the road we had to make a wide circle to the left to avoid an awful swamp. When we had described half the circle a runner came out with orders that we were to go to Bethulie. This meant that we found ourselves back at our last bivouac, having described a complete circle. We had collected about a thousand sheep and cattle to take into Springfontein. These had to be left. We halted about a couple of miles farther on as there were rumours of Boers behind us. The guns were ordered back, but the enemy turned out to be our own rear-guard. The road soon improved and we got along fairly well. We halted from 1-15 till 3 p.m. Then we came to a deserted farm and I got a good table. Every farm we came to was stripped of chickens and pigs, and any house which was

deserted had everything taken. We collected all the Cape Carts and took all the men along with us. The Bodyguard are awful looters. I saw one of the escort to the guns hand his rifle to a pal and ride off to a farm to see what he could get. Another fellow loosed off his rifle at a chicken which was wandering on the veldt, and I believe he missed it. At one time we heard several shots behind us and the Colonel went back. It was only the Bodysnatchers trying to shoot a horse. It was too funny for anything. We halted at a farm about 7 miles from Bethulie for the night, and I got a fine lot of leeks. Fricasse of chicken for dinner to-night. It is very cloudy but I don't think it will rain to-night. We got a Cape cart to-day to carry our kits on. We are a champion lot of Scallywags.

DECEMBER 7th. We moved at 5 a.m. and got to Bethulie at 7 o'clock. I found Tate here with his hospital full of wounded. He had been fixed up in an hotel. We move on to Aliwal North in an hour's time so I am getting a letter off in hopes of catching the mail. The roads are fearful.

DECEMBER 8th. Several officers of the 9th Lancers were amongst Tate's wounded. One named Gordon Stirling who lost an arm at Maggersfontein, had a bullet through the other arm. I had breakfast in the hotel with Tate, and then we moved across the Orange River, by the road bridge. The water was very muddy and of a dull orange colour. We have a Gunner officer with us who was with Gatacre when he saved the bridge, and it is very interesting to hear him describe the positions. We got fresh orders as we were about to cross the

bridge, but we went over and outspanned on the other side. I went to the Guards Field Hospital and begged a loaf of bread. We filled up with supplies and the mules had a great feed off the hay which the 17th Lancers had left on the ground this morning. We had an excellent lunch. Undercut of veal, fried in bacon fat. Nairne, the Adjutant, lunched with us. We got away at 5-30 p.m., recrossed the bridge, and trekked towards S,ithfield. De Wet is supposed to be between the Caledon and Orange Rivers and Basutoland and we are supposed to be going to keep him there. We went on till 11-30 and then outspanned for the night. There was a good moon but the road was very bad and I had a narrow escape from getting my Buck-wagon broken. I bedded down in one of the ambulances.

DECEMBER 9th. I didn't get away till about 5-30. These fellows are very slack in obeying orders. We only got about a mile when it was reported that 30 Cape Carts were seen on our left flank. A number of our people went after them, but after waiting for two hours nothing turned up and all this time was wasted. I spent the time in taking a disselboom from an ox wagon which was close by on a farm, and had it fitted to my buck-wagon, in case of a future smash. Then we went on about 3 miles, halted for 2 hours and had a ripping breakfast. The Bodyguard can't make us out, we do ourselves so comfortably. We marched at 1-30 and went on till 5-30. We are to march again at midnight. I met Apthorp of the Royal Irish. He is one of the Commissioners of this district and we had a great talk about all the fellows of his Regiment whom I had met in India.

DECEMBER 10th. We were to have marched at midnight, but at 11 p.m. we got word that we were to leave at 5 a.m. One got very little sleep in consequence. Just before we started Col. White's force came along and one squadron of the 16th Lancers was with it. We were delayed for several miles by them, but eventually we got ahead and reached Smithfield at 3 p.m. I lay in an ambulance most of the way, and got a good rest. I saw the local doctor and arranged to leave three sick with him. He is a Frenchman by descent and is married to a Scotswoman. We may have to leave at 3 a.m. and march 40 miles to catch up De Wet, but orders have not yet been issued.

DECEMBER 11th. We marched at 5 a.m. and followed Col. White's force. He captured a mule wagon and team, with several boxes of ammunition, and three armed Boers. A tremendous storm burst just before our buck-wagon came up, but we managed to soon get a tent pitched and got a good night's sleep. One man got struck by lightning but got off with a severe shaking.

DECEMBER 12th. We marched at 5-30 a.m. and very soon came in touch with the enemy. Pilcher and Williams are on our right, and there are forces to their right still. Knox was in command. Four officers who were taken at Dewetsdorp made their escape owing to the Boers having to abandon a buck-wagon on which they were riding. I sent a Cape-cart back for them. They said they only had a live sheep given them once a day for food and nothing else. One of our other columns surprised De Wet this morning and they had to bolt. They have our two 15-pounders which they got at Dewetsdorp, one

pon-pon and two maxims. They lost over 1000 horses during the late rains but had thousands when they left Dewetsdorp, mostly gathered in this district. The Boers who we met and shelled were probably a small rear-guard. We are not pressing in pursuit, all we have to do is to drive him away north of the Colony, and in to some of the forces which are stretching from Ladybrand to Thabanchau. We made a very long trek and did not reach bivouac till dark. It was lucky that I had brought the buck-wagon with us, for the bulk of the transport did not get in until about 2 a.m. We got no oats for the mules and it was quite pitiful to hear them calling for their food. They had been tied up to the pole as usual and could not make out why their food was not forthcoming. I managed to borrow 160 lbs. from the Battery, but there is nothing for the morning. We gave two of the officers a good meal and bedded them down for the night on stretchers; they were very grateful, poor fellows. One had had 2 bullets through his helmet and said he had had much more narrow escapes than that.

DECEMBER 13th. Started at 4 a.m. and got a lot of oats, straw and chaff soon after starting. We had to leave the buck wagon behind to come along with the transport. We passed over 100 horses which the Boers left on the veldt last night. Poor brutes, they suffer frightfully in war. We never passed so many before in any of our pursuits. They passed up the valley last night and were going hard. We halted for 2 hours at mid-day and then passed on. At 4-30 we came in sight of them just doubling back behind some hills about 8 or 9 miles from Dewetsdorp. We had done a tremendous journey but

we changed direction and went after them. We did not reach bivouac till 7-15 p.m., having started at 4 a.m., so you can imagine what we have to go through at times. If only we could get a day's rest, or even get into camp, it would not matter so much. The officers who were prisoners left us when opposite to Reddersburg, and went towards the Railway.

DECEMBER 14th. We were ready to start at 4-30 but it was over an hour later before we got away. Boers were in front and so they had to scout first. About 2 miles from camp where we had seen the Boers pass last evening, I saw a number of animals grazing. Webb and I went over and found 11 fine Govt. mules. They had probably been left by De Wet. It was a grand haul and enabled me to mule our Cape carts and complete our wagon teams. I gave 5 lazy ones to a Major of ours who had a Bearer Company. Further on we got a lot of barley and 5 sacks of mealies. One of my fellows found them in a farmhouse and as the husband was in Ceylon I gave a receipt for them. We are well off for another couple of days for the animals. We watered here and a frightful calamity occurred. I let my groom drive my Cape cart this morning. The silly fool led the mules in the cart to the edge of the dam and left them standing while he drew water in a bucket. The thirsty animals saw the water and forgetting they had a cart behind them walked over the edge, and over went the cart. My food box went in and all my bottles and tins, eggs, crockery, knives, etc., etc. I made him go in as he was and lift the cart and grope about in the mud for the things. My table-napkin ring is lost and I am very sorry. My bedding got a little wet but

soon dried. We have gone a very short distance to-day and have watched the Boers trekking away. It seems to me that we always do this, that we kill ourselves in getting near them and when we get there we do not know what to do. We got to bivouac at 5 p.m. but our buck wagon has not turned up and so we shall not get to bed so early as we expected.

DECEMBER 15th. We did not start till 5-30 a.m., so had a good night's sleep. We soon passed through the Nek which had been held by the Boers last night; in it was a fine farm which belonged to an English family. The Boers looted him to the extent of about £200 worth and took all his Cape carts. The girls took the bolts and nuts out of ^{some of} them and so they will soon drop to pieces. They went up to the laager and tried to get one of the carts back, but De Wet said they were spying and ordered them away at once. They had strongly fortified the position and expected we should attack them last evening, but fortunately we didn't. We divided after this into two columns and headed off for Thabanchu. About 12 o'clock we captured 3 prisoners. One was dressed exactly like one of our men, Khaki coat, breeches, putties and slouch hat, with a bit of red ribbon at one side to resemble the Body Guard perhaps. He was sentenced to be shot and was brought along till 4 o'clock. Then he was blindfolded and led out 80 paces in front of a firing party of Infantry, The front rank knelt and the rear rank stood up. He was assisted by two Tommies and he walked very nervously. Then "Ready - Present - Fire" and all was over. Poor devil, it was hard to be shot in cold blood like this, but he was practically a

spy and deserved his fate.

It was the first execution I have ever seen.

Thorneycroft's Horse have fighting De Wet all day, and Col. Laine told me that he thought he was practically cornered this time. We were moving towards a Nek on the east of Thabanchu to bivouac for the night when word came that 500 Boers were trying to escape eastwards. Off went our force at the trot, and one of my ambulances has gone with it - and Webb. I got 2 doz. eggs to-day and a lot of oat straw. As I write I hear that merry Pom Pom going, so I suppose we have found the 500. The country we came through to-day was crammed with wheat which had been cut and stacked. This part is the granary of South Africa and it is rot to talk of starving the Boers while they can grow stuff here. Of course we did not burn any of it. I got a quart of fresh green peas out of a field. real beauties. My mules are enjoying the oat straw, I never saw finer stuff than what we got to-day.

DECEMBER 16th. We had a fair amount of luck last night. We sent a patrol of 10 men off to our left in the afternoon early and these saw about 500 men trekking away. They sent back word but no notice was taken. They sent 2 more men with the news and finally when it was getting dark we moved against them. The 16th who were on very tired horses got up with them and shot a few. They were heavily fired on and had to fall back. They got 3 prisoners. The Bodyguard was collecting its prisoners when our Pom-poms shelled them by mistake and they only got 5 away. It was Haarsbrook's Commando

We marched for the Nek which is on the east of Thabanchu at 6 o'clock and got there about 10 a.m. It was occupied by one of our columns. They had shelled the Boer laager which was here yesterday, and we hear that 2 guns, 92 prisoners, 120 Cape-carts and wagons were taken.

I saw one of the ambulances which the Boers took from Dewetsdorp, and had a chat with one of their doctors. He has 3 wounded with him and told me that he had seen De Wet sjamboking burghers to drive them into positions. Fourier's son, who is a doctor, was also here, and I never saw a more repulsive looking fellow. He has treated our sick and wounded badly, I believe. We went into bivouac at once and are having a nice rest. I am doing some tailoring. My sick are probably going into Thabanchu, and I am going to send this off with them in hopes of catching the next mail. Some fresh troops are still taking up the pursuit - we are taking in 6 days' supplies and will probably go on to-morrow. I got a lot more peas to-day and a ripping little pig.

Our 2 ammunition wagons got lost last night in the dark, owing to their getting separated from the guns which trotted into action. A squadron of the Bodyguard went out early this morning to look for them and so did the officer who was in charge of the section. None of these have yet returned, so that looks like as though they had fallen into the enemy's hands. It means 300 rounds of 15-pounder ammunition for them. There are rumours that a number of Boers are to be shot for having soft-nosed bullets. One of the Bodyguard scouts was out (looting probably) this afternoon with a

native. They came across 5 Boers and held them up while the nigger collected the rifles and then brought them all in. We have a large number of fearless chaps among them. We have just had a smart shower and it looks like more rain. I got rid of all my sick by the ox-convoy.

DECEMBER 16th. We were to have marched at 5 a.m. but did not get away till 6 and then did only about 5 miles. We had our tent pitched by 9 a.m. and have had a good day's rest. There is beautiful grazing around here owing to the recent rains. Webb drove into Thabanchu and got a few scones from a house there. He saw Begbie of my batch who had just come round from Natal. We have had some heavy rain this evening and it looks awfully black all round. Our ammunition wagon turned up safely this afternoon but I hear that it is not true that we got all their Cape carts and wagons. It shows you how difficult it is to get information of what has occurred actually on the spot.

Marched at 5 a.m. We were to have left at 7-30 but at midnight word came that we were to move at 4-30. This of course spoilt one's night's sleep entirely. We have been making all day towards the Fiksburg Road to get round the Boers, but at 4 p.m. we got news that they had gone North and so we were halted at once and went into bivouac. I am not sorry in a way, for the country ahead was very bad. We had De Wet in a nice corner, but as usual, an opening was left and he has got away. I must say that it is exceedingly difficult to round him up in this enormous country, for

men on horses and without guns or wagons can go anywhere. We passed a fine orchard loaded with big apples, pears, peaches and apricots, they were nearly ripe and we would have liked to pass it in a month's time. However, I believe there are lots more like it.

We were ready to move at 6 a.m., but have not done so. We hear that there are 200 Boers holding the Pass called "Maquatling's Nek" which is about 6 miles farther on the road which we are on and that De Wet and Co. are between us and Bloemfontein. We also heard the news of the capture of two 5" guns and 3 Companies at Potchefstroom and that things are disturbed in the Colony. All this has put one rather in the dumps, for goodness knows when the war is going to end. I went to do up my stamps for the post this afternoon and found only £17.10.0 instead of £20.0.0. Only my servant knows that they were there, so I am afraid there is no doubt as to the thief and yet one can say nothing about it. It is rather sickening. It has been very squally and rainy all day and looks very threatening to-night.

DECEMBER 19th. It rained pretty well all night and was still at it this morning. About 8 o'clock we heard that the Bodyguard was going out to look for the Boers. No guns or wagons and only a few Cape carts. I sent Webb out with one ambulance and a Cape cart, he may be away for a couple of days. I was not sorry to remain behind in a tent. We heard of the Boers getting into the Colony, so naturally have been rather depressed all day. It looks as though one was never going to get home. Four of the columns who have been

operating with us have gone post-haste to Bloemfontein to be rushed down by train into the Colony. The rain cleared off about 4 o'clock but the ground is very heavy. I went over to the 9th Lancer camp to have a buck with some of the fellows and was greeted by "Oh Mr Porter what shall I do?" on a concertina played by one of the Tommies who spotted me in the distance. I had a novel to read to-day, otherwise it would have been pretty beastly.

DECEMBER 20th. We marched at 7 a.m. and have come a very short distance, probably about 10 or 12 miles. We are now bivouacked on one side of a broad valley and the Bodyguard are on the other. It has been very showery and the road heavy. We got a large quantity of ripping mushrooms on the way. We are at a very nice farm and I found the woman in great trouble because all her hens were being taken. She says that the Boers took her husband away last month. She has some nice children and a sweet little kid of about 3 years. I comforted them and she is making me some bread, and I have given her half a bucket of flour for her trouble. She has the cleanest house I have yet seen in these parts and she is a very nice woman. One feels so sorry for her. I got 13 turkey eggs for 1/- on the way, they will be a great treat. I don't know a bit what we are supposed to be doing here, for De Wet passed this place on Sunday. The brother of that man "Jeffcott" who married DeBrett's cousin is with our force, in charge of the pom pom. He was best man to his brother, you may remember.

DECEMBER 21st. I got 7 loaves of bread last night. It rained during the night. We did not start till 7 a.m. and joined the rest of the Bodyguard. They captured 12 prisoners yesterday and came in touch with the enemy. We have crept along very slowly to-day and had a long halt at noon. We hear that De Wet is ahead going North and that he now has 3,500 men and one gun without ammunition. Our column only numbers about 500 rifles, and although we have 5 guns, I hope we may not be attacked by him. The Body snatchers are driving a herd of about 600 cattle along, so perhaps the enemy may think they are cavalry and leave us alone.

About 4 p.m. advanced party of the Bodyguard came across 2 Boer Scouts. The officer, who had not even a revolver, rode for them, followed closely by a sergeant; one dismounted, laid down his rifle and held up his hands. When the officer was about 20 yards from him, his horse came down and he came a cropper, but when he got on his feet again he found the Boer still supplicating, so he bagged him. The other dropped a good pair of field-glasses and got away. We were now quite near enough to the enemy so went promptly into bivouac. Nice time to bathe and have a shirt washed. I got 3 sacks of mealies to-day and some oat hay, so our mules will be all right. We got served out with 2 pounds of mealies per mule last night.

DECEMBER 22nd. We had just started a jolly good feed about 7 p.m. when we heard Mauser firing on our right front; everyone fully expected that we should be attacked before morning for there are

over 3,000 Boers who could easily get round us. The firing was at one of our natives who was going out for Intelligence. I unpacked the wagons and built a bullet-proof shelter round the buck wagon of boxes, tents, blankets etc. into which we could retire if things became very hot. Then lay down on a stretcher outside and waited for the morning. It was rather a beastly sort of feeling, and everyone seemed perfectly certain that it would come off, but thank goodness it did not. However, it spoiled one's night's sleep. There was a very heavy dew and one's pillows etc. got soaked. This morning the whole force went out to reconnoitre, and just left the baggage and most of the ambulances in bivouac. Webb went out and I had a nice quiet day. We are only about 20 miles East of Winburg and are in heliographic touch with them. I have just had a tent pitched^{so} as to be comfortable for the night. The column has not yet returned. I hope we shall not be left alone for the night.

DECEMBER 23rd. The column returned about 7-30 p.m. having had a hard day, seen about 20 Boers, wasted about 40 rounds of gun ammunition and got an officer of the Bodyguard killed. We are still halted here, but something must happen soon as we only have 2 days' food left for men, and nothing for the horses. We had Church Parade at 9 o'clock. A very nice Dutch girl came up to camp and reported that a native had broken into her house and used violence to her last night. All the natives were collected and she identified the man. He was tried by Court Martial and sentenced

to be shot to-morrow morning. We got communication from Knox this afternoon and we move to-morrow.

DECEMBER 24th. We left at 6-30 a.m. I had to see the native shot first. He lied to the end and said he had not been out of camp last night at all, but his fellow natives gave him away. We advanced very carefully, for there were lots of Boers in front. The 16th and Yeomanry caught sight of about 150 Boers, raced for a kopje and turned their Hotchkiss into them, they flew towards the ridge. The guns trotted up but could not get a target. We got into helio communication with Pilcher's force on our right, and we saw a Boer helio on the ridge near up. We thought they were calling us up. so turned our helio on to them, but they would not be drawn. We remained where we were till 12 o'clock and were then ordered into bivouac behind Leeuwkop. The Bodyguard are here and the rest of our force are 2 miles behind us. All the afternoon we heard firing on our right and went on to the top of the hill. We saw lots of Boers moving about, and Lyddite shells bursting on the ridge where they were this morning. We also saw a long column of dust running North and South. It may be them trekking away or another column of ours' closing in. Boye's column from Winburg came out and bivouacked on our left. They have brought out food for us and the empty wagons will probably go back to Winburg and take a mail for us.

DECEMBER 25th. Christmas Day. We may halt here to-day, but our movements are uncertain. I am getting this ready for the bag

which they are making up.

DECEMBER 26th. Yesterday Boye's force moved forward a bit; we halted. There was a sing-song in our camp and another in White's across the valley. They kept up till about 10 p.m. At 3-15 a.m. we were woke up with the cry "Stand to your Guns". It was rather rot, for the Boers had cleared out yesterday afternoon, when they saw that we had brought a large force, enough to tackle them. We fooled about till 7 o'clock and then marched. We came right through the place where they had their laager and a tremendously strong place it was. We found ourselves finally on the top of a mountain and there we bivouacked. We are about 12 miles from Senekal. The farm is a very fine one, well built and a huge garden walled in. There is a fine dam fed by a spring, but the great drawback is the drinking water. It comes from a reservoir on top of the mountain and is led through a small pipe. All day long the troops have been standing 8 to 10 deep round the tap waiting for their turn to fill their water bottles. We were lucky enough to get several buckets full. Scarcity of water, or at least decent drinking water, has been our great trouble for several days. The man of the farm was killed in this war. There is any quantity of fruit, but all unripe yet. We found about 1,000 bags of wheat in a stable here, none of it could have been grown here and it looks as though this almost inaccessible place had been used as a store-house. It is all being thrown into the dam.

DECEMBER 27th. I was awakened at 10-30 last night by a chit from Thompson to say that our sick were to go to Boye's column at 5 a.m.

This rather spoilt one's night's rest. We came in touch with the Boers about 8-30 and the Yeomanry had a very warm time. I went ahead, and left Webb bringing up the ambulances. It was very pretty to see ^{4 of} our 15-pounders in action, and to see the shrapnel throwing up the dust. One Yeoman was killed, one shot through the neck, and one through the arm and leg. I dressed them and put them in my wagons. Their own never turned up at all. We bagged 9 horses, all saddled, and killed about 3. We must have killed a good many of the enemy. They were hiding among some rocks near a farm, and had their pom-pom at the foot of a hill as usual. It has been one of the longest days I have yet put in, and very hot. I took the wounded to camp, washed and dressed them, and then sent them over to their own hospital. Their Colonel came in while I was dressing the men. We came across about 70 Boers here whom their own people had put in prison at Senekal because they wouldn't fight again, but had to release them when our people went into the place.

We have done well in the vegetable line to-day, onions, beets, cabbage and new potatoes, also plums nearly ripe. Pilcher's force has just come in, they have the 17th Lancers with them.

DECEMBER 28th. We left at 5-30 and our Pom-pom was in action at 7 o'clock. There were about 80 Boers, and probably the same lot which we saw yesterday. About 9 o'clock we got word from Knox that a large party of Boers with wagons was trekking north. There was only one road by which they could come, bounded by a mountain range and Pilcher was behind them. We all made sure of a big bag,

but as usual they all got away in single file across the mountains. We got one of their wagons loaded with a lot of rubbish. It was one of our own wagons, and was drawn by a team of our own mules. There were some prisoners with it, men who wouldn't fight for them. We passed through some nice farms. In one was a number of sacks of empty Mauser cases, and several of our empty ammunition boxes. There were 3 Cape carts, 2 quite new. I have one of these and am not going to mount a red flag on it any more. It will be our mess cart. My other one and the ambulance have not yet returned and I do not expect ever to see them again. Pilcher is bivouacked behind us. I got some nice ripe apples to-day. We are getting tired of the De Wet manoeuvres as Tommy calls them.

DECEMBER 29th. We have had a very exciting day. Started at 5-20 a.m. and about 9 o'clock we were approaching some kopjes when we changed direction to the right and this brought us closer to them. All of a sudden there was a tremendous fire opened on the Bodyguard. They turned and galloped back and only that the situation looked so serious, it was laughable. I know the Boers must have laughed at the calm way we advanced in column up to 2 nasty kopjes. Some say that they let our scouts pass without firing, but others say our scouts never went there at all. The 2 guns halted at about 1900 yards in the open, and opened fire. Then they had to stop where they were, for the horses could not be brought up. I never expected to see a man get away, but only one was slightly grazed on the forearm. A couple of horses were hit, and though some thousands of rounds were fired from rifles, not another man was hit.

Two more guns came up and the kopjes were well shelled. Pilcher advanced on the right and cleared them out there. The 16th and Yeomanry were on the left and the Pom-pom fired 1500 rounds during the day. They had only one casualty, a Major, who got 4 bullets but I think will do all right. Their Colonel came up and got well peppered from a donga. The silly fool went back and promptly ordered a troop to charge the donga. The 16th Lancers were there but were not quite mad enough to try that game. So I suppose he wanted to show them what gallant fellows the Yeos were. They got a heavy volley and turned tail at once. I saw a troop of the Bodyguard charge up a valley and get peppered, but not a man hit. The Boers can't shoot for nuts evidently. We were fired at from nearly every kopje we came to. I got a lot of fine pears and apples from a farm and several chicken from a farm which was deserted, also an enamelled basin as large as a bath and for which it will be used.

DECEMBER 30th. We marched at 6 a.m. with a wide front. We knew that De Wet had laagered about 4 or 5 miles from us last night, so fully expected to come in touch with him early. However, we have come many miles and have seen no sign of him. We had heavy rain last night but it got sultry about mid-day, and one felt quite limp. I rode in my Cape cart at the head of my wagons all day, and took things easy. We had a great feed at mid-day. I got hold of some lemons last night. You ought to get a sparklet bottle. I used to think that they were useless things, but Webb showed me

how to make a sparklet properly and now the soda-water is very good. Most people screw the top home and leave it, but it should be alternately tightened and loosened until all the gas has escaped. I sometimes think that we shall wander about the veldt for the rest of our lives trying to bag De Wet, and in course of time flying columns of a spectral nature (after the type of the Flying Dutchman) will be seen wandering about the veldt.

DECEMBER 31st. We had a tremendous thunderstorm last night, or rather a succession of them. Two men in the camp were struck by lightning but escaped with a severe shock. We left at 5-30 a.m. and were fired at in front and on both flanks after we had gone a few miles. We saw crowds of Boers and Pilcher was firing at them on our right. It looked like an attempt to delay us while they possibly attacked Lindley in front. We had a very long halt from 10-45 till 2-15 and then went into Lindley. They had sent off a mail this morning, so I am late. However, a sick convoy is going in a day or two and so this letter may reach you before the one which went into Senekal. They have had no mail here for over 6 weeks and are simply buried alive in this hole. I would rather trek than this I think.

JANUARY 1st, 1901. The Bodyguard are very angry. An order was issued yesterday to the effect that no member of it was to take horses, carts, forage or stock. As we passed out of camp we ~~perceived~~ saw the 16th Lancers taking horses from a kraal. The Bodyguard have remounted themselves with dozens of horses since we started. Now we

leave hundreds of good animals for the enemy to fight us with. It seems to me that if the Imperial Officer can do anything to put up the back of the Colonial, he does it. I think it would be better to let them serve only under Colonial Generals. I sent one of the Bodyguard Officers sick to-day. On the day that we were surprised by the Boers this fellow was found by his squadron leader crouching behind an ant-hill and firmly gripping his revolver in his hand. The Boers were shooting at about 1500 yards. He was in an awful state of fright, and had previously come out of the firing line for a doctor for an imaginary man who had been hit. I wasn't taking any bullets at the time, and so sent him back again. The brutal squadron leader (who by the way is a doctor), and who held a combatant commission in the South African Light Horse, called him out, made him put away his revolver, and standing beside him in the open until all the men had retired. The bullets fell thick and fast but neither of them were hit. Next morning he had developed a severe attack of Lumbago and was unable to ride. He said that he knew it would not get better until he went to some celebrated baths in New Zealand, and was very anxious to get there as soon as possible. He was quite willing to run the risk of capture by the Boers, and consequent loss of kit if only he could be sent into Lindley. His anxiety was most piteous, and his relief when I sent him into hospital to go down, was most marked. He is going to send in his papers and get home as soon as he can. This same fellow recited "The Charge of the Light Brigade" on 'Xmas night in stentorian tones. He fancied at that time that he was a great

warrior, but since then he has been under hot fire, and has been led to change his opinion.

Another officer shot himself through the foot to-day while cleaning his revolver. The whole of Pilcher's force came in to-day and Barker's is not far behind. A convoy of 200 wagons should have arrived to-day, a force having gone out to meet it. Up to 6 p.m. it hasn't come, and there are rumours that there has been heavy fighting in that direction to-day. In spite of this a large mounted force has sat down here all day instead of at once going out to see what had happened. It looked like a nice New Year gift of supplies for the Boers and a prolongation of the war for another few months.

JANUARY 2nd. Our convoy turned up all right about mid-day. We heard a good deal of firing early this morning, so they were opposed. We spent a day here also. This place is to be evacuated at once. Piet De Wet, brother of the General, came out with the convoy to try and persuade them to surrender. He had better not go near his brother or he will be shot. Colonel Laing told me this evening that Kitchener had given the Boers a fortnight to lay down their arms, or he will devastate the country. They won't do it I am sure, so we shall soon be carrying out his threat. One feels that something of the kind is needed, for our operations since June last have been quite useless. I thought before we got into the Ladybrand District that their food supplies must soon run out, but there one saw tons of wheat in bags, and growing, also millions of sheep and cattle.

A Yeoman and our Sergt. Major were captured by the Boers on New Year's eve. They sent them back because it was New Year's eve and laughed when they heard that we were trying to capture De Wet. We have left hundreds behind us. This garrison has been here for the last 3 months and has never been able to go 2 miles from the town without being fired at. Nobody knows where we are going; some say Heilbron and some Reitz. I suppose we shall get our orders from De Wet to-morrow and follow wherever he chooses to lead. We march at 4-30 a.m..

JANUARY 3rd. It was a beastly early march and the Boers were very active on both flanks and on our rear, in spite of the fact that Barker's force was close behind us. We sent an escort of 25 men of the Natal Squadron Bodyguard with Piet De Wet who wanted to go to his farm and get his wife and children away. These fell in with about 200 Boers and had a bad time, 2 killed and 3 wounded, including an officer. De Wet I expect was taken prisoner by the Boers. We got into bivouac on the Reitz Road about 1 p.m. and at 2-30 the Bodyguard were sent out on reconnaissance towards Reitz. About 4 o'clock we saw about 150 Boers on the skyline riding past our camp and others apparently getting round us. The whole camp turned out at once; the foot went on a ridge and the Yeos and Lancers went out after the Boers. They shot one yeoman through the chest and I have just sent out for him. The Bodyguard will probably run into this lot on their way home and will have stiff fighting. The Boers are getting very daring and we are encouraging them by our rotten tactics.

JANUARY 5th. I have just finished another very trying experience. I must go back to the night of the 3rd when we saw the Boers ride along the ridge. White and 3 guns went out in the direction the Bodyguard had gone and arrived too late to prevent a disaster. It appears that 120 of the Bodyguard left camp at 2-30 p.m. and moved in the direction of Reitz. They never suspected Boers quite near our camp, although it has been a case of perpetual sniping for the last week. They neglected (I'm afraid) to throw out their usual flank patrols and advanced scouts. Three miles from camp they got near a large nullah and on their right was a large kraal and farm, in this were about 800 Boers under Philip Botha. They came out and galloped all round the Bodyguard pouring in a heavy fire. They could not return it and all had to surrender, but not before the Colonel, 1 Officer and 15 men were killed and about 25 wounded. I got word about 6 o'clock and went out with 5 ambulances and four 4-wheeled Cape carts, also 2 other doctors. It was almost dark when we reached the field, but fortunately there was a good moon. We had a bad time collecting and loading them up. I lost my way and did not get in till 11 o'clock. The other wagons had got in before and the patients were in tents and had been attended to. The Boers took their rifles, ammunition and horses, also all the field glasses, and let the men all go. It rained heavily for a couple of hours after we got in. I was up at 2 a.m. giving more morphia and did not get to bed after. We started dressing the cases at 6 a.m. and went on till 11 o'clock. Most had more than one wound and one sergt.-major (who used to be a sergt. in the

Scots Guards and knew me when we lived in the Tower years ago) had a thigh and an arm broken. I got 4 Buck wagons, three 4-wheeled Cape carts and 2 ambulances loaded up and got away at 12 Noon. Our column left at 1 p.m. and was moving in the same direction. I pushed ahead right into the Boer lines and soon found myself quite surrounded by them. They could not understand what was happening. They knew that our column was quite near and suspected that they were going towards Heilbron. So they could not understand why we had so many wagons on the road and no troops as escort and thought there was some trap being laid for them. It was simply beautiful to see the way they surrounded us. Occasionally we saw 2 men riding parallel to us and then they would disappear behind a ridge and so on. No-one rode on the sky-line like our men do and the ring showed itself practically simultaneously. I rode towards them and explained who I was. They said that we must halt until they got permission from Botha for us to go on. I was rather in a fix, for our column was leaving in an hour after us and already I could see our advanced scouts coming towards us. I told them that we should be caught between two fires and asked that the wagons might go on and I would go with them and see Botha. This they did and I was handed over to a smartly dressed man named Jacobus De Wet. His sister is married to Piet De Wet. We went towards where Botha was supposed to be. After 3 miles I told De Wet that I thought it was rather rot my going on and that he would have to come all the way back with me, for I was not going to run the risk of being shot by their men. I also kept his horse going hard, mine was fresh and a strong beast

and as his was getting done up I suggested that we should go back and tell the others that we could not find Botha. He fell in with this and we went back together for a bit. I then rejoined the wagon. He was a very decent fellow and said that they were going to fight on. He wanted to know if we had burnt any farms lately or taken any of their women away. The latter proceeding seems to hit them very badly and several others spoke to me about it during the trek. A boy of about 18 years was riding with the wagons when I got up with them and he went some way with us. He was at first very bitter and inclined to be nasty, but Webb talked him into good humour. We discussed the war and he asked one some very hard questions about England's dealings in S.Africa in the past. After another mile or two a lot of Boers came up with a field cornet from Botha. I had halted and was giving brandy and water to some of the patients. We displayed our Boer and they talked to him asking about our treatment of him. He gave a good report of it to them and they were greatly satisfied. He has been our stand-by all the time and it was fortunate that he was a good chap and that he had been properly treated. I told them that they could take him away but that he would be better left with us. The man himself told them that he wished to go to Heilbron. We pushed on till 5-30 p.m. and saw swarms of Boers. The same process of surrounding us went on at intervals and it was jumpy work. I tied the flag like a big sail, so that it displayed the red cross at all times and this wagon went at the head of the column. We halted for an hour and a half and had food, then we went on till 9 o'clock. Fortunately

it did not rain, to add to our troubles. An officer was awfully bad at this time. He had been shot through the chest, and one side was full of blood and pressing on the heart. He was delirious and very livid. I thought about his case and decided to bleed him. His stretcher was pulled out and by the light of a candle I opened a vein and took 8 ozs. He was put back and at once turned on his side and went to sleep. He is now doing well and ought to recover. Poor Capt. Butters, the man who practically saved Hore's laager, was shot through the spine high up in the neck and is paralysed from the shoulders downwards. I thought he would die the night he was hit and told him so. However, he has come along well, but will probably die to-morrow, he is quite conscious and the most plucky man I have ever met. Such a nice homely fellow.

We started at 5 a.m. and at 7 o'clock came across a large laager of Boers. They came up and stopped us and said that we should go back, and see their General. I flatly refused to do this and used strong language. The swine lifted the butt of his rifle to hit me in the face, but he was pulled up very sharply by one of the others. Finally we got very friendly and were allowed to proceed. I gave the interpreter chap a cigarette which greatly pleased him and made the others clamour for some. The field cornet came up and looked through the wagons. We again displayed our Boer and he played up as usual. The bulk of the Boers we saw are boys from 16 to 20. They are very keen and there is no doubt that from their point of view it is very good sport. Their risks compared to our men's are very few. At 9 o'clock we halted and fed. More

Boers came round and one fellow was inclined to be very cheeky. Our tame Boer again played up and the fellow finished up by having coffee with us. We were told to stop for orders from their General but I went ahead when I was ready. We were stopped after a couple of miles and had to wait 2 hours. Then we were allowed to go on. The road was now splendid and so we trotted out and made up for lost time. When we got to within 3 miles from Heilbron we were fired at from a kopje on our right. I got the wagons away to our left and galloped as hard as we could. We were hardly within range but they fired heavily. We would have got away only a mule came down in the last wagon and it had to stop. I went towards the Boers who came out into the plain. One fellow was very nasty and would not believe my statements. A very respectable youth came up and apologised for our being fired on. He said that he had told his people that we were an ambulance but that they had given orders to fire on us. It was rather cheeky of them to tackle us within range of our guns, one of which was actually trained on this kopje at the time. As we approached the town some Yeomanry came and stalked our wagons in a very amateurish manner. They could not make up their minds who we were until I left the column and rode towards them. When I got to the town I saw the commandant who is in command of the Oxford Regiment. They have no proper hospital here and are crowded with patients. The Regimental Medical Officer runs it, and I had to take over the Court House and turn it into a hospital. It was rough luck after 50 miles of trekking to have to do this, but we worked hard and got all square by dark. The Colonel

stood about and I think was a bit astonished at what he saw. I got 3 beds and a lot of mattresses and some lamps. The Wesleyan parson played up like a man and gave great help. A lot of ladies made tea, cut bread and butter and handed it round to the patients. They were delighted at having their tea out of a cup. A train has been wired for and is expected to-morrow morning. I shall take my lot and about 30 from here down to Kroonstadt. Then I shall go on to Bloemfontein and see the P.M.O. and explain that there ought to be a proper hospital here with nurses and try and get charge of it. It is a nice little town and I do want to sit down somewhere until the end of the war.

JANUARY 6th. Two of the bad cases died during the night and Butters will die to-day. We all had a fair night. The sergt. major with the fractured thigh etc. is also dying. At 6-30 a.m. I got word that the train would leave at 9-15 a.m., so we got wood etc. and packed the patients in the wagon and took them to the station. There were only trucks, and one long covered truck to put them in. I took all the mattresses with us to spread on the floor of the truck. There were about 30 sick, mostly enterics going down as well from the hospital. I had to load them up as well, for the man in charge appeared quite helpless, and we had to catch the connecting train on the main line. The commandant was there and some other officers. We were only a quarter of an hour late and got to the main line with ten minutes to spare. I had three bottles of egg flip made before starting so we served that round, and some Bovril. Then we were attached to the passenger

train, and went to Kroonstad very quickly. We travelled in the passenger train, and three wounded officers as well. On the train I met a Major Wilson who has just been given the command of "Kitchener's Fighting Scouts". He was with the Colonial Division when we were marched from Zeerust, and knew all about my experiences at that time. The three wounded officers in our carriage were old friends of his, and they were cracking me up like blazes. He wanted a combined Medical Unit for his force, so I offered mine. He jumped at it and I wired to Kitchener and the P.M.O. at Pretoria which he sent off at the next station. I think we are certain to get the billet. It is a fine Regiment and is to act quite on its own. Wilson is a funny fellow but he has had a great experience out here and apparently is well in with K.of K. As I said before, he knows me well. If all goes well with the Regiment one is very likely to get something out of it. I had thought of trying to get with a stationary Hospital, but when I reached Kroonstadt and saw the dust, dirt and flies, and heard how short-handed they were, I thought one would be better off trekking. Wilson will wire to Webb who returns to Heilbron to-morrow. If we are to go with him Webb will wire me at Bloemfontein, and I will meet the Kit on its way down Colony. The Headquarters are at Beaufort West down in the Colony. They are to operate until the Colony is clear, and then go back to the Free State. I hope we get the billet. Kroonstadt is full of enteric and so are most of the Stationary places. I met a lot of old friends there including the Sister we brought from Bothaville. W xxxx has not improved in manners and is in very

bad odour with everyone at the Hospital; he looks rather seedy. I dined at their Mess and after dinner a note was brought me from one of the Sisters named Enright asking if I was the same individual who lived in the Tower. I went and saw her at once and she was awfully glad to see me, she had been here since May last, and only heard I was here from listening to Sister True talking about me at dinner. She is such a nice girl and we are great pals. I spent an hour talking with her and then went to the Station, put my "Camp Bed" in a truck and turned in.

JANUARY 7th. I had a good night and we left at daylight, got some breakfast on the way and had to get into the Guards Van owing to the truck being detached. I am going to get a lot of things at Bloemfontein for the men and for myself. I wired to try and find out where the Headquarters of the Bodyguard are, so as to get our back mails but have got no answer as yet. I did a good deal of letter writing in the train while waiting for trains to pass us in the Sidings. They were jumpy as usual at Kroonstadt expecting to be attacked every night and I can't understand why they are not. The place is very large and the Garrison a very weak one. The Boers would find a good haul there.

I heard about a Civil Surgeon named Engelbach being shot a few weeks ago; he was rude to some Boers while dressing a wounded man and they emptied their rifles into him on the spot. Apparently it is not a safe thing to do to check a Boer who has a rifle in his hand. Got to Bloemfontein at 1 o'clock and put up at No.10 General Hospital. Saw Greenway and dined with them in

the evening; saw the P.M.O. who had been enquiring for me.

JANUARY 8th. The P.M.O. took me to Hunter this morning; he had not heard any details about the disaster, so I told him, and he got me to write out a statement which he is sending on to Kitchener. He was very nice, and I told him the useless way we had trekked and what we might have done. Knox was supposed to be clearing the country of Stock and has done nothing. I expect he will get beans from Kitchener. I could not get hold of my mails, I do not know what has become of them. I got a letter from home dated December the 15th, so I know you are all right; also a few papers. Had a wire from Webb just now to say that the P.M.O. has wired for details of our personnel; got an excellent pair of riding breeches and a pair of new pattern boots and braces and putties, also some stores for our Mess; pay for natives and men. I posted £17.10.0 of penny stamps, they would not insure them so they are going registered. I hope they will get home safely. I have a few things to do to-morrow and then I am ready either to return to Kroonstadt by train on Thursday or else pick up the Unit and travel South. I am quite equipped for another four or six months with clothing etc. and I hope that will see the end of the War. I had a very realistic dream last night that the rest of the Boer army was surrounded and captured. No such luck at present I am afraid.

JANUARY 9th. No orders came during the day so I got all ready to move in the morning. I went to a theatrical performance at No.9 Hospital at 8-30. It was simply splended, two nurses and five

civil surgeons acted. The topical bits were grand and it was a great success. Afterwards there were light refreshments and a lot of people were present. I met Begbie there and he was very glad to see me. From there I went to the train and went to bed. It was frightfully hot in the station; we left at 4 a.m. and had a safe journey to Kroonstadt. At Ventersburg Road there was some fighting going on a few miles off. I saw Wood and told him what the P.M.O. at Bloemfontein had told me to do. He had not heard anything about me. I wired to Webb to come in by train to-morrow with the equipment. I shall try and get Wood to put some Civil Surgeon in my place and keep me here; it is not the sweetest place one could find but it will be a change from trekking.

JANUARY 10th. Had a ripping night on a spring bed. I took over a lot of surgical cases from one of the Civil Surgeons who is going on leave for several days. I asked Wood to put someone in my place, and he probably will. Webb wired that he is coming in to-morrow and that he has been given the "Medical Staff Corps" Orderlies; that will probably mean some of our trained men staying here. Mrs Wood came up this evening. I am going there to-morrow to tea, she lives at the hotel now. We had a tremendous fall of rain this evening; my tent was not trenched, so the water went right through. All my kit was on boxes so it did not much matter.

JANUARY 13th. A Major of ours who was with White's column has been to Bloemfontein and seen the P.M.O. The result is a wire to me, telling me to take over all his kit and join White's column.

It was rather annoying at first, but after all, I think I would rather be on the trek again. The hospital has been standing for a long time on the same ground, and the dust and flies are awful. It is quite possible for one to contract Enteric or Dysentery here, and it must get monotonous after a while.

I have drawn a lot of kit from the Ordnance and join White's column this evening. We trek to-morrow for Lindley I believe.

JANUARY 14th. We marched at 9 a.m. and had to re-cross the drift and move past No.3 Hospital on to the same road which we trekked North to Pretoria and which we have gone once since. Then we turned off towards Lindley. We are to bring back the garrison of that place and burn it about 6 or 8 miles out. I got an officer with temp: 105 and probably Enteric. I sent him back in a Cape cart of ours and was lucky enough to get it back before 5 o'clock. I was afraid it would be bagged by the Boers. We have seen clouds of smoke all day in the direction of Lindley and it looks as though the garrison was burning it already. We have been sniped since 5 o'clock and have lost a horse and prisoner. We got into bivouac at 6-30 and it looks like a wet night. It blew a dust storm most of last night, filthy Kroonstad dust. It is quite a treat to be on clear veldt once more. I met a Capt. R.A. who knew me at Sangor, he was on a visit to McNeill's. Jeffcott is also with us. I think we are going straight back to Kroonstadt, I hope so, for then we may get our mails, I have wired all over the place for them.

JANUARY 15th. We marched at 5-30 and had not gone more than 500 yards before we were sniped. Pom pom spread a dozen shells along the ridge and they cleared. I never saw anything so pretty. We have been sniped on all sides the whole day and the guns have been very busy. I picked up 86 pom pom cases for the nurses at Kroonstadt. They are very keen on getting them. We had 2 15-prs. with the rear-guard and that rather sold the Boers. They are very cheeky. We had 2 slight casualties only. I picked up a very fine mare, she was slightly lame in one foot and was cast. She kept up with the column on her own account and as the lameness seemed to pass off I captured her. We bivouacked about 3 miles from Lindley, having got into helio communication with it.

JANUARY 16th. The smoke that we saw must have been a large signal fire. Lindley has not been burnt and we are not evacuating it at all. We were to have marched out at 6 o'clock, but when all was packed up we were told to stand fast for further orders. We re-pitched our tents and have been here all day. Nearly a gale of wind has been blowing all the time and it has been rather unpleasant in consequence. I did a great job on my old riding pants, putting in 2 leather knee strappings. The leather came from an old ambulance cushion. At 3 o'clock we got orders to send in all our sick etc. to Lindley. I am afraid we are going off in some other direction and not back to Kroonstad as we had hoped to. I have just discovered that I paid 2 native drivers £1 each too much when paying them up and discharging them at Kroonstadt. It is a beastly unnecessary sort of loss to have to suffer.

JANUARY 17th. Bruce Hamilton left Kroonstadt this morning with a large convoy for Lindley. We left at 5-30 a.m. and have gone back to where we camped the first night out from Kroonstadt. The country about there is rather bad and so we are to help him through. Apparently Lindley is not to be evacuated after all, and all the Boers who were seen moving towards that place yesterday in hopes of getting in to-day have got a sell. We saw very few to-day and there was very little fighting. I expect we shall be attached to Bruce Hamilton's force, but there is just a chance that we shall go back with the empty wagons to Kronstadt. I sincerely hope that we may so that I may get some letters. The merry snipers are just firing into our camp and the pom pom is barking at them. It is very annoying to be sniped at the end of a day's march, but great fun for the Boer youth who goes in for Rooienek shooting.

JANUARY 18th. The baggage remained in camp and most of the troops went out at 7 o'clock. I sent Webb with 2 ambulances and I had a peaceful day in camp. There was a fair amount of shooting heard, but, as usual, the target was only one or two Boers. No sign of the convoy yet, so I don't know whether we shall move to-morrow.

JANUARY 20th. We came across the wife and family of a man named Morgandal to-day. He had gone out from Kroonstadt to try and induce De Wet to surrender. One of De Wet's generals shot him through the chest and they left him on a farm. His wife reached him just before he died. It is a sad case. I pitched a tent for them and am lending them my Cape cart to go into Kroonstadt. They leave before we march in the morning.

Webb brought back a table, a pig, duck, and half a sack of apples.

I went out to-day with the foraging party and had an interesting time. I got half a dozen chickens, a chair, and over 200 Pom pom shells. I have about 400 now to delight the hearts of the sisters at Kroonstadt. We halted at a farm which had been burnt out last September. There are any number of such farms around here, but they have all had the roofing put on again and most are quite habitable. This woman's husband is with De Wet. We took all the mealies and chicken from these farms and scattered the wheat and corn over the veldt. I stayed with the rear-guard and it was rather fun. We had not left the farm more than 2 miles behind when the Boers began to go back to it. The Pom pom was waiting for them and loosed over 100 shells at them. They lay in a donga promptly and probably none were touched. Then as we retired our rear-guard, they trotted on to the crest of the next ridge, prepared to snipe. The Pom pom had retired meanwhile and shelled them as they appeared and our rearguard retired in perfect safety. At last they got sick of it and went home and so did we. I do not know what we are supposed to be doing here. The expected convoy has not turned up yet and we are on $\frac{5}{4}$ ration of groceries, at least the troops are. We never find ourselves short.

JANUARY 21st. We had to cross a bad drift in which was a quicksand. They had got into this and had to wait until some of our feet who had gone ahead to make the drift, found them and pulled them out.

I took them on a mile farther and we halted for breakfast, so gave them some too. They were awfully grateful. Then I found that we were not going into Kroonstadt, but to America Siding, 8 miles up the line. I sent a chit to Browne to send it up there and I also got a letter through by a runner to him. I hope to get to the railway early to-morrow, get rid of the sick, and get my cash and some letters. Lindley was evacuated to-day, and we didn't fire a shot; the Boers were all busy in Lindley I suppose. I had an inspection of the Yeomanry this afternoon and cast 8 for Hospital. One of the Officers of the 16th had his tent burned down and lost all his kit except a pair of trousers and a shirt.

JANUARY 22nd. We marched at 6-30 to America Siding, where I got a train stopped and put my sick into Kroonstadt 8 miles off. I got $4\frac{1}{2}$ doz. eggs on the way, also a sheep and lambs. I sent 2 dozen eggs to some of the Sisters, also a 200-lb sack of Pom pom shells, one sheep and 2 lambs. The empty shell cases are worth $2/6$ each; that is the actual value of the metal and work in them, so my sack was worth about £33 if one could find a market. The live shells cost $10/6$ each, and we think nothing of loosing off 25 at a time at one Boer. War is an expensive amusement. We are camping close to the line and I am anxiously looking out for our Cape cart and mails; I hope we don't move from here to-morrow.

JANUARY 24th. My cart came back by 7-30 a.m., but no more mails. Our orders were to stand fast and be ready to move at short notice. The result of this was that we couldn't leave camp or go into

Kroonstadt. Even up to 8-30 p.m. we didn't know where we were going. Then we marched across the line and headed for the North of Rhenoster Kop. News had come in that De Wet was playing about there, and we were off again on another useless trek. The 9th were attached to the force under Col. Melville and we acted as guard to an enormous convoy of mule and ox wagons. Within a couple of miles of camp we had to cross a spruit and we made another drift, enabling 2 lines of wagons to cross at the same time; from then it took us about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to get over. We trekked on till 8-45 and then halted. It was beastly work moving along in the dark across the veldt and no road, ant-holes all over the place. One couldn't help thinking what the result of half a dozen Mauser shots would be on a long line of transport, absolute panic I should say. However, we got in without accident. Orders were issued to march at 5 a.m., but were cancelled for us, the other force having to go on after De Wet. Heard to-day of the poor old Queen's death. I expect the worry of this war has shortened her days, but it is nice to think of her going out fairly quickly and not having a lingering end. We didn'y move until 2-30 p.m. and then only did 7 or 8 miles past Rhenoster Kop and bivouacked about 6-30 on a very nice farm. We got a very nice lot of horses here and I got a very fine Stallion pony. We noosed him in a kraal and threw him by strangulation. We had a couple of hours' exciting work with him, but he is securely tied to the wheel of a wagon and both his fore feet tied together. De Wet is said to have gone south and we probably march to Kroonstadt to-morrow.

JANUARY 25th. Marched at 6 a.m. and got to Kroonstadt about 10-30. The people at No. 3 were very pleased with the shells, etc., and I was greatly disappointed at not getting more mails, I made certain of getting some fresh ones. We crossed two drifts and camped about two miles from the town, expecting to march tomorrow at 5 a.m. for Ventersburg Road Station. Instead of that we got orders at 3-45 p.m. to march at 6 o'clock, this evening. I have just had to send 5 more sick to hospital.

JANUARY 26th. We marched till 8-45 p.m. last night and bivouacked at Boshrand for the 20th time. It looked like a fine night so I didn't have a tent pitched. At 2 a.m. I was wakened up by large drops of rain and it looked very black all round. I packed up my kit, dressed, and lay in an ambulance. The mules were tied on and they never ceased scratching and pulling so one didn't get a wink till morning. We marched at 5-30 down the line and had a long halt at 8-30. I took the lining out of my helmet, and the pugri off, and spent a couple of hours putting them on an old felt hat which I picked up on the field at Maggersfontein last September. The result is very good, and I have been able to cast the old helmet which was very battered and uncomfortable. We reached Ventersburg Road at 2-30 p.m., and had a grand bath etc. Then I got orders to arrange my ambulances and wagons so as to be able to detach half at a moment's notice. The idea is that the mounted portion of the force and guns may be ordered off at a moment's notice on a 4-days' trek. I have arranged for Webb to go on if it takes place. It looks like a heavy fall of rain to-night. I

got an old letter from Jess which has been following me since October last, although properly addressed. I had a very narrow escape of losing my Cape cart. The same lot of Boers which stopped the woman on her way out, stopped them going back and wanted to know where they had got the second cart. They made them outspan, but hearing firing they cleared off, and after half an hour the people went on. I went to see them yesterday, they are relatives of Steyn and Botha and are aristocrats in their way. They were awfully grateful for our help.

JANUARY 27th & 28th. We left Ventersburg Road at 5 o'clock and got to Ventersburg about 11 o'clock. There was no opposition. I got a feed of ripe figs on the road. I went and saw the family the son-in-law of which ^{had} Phthisis, and whom I attended last time I was here: I never saw such an improvement in anyone. They were very glad to see me. There had been a large meeting of Boers in the town last Friday, and De Wet and 12 men were off to the Colony, and the Commandoes were to return to their own districts. This of course is the best thing they can do. 40 or 50 men to their own districts, living on their own farms with wife and children can go with this sort of game for months, whereas large bodies would be unwieldy, and liable to be broken up by us. We went on at 2 p.m. and pulled up at a place called Kool Spruit. We got in at 5-30 and had a bath, and tent pitched and were looking forward to a good night's rest. At 6-30 orders were sent that we were to march at 8-30. It looked very threatening and we felt we were in for a

storm. We were supposed to march about 12 miles, and strike the Zand River at a place named Hilpmakaar. About 11 o'clock the storm burst. The Column was halted at once; I pulled off the road, formed up the wagons and got into an ambulance. Fortunately I had my waterproof out and an old umbrella. The lightning was perfectly awful. A horse was killed and one flash came so close to me that I thought I had been struck. I tingled all over. The ambulance cover leaked and I found the stretcher full of water. The rain was too continuous to think of a bed or tent, so I pushed a mackintosh sheet across the roof, emptied the water off the stretcher, spread a folded blanket on it, and lay down in my waterproof. I dozed till 5 o'clock and then we got up and had some hot coffee. The Boers were quite close to us just before the storm, and 40 were seen crossing the drift just before we got to it. What would have happened if they had attacked us during the storm I can't imagine. I hate these night marches with large convoys. Just out of camp I found a fine buck wagon which belonged to us. It was minus a wheel and a disselboom, but otherwise was in good order. As there would be a delay of a couple of hours at this drift I fitted a disselboom and a wheel to it, greased the wheels and transferred the load from my old wagon and abandoned it. It was a most useful find. We halted for an hour at 9 o'clock while another drift was being crossed, and again from 11 till 4. This drift took all this time to get the wagons across and was quite one of the worst I have yet met with. I got about a pound of very nice butter and some eggs at a farm near this place. We got into

bivouac at 6 p.m., and got orders to march to Winburg and entrain to-morrow. We have collected a very fine herd of cattle and ponies in the last 5 days. Some of the very best. Milch cattle and enormous trek oxen. I had 2 cows caught and milked when we got in. We are not marching till 6-30 a.m. so one ought to get a good night. We got some ripping apples to-day.

JANUARY 29th. We marched at 6-30 a.m. and got to Winburg about 10-30. I sent a wire off to Kroonstadt at once for our mails. Our column has been busy entraining to-day, but we shan't get off till to-morrow evening. Knox has been very busy all day fighting the Boers near Boxburg, they are entrenched there and number about 1500. They have been freely dosed with Lyddite and at 6-30 p.m. they are still getting it hot. The armoured train is just off in front of two trains boarded with men and animals. We don't know where we are going yet.

JANUARY 30th. We heard that the trains were at Smalldeel at 8 o'clock this morning, but didn't hear whether the delay was this side or the other. White's orders when he left here were to detrain at Bloemfontein, but by the time we reached there, it would probably be known that De Wet & Co. were beyond that place, and so they would most likely go further down the line. Bruce Hamilton's force entrained at Smalldeel yesterday, and as no trains have arrived to-day to take the rest of the column, it looks as though they had all gone lower down the line than Bloemfontein. We can't march as we have only 100 Infantry to escort the guns so here we

must remain till they send trains for us. The 16th, and Yeomanry, and 2 Pom poms will probably take part in the new pursuit, and with any luck we shall escape it. I got a box put into a ^{new} wheel for my buck wagon and also got the fore carriage of one of my ambulances repaired at a local shop in the town. They made a splendid job of the ambulance and it ought to last for a long time now. The bill was £2.15.0. and I have sent it to the Ordnance Officer to pay.

L----- a Captain of the 16th Lancers and who has been stationed here with his squadron since November last dined with us last night. He is a great pal of mine. He had a brand new Cape cart which was taken from a farm close by and was anxious to change it for one which has come from another district, so that the former owner couldn't claim it possibly later on. I swapped my buggy for it, and I now have a more roomy and more comfortable vehicle. We started to change our camp to one nearer town, at 3 p.m. It looked very threatening and we made haste, and just got our tent up before the storm broke. We were on the slope of a hill and our shallow trench was no use. The rain fell in torrents and came right under the curtains. We put our kit on chairs and tables and lay on our beds. We had to lift the curtain on the lower side and let the water escape, for at one time we had a foot deep there. When it ceased we made a dam to divert the upper water and deepened our trench. There is lots more rain about, but I think we shall be alright.

JANUARY 31st. At 9 a.m. this morning we heard that we were to entrain. We went by the second train which came out from Smalldeel

and got away about 4-30 p.m. It was a big job getting our 80 mules and ponies into the wagons; some walked in like lambs, but some jumped right across the wooden platform, and some jumped clean into the truck. Our buck wagons and ambulances were loaded for us by shouting niggers. I had my bed made down in one of the ambulances and my kit and food box put in also. We got to Smalldeel about 7-50 p.m. and to my great disgust found no mails there for us. I sent a letter on to Wade-Brown telling him that we were going South and asking him to hold on to any which may turn up. It is a most curious thing that we can't get our letters in spite of all the trouble I take. I shall write again to-morrow. We were told that we had to go on and didn't relish the prospect at all. We reached Brandfort about 11 p.m., and the O.C. Lines of Communication, Colonel Napier, told us that a report had come in to the effect that Boers were near the line near Karee, and gave orders for all to be on the alert, but keep under cover. We had about 50 armed men on board. I got under the ambulance so that I might have the protection of a two-inch plank which formed the side of the truck. It was a very jumpy time for the next 7 miles, but nothing happened. Then I got into the ambulance again and dozed till we reached Bloemfontein at 2 a.m.

JANUARY 31st and FEBRUARY 1st. Here we were told that we had to go probably to Bethulie. We travelled very quickly during the night and at 7-30 a.m. were 2 hours from Springfontein. We halted by the roadside to let a train pass and managed to feed the animals,

and got some coffee for ourselves. We passed thousands of cattle at various places on the line, and also herds of horses being driven along. We hear that we may go to De Aar or Norval's Pont, or Bethulie.

FEBRUARY 1st. We were detained at Springfontein from 10-30 a.m. till 2 p.m., then we got away. There was a train close in front of us, and another 2 just behind. The trains were unequally loaded, so that they gained or lost distance. About 4 o'clock we got near Bethulie. Just outside the town there were some very steep inclines and one very sharp curve through a cutting. All of a sudden our train came to a full stop just as it was rounding the curve at a fair speed. I was sitting in an ambulance on a stretcher, so didn't feel the shock. The wagon jumped forwards about 3 feet. We realised that there had been a collision and ran forwards. We found that our train had run into the one just in front. A sentry had seen the danger and warned the driver who put on his brake and reduced the speed considerably, but couldn't bring her up. Right in the rear was an open truck with about a dozen men. This was thrown off the rails to the left, and only one man hurt. The guard's van was completely smashed and a cattle truck full of horses also smashed and thrown to the right. In the guard's van were a guard, a railway Doctor, an Officer and 8 men. The Doctor heard the whistle of alarm and jumped out of the door which fortunately was open; the guard followed his example and then ran down the cutting. The others were caught in the smash and two men were killed instantly and crushed under the van. The Officer had his skull

fractured, but we got him out alive and conscious. He only lived about an hour. We got 3 horses out alive and sound, the others were killed or had to be shot. Then a large fatigue party of Infantry was put on to clear the wreckage and we got through about 5 o'clock. By this time there was a tremendous conjection of the line. All trains were waiting at Springfontein, and others coming down from the North. We managed to get detrained and fixed up by 12-30 p.m. We slept close to the Railway and trains were coming and going all night so that we didn't get much rest. The poor mules must have been glad to get out, for they had had no water for about 32 hours.

FEBRUARY 2nd. Up at 5-30 and got things a bit straight. At 10 o'clock we moved across the line where a lot of our Brigade were. I was asked for one of our buck wagons to carry kits on, but managed to keep it on condition that I carried the great-coats for the infantry. We had just finished re-packing the wagons when I got orders to hand over one Buck-wagon and leave two ambulances and spare kit behind. Evidently we are going to make a rush somewhere, and they are at their wits end for transport for food. All the supply wagons of our column are somewhere on the railway. I expect the rush will end as all the others did, in failure, for De Wet has hitherto managed to do pretty well what he wanted. It is frightfully hot here to-day, and one gets a tremendous thirst.

FEBRUARY 3rd. Another hot day and we are still here. I hear that there are about 25,000 mounted men about here, and that De Wet was

at De Wet's Dorp this morning, and halted there. It looks as though our concentration here had put him off coming this way. He will probably turn off in some other direction now. There were no arrangements here for reception or transfer of sick, so young Webb who wished to stay has been sent to run the place and I am alone once more.

FEBRUARY 4th. We have marched to Slick Spruit to-day, a distance of about 8 miles on the Smithfield Road, and we had to get up at 4 a.m. to do it. We got here about 7-30 a.m. and have had an easy day in camp. This is the place where De Wet attacked a convoy of ours when he was trying to cross the Orange River. We have passed over this ground before, and there is nothing to be had, no chickens, eggs, sheep, or even grass for the animals. I hear that we are likely to stop here for a day or two and then go to one of the drifts on the Caledon River close by. I am not sorry to be on the trek once more, for I have had no fresh meat since we got to Winburg. I got a ripping undercut this evening for dinner. I am now all alone - and it isn't at all pleasant, though I suppose one will get used to it. I managed to get permission to take another ambulance with me. The Yeomanry Officers haven't got their mess carts yet which were left at Winburg, and even Colonel White hasn't got his wagon, bed or tent. I have lent him a tent. It looks very like rain this evening. Bethulie was the hottest place I have struck yet out here.

FEBRUARY 5th. We didn't march to-day. It has been most unpleasant

here, constant squalls, the air quite still for a few minutes, and then a tremendous gust which sends the dust flying over everything. We had a sharp shower about 5 p.m. and that ought to make things more pleasant. I have been reading Miss Corelli's new book to-day, "The Master Christian"; it is very clever I think. The 16th Lancers have a good many books among them, so one will not feel so lonely now with something to pass the time away. We sent some wagons into Bethulie this evening and I was glad of the chance of sending a case of enteric fever in. I heard a few days ago that Cronje had sent most of his horses away from Maggersfontein to graze in the Free State because the grass was so bad in the former place. He was advised not to, but was obstinate. He was told that Roberts was to relieve Kimberley on a certain date, but thought that he was bound to stick to the line and get through Maggersfontein. This would explain to some extent why he stayed in the bed of the Modder. They couldn't escape on foot; and also explains why we saw so very few dead horses in the laager. There ought to have been 4000 at least, but probably 6000. I was also told that the Boers had our cypher and could read all the messages which were sent into Kimberley at night by sky-flashing.

FEBRUARY 6th. We marched at 5-30 a.m. I only took one ambulance and my Cape cart. All the wagons &c. remained at Slik Spruit. It was beastly marching in the dark. We got about 5 miles along the Smithfield Road and then the Lancers and guns halted. The Yeomanry went on with a Pom pom to a place named Willoughby, 4 miles farther

on. I had to go with them. We saw a few Boers and ought to have bagged 5 or 6 who went into a farm quite close to where we were concealed behind some kopjes. The Yeomanry, instead of stalking the farm quietly, made a dash at it, and the Boers hearing the clatter got away, leaving three horses behind. We remained there doing nothing till 4-30 p.m. and then went back to where the Lancers were. Someone had seen about 300 Boers near us, or thought they had, so we had to stay where we were. I had brought my bedding and food on the Cape cart and with what we had in the wagon we did alright.

FEBRUARY 7th. We remained here all day doing nothing. Bruce Hamilton came out in the afternoon with a squadron and pom-pom and went out to Willoughby, but nothing happened. I got my wagon and ambulances out in the evening. There are rumours that this column is to be broken up. It is not large enough to go after large bodies of Boers, and De Wet is supposed to be about 35 miles from us, on this road, with 2500 men.

FEBRUARY 8th. Still on this farm doing nothing. There was a chance of a night march but it didn't come off. I had my bedstead put up in an ambulance and got a good sleep. I had my A.S.C. groom tried by Scouts Martial this morning. He was a lazy, insolent fellow and I was getting rid of him to one of the pom-pom sections under a chap who would have stirred him up. He refused to go, and of course there was nothing else to do but to try him for it.

FEBRUARY 9th. We marched at 4 a.m. to reconnoitre the road to

within 18 miles of Smithfield. At 2-30 a.m. I was awake and heard some pom pom and 15-pr. firing in the direction of the line from Springfontein to Bethulie. We didn't meet any Boers to-day and passed where they had had a big laager, but as usual, they had cleared out 2 days ago. I got a lot of eggs to-day also 2 sheep which we brought back in one of the ambulance wagons. We had a halt of a couple of hours from 9-30 a.m. and then began to march homewards. About 2 o'clock we were halted by heliograph and told to wait for orders. These came after half an hour by helio from Bruce Hamilton, and we were told to go back to Slik Spruit where we would find rations and orders. It was a long march and we didn't get in till 6-30 p.m. The road was too rough to ride in the Cape cart and so I have been the whole day in the saddle. 4-30 a.m. till 6-30 p.m. is rather a long day. I got some potatoes and a couple of chicken on the way home, so am all right in the food line for a while.

10th FEBRUARY. We marched at 6 a.m. and got to Bethulie at 10 o'clock. Passed a fine orchard and got a nosebag of peaches nearly ripe. We halted for 2 hours and I got a ripping lunch of fricasse of spring chicken and new potatoes and fresh bread. I got back Webb's Cape cart and mules and driver - also my Corporal whom I had left with him. Webb went to Springfontein this morning for duty, I suppose at the General Hospital there, under Col. Allen. I hope he will enjoy the change. He will get work enough to please him at any rate, though he won't have the independent charge which

his soul seemed to yearn for. We left at noon and have come about 17 or 18 miles along the road towards the Norval's Pont line, and are at present 7 miles from Prior Siding on that line. The road was fairly good so I came most of to-day's journey in my Cape cart and have had a pleasant time in the shade reading Churchill's book on the war. It has been very hot, but I only got out to superintend the catching of some lambs, so have come in quite fresh and not a bit bored by the 28 miles. I was a big ass not to travel like this before. No General Hospital for me if I can help it.

FEBRUARY 11th. We marched at 5 a.m. and got to the line by 8-30. We have remained here all day waiting for a train of supplies which we are to escort to Phillipolis. I believe we were to march at 8 p.m. but then we got orders to march at 11 p.m. and so are in for another night march. At 7 o'clock we got a sack of mails including the chocolate, 4 of yours, and a lot of papers etc. We have seen lots of trains going up and down and the men always ran for the passenger ones and got papers. The latest was the Cape Argus of Feb. 9th so we were lucky in getting such late news.

FEBRUARY 12th. We marched all night and over very hilly country and bad roads. I managed to doze for a little while in a wagon but it jolted frightfully. At 7 a.m. we halted for 2 hours and got breakfast and rested the animals. Then on again to Phillipolis. We halted there from 12 till 2 o'clock, and then marched in a storm. The dust was fearful and soon we had a heavy shower which made things pleasant. We went on till 6-30 p.m. and then finding that

we were 12 miles from the drift, and prospect of heavy rain, we halted. I was afraid that he would march again when the moon gets up, but thank goodness we remain here till 5 a.m. to-morrow. Everyone is very tired and wants a good sleep badly.

FEBRUARY 15th. We marched at 5 a.m. and didn't get the rain which threatened. At 7 o'clock we were halted and told to wait for orders. We heard that the river was in flood and that we should have to go back to Phillipolis and then on to the Colesburg Drift. At 11 o'clock we were ordered to move on this drift, it having been found that the river was falling - and Bruce Hamilton was crossing. We moved on and descended to the level of the river by a very steep pass which was cut in the side of a hill. The scenery round here is very wild. De Wet took 3 days in crossing this drift and we only found it out on the 3rd day. Knox is after him, but we must be miles behind. I rode on to the drift and saw a most extraordinary sight. About half of Hamilton's force had got across and the rest was on this side. The river is very broad here. Numbers of dead mules were lying in the stream, drowned by Knox and De Wet in crossing. 24 span of oxen were drawing each ox wagon across and naked soldiers and blacks were in the water with long whips trying to get them to pull. The water on the far side was nearly on a level with the animals' backs - and so you can imagine how wet the contents of the carts were getting. We are halted, and probably all won't get across to-morrow. The sky looks very black and if much rain falls we shan't get across for days. -

One of my new men who is a bit of a carpenter is trying to mend it now. We had a lot of rain to-day and it made the going very heavy, and may have to climb this terrible pass and go back to Phillipolis. Meanwhile De Wet is doing whatever he wants. He had a number of Scouts out, and our natives and people couldn't get near him I suppose to watch his movements.

FEBRUARY 14th. De Wet was halted here for 2 days and it took him 2 days to cross and we couldn't find it out. He hid his men and wagons amongst the trees as they got over. A few men could have easily prevented the passage and if we had got behind him with a high river in front, he could have been bagged. We got across the river quite easily at 9 o'clock. I put a lot of kit in the ambulances, so as to distribute the weight. I emptied my Cape cart and crossed in it. The water at one place came over the wheels and half-way up the seat, but I managed to keep dry. I took a couple of photos in mid-stream. When we got to the other side we found a bank almost perpendicular to get up and all deep sand. It was quite the worst drift I had yet seen and beat the famous De Kiel's Drift over the Reit River, which we crossed on the way to Kimberley. I managed to get up with the help of some Infantry, and White's column started at once. We had an awful road at first and any number of drifts which crossed branches of the Orange River. One of my ambulances took a plunge and broke part of the fore-carriage.

One of my new men who is a bit of a carpenter is trying to mend it now. We had a lot of rain to-day and it made the going very heavy. We heard a lot of firing early this morning. We march at 5 o'clock to-morrow, we could not get over the river now I'm sure, it was rising as we crossed.

FEBRUARY 15th. We were supposed to march at 5 and it was another getting up in the dark. The ambulance was quite strong now. The roads were frightfully heavy, and it has been a very heavy day for the mules. We had a halt from 11 till 1-30 and then moved into Phillipstown. We marched through and then it was contemplated sending us on another 16 miles. There is only one feed left for the animals to-morrow, and half a feed for the mules, and we have about 35 miles to go to De Aar. There is plenty of groceries and biscuits and meat, but no forage for the animals. It looks very like rain to-night and if it falls we shall be in a proper fix. They may send us straight across country to Hout Kraal, but I should say it would be simplest to send out a convoy of oats to meet us half way. I have 80 lbs. surplus in each wagon and got 100 lbs on the quiet last night, so our animals will be all right. My late groom has got 11 months' imprisonment with Hard Labour and will have to put it in in Cape Town. I'm sorry for him, but he practically asked for a Court Martial. If he had said he was sorry next morning when he was brought in front of me, I would probably have torn up his crime.

After about an hour it was decided to keep us here. I had a wash and shave at a pool of rain-water while waiting. We were

on a nice piece of ground but they marched us about a mile and got the whole force on to a low-lying piece of ground which will be a swamp as soon as it rains.

FEBRUARY 16th. The rain did not come, fortunately, and we have come along good, hard and dry roads. We are not to go to De Aar but to the nearest point on the railway, and probably on to De Aar to-morrow. We shall have done about 35 miles by the end of our journey.

FEBRUARY 17th. We got into De Aar in the dark last night about 8 o'clock. The animals were very done, and instead of getting hay for them there was nothing but hard oats. A good many were much too done up to eat the oats. My animals were fairly fit thanks to the feed (extra) which I managed to have on the wagons. We halt here to-day and draw fresh animals. The authorities have at last managed to have a supply of animals, so that we handed in a number of horses which were done up and wanted a few weeks' rest and draw others instead of these.

FEBRUARY 18th. We expected to halt here to-day, but at 2 p.m. we got orders to march and have come about 10 miles towards Batstown.

FEBRUARY 19th. We got a sudden order at 8 p.m. to march at 5 a.m. At the time I was feeding and one of the C.M.R. Officers was eating a bowl of arrowroot in my tent and talking over old times. He was one of the Colonial Division which was with me at that time at Quaggersfontein and he told me what a plight they were in the night

of my capture. He said that they made a very early march, probably on account of the information I had sent in and by daylight were well clear of the boggy ground in which the Boers expected them to stick. He promised to post some letters for me, so I shall catch the next mail. It poured during the night and the roads were in a frightful condition. We were to march at 5 and were supposed to be at a place 22 miles on in $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours. This was obviously quite impossible. The Yeomanry had gone on at 9 o'clock last night and were to make for this place. They must have had a horrible time of it. We got on the wrong road at first and were delayed about 2 hours in a bog. Finally we got clear, and after 6 miles all the baggage etc. was halted, and I, with the ambulances and a Cape cart accompanied the mounted part of the force and went forward. The roads were still very wet and so I put 2 more mules on the front of my Cape cart. I met Dunlop who used to command the 3rd F.B. at Sangor. He is now a Colonel and arrived in the country 10 days ago. He looked so smart in his new clothes. We had the 3rd. D. Guards, who also came out at the same time, and it was very funny to watch the behaviour of the officers and men, and compare the way they worked, with the way the older troops do. Some were perpetually counting kopjes which we had just passed, or were passing, looking for Boers, as if they expected to find any there; I suppose they will learn in time, but will lose a good many men first. About 200 Boers were seen during the day, but we never came up to them. At 3 o'clock we reached a farm where 500 Boers had been for the last 2 days. Our advanced lot got here about 1 o'clock.

having done 22 miles over heavy country. The enemy were quite fresh and off they went. They smashed the threshing machinery which they found here and said "No doubt the British Government would pay for it. They were under George Brand, son of the late President O.F.S.

Our supplies and the rest of my wagons did not arrive till next morning at 5 o'clock. There is lots of wheat in the straw here, and so the horses get something to fill their tummies. Its an awful sin to see the beautiful English horses all tucked up. They have not had a single day's rest since they came off the ship 10 days ago; and here they are, expected to do a hard day's work. There won't be one left in about a month, and each one costs fully £100 landed here. One would think that by this time our people would have had hundreds of horses waiting, all ready and fit for use, but the hand-to-mouty system still goes on.

FEBRUARY 20th. I slept under my big ground sheet stretched between an ambulance wheel and my Cape cart wheel. The other columns began to arrive about midnight and disturbed one's rest. My remaining wagons arrived at 5-30 and at 6-30 we were off again. We have not seen any Boers. We got an issue of 2 sheep this evening. The troops got one for every 20 men. The 16th Lancers killed theirs near my bivouac and left all the heads on the skins. I collected them for my boys and cut out the tongues. I have about 20. I also got a nice chicken and a couple of eggs. Thomson and I had a nice swim in the big dam near where we are encamped.

FEBRUARY 21st. We marched at 6-30 and kept on till 3 o'clock. A

scout of ours came in sight of the Boer rear guard of 500 men. They were off-saddle and their ponies were grazing. He galloped back three miles to tell us and the 16th galloped after them. They were too late to get into them although some firing took place. The main body is about 1000 strong and Brand and Hertzog are with them. I heard that the latter only got 30 recruits altogether - 500 have re-crossed the Orange River at Marks and Kamel Drift, and our lot are apparently making their way also.

This is a fearful desert of a country, the farms are of enormous size and the ground is all stones and doesn't even grow decent Karoo. There is nothing but low thorn bushes, so sharp that the horses won't walk through them. Our rations are all gone this evening but a Convoy is expected.

FEBRUARY 22nd. We got a little food only from the convoy last night. The mules are to-night on 4 lbs. of oats (for 24 hours) and the horses on 5 lbs. We are in a desert and there is no grazing for English horses at any rate, so you can imagine how big gun horses are getting on. The men are on half rations and there is no sugar at all. We left at 6 a.m. and crossed the river. Although we knew that we were to do this there was no attempt made last night to improve it by cutting banks away and filling in stones into the soft sand. The result was a delay of about two hours in crossing. We were expected to do 35 miles, but thank goodness we stopped after about 18. We met no water for the whole distance except one puddle about 3 miles back. It is an awful desert and the heat has been very bad and the road or track sandy and heavy

in places. It has been one of the most uncomfortable days we have had. My sick have increased to 20 and I rigged up an awning over a buck wagon to carry some of them to-day. There is no chance of getting rid of any of them at present. I heard a Tommy say to another to-day - "The Boers must have thought that they were in a promised land when they got into the Free State after trekking through this desert", and I quite agree with him. The sooner we are back there the better.

FEBRUARY 23rd. We marched at 3-30 a.m. We had settled down yesterday anyhow thinking that we were only halting for a couple of hours. Then it turned out that we were halting for the night. The result was that different units were mixed up anyhow, and when it came to getting out of camp in the dark, the confusion was awful. It also meant that we were up at 2 a.m., and considering that ^{some of} our troops didn't have their food cooked till 10 or 11 o'clock it comes very hard on them.

Our Brigade and Maxwell's remained hopelessly mixed up till 8 o'clock when we watered. We then found that we could have gone on in the direction we were marching yesterday and found lots of water about 3 miles farther on from the place where we turned off to the river and this would have saved us a useless trek of 6 miles. Our intelligence as usual was rotten. After watering we separated and Maxwell went in front. We halted from 11-30 till 4 p.m. Then we moved on again till 8 o'clock. The road was very bad and we couldn't have done less than 28 or 30 miles. Got into bivouac in the dark on awful ground, full of stones and thorn bushes. Our wagons

didn't arrive till 9 o'clock and it was about 10 before I got to bed. No time to pitch a tent and it was frightfully hot and thundery - threatening rain. The Boers are supposed to have gone back again, but I don't think they would be quite mad enough to trek back over a desert which has taken us 5 days of marching to cover - and in which there is no food for the horses. We passed the place where they halted a couple of days ago and found lots of entrails of sheep, empty beer bottles and salmon and sardine tins; evidently they are well supplied with luxuries. I feel utterly weary and sick of the whole show to-night. This is the hardest trek we have had, and it is piteous to listen to the mules shrieking for food and their allowance only 2 lbs. a day. One wouldn't mind if we are to do any good, but it will end as all the other treks have, and here we are getting worn out. We lost 68 horses and 16 mules on to-day's trek alone.

I am filthy and can't get time to have my clothes washed.

FEBRUARY 24th. We were to march at 5 a.m. and after getting all ready were told that we were to march at 6. This is the sort of senseless treatment which takes the heart out of us. We have only 9 miles to do into Strydenburg to-day and they made us do 30 yesterday instead of dividing the distance more evenly. Maxwell's column has had no food for animals for the last 2 days and the men have very little. The Boers were through Strydenburg a couple of days ago, so there won't be much left for us. We hope to find a convoy of food waiting there for us. I had a rotten night's rest. About 11 o'clock another column passed through our camp making a

beastly row, then it was frightfully hot and threatened rain - so I feel a bit of a worm this morning. I wish we could get away from Bruce Hamilton. He makes things frightfully and needlessly uncomfortable. We got to Strydenburg about 11 o'clock. The Boers cleared out this morning and are hanging about some kopjes. Some supplies (3 days) were put on wagons back at Klip Drift about 3 days ago. The columns changed direction and so they lost us. They have been wandering about the veldt ever since and were quite given up at 3 p.m. to-day. All our mails were on them. However, they have been sighted, and are now coming in. This alters all our plans. We were to have marched to the line for food: now we go after the Boers on 3 days' rations which will probably be turned into six. All our sick are going in to-morrow and I shall send off a mail. The Boers looted everything here in style. Our horses etc. are in a shocking state, but our maniac of a General still goes on. It's great luck that the Boers didn't bag those wagons. I had a nice quiet day for washing and mending.

FEBRUARY 25th. We marched at 6-30 a.m. I got rid of all my sick. They went to the line by the ox wagons. About 9 o'clock last night Thompson sent for some Chloroform. I went with the messenger and found four doctors operating on an officer of Rimington's Scouts who had been wounded that morning. I lent a hand and got back to bed at about 10 o'clock. He and another fellow have been following De Wet for many weeks disguised as Burghers and have sent a good deal of valuable information back to us.

Yesterday one of them was in advance of 6 of Rimington's

and came across a Boer who was holding 6 horses near some kopjes. He engaged him in conversation till the others came near, and then told him to "hands up". He did so, and five of them then proceeded to mount the kopje and rush the five Boers who were on top. Each closed with his man and there was no shooting. A big Boer had one of our fellows down and was choking him, so another let go his man and blew his brains out. The released man got his rifle and started shooting. He shot 2 officers (the spies) and a man. One officer was shot twice through the chest and his rifle taken from him. He sat up and drawing a revolver killed two men and wounded another. This enabled the rest of our fellows to bag the remained. It is the best thing I have heard of for a long time and it will probably get the V.C.

We didn't get our mails after all. There has been some wretched blundering, and they are probably on some other convoy. It is very sickening. It was arranged that we should go after the Boers, but after we started, we were sent to the line and are on our way there. Brand and Hertzog passed here yesterday and are to cross the railway line to-night. We are done up and quite helpless. The country has been much better to-day and we have seen some grass, also some enormous dams fed by springs. The soil is very chalky in places but mostly orange and sandy.

FEBRUARY 26th. We marched at 5-30 a.m. and reached Botfontein which is two stations above De Aar. Here we are still waiting for supplies and remounts and may be here for 2 or 3 days. De Wet

crossed the line quite close to this place, and Thorneycroft just arrived by train too late to take him on. We have heard several rumours of guns and prisoners having been taken but don't know if true or not. I hear that the King is going to give a medal as well as the late Queen and so we shall have 2 ribbons and I shall have at least 5 clasps and perhaps six. The colonies are very likely to give one to the Colonial troops, and after all the fighting that the Imperial troops have done in Natal and Cape Colony it is very likely that they will offer it to us. Whether the War Office will allow its acceptance is of course another question. I hear that lots of people are coming out again, most likely the new medal will fetch them.

FEBRUARY 27th. I dined with the 9th Lancers last night. Campbell says that he is a great friend of Beevor's and will write him to-day and tell him to do his best for me in getting one of the police billets. Got another mail last night but it still leave 6 overdue. We are still here at the line. I had a look at the armoured train which was principally engaged the other day when we got De Wet's wagons near Southwall. They have 2 naval 12-pdr. quick-firing guns and although each weighs 12 cwt. they are so perfectly balanced that they can be traversed and worked as easily as an ordinary rifle. There is a small trigger which has an electric attachment and can explode the charge - and seven shots a minute can be fired. It's a funny thing, but this is the only train which is armed with these guns, although there are lots of them at Cape Town, and their superiority over other weapons is

manifest. The railway has been very busy all day, trains running up and down. At 2-45 p.m. we got orders to march at 3-30 and only just then did a train-load of supplies arrive for us. We got away by 4 o'clock and have come about 12 miles. Bruce Hamilton is expected to join us to-night.

26th FEBRUARY: I was roused at 1-30 a.m. by an officer of Bruce Hamilton's staff who had just arrived with orders, and was looking for White. Soon afterwards we got orders to march at 6 a.m. We were ready at this time but didn't move till 7-30. Shocking waste of time. We might have had it in bed, and the poor mules and horses were standing all the time. We only came about six miles and bivouacked at 10-30. We probably march again at 5-30 p.m. and it is clouding up for rain. I got your letter (registered) of Jan. 18th this afternoon. That leaves 5 mails still owing. We are heading towards Phillipstown, and are probably helping De Wet to be hemmed in between the railway line and the Orange River. If only the river would come down in flood for a week or so, we might get him this time. Kitchener seems pleased with the operations I hear, and I suppose we have played our little part, though at the time it seemed as though we were engaged in fruitless marching and counter-marching. We certainly caused Brand and Hertzog's Commandos to trek from Strydenburg to the other side of the railway line in one march.

MARCH 1st. It rained very heavily from 4 till 5 p.m. yesterday, so we didn't march. The rain came along the floor of my tent, but

I was on a bed and my kit on table and chair, so it didn't matter. The floor was awfully soft after it, but a few sacks thrown down made that all right. We marched at 5-30 through Hills and the road at first was very bad. We passed a nice farm and I got butter, a cabbage, onions, beets and some ripping grapes, about 4 lbs. for sixpence. We got to Phillipstown at 11 o'clock and were halting till 3 p.m., so I had a tent pitched and had a ripping lunch, to which I asked Wynne of the 9th and Montgomery of the R.A., an awfully nice chap. We all had a great tuck-in. We didn't reach our bivouac for the night till 8-30 and we have done about 30 miles. We heard that De Wet had crossed with a few men, but they must have swum the river. A Boer from his lot came in and surrendered to-day. He said that they had nothing to eat but Biltong, and that their horses were done. It must be a great blow to De Wet to lose every wagon, cart and gun which he brought over, and all his reserve ammunition, and to have to get back by swimming. I bet he never tries the same game again. We don't march till 7 a.m. to-morrow, so I shall get a long night's sleep.

MARCH 2nd. Marched at 7 o'clock and went on till 1-30 p.m. Very hot and trying day. Then we halted till 4-30 and came to within 4 miles of Colesburg. It was funny to see Colenkop, and McGracked Hill, and Suffolk Hill once more. To-morrow we march to Colesburg Junction and entrain for some place on the line, north. So we shall soon be back in the Free State once more. I shall go and look up Wilson, the parson who lived with us last year. He is the Rector of Colesburg.

MARCH 5th. We didn't move last night, but the whole of the supply column was entrained. This morning I went into Colesburg and saw the Wilsons. He got me two loaves of beautiful bread and some note paper and envelopes, and rode out to camp with me. We entrained this afternoon and all are ready to start, but shan't get away probably till midnight. While waiting in the station I saw about 30 Free State prisoners who were captured the other day by the Australians near the Orange River. They formed part of De Wet's rear-guard. Among them were two fellows who had held me up that time when I was bringing the Bodyguard wounded to Heilbron. We had a long talk and they seem quite satisfied that they had been captured. One of them had written me a pass saying to save me from being stopped after I had left them. They complained greatly about the Australians having taken all their money from them, but they forgot that they have always done that to our fellows. Among them were 6 armed kaffirs. They said that they didn't get a single recruit in the Colony. Most of these were of the Heilbron Commando. I got one letter by the mail to-day but not yours. Some more have come in since so yours may be amongst them. I have my bedstead put up in an ambulance, and my Cape cart and the water-cart are on the same truck. I have lots of room to move about in the truck and shall be very comfortable. We have to go up to Springfontein, and then on to Bethulie, and from there to Burghersdorp, and then up to Aliwal.

MARCH 6th. We were shunted on to the line which runs to Colesburg

about 9 o'clock and remained there till 5 o'clock this morning. It took us till 12 noon to get to Naauwpoort, and here we have been all day. I have managed to water and feed the animals, and so they are not suffering very much. There seems to be a tremendous block on the line. The track is a single one and trains must wait at sidings to pass. I don't know when we shall reach our journey's end at the rate we are travelling at present..

MARCH 7th. It was bitterly cold last night and a strong wind blowing. Fortunately we don't travel at night, or the cold would be awful. We got away at 6 a.m. and have been travelling all day and have just got to Stormburg. At Steynsburg I got food for a lot of mules who were travelling with an officer. I had previously stopped at Thebus and had them all watered, and lent some of my own food for them. The poor devils had had no water for two days, and their shrieks when we passed water on the side of the line were pitiful. However I filled them up with food and watered them all again about 6 o'clock just before we got into Stormburg. The country has been pretty all day - nice grass veldt and lots of water. The change in the temperature as soon as the sun goes down is most marked. All the bridges are guarded along this line as well. There is not the same congestion along this as along the main line, and we get along faster. I passed one place where over two miles of the line had been washed away about a month ago by the rain. I never thought it would take us three days in the train to come this journey.

We got to Stormburg about 7-30 p.m. It was most

frightfully cold and a strong wind blowing. The garrison was in a state of alarm and I was told that they expected to hear that my train had been wrecked by the Boers. There are about 400 prowling about near that place and the line was being threatened. We met a large patrol of Tommies close to the line about 4 miles out. I was expecting a nice dinner at Stormburg, but the Refreshment room was shut and everyone gone away. However, we soon had a fire and I made a very good meal of coffee and bully. Then we were told that we were going on. My wagon would have had the tail facing the engine, so I had it taken out and turned round the other way. We didn't get farther than Albert Junction during the night, and when I got up I found that 4 trucks of my mules had been detached and left behind somewhere. I expect our train was too long for the sidings. I left some boys and my groom behind to come along with the train as soon as it comes up and to water them if necessary.

We got to Aliwal North about 11 o'clock, but it was 1 o'clock before we got detrained and away from the station. Our mules had arrived before us. We crossed the river and encamped on the other side, so we are once again in the Free State. I am on the top of a hill and have a grand view. Aliwal is a very pretty and thriving little town. It is almost hidden by trees. I believe there are some good stores there so I shall be able to get a few things. I got six new mules and left five who were worn out. I don't fancy we shall get away for a day or two. We shall have a bad time if we get heavy rain here, for we are on a

very steep slope. We have not heard any more news about Kitchener and Botha, but everyone seems rather hopeful that we are near the end of this beastly war.

MARCH 8th. No news yet of a shift, but we may go at any time. We had a few heavy showers this morning and also last night, but not enough to wash the camp away. I am sending my mail away to-day; on account of the congestion of the line it is better not to chance sending on the last day.

I went into the town this morning, posted my letters and bought some stores. I got them at a place which is run by Indians. They had a good supply, but things are very dear; 3/- for a bottle of Chutney which we bought in Bombay for 12 Annas, and so on. Then I had my hair cut, and wired for money to pay my natives. I had lunch with Thompson at the Balmoral Hotel, and later on in the afternoon went to the local stationary hospital, and then to the swimming bath. There are large sulphur springs here, quite hot. The water runs through the bath and then along the sides of the streets in channels made for the purpose. I suppose that is why trees do so well here, you can hardly see the town for trees. The whole place has a very prosperous appearance. We had a number of heavy showers to-day, and there is lots of rain hanging about. We may march to-morrow, but not early.

MARCH 9th. More rain to-day. The troops are frightfully uncomfortable, and the worst of it is that the heaviest rain falls at night, and the slope we are on is so steep that the water rushes

over any trench unless it is dug very deeply. We had a frightful shower about 7 o'clock this evening and the wind drove it right through the outer fly of my tent. Fortunately I have a double fly tent and in that respect am more comfortable even than the General. The driving rain is stopped by the inner curtain and just trickles on to the floor. The G.O.C. has sanctioned tents at the rate of one for every 18 men and one for 3 officers. Just fancy what the atmosphere in a bell tent must be like - if 18 men get inside and take their boots off. Of course no-one would get into it unless it was pouring, and a certain proportion will find shelter under carts etc. Poor fellows, they cheer like blazes when the rain stops, as if it were great fun. We march at 9 a.m. to-morrow. Fortunately it is not cold at present, or the results to men and animals would be awful.

MARCH 10th. We left at 9 o'clock and began our march up the Free State. Of Hamilton's force, our column is on the left. Munro in the centre and Maxwell on the right. On our left are several other columns. Our orders are to take every male between 15 and 65 and take all stock or horses, or shoot what we can't take along. Leave enough food to take the women to the nearest town, and take, or destroy, the remainder. We are to do 10 miles a day, and clear the country for 5 miles on either side of the road. We have done 14 miles to-day because there was not much to clear, but we have managed to collect about 50 head of cattle and 8 or 10 good horses already. We have come over some awful hills and bad dongas, and it has been very heavy going. There is heaps of beautiful grazing

thanks to the abundant rains, and so our horses ought to do well.

The bulk of my six new drivers have never seen a mule before and can't drive or harness them, so I expect lively times for a few days. A mail came in just as we left, but I got no letters, nor did some other units with us. I got a parcel which left Brighton on the 7th February and contained a letter of yours dated Dec. 14th which had been returned from S.Africa. It shows how much trouble the Postal people take to find out one's whereabouts. I dare say some more of my letters have been returned by this time. I expect we shall be in the neighbourhood of Bloemfontein about this time next month and I imagine that our clearing will be done in the same fashion that the previous ones have been. It's quite impossible to search 10 miles a day and clear the country satisfactorily at the same time. We passed a beautiful orchard of peaches and apricots this afternoon, and I filled a nosebag which I always carry on my saddle in case anything turns up. I never saw such quantities of fruit on such little trees before, - and it was just ripe. I expect the troops will have the tummy-ache to-morrow. It is nice to have only our own column to trek with once more - no crowding or crushing - and the country is not stripped of eggs and chickens before one can get up. We are not marching till 7-45 a.m. to-morrow. That is quite a reasonable time to march.

MARCH 11th. We didn't leave camp till about 10-30 a.m. There were a couple of very steep and rocky hills about two miles back

and the supply wagons all stuck there and didn't get in till this morning. I was ready to start at 7-45 and just as we had got the mules in I heard that we were not to move till 9 o'clock. This was very annoying. At 9 o'clock I was ready again, and the order came to wait for the supply wagons. All this caused a lot of unnecessary work and trouble. We saw a good many farms to-day and sent back to Aliwal about 2000 sheep and 50 cattle. The destruction of food-stuffs has been very badly carried out. I saw sacks of wheat just carried outside and the contents scattered thickly over a small area so that it could quite easily be collected again. At another place a fire was lit and a number of sacks of wheat put on. This is easily put out after we had gone by. This sort of clearance is all rot. The women are supposed to be deprived of all food, so that they will be compelled to go into the nearest town, but from the way I saw the stuff disposed of, they will have no need to do any such thing. It is perfectly maddening to see the slipshod way some officers carry out their orders, and meanwhile the war goes on, and can go on.

We have collected over 5,000 sheep, and a large number of cattle to-day. Most of the houses were deserted this morning. The Boers left just before we advanced. At one farm they had buried a number of tin boxes containing the usual photo frames and odds and ends which they value, in the large heaps of cow dung ashes which accumulates outside every farm-house (Dutch) in the course of years. All these were easily found and their contents scattered - also a five-gallon cask of brandy. In the garden were

2 casks of wine and any quantity of grapes and fruit. The troops did well. I got a chicken and a little pig. I saw a copy of Kitchener's instructions and they are very stringent about clearing the country. Still we are going the wrong way about it. We can't march 10 to 14 miles a day and clear the country properly as well; but we might do it better than we did to-day. We heard firing about 5-30 p.m. just as we got into camp; probably from Rickman's force.

MARCH 12th. It began to rain at 3 a.m. and was still at it when we marched at 7-30. We had a nasty drift to cross almost immediately and the supply wagons stuck. We went on about two miles and then halted for them to come up. It rained almost the whole time and was most uncomfortable. I sat in my Cape cart and was better off than most people. While here I heard five pom-pom shells let off and saw them burst about 200 yards on my right. I made sure that we were being shelled at close range by the enemy so jumped out and ordered the ambulances to the left and to open out. On enquiry further I found that it was our own pom-pom which had been fired into the ground to see whether it would work all right. It jammed yesterday when they wanted to fire at some Boers who had a lot of cattle with them, but we got the cattle all right. We have come over the worst road I have ever seen to-day, and I never saw anything like the mud. We have collected cattle and sheep of the value of about £15,000 already, and about 200 horses, most of them beautiful animals. About 3 miles from where we are to-night my buck wagon broke down; the wagon slid down an incline

sideways and dropped on to some rocks. The shock doubled up the wheel completely. Exactly the same thing happened to another wagon almost immediately afterwards. It didn't arrive until about three hours after we got in and I had to send another spare wheel back for it. I wish the rain would clear off, we should be having a nice comfortable trek only for it. We got a turkey and six or seven chickens to-day. I lent a tent for the Boer prisoners to-night; we have 11 up to date. Many of the farms we come to have been deserted by the women who have gone with the Boers. I don't think that any troops have been on this road before, judging by the number of fence posts which one sees standing.

MARCH 13th. We marched at 7-45 p.m. and only expected to do about 8 miles, but it has lengthened into 18. We had to wind about so often, so as to get across bad ground, and once we had to get over a steep hill. The country is very pretty about here and to-day I have seen some really splendid farms. The first one we came to was deserted only this morning, and most of the furniture and all the stock taken. I was early on the scene and saw a lot of fowls feeding in a granary. I closed the door and bagged the lot, about 12. There was so much grain here that the house was set on fire. Later on in the afternoon one of the flanking patrols came to a dwelling house which was packed from ceiling to floor with wheat, and a large out-house also. The officer tried for a couple of hours to throw it into a dam, but finally had to burn the lot. This place, which is in very difficult country, was evidently a store-house of the Boers. With boiled wheat and cattle they could go on for ever. The number of

sheep which we have now is enormous, and the beautiful herds of cattle we come across is surprising. We got into camp about 5 o'clock and found fresh supplies waiting for us. Just before the mid-day halt we came to a fine fat farm and got any amount of oat straw, flour, Boer meal and 3 or 4 Cape carts with some new sets of harness. We are all living as Tommy says "slap up", even the horses and mules are getting their tummies full and have not to work very hard for it.

MARCH 14th. We marched at 6-30 a.m. and about 2 hours afterwards we had to cross a neck between two hills. The road was repaired, but it was a frightful pull for the animals. The pom-pom ammunition cart just reached the top when one of its mules fell dead. Poor devil, he literally killed himself. We have come over 20 miles to-day and the clearing of the country has been a farce. We changed direction so often that the flankers couldn't possibly keep in touch with the main body, and any amount of sheep and cattle must have been left. We started from Aliwal and did pretty well up till to-day, but after to-day's work all our previous labour will go for nothing so far as rendering the country impassable for commandos. I suppose it is Lyttleton's fault, for he is running all these columns I believe. He issues orders that such a column is to be at such a place on such a day. We get there, but the primary object of our trek is lost. I bet Kitchener would be wild if he knew how the show was being run. These bosses look at a map and calculate the distance between two places as the crow flies. They have no idea what the country is like and quite forget that we

often have to go miles out of our way to get past a hill or over a river. Then again, we tell the people that they must go into Aliwal, and they say they will, but we trek on and never know whether they do or not. We never bring on an empty wagon or two to load up mealies and bran from those farms which are actually in our road, and give the animals the benefit of a few extra pounds of corn. Oh no! That would be much too sensible a thing to do. It is scattered over the veldt instead.

MARCH 15th. We marched at 6 o'clock and soon got on to a good road and we went at a great pace towards Wepener. At the first farm I got about 3 lbs. of splendid butter and the supply column actually loaded up several sacks of mealies. A little farther on we captured 2 bullock wagons and teams. The owner had been running loads of grain from the Ladybrand district down South and storing it in farm-houses in the Rouxville district. We took them along and used them for removing mealies. The cattle and horses arrived in camp last night, but the sheep hadn't turned up when we left. I daresay they came along all right, for I don't suppose we left a single Boer behind us at any rate. The Colonel of the 16th told me that he was searching a farmhouse a couple of days ago, and the woman confessed to having 8 bags of mealies only. Further search disclosed 40 sacks of oats and about 100 sacks of wheat. She didn't mind this being taken away and destroyed, but began to howl when her cattle were driven off, clearly showing that the grain didn't belong to her at all. About two miles from Wepener we heard from a lady who was coming from that place, and whose Cape cart

was broken down, that the Boers were going to hold a bridge over the Caledon River. The guns and Cavalry pushed ahead, but the Boers didn't stand, or damage the bridge, which is a very fine one. The river is in flood and all the drifts are impassable. Near the Bridge were several ox-wagons and families of Boers, including some very fine young women dressed very nicely. All the men were taken away and the girls scowled like blazes when one tried to speak to them. They had fled in front of us right from the district close to Rouxville, and some from Zastron, with the Boers. Now they have to go all the way back again and to Aliwal North. Bruce Hamilton arrived in Wepener shortly after we did. White pushed on about 6 miles after the Boers. We crossed the river and went into bivouac. On the other side was a large mill and thousands of sacks of wheat. I hope it will all be taken across the border into Basutoland along with the cattle and sheep and not thrown into the river. The horses are being driven along with us, and I suppose will be sent to Bloemfontein. Its rather a pity that all the young animals were not picked out and sent across the border; it is only 4 miles from Wepener. I had my tent pitched and had a tub, when suddenly the order came: "march in half an hour". It was sickening, and just as we started a heavy shower of rain fell. On our way we met four more families of Boers who had fled from Zastron in front of Munro's column, but only to fall into our hands. We went about 6 miles along the road to De Wetsdorp and found White and the rest of the troops. We don't march till 8 o'clock to-morrow.

MARCH 16th. We only marched about 3 miles towards Dewetsdorp this

morning. Then a camp was formed and the baggage etc. left there. I went with the bulk of the mounted troops on a reconnaissance 6 miles on the Dewetsdorp Road, but didn't see any Boers. We then came back and have had a quiet day in camp. There is a convoy going into Bloemfontein to-morrow with 50 Boer prisoners, and so I am going to get a mail off. I believe we shall not move camp to-morrow either. Nearly the whole of these prisoners are men who have remained on their farms since they took the Oath last May, and now we have come along and ruined them.

MARCH 17th. At 8 o'clock the prisoners and some refugees were sent into Dewetsdorp and I sent off my letters. At 10 o'clock I had to send an ambulance in with sick. A lot of Lancers went out to clear the country within 5 miles and to bring the women and children in and send them into Dewetsdorp under escort. At noon we got orders to march N.E. At 2 p.m. nearly the whole of our force was out and one of my wagons. Just as we were starting off a lot of women and children came in and they were simply told to go into the town. They will please themselves whether they do or not. Now I hear that we are not going to collect stock but hunt Boers and that we are to be at a point on the Ladybrand-Thabanchu line on the day after to-morrow. The Boers will rimp through the line as on former occasions. Yesterday we sent a squadron of 16th Lancers 30 miles to blow up a mill. They got there and found it had already been done. Result: 60 miles in one day of unnecessary work and most of the horses done for. This is only another instance of how the show is run. I

wonder what would be thought of a doctor who changed his prescription every day ? and this is exactly what has been going on ever since the war started. Why can't our Generals consider the best plan of campaign, and then stick to it ? We had a tremendous thunderstorm last night and it has been very showery all day.

MARCH 18th. We marched at 6 o'clock. The nights are getting much colder and one doesn't like turning out at 5 a.m. To-day we have come through a part of the district which is mainly inhabited by Kaffirs or rather Basutos and one only saw one or two Dutch farms. There were very few cattle and most of the Basutos have gone across the Border into Basutoland, and the remainder are being sent there. We destroyed hundreds of bags of wheat and gave chits to the niggers for what we took from them. We also burnt many stacks of wheat which is still in the fields unthreshed and which of course ought to have been done last December, when we came up this way. We are marching a little to the east of the line which I then came, and probably over the ground which Barker's column went. There is beautiful grazing and lots of water. I got six ducks and a chicken to-day. We also managed to get enough oats and mealies and chaff for the column. For the last 24 hours only 4 lbs. of mealies per mule was issued and we had nothing in the supply wagon this morning. We are verily living on the country at present. It's a pity we can't feed the animals on wheat; but so long as we get a 2 hours' halt in the middle of the day the animals won't starve.

MARCH 19th. We marched at 7-30 a.m. and only went 5 or 6 miles. We soon came in sight of some of the fortified posts which stretch from Thabanchu to Ladybrand. Among them, and which we passed close to, was a fort, nicely built and loopholed, on the top of a high kopje. So far as one could see, there was nothing between it and some tents about 2 or 3 miles away. They may of course put pickets in between at night, but I wouldn't mind chancing a ride between them in broad daylight at a gallop. The odds are that one would escape. We went into bivouac about 11 o'clock and sent our supply wagons back at 1 o'clock 5 miles to a depot, to fill up. We are on one of the main roads to Ladybrand, and as I write, an ox convoy of 96 wagons each drawn by 18 oxen are moving in that direction, laden with supplies for the columns which are on our right. They are all lettered A.S.C. and the numbers on some run over 8,300. At the beginning of the war all our ox transport was supplied by Julius Weil, the great Contractor, and I think we had to pay about 30/- or £2 a day for the hire of one wagon and team. I fancy that this extravagant system has now been given up, and that we have collected all these wagons and teams by different columns in various parts of the country. Oxen are splendid workers and the trek chain is always tight enough to walk along, this showing that all the animals are pulling, but I imagine it is all done by fear of the frightful long whip which never fails to pick out a lazy animal. I don't know whether we shall get any mails when our wagons come back, but it will be very bad management if we don't. The actual date of our arriving on this line, has been known for some time in

Bloemfontein to the supply column, hence the food convoys and the postal people ought to be aware of it also. We shall at any rate get a mail off and it ought to catch up that which I sent from Wepener.

Fourie and 20 men were supposed to have slept just ahead of us last night. I expect they have doubled back, or else got through the "impregnable" line once more. I hear that 300 have broken back and gone towards Rouxville. They won't find that our "clearance" of the country will inconvenience them very much.

MARCH 20th. We didn't move till 1 p.m. and then started in a down-pour of rain which flooded the country. I examined five of the Yeomanry for commissions. We didn't get our mail though one for ~~the~~ Maxwell's column which is on our right went by in a postal wagon this morning. I think they really might try and manage things a little better for us. I saw Hickman's column just leaving their camp as we came near it, so I rode after it and saw Tate once more.

MARCH 21st. Marched to Springhann's Nek. This is the place where we should have bagged De Wet about the middle of November last. The country round this is very fertile and we found immense crops of mealies growing. The Brigade was turned out to cut down the crops, the men using their bayonets on the soft mealie stalks. They cut down a few fields and then it became obvious to our C.O. that it was an impossible task and so it was given up. It was a similar task to trying to keep the sea back with a long broom.

MARCH 22nd. Halt.

MARCH 23rd. Marched to Reitfontein. From this place some of the Yeomanry made a night march and bagged a few Boers at a farm-house where they were having a little dance. They shot one through the chest and he is now under my tender care in the hospital. He is badly wounded through both lungs but I think he will live.

MARCH 24th. Marched to Daaspoort. On the way we found a house which contained a great deal of grain in bags. It was very neatly concealed in a room which had been partitioned off from another big building. A wall right up to the ceiling. There was also a good deal of clothing which had been looted from some stores close by. This was collared by our men and the grain was thrown into a dam. This is part of the grain which was stacked in the ear in the fields when we came this way in November last and which could have been all destroyed by the expenditure of a box of matches.

MARCH 25th. Halt.

MARCH 26th. Halt.

MARCH 27th. Marched to Dewetsdorp and found an enormous convoy of women and children waiting to be taken into the line to be sent into the refugee camps. I went over the position which was taken by De Wet and Co. in November.

MARCH 28th. Marched to Bulsburg. I picked up an enormous sail-cloth which I gave to the chap in charge of the pom-poms to make a

shelter for his men. It was far too heavy for me to drag about the country even if I had wanted to keep it.

MARCH 29th. March to Coetzee Post. To-day Rimington's Scouts had a running fight for several miles with a large number of Boers, but they got away.

MARCH 30th. Marched to Klein Marsfontein on the way to Springfontein. We are driving an enormous crowd of mares and foals in front of us. It is marvellous where the animals come from considering that they have been collected by various columns who have passed over this ground before us. I hear that they are going to be driven into the Cape Colony and kept on farms there.

We are going to work backwards a little nearer the line than the way we came, clearing the country, and pull up near Wepener at the same place where we were a few days ago. 300 Boers have broken back and we may be hoping to catch some of them. Then I hear that each column is to have a district and move about in it, and if De Wet manages to raise another large force, all the columns will move and try to surround him, with the usual result. Since writing this news has come in that De Wet and Steyn have had a big row. The latter wants to chuck it, and the former is angry because when he wanted to, and could have got terms, Steyn wouldn't give way. De Wet says he is going to try and get into Portuguese territory, and failing that, will hide among the mountains in the east of this district. If this is all true it looks hopeful.

MARCH 31st. We marched at 6-30 a.m. and got to Springfontein about 6 p.m. I got rid of my sick and wounded and went on to the Post Office to see if the mails had arrived. I found about 12 sacks and brought them up in the ambulance. You can imagine my feelings when I found that they were all for the Yeomanry. None for the 16th Lancers or anyone else. Its perfectly disgraceful the way that our mails are managed. We could have helio'd to Bloemfontein via Thabanchu when we were at Dewetsdorp and had the mails all waiting here for us on arrival. Its enough to make one mutinous.

APRIL 1st. We did not march to-day, so there was a chance of getting our mails, but up till 6 p.m. nothing has come. Lyttelton came by train this morning to see Hamilton, so we may possibly move to-morrow and then goodbye to our mails for an indefinite time.

APRIL 2nd. We left Springfontein at 7 a.m. and marched to Prior Siding. This is the station which we marched to from Bethulie on March 10th and here we are again. We halted for a couple of hours and then moved on towards the river and keeping parallel to the line reached Dreikul Siding a few miles from Donkerpoort. Here I got the latest mail and three parcels. I am now missing March 1st. and three weeks papers. We passed a train load of Boer and Kaffir women and children as we were leaving Springfontein. They had been sent down the line without proper notice in open trucks and they spent the night in the rain. This will take some of the fire out of them and repay them for the hardships they exposed our women to

at the beginning of the war. Maturin's son is serving with the 2 guns which have just joined our column. It is the battery which lost its Major (Hanwell) on the night march which we did to Ventersburg last year, under Bruce Hamilton. He was at Singapore before the war, and was sick a day or two ago with malaria. He is a very good chap. We are going to remain here until the Boers cross the river and then try to catch them before they get out of the frightful country which is all along the banks of the river. This morning there was $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet of water in the river at Norval's Point, and so they will have to swim for it. Krutzinger and Scheepers with 600 Boers are between Bethulie and Norval's Pont, and trying to get over the river. If we can keep our present position from them, and they do swim over, we ought to get them. Half the Lancers and Yeomanry are going out to patrol every day and the rest will remain here. If any are seen, all other columns will try and close in on them. The scheme is very pretty and may work, especially as I hear that there are 8 commandoes behind him in the colony. The Yeomanry will watch the drifts on the other side of the line for a distance equal to that watched by the Lancers. I shall stay at the line and send on sick etc. to hospitals.

APRIL 3rd. There was a good deal of gun firing on our left this morning, but we can't hear who it was. The 16th came back without seeing any Boers. I hear that the Welsh Yeomanry fired volleys at one of Nesbitt's scouts who was scouting on their right: Utter lunacy! To bag one probable Boer they gave ample warning that a

force of ours was waiting for them, and the natural result would be to stop them from crossing if they were inclined to.

APRIL 3rd. A splendid lot of wild horses were driven in this evening by our natives. I never saw a finer lot. There seems to be no end to the horses in this country. One could certainly have thought that there would not be a single horse left close to the river, at any rate, but our men took at least 30 very fine ones, and they were probably waiting for the Boers when they crossed. The Irish Yeomanry leave us to-morrow for Kroonstad. There are some very nice fellows among them. One chap named Maude was an especial pal and has done grand work all through the war.

APRIL 4th. Another halt in camp. No firing heard to-day. The 16th got another draft from Springfontein, they are getting very strong in numbers now.

I have fever so am going into Springfontein hospital.

From this place I went to No. 8 General Hospital at Bloemfontein and took over charge of the Medical Division. I remained here until July 1st. when I was seconded for service with the S.A.C. and went to the Dynamite Factory at Modderfontein and took over charge of the hospital there.

force of our waiting for them, and the natural result would be to stop them from crossing if they were inclined to.

April 3rd. A splendid lot of wild horses were driven in this evening by our natives. I never saw a finer lot. There seems to be no end to the horses in this country. One could certainly have thought that there would not be a single horse left alive to the river, at any rate, but our men took at least 35 very fine ones, and they were probably waiting for the boats when they crossed. The Irish Yeomanry leave us tomorrow for Koonabad. There are some very nice fellows among them. One chap named Kade was an excellent gal and has done grand work all through the war.

April 4th. Another half in camp. No firing heard to-day. The Irish got another draft from Springfontein, they are getting very

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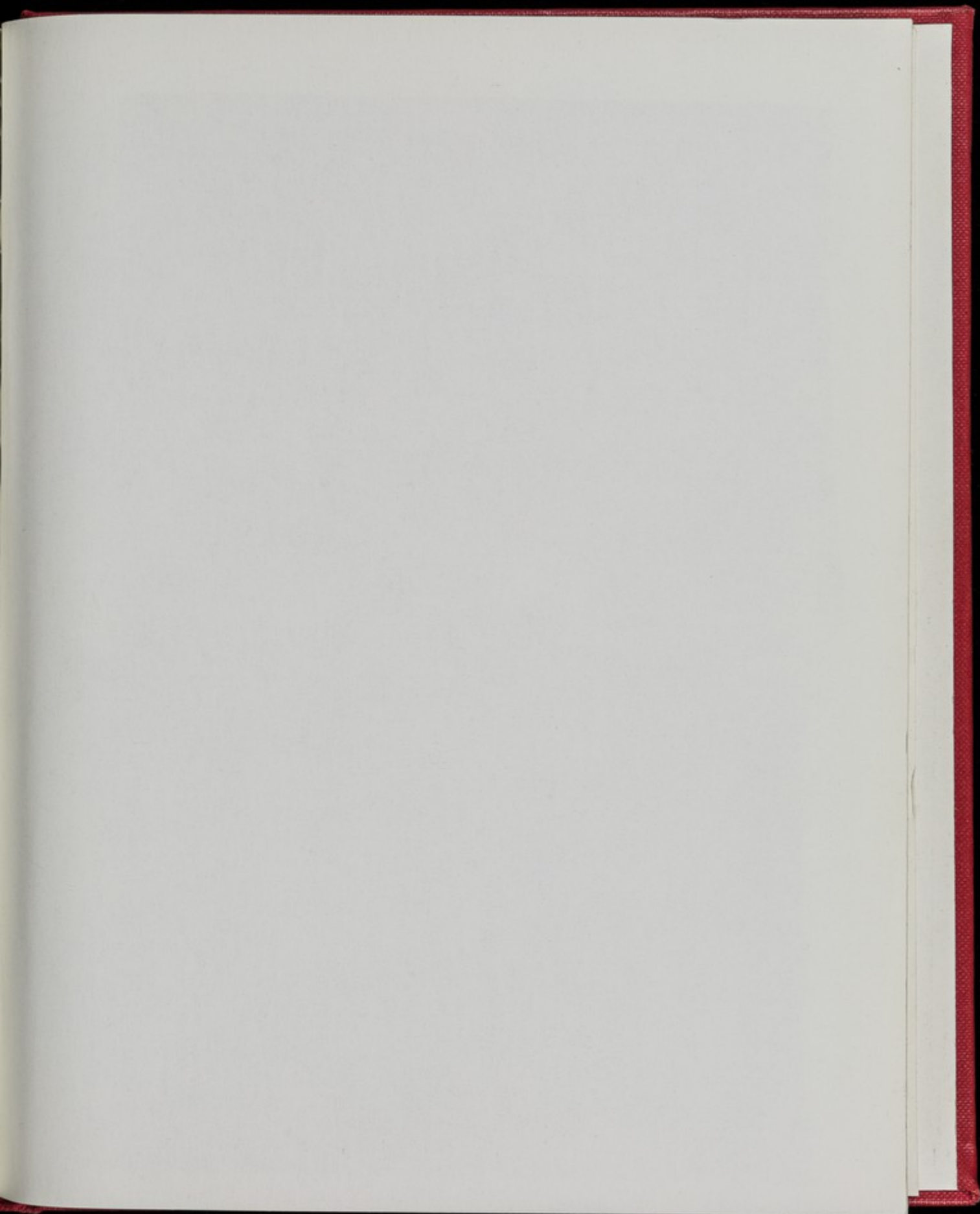
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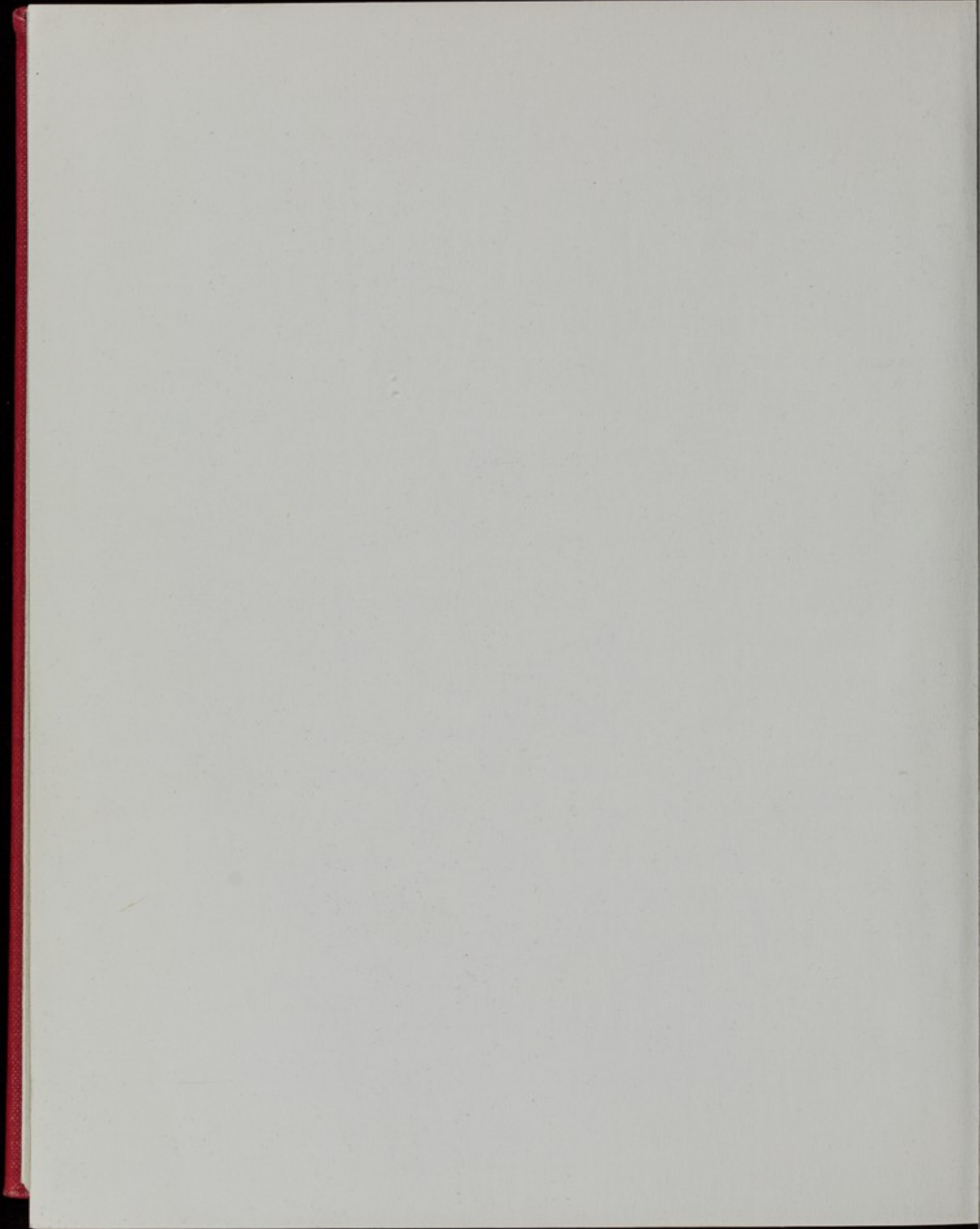
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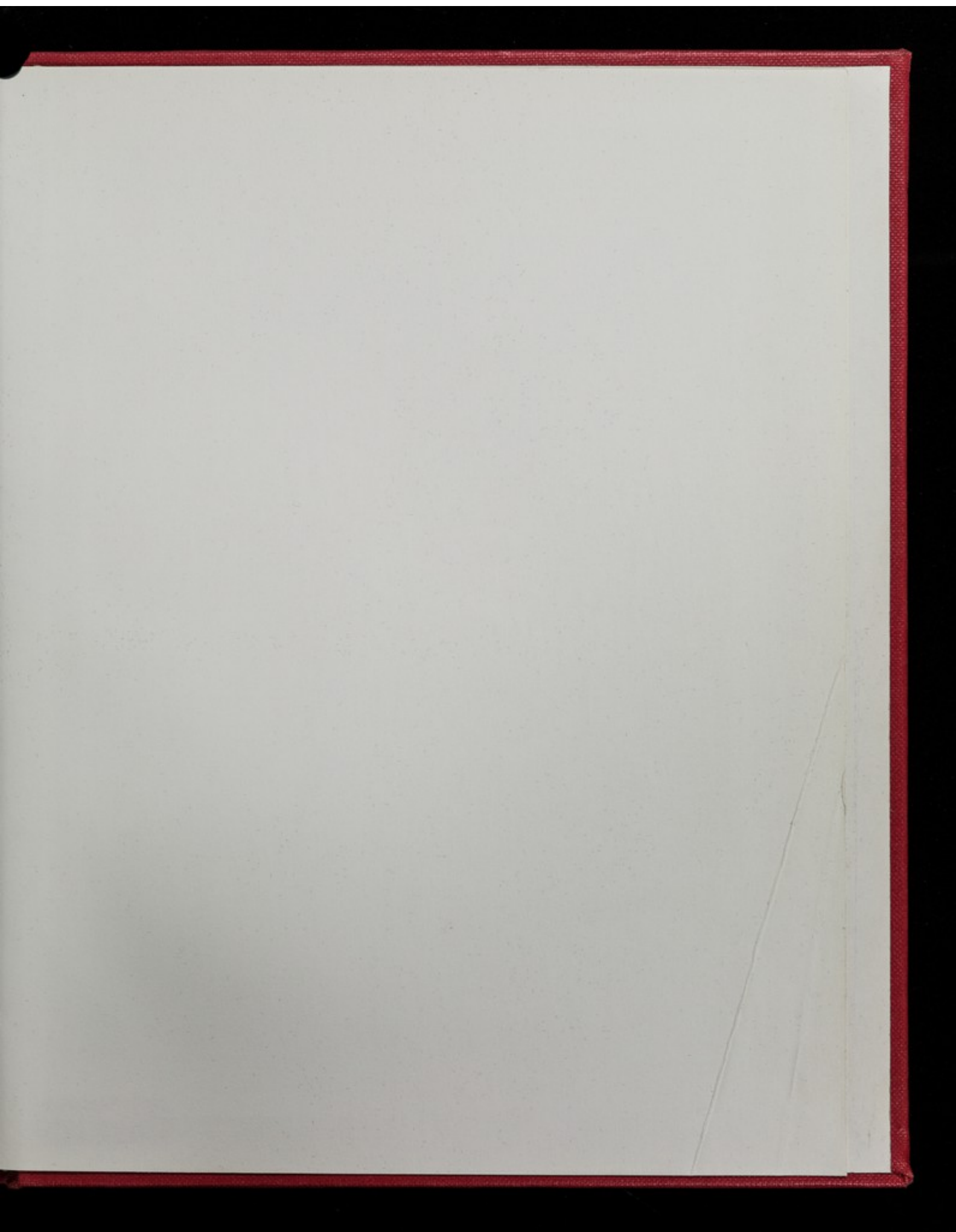
remained here until July 1st, when I was seconded for service

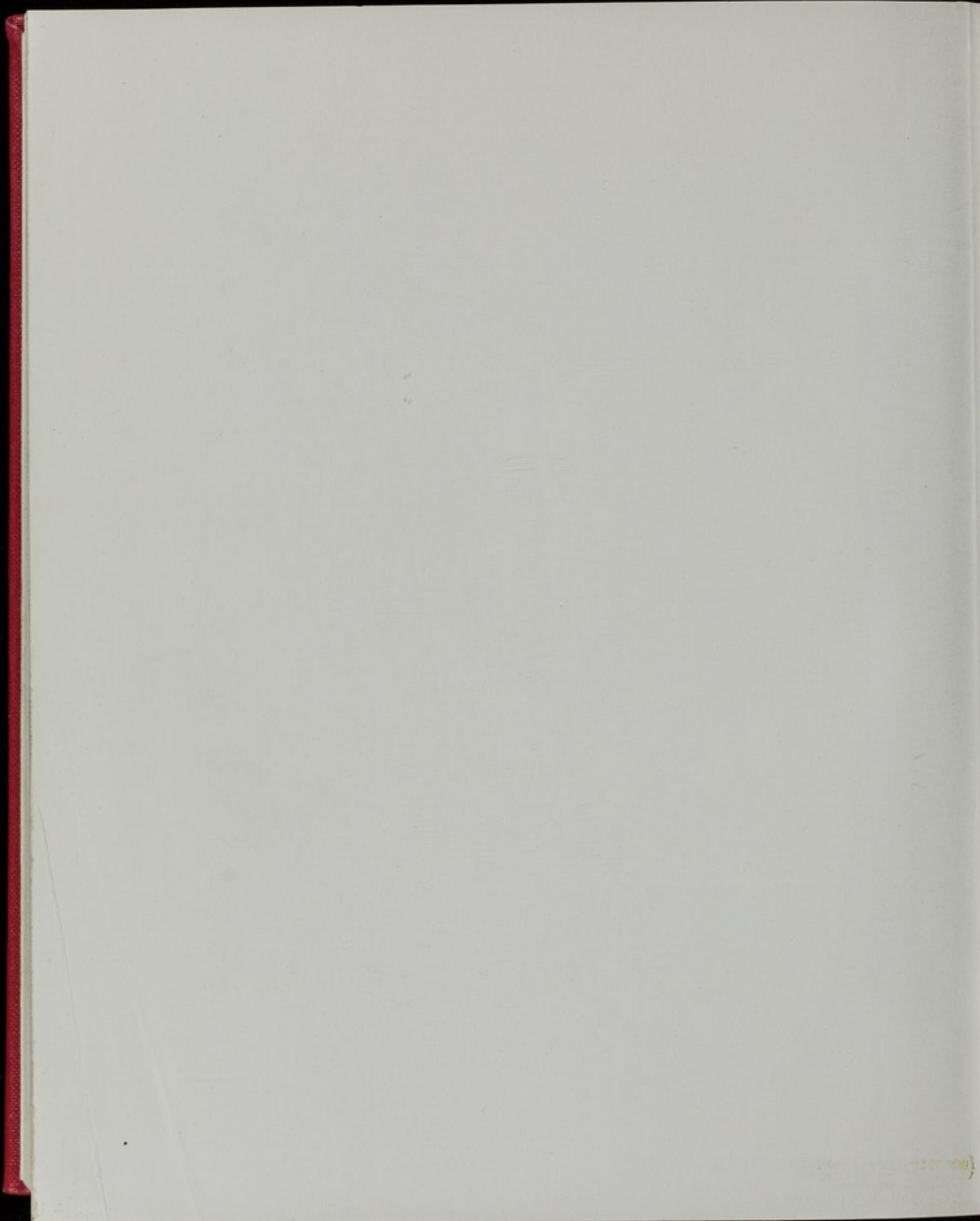
with the S.A.G. and went to the Dynamite Factory at Robbenstein

and took over charge of the hospital there.









BOUND BY 

