

**Diary, 1899-1901, including the siege of Ladysmith during the Boer War,
and station in Bermuda**

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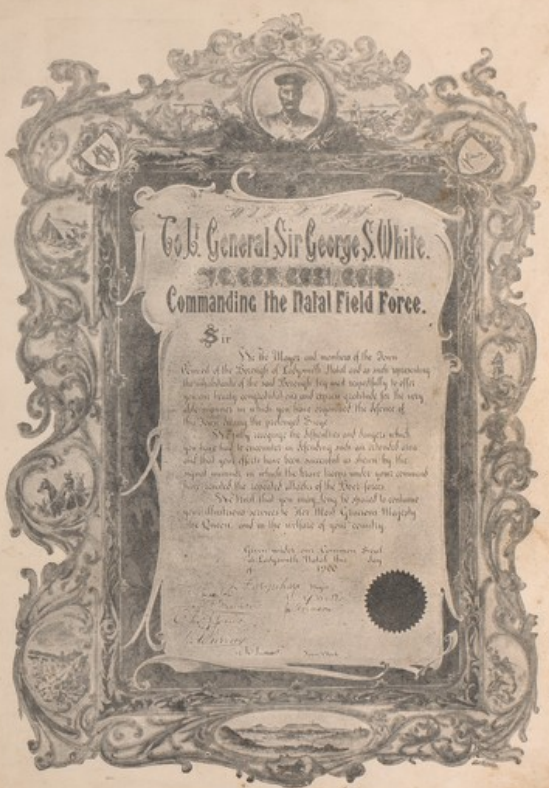
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THE SIEGE OF LADYSMITH.



To Lt. General Sir George S. White.
Commanding the Natal Field Force.

Sir
We the Mayor and members of the Town Council of the Borough of Ladysmith, Natal, and as such representing the inhabitants of the said Borough, beg most respectfully to offer you our hearty congratulations and express gratitude for the very able manner in which you have equalled the defence of the town during the protracted Siege.
We truly recognize the difficulties and dangers which you have had to encounter in defending such an isolated town and that your efforts have been rewarded as shown by the signal success in which the Siege has been your command has secured the eventual relief of the Town.
We trust that you may long be enabled to continue your illustrious services to Her Most Excellent Majesty the Queen, and in the welfare of your country.



LADYSMITH TOWN COUNCIL.

Complimentary Address presented to Sir George White by the Mayor on behalf of the residents. The Address was executed in colours by Mr. Earl Robert, during the siege.

1011

A Staines man we had not heard of before, and who has gone through all the privations endured by the besieged in Ladysmith, is Private Maidment, of the R.A.M.C. His home is in Church-street.



LADYSMITH TOWN COUNCIL.

Address of welcome to General Buller. This work was executed in colours, during the siege, by Mr. Earl Robert.

A
A Brief diary of events pertaining to the memorable siege of Ladysmith, prior to the relief, together with notes of travel and various items of interest, discerned by the writer during the South African Campaign.

Preface.

Dear Readers,
The following is a brief description of events which occurred during a time when our troops were secluded from communication with the outside world. And when the eyes of all English speaking people were directed on Ladysmith wondering whether Sir George White & his brave army of defenders would be able to hold out until assistance reached them or whether in the end they would have to surrender to the forces of the enemy which so strongly invested their position. I trust the readers of this brief descriptive of events will not pass

"A Soldier's Diary" is kept so low in tone, is written with such a complete absence of romance, cynicism, disgust, excitement, or even comment (favourable or unfavourable) of any sort, that it does actually succeed in reducing big events to the size of events of no importance.

But, as a matter of fact, the events themselves are too tremendous to be denied. With no brilliance of description, with hardly even an impression of emotion on the part of the writer, the book remains interesting as a record of what the complete "average citizen" lived through in the war.

right: Captain the Hon. H. Lambton, R.N. At the extreme right end of second row sits Sir Henry Fawcett, and at his right is Colonel Ward, A.S.C., and Colonel Downing, R.A.

A Staines man we had not heard of before, and who has gone through all the privations endured by the hospital in Ladysmith, is Private Maidment, of the R.A.M.C. His home is in Church-street, Staines.



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Address of welcome to General Buller. This work was executed in colours, during the siege, by Mr. Earl Robert.

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For Catering
 THE THIRD FORM IS OF GEORGE'S
 PRINTED IN MOST FINE AND BROWN
 ON A GREY PAPER. THE SKIRT IS UNDER.

Preface.

Dear Readers,
 The following lines were written by me during a time when our troops were secluded from communication with the outside world. And when the eyes of all English speaking people were directed on Ladysmith wondering whether Sir Geo White & his brave army of defenders would be able to hold out until assistance reached them or whether in the end they would have to surrender to the forces of the enemy which so strongly invested their position.
 I trust the readers of this brief description of events will not pass

SIR GEORGE STEWART WHITE, V.C. AND STAFF.
 Sir George White sits in the centre. On his left is Sir Archibald Hunter, and on his right Captain the Hon. H. Lambton, R.N. At the extreme right are the second row seen Sir Henry Rawlinson, and at his right is Colonel Ward, A.S.C. and Colonel Downing, R.C.I.

B
a too severe criticism on my poor attempts
to compile this diary as my tent for writing
it, was very much hampered by the onerous
duties of my profession.

I have, however, during the
brief intervals of rest accorded me endeavoured
to portray in as careful a manner as
possible the sufferings, joys, & expectations
of relief experienced by myself & my
comrades during this arduous period.

The latter part of this book is
solely devoted to places of interest visited
by me in my capacity of orderly on the
74 hospital train on which I was from
time to time employed.

If during the perusal of these lines the
readers may recognise any grammatical errors
I hope they will deal leniently with me
in their criticisms as I am unfortunately not
possessed of those brilliant qualifications
which are required to make an author.

Faithfully Yours,
Geo Chas Waidment
P. Ramer 1890



SIR GEORGE STEWART WHITE, V.C. AND STAFF.

Sir George White sits in the centre. On his left is Sir Archibald Hunter, and on his
right, Captain the Hon. H. Langdon, R.N. At the extreme right end of second row
is Sir Henry Fanshawe, and at his right is Colonel Ward, A.S.C. and Colonel Downing, R.A.

D

The object aimed at was thus secured.

Whether had the effort been pushed home, a definite check might at the stage have been imposed upon the Boer advance is doubtful.

Stopping where it did, it did not prevent the steady and unceasing movements of the enemy to surround Ladysmith.

I arrived in Ladysmith on this date after the previous evenings ride by train in cattle trucks from Pietermaritzburg. We got in about 6.30 P.M. & were marched through the streets to the Hospital.

In the main street close to the Town Hall we halted and had breakfast, we again paraded at 8.30 & were told off to our respective duties & wards which were found full of patients chiefly wounded myself being sent to the Wesleyan Chapel. The troops were marching through Pretoria all day. We have heard that the 7th Mountain Battalion R.A. had their mules stampede causing the loss of their guns & ammunition & that the 1st Glou. Regt & 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers had to surrender to the enemy after 8 or 9 hours hard fighting.

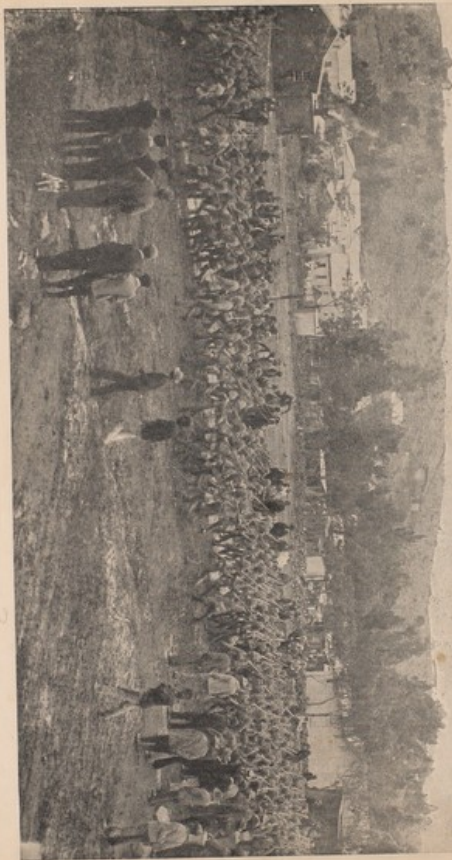


LADYSMITH FROM CONVENT HILL.

(Looking West).

The first line of hills in the background is known as "Maiden's Castle," and that beyond as "Wagon Hill," a continuation of the ridge of "Caesar's Camp," the two positions commanding the town which were stormed by the Boers on the 6th January, 1900.

D



The gallant Devons (1st Bn) marching through on their arrival from India. This regiment, in company of the Gordons, stormed the hill at the battle of Elandslaagte.

LADYSMITH GARRISON.

E

Oct 21. The enemy commenced shelling at 5:20 A.M. this morning 12 shells came into the town.

On this date we were informed that Gen. Buller's column checkmated all possible efforts of the Boer forces to intercept it on its march to Ladysmith.

Tommy Atkins was much surprised by the firing of an automatic gun which with his aptitude of expressive phrases he promptly christened "Pom-Pom" which name stuck to it throughout the campaign. Gen. Soubert has sent in an ambulance with wounded, who speak highly of the treatment they have received at his hands.

We were also informed that the loss of the guns of 700 Mountain Battery & the surrender of the 1st & 2nd R.I. Fusiliers was due to the fact that these Regiments instead of outflanking the Boers were actually between two strong bodies of the enemy. They begged hard to be allowed to charge the rough slopes when some one hoisted the white flag and by this act of treachery the two gallant Regiments became prisoners of war.

Oct closed without further hostilities and its last day was uneventful in a military sense.

F

though full of forebodings in the town for we all know that the Boers are taking advantage of a brief armistice to bring up reinforcements. Every train that leaves here is laden with civilians eager to get away from the town.

7th 10th

Bombardment of Ladysmith
Anticipated

The flight of the town people southward continues they do not trouble about baggage now but lock their doors & clear away. Half the houses are empty & many shops closed. There have been no hostilities today - Captain Lambton's Battery is on Junction Hill where the Naval 4.7 inch quick firing gun is being mounded.

The Boers, I hear let no opportunity escape for improving their position & in the choice of means they are not inclined to risk their reputation for "Slimness".

G

Nov 9th

Under the pretence of treating the wounded with great consideration Gen. Buller sent them into camp here to day taking their parole as a guarantee that they would not again take up arms during this Campaign. With the Ambulance waggon was an escort of 20 Boers all wearing the Red Cross badge of neutrality among them the towns people recognized several well known Boers who were not Doctors or otherwise specially qualified for attendance on wounded men.

Does anybody in their senses believe that such careful inquiries were made without an object all this while.

They probably picked up many interesting items as to the number of troops in Ladysmith, the positions of ordnance stores magazines & the general state of our defences.

When Buller's artillery began shelling the town later on in the day their fire was directed on important stores.

Lieut. F. G. Egerton was grievously wounded by a shell whilst fighting with 74 m/s. Powerful guns & was subsequently

H

admitted into my ward, both the brave Officers legs were missing yet he showed no trace of the agony he must have suffered & in a brief conversation he remarked (both my feet are very cold) thus showing that the impression that his legs were still intact was fixed upon his mind.

I was ordered to proceed to Mantzberg with some sick this being the last train to get through from here & that ran the gauntlet of rifles and artillery fire. Luckily for me I was returned to my duty as a civilian took my place. An hour later the railway was cut by the Boers at two o'clock telegraphic communication stopped short whilst an important message or despatch was coming through.

We have to be content & wait the development of events in other quarters. For it must be admitted that Ladysmith is under siege & the Boers around it know it & blink at the fact.

I

700370



[A]—FREDERICK GRENVILLE EGERTON, Gunery Lieutenant R.M.S. Fowling, was born Apr. 15, 1869, and died of wounds received at Ladysmith on Nov. 2, 1899. He was promoted Commander for services on this occasion. Photo.

This morning Lieut F G Egerton R.M.S. passed away, we are all filled with sorrow that such a brave, gentleman and gallant Officer should at so early an age have forfeited his life.

His funeral this afternoon as military funerals always are was a very impressive affair and was attended by nearly all the officers of the Staff.

At the request of Sister Hobbs I have taken a look of his hair. Some shells have been thrown about the town as if to compass its ruin this started at 8.20 a.m. some discharge of a shell fell into my ward but no damage occurred. Another fell into No 12 Field Hospital without bursting Pitt Rivers came. placed it into a pail of water close by. One struck the house of Mr. J. & S. Beard the Daily News Special Correspondent completely destroying it not 10 yards from where many Officers were then lunching at the Royal Hotel. a prominent building that can be seen by this photo marked X. This was the last attempt at bombarding today.

J
7/11/14
A. smart action towards Dewas dop in on
Major Launter Border. Mounted
Police Capt Snapp & Lieut Prabant of the
Imperial Light Horse. were killed & many
of lower rank wounded yesterday
Here is also fighting towards
Paulwanra also & 8 were killed &
20 wounded. which makes about 98
brought in today wounded.

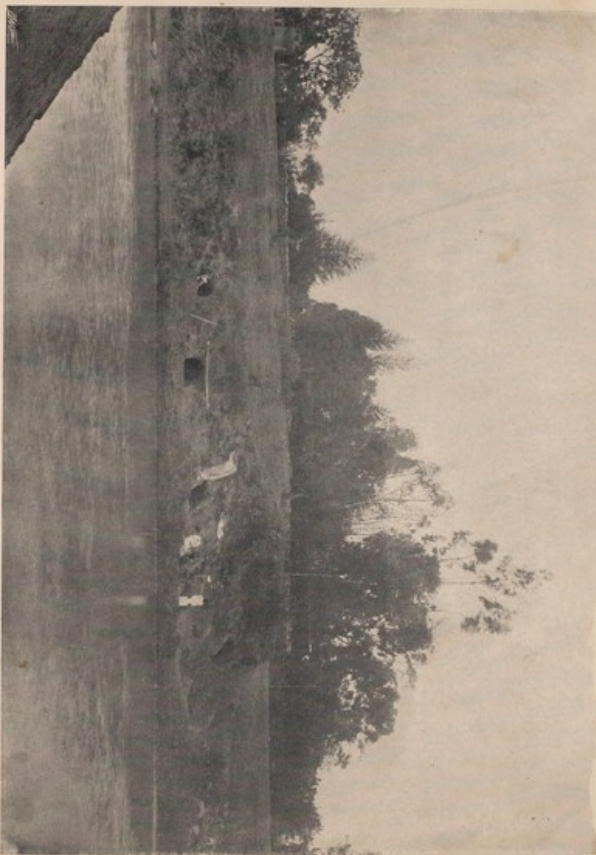
People have deserted their dwellings
and are living in Bomb-Proof shelters as
shown by photo, these shelters are delightful
in contrast with the scorching sunshine
outside. I've spent many an half hour in
them. And what it will be, however, after
many people have been crowded together
for some time is less pleasant to contemplate
And indeed these habits are strangely
various even some people have spent much
time and patient labour in making
burrows for themselves find life here so
intolerably monotonous; they prefer to
that the chances above ground.



KLIP RIVER AT LADYSMITH.

The hill on the sky-line is the Umbulwane, 800 feet high, and about 6,500 yards from the nearest point of the river. The 4-ton gun was mounted on the summit at a point 31 inches distant from left end.

J
7/21/14



Holes in the river bank, where families took refuge during the hours of bombardment.

KLIP RIVER AT LADYSMITH.

K

Others pass whole days with their wives & families or in solitary misery where there is not light enough to read or write, scarcely showing a head outside the place from sunrise to sunset.

75

The enemy are shelling the town early this morning. Their artillery is being well handled but it is not producing much effect.

They took advantage of a flag of truce on Thursday 2nd inst and sent a Transvaal Artillery Officer disguised as an ambulance driver with the wounded to observe the effect of Boer artillery in town.

Lieut. George White, recognising the danger that might happen by reason of the constant shelling applied to Genl Joubert for permission to allow the townspeople to leave for the south. At this date Genl Joubert established his camp at the Umbulwana and during the early part of the day he replied emphatically declining to accede to the request. He would however offer

L

inspection to the wounded leaving with Military Doctors and necessary nurses.

In due course a camp was formed close to Umbulwana Mountain at a place called Intombi Spruit where there is a large gun firing over our heads all day. With the wounded Officers & men from Dundee we sent about 60 other patients which totalled about 150 for under canvas also 4 Boer prisoners.

The enemy's guns have preserved all day an absolute silence which was not broken ^{until} about 10 pm when a sentry of ours accidentally let off his rifle; this roused the whole garrison, and soldiers stood to their arms until the cause of this false alarm was discovered.

Nov 6th

Sir Geo White its believed sent out his first message by pigeon post. One of the railway trucks with stores overturned while on the way to Intombi Camp this morning. The Boers sent a few shells into town at 5-30. I proceeded to Intombi this afternoon & found the camp

M

forming the neutral ground with boundaries in a southerly direction from the town was situated under the shadow of the Umbulwana with the railway running through it for a distance of 1/2 miles.

The military portion with camp alongside was, at a guess 2,000 acres. Rations together with necessaries required, were going to be daily supplied from the town.

We maintained the utmost discipline none of the civilians we allowed to take their departure from or to the town. We have been very busy pitching Marques tents all day, which is very hard work.

During the evening firing occurred on both sides.

The Boers having killed some of their own men, thinking they were our troops.

Our raidy also set fire to some of the farm houses as the enemy were storing ammunition in them. We are expecting Gen. French's Column here every day.

The idea that Bulwana is beyond effective range of anything but the heaviest artillery has however been dispelled today.

Nov 4th A small party met with a sortie this morning and firing on both sides was continued throughout the day. We have been on fatigue's pitching tents &c.

The enemy commenced shelling at 4-15 A.M. "Long Tom" shells on Bulwana are 40 pounders & travelling faster than sound whistle over our heads with town to burst near the Balloon Detachment which is moving with guy ropes up a valley towards the out defences.

This gun must have a range of nearly 6 miles and we have nothing that can reach it but our navy's 9 1/2 pounders mounted on Junction Hill, both of which have enough to do in keeping down the fire of "Long Tom" of Lepworth Hill.

Nov 8th Firing dated at 6-30 A.M. & continued until about 5 p.m. Boers with an ambulance wagon came over to the camp enquired how their wounded were; they caused an excited crowd as we all thought they were spies for they were certainly nothing more, in locating new point of military importance of personal interest in Ladysmith.

The Convent conspicuously placed on a ridge have been completely wrecked inside fortunately however the patients & nurses were got out before that happened. This must have appealed to all of us as a



LADYSMITH FROM CONVENT HILL

(Looking South-West).

The hill rising out of the bushes on the left of picture is "Camp's Camp," the scene of severe fighting on the 6th January. The Boers were at the point of the Kopje by storming the side of the hill, but were repulsed by the 53rd Battery Field Artillery stationed in the bushes just beyond the town, and about the centre of the picture. The advance guard of the Relief Column approached the town through the bushes skirting the kopjes.

Nov 4

Nov 8

In the centre of the picture, under the kopjes in the background, is the position of the Neutral Camp

LADYSMITH FROM CONVENT HILL
(LOOKING SOUTH-EAST)



contemptible part played by the enemy as it was impossible for them to ignore the Red Cross flag flying at this time. Since then the Royal Hotel has been nearly struck several times and on each occasion about the same hour so that most sceptical are now changing their opinions in favour of a belief that the Hotel has been marked of destruction. Out of consideration for other guests therefore Col Rhodes, "The Doctor" (Mr. Jameson), Sir John W. Bulloughby & Lord Awa, have taken up their quarters elsewhere. I am told on high authority that the word "siege" is not quite applicable to our case here.

But the Boers are not sitting down before us in a very leisurely way, but intend upon keeping us under bombardment as long as they may choose to stay. So I do not know the meaning of the word "siege"

The bombardment by the enemy began & continued with more vigour this morning. Our Naval guns constantly did good work. About this time two more guns were mounted. Heavy firing is heard in all directions which started at 5 a.m. It sounds like a big battle raging north of the town with heavy musketry fore Joubert's main

3

object. I believe is to gain possession of the town but he had to retire with heavy loss with about 300 prisoners, this being the first severe Boer assault. These hostile demonstrations were never very determined or long sustained they slackened down to nothing for a time just before noon. At that hour a curiously impressive incident astonished many of us in camp not less than it did the Boers, Guns large & small of our Battery having shotted charges were carefully laid with the enemy's artillery for their marks, & at a given signal they began to fire slowly with regular intervals between when twenty-one rounds had been counted everybody knew then that it was a Royal Salute in celebration of the Prince of Wales Birthday.

Nov 10th

A few shells were exchanged early this morning "Long Tom" was carrying on a duel with our naval gun and throwing shells over the town to burst very near Sir Geo White's Headquarters. But slackened down to nothing for a time about 11 am. The garrison & inhabitants of Smith now began to realize that they were doomed to a long period of inactivity if to nothing more serious. The Boer's attempt of yesterday were now quiet again, rain & mist interfering with the enemy's bombardment.

4

Our naval gun has been christened "Lady Ann"

Nov 11th

Shelling still continues. Heavy fighting

The unfavourable criticisms of our troops in general and our commander in particular is recently felt by all. An Irish-American's story, though not to be swallowed without salt, tended to confirm some things that seemed strange in the fight of a few days ago, when as the deserter said that the Irish brigade that day lost heavily having now only seventy-three left of the original three hundred & fifty, and that ten Irishmen were killed by one of our shells.

Nov 12th

The 12th Field Hospital had orders to hold themselves in readiness at any moment to move off with the troops they have been transferring their sick to our Hospital today. What loss our force suffered we have no means of knowing of yesterday's fight; but they are probably much heavier than ours which numbered 5 killed & 20 wounded mostly by shells after 12 hours of intermittent fighting.

5

7 Nov 13th. I was awakened by large guns at 5.30 a.m. which continued at intervals during the day. An irreparable loss has befallen us, the enemy succeeded in cutting off our supply of water from the reservoir this will compel us to take our water from a place in the river where we run imminent risk of contamination. We now get days of torrid heat bringing a plague of flies from which there is no escape and then a sudden thunderstorm sends the temperature down to something that reminds one of chill October among English moorlands.

According to the calendar this is Natal's summer, when hills & veldt, refreshed by genial showers, should be green with luxurious growth of young grass, or brightened by a profusion of brilliant wild flowers. but the seasons must be out of joint just now

7 Nov 13th. Lt. Boers, started again at 12-15 p.m. and we are told but not forced to believe there is a large force at Colenso, it is true very long distant firing has been heard for twenty minutes or so in that direction



TROPHIES

Collection of Boer shells by a resident. The centre shell is a "Long Tom," standing on a shell-case, those at the side are 47; the pieces of contorted shell-iron are atropal cases, and the box contains shrapnel bullets.

could the firing did not until every 3000 cannon round about our position had let off a shot. Some of us began to dress, thinking that the misty diffused moonlight was the coming dawn. Nothing of particular importance has occurred during the day.

We know nothing yet that can account for the firing of so many guns. I only attempt to explain it on the supposition that our enemies being startled by some false alarm

Nov 16

We are becoming accustomed to the daily visitation of shells that do not burst & perhaps familiarity is carelessness. If so the 40 pounder on Lombard's Top gave us timely reminder this morning that he is not to be ignored with impunity. One shell thrown over the railway station burst in the air as it was intended to do, and scattered its hail of shrapnel bullets about that building. One guard (a white man) was killed on the spot or only breathed a few minutes after being hit & two Kaffirs (labours) were wounded.

Yesterday an armistice we believe had been declared & we were all fervently hoping for good results. but today are doomed to disappointment

Artillery & musketry fire at intervals during the day & bombardment of the town from Pulwama. But heavy clouds collecting about the mountains soon put a stop to the firing until a late hour. At 2 o'clock this afternoon rain began to fall steadily

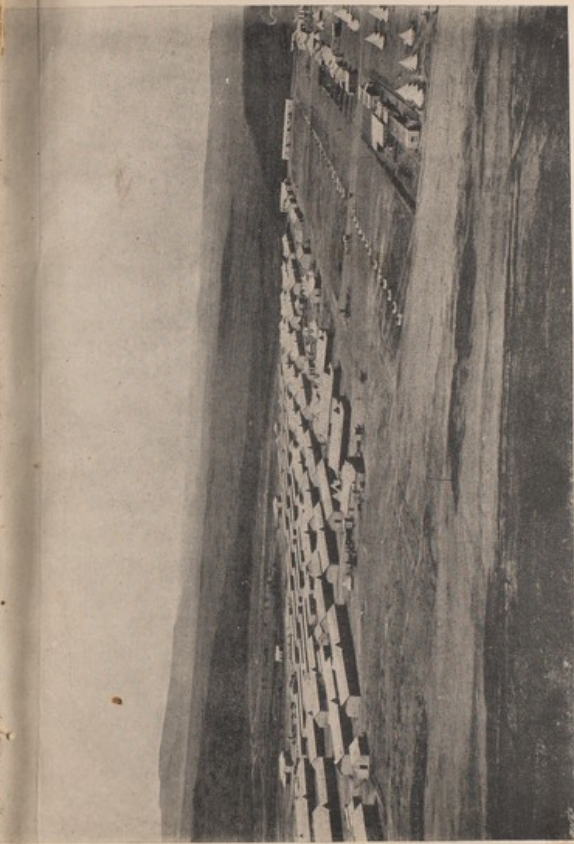
Nov 17

Engagement near town in which 5 bartoniers were killed & 7 wounded I found out that Tom Stone was on the armoured train at the station I wrote him a letter & got an answer. Some sick camp up the line in trucks pushed by coolies on the rail road were taken in at the volunteer hospital

A concert was held at the civilian camp at which I obliged with two songs and enjoyed a pleasant evening under the peculiar circumstances.

7pm 10th Just after midnight Boer guns again fired from every position round Ladysmith. What this was is nobody knows. Perhaps it is device of keeping Boer sentries on the alert. Rumours having their origin in the fertile imaginations of those who think they are true are prevalent. First we hear of a column marching into Bloemfontein and an hour later they spoke gravely of a force under Gen. French having captured Dundee.

But by some means all news travels faster even than these absurdly impossible rumours. A Boer doctor was here this morning & told us there was armoured train captured yesterday or on Friday near Colenso, and many prisoners taken, including Lord Randolph Churchills son. That was the doctor's way of cheering up our sick & wounded. We might have doubted the story, but circumstances confirm it and I have so little faith in armoured trains that it seems quite natural for them to fall into the enemy's hands.



LADYSMITH BARRACKS.
LOCALLY KNOWN AS "TIN TOWNS" AND ABOUT TWO MILES WEST OF THE MARKET SQUARE.

The buildings are tastefully laid out on the left bank of the Klip River, but owing to the dangerous proximity of the Boer lines, this healthy concentration was early abandoned by General White. Some of the buildings speak eloquently of rough usage during the bombardment.

7pm 10th Jan
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The gallant Devereux (1st Bn.) marching into Ladysmith on their arrival from India. This regiment was "mentioned" after their charge, when they drove the Boers from Wagon Hill, on the 6th January, 1900.

LADYSMITH GARRISON.



20th Dense white mist rising from the river-side and spreading across the plains to hang in a thinner haze about the shady sides of the hills put a stop to bombardment most of the morning. Until noon there had been practically no shelling, but an exchange of rifle-shots between Drell's Hills which continued for an hour. However the enemy made up for lost time later by sending several shells into town from Surprise Hill, several fell into the 18th Hussar camp where three men were hit, one so badly that his leg had to be amputated. another shell fell into the Gordons camp wounding Lieut Maitland & a private, after 9 o'clock p.m. we were astonished to see the beams of a search light sweeping Observation Hill. Two hours later artillery & rifle fire began & continued until I fell asleep.

21st

The cannonade begins again at day-break with some shots at our scouts who are trying to feel their way out through the scrub between Bulwaan and Lombard's Pop.

The Boers have mounted a 40-pounder high-velocity gun on the spur of the latter, and give us a taste of its quality, by throwing several shells of its quality into the fusilier camp at Bang Post & bursting shrapnel over the town.

The bombardment finishes about dusk with some vicious shots from Bulwaan. After that we sit and watch the lightning which plays in forks and zig-zags and chains about the hills between us and Tugela River.

For such picturesque effects there is a great advantage

I often wonder whether they know at home, I am here. I should like to hear from them (God Bless them all)

Again the lightning brilliant as moon light, I'll trust the black clouds which mean rain & turn in before it, starts

From half-past eleven last night there was heavy musketry firing the north-eastern of our defensive works, and we thought the Boers were being attacked hotly, but it turned out to be nothing more than a fusillade from Boer rifles at some unknown objects.

Our foes are evidently a little jumpy and apprehensive of a surprise by night. Sir Geo White sends out a flag of truce to protest against the persistent shelling of the Town Hall, where our sick & wounded are lodged temporarily under protection of a Red Cross flag. Commandant Schalk-Burger is said to have replied somewhat insolently that he understands the Geneva flag is being used by us to shelter combatants. At any rate Entombi is the place for our sick & wounded. He will not respect any other hospital flag. Curiously enough we accept this humiliation, so far as to remove the patients & provide for them a camping-ground where the tents cannot be seen; but the Red Cross flag still flies on the

77
13
Town Hall. Again I watch the beautiful effects of almost continuous lightning.

I have remarked before on the advantage of being able to watch the picturesque effects.

But there are some disadvantages in a storm especially if you have to sleep under canvas and a tent-pole happens to give way.

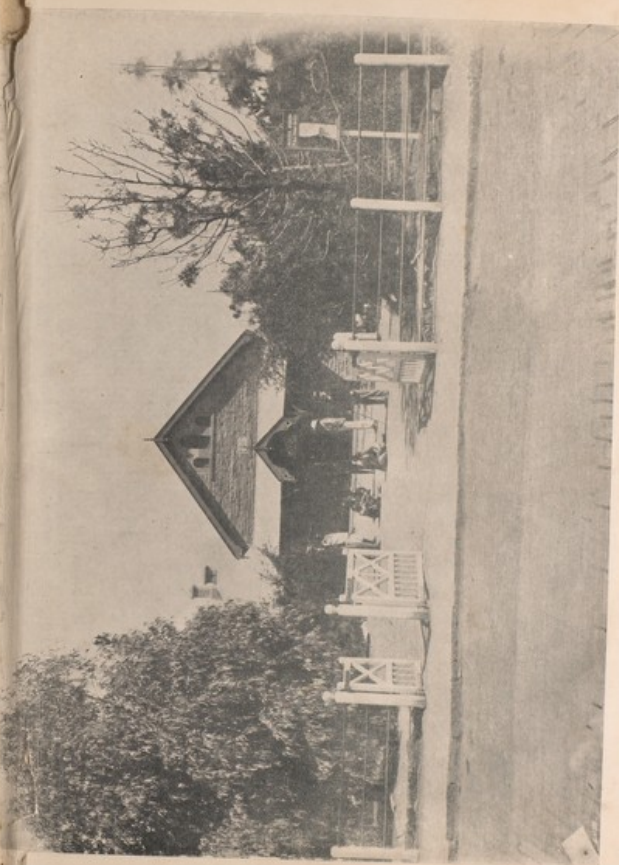
Then you wake with wet canvas flapping about you. The rain pours down in a deluge that makes you shiver at the mere thought of turning out to put the tent-pole right.

But still that is better at any rate than lying as my comrades do on the hillside yonder with only one blanket to roll himself in.

7023

Notwithstanding Sir Geo White's protest, Boer guns are still brought to bear on the Town Hall and shells frequently fall in the enclosure near it. And had hit buildings sending splinters in all directions.

This seems to me a scandalous violation of all the rules of civilized



COURT HOUSE, LADYSMITH.

The Headquarters of Colonel Durnell, C.M.G., and the Natal Police. Civil cases were conducted during the siege.



GROUP OF DUTCH PRISONERS.

With N.C. in charge, who were detained in the Dutch Reformed Church.
The man on the extreme left (front row) is a French artilleryman.

14

warfare which certainly entitles us to a field hospital in addition to one at the base. If Schalk Burger had objected on the grounds that the Town Hall came in the line of fire from his guns to our batteries or defensive works he would have been within his rights; but all the same there would have been no truth in that contention and at any rate it rests with him to clear himself from the charge of having fired upon a Red Cross flag without warning.

We have heard of a large force at Escourt & a battle on the 2nd inst. no casualties so far detailed.

24

Shelling from Umbulwana all day. Official information dated 2nd Nov. has been received by G.O.C. that Genl. Meldyard has arrived at Escourt with reinforcements & additional troops are arriving daily at Durban. The daily issue of rations allowed tomorrow 25th inst. will be.

fresh meat 3/4 lbs; mealie flour for porridge 1/4 lb

One shell killed 4 & wounded 7 men of the Liverpool Regt this morning

The enemy made a clever cattle raid 20 span of trest-oxen slowly grazed towards better pasturage, nearer the Boer lines from which shells in rapid succession were sent to burst just in rear of the herds

mounted infantry of the Leicesters attempted again & again to herd the cattle back but they were met each time by heavy rifle-fire. Thus no less than 250 valuable trest oxen fell into the enemy's hands

The firing was fiercer today than since the siege began.

But our "Hazel" sent a shell into "Long Tom" and she hasn't spoken or shown any life since.

Without wearisome iteration it would be impossible to do justice day by day to the good work of the Naval Brigade under Capt. Lambton with our heavy guns of "H.M.S. Powerful" our

state here would be much worse than it is. always cheery always ready for any duty & whose good shooting has done much to keep down the fire of the Boer artillery.

7/11/25

No hostilities disturb the quietness of this morning. But it is never safe to count on this, & "hoot-out" men are kept constantly on the alert in each camp to give warning by sound of high whistle or gong when one of the big guns has been fired.

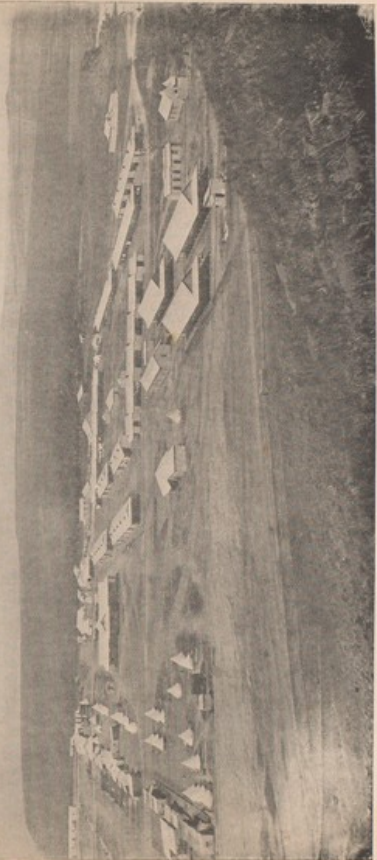
Against "Silent Susan" such precautions avail nothing so the patients tell me for she wears no white-cloud signal; the flash of discharge can only be seen if you happen to be looking for it intently in the right place, close upon the heels of her report comes a shrill fiendish whisper in the air and by the time you hear that the shell is overhead or has burst elsewhere.

A very persistent rumour prevails that Blomfontein is taken.

17
The bombardment did not begin until half-past six and lasted only until dusk the final shot being fired by our naval gun into Paulwana where the enemy are beginning some new works.

Nov 26
The enemy started firing about 10 a.m. & their strict regard for the Sabbath does not run to toleration of Sunday labour on our part so they sent three shells in among some Haffers who are digging trenches with the harmless object of burying dead horses there. This being the first Sunday firing we have experienced worth mentioning since the siege began

Nov 27
The enemy ^{had} grown bold with the success of their first raid try another: this time with the object of cutting off horses that graze loosely on the plain towards Paulwana. But they have to do now with Natal Carbineers many of whom like themselves are reldt farmers, fami



LADYSMITH BARRACKS.

LOCALLY KNOWN AS "TIN TOWN," AND ABOUT TWO MILES WEST OF THE MARKET SQUARE.

The buildings are usefully laid out on the left bank of the Klip River, but owing to the dangerous proximity of the Boer lines, this healthy encampment was early abandoned by General White. Some of the buildings speak eloquently of rough usage during the bombardment.



LADYSMITH BARRACKS.

LOCALLY KNOWN AS "THE TOWN" AND ABOUT TWO MILES WEST OF THE MARKET SQUARE.

The buildings are tastefully laid out on the left bank of the Klip River, but owing to the dangerous proximity of the Boer lines, this healthy encampment was early abandoned by General Buller. Some of the buildings were "blown up" by the Boers.

18

with every trick of rounding up "horses or oxen"

Heavy artillery fire & shelling of town so I suppose the Boers will have some consolation. The Rifles had a narrow escape, as they were at work on a wall the top of which was struck by a shell & splinters flew all round without hitting anybody. The Manchester were not so having three men wounded, but none seriously. While I write smothering concerts are being held perhaps some faint noise of it may stir the air about sleeping Boers of Mount Bulwerina.

28th

A misty morning with rain but which does not prevent the Boers from shelling the town very heavily, Middle Hill, Rifleman's ridge & Telegraph Hill there is three 9-pounders which the Riflemen for quaint reasons of their own frame with hope & charity all have had a turn at us & our batteries reply

19

Today we have been cheered by news of victory of our troops over the Boers near Moods River

7729 Heavy firing continues all day especially to the north of town & also on the Colenso road. The name of the "Big Gun" on Middle Hill which because of her propensity for throwing shells into everybody's mess has come to be known as the "Meddler".

We have two old-fashioned howitzers throwing shells with sticky powder of Black powder for bursting charge, which was mounted on Waggon Hill. They are either "The Great Swin Brethren" or "Castor and Pollux" or "Puffing Pallo".

It matters little by what name men call them so long as they can throw shells into the enemy's battery & this they do steadily.

The "Meddler" cannot reply to them effectively & other Boer guns try in vain to reach them.

20

7730 Day breaks across white mists on the plain and then comes gorgeous sunshine, with a glow of colour all round, brilliant orange in the east above Bulwaan, deepening to blood red in the west behind the rugged crest of Mount Lintwa.

From early morning onward there is heavy artillery fire on camp and town from every gun the Boers have mounted.

Our howitzers and the "Meddler" began it with a merry little set-to between themselves doing no harm. But Lombards' Nap joined in, then aiming straight for the hospital with its Red Cross flag. Two shells had fallen close to that building from which all haste was made to remove the helpless patients most of them had been got out when the third shot came crashing into the largest ward & from among the ruins one dead man and nine freshly wounded men taken. At night the column southward flashes another long signal on the clouded sky, & Boer search-lights try to obliterate it by throwing their feeble rays across

21

The beam that shines like a comet athwart the
darkness above Zugela heights

Dec 1st

Long Tom of Pepworth's Hill which has not
fired since "Lady Ann" silenced it days ago
is now reported to be cracked & useless, but
the enemy are substituting another heavy
piece of ordnance in its place. Riddle
Till gun only fired a few rounds today
& was promptly silenced by our Great
Twin Brothers on Waggon Hill.

The Boers new gun sent three
successive shells this morning into
or near the Covert where Col Dick-
Cunningham Major Riddle & other
convalescent wounded officers have
their quarters.

Dec. 2nd

Shelling continues but less than
usual. We are not left long in doubt
as to the meaning of these new work
on Gun Hill

A crescent of H's has opened from

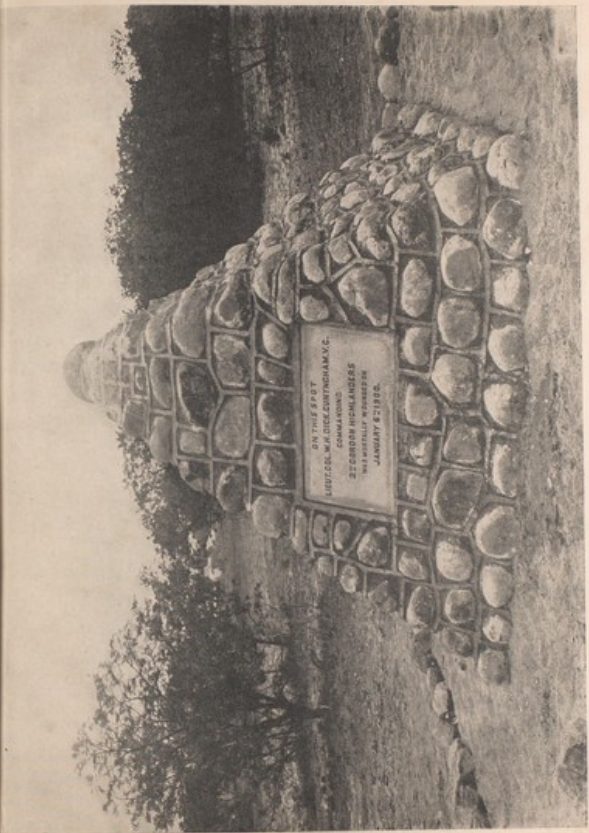


COUNTRY ROUND LADYSMITH
(LOOKING SOUTH-WEST)

Town, from Naval Brigade position. Proceeding along the road from the left corner, the houses
and tents in the little forest of trees on the right of the path cover the Headquarters
of the Boers. White the wagon on the opposite side is the Field Printing-office, and on its
right the other end of the Star Circle. General Ward's wagon is seen a little further on.
Caesar's Camp rises on the left of picture and part of "Mabel's Castle" on the right.

rumours of Lord Methuen's victory on Modder River, which are now officially confirmed. Genl. Clery is also said to have defeated the Boers near Estcourt, but if so he did not get back the cattle he had looted, for we have watched them for hours driving great herds from southward up the roads that lead to Van Rensselaer's Pass.

Our batteries here have for one been most aggressive, shelling the enemy's position at Rifleman's Ridge vigorously, while the howitzers directed their fire on Middle Hill without drawing a reply from the 6 inch breast which Captain Christie and his gunners believe to have been put out of action completely. His twin brother, "Puffing Billy" of Bulwaan, was also silenced for a time but has come back to quite his old form this evening, & threw several shells into town & camps, where troops assembled to cheer the news of Lord Methuen's victory.



R. I. P.

Memorial Cairn, erected near the Highlanders' Camp, in the bush through which the regiment passed to support the defenders of Wagon Hill, on the 6th January, 1900.



VAN REENAN.

Pass at the Darkensberg on the lines of communication of the Free State Boers, who held Spion Kop and the west positions around Ladysmith.

5 A few shells fell in the town this morning.
 I went to the train to see if any letters had come from Tom Stone, but no luck.

The bombardment has been slack again; all the enemy's big guns are silent. But there is great movement among the Boers, who are apparently holding a great council of war at Genl. Joubert's headquarters. This may account for something fresh.

6th Now we know what the forging of Boer guns around Ladysmith at mid-night of the 19th of last month ^{means} news came to hand of a successful British sortie at Kimberley on the 25th. Genl. Gatacre's column fired the first shot at Carnarvon the occasion being an affair of outposts. Now we know it was a night alarm magnified by imagination into a desperate sortie from here.

The daily bombardment is now a matter of course that our hardly

27

& alertness of his questions. Eventually we were released & allowed to take back with us the more seriously wounded.

Dec 9th

Sharp musketry firing heard in the vicinity of Lombards. Stop at 2.30 am and at 5.30 am heavy firing artillery & musketry till about 4.15. Shells ^{were} exchanged in the evening. Such brilliant achievements as the above ^{were} felt. It will be more difficult in future, the enemy having been put upon their guard.

Dec 10th

The Boers started again early this morning firing & shelling.

News received Gen Lord Methuen who was wounded at the Modder river fight resumed command of his column.

Now, however, the regular forces here who had long been ready for any service in view of the brilliant performance of the irregulars, regarded inaction as a slur upon their particular



COUNTRY ROUND LADYSMITH

(Looking West)

Soldiers of Ladysmith. The camp in the foreground is that of the 5th Lancs. On the far sky-line to the left of the black bush, in the foreground—the faint, double-pointed hill is Spoon Kop and the Talamyama Range. The right of the picture is "Kilmen's Post" with "Fin Town," or barracks immediately below. The white stones in the foreground show the pathway to the naval guns.

to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since 1800."

27

Dec 6

This view, taken from the Naval Brigade Hill, shows the camp of the 6th Laners. The stripped, daisied hill ending with the centre of the picture is Wood Hill. The boxes carried and were driven back, on the 6th January. The camp behind the black hill in the distance is that of the Irish Fusiliers, covering the Colenso Road, and on the skyline beyond the Talsnyana Range.

COUNTRY ROUND LADYSMITH
(LOOKING WEST)



28

8

regiments. Lieut Col. Metcalf with 500 men of the Rifle Brigade attacked the Boer position on Surprize Hill & silenced the howitzer there.

Our Force had to fight their way back lost 12 killed & 22 wounded.

11th

Heavy firing throughout the day. The big gun on Middle Hill which the "Lion Brothers" had put out of action some days ago was again in working order & taken to Telegraph Hill & mounted in a strong position whence its shells reached Coe's Ridge Kings Post & the other defensive works with unpleasant persistence. Echoes from guns, Colenso way had been heard all day. "Bullet Heliograms are busy."

to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since...

29

Dec 12th

News by Heliograph a part of the relief Column advanced to Colenso without opposition. Heavy firing is heard in the direction of Colenso all day. The Town Guard having been duly embodied was called out to ~~take~~ line the river banks facing Bulwaria, it was apparently expected that the Boers would attempt reprisals for our night attacks, so this was done to assist in the defence of the town.

Dec 13th

Still firing is heard on the Colenso Road. The bombardment was not carried on with its previous vigour, but still a little in the evening.

Dec 14th

Shelling continued as before. No news. Genl. Buller's guns being plainly heard. We are expected to be relieved within a week. We have not yet felt the strain severely yet. There is not much reduction in the issues of meat & bread but vegetables are getting scarce.

30

Dec 15th

Shelling town & Camps now heavier. Big Battle taking place south of Lemith, ~~about~~ ^{about} 8 miles distant.

— Except for the bombardment, heavier than ordinary, the last three days have been uneventful. There is no doubt that "Buller" is making a vigorous effort to join hands with the beleaguered town & that the Boers were with equal stubbornness trying to beat him back along the banks of the Tugela.

Dec 16th

Sounds of battle reached us in a dull roar from the distant southward but did not get no nearer & therefore told us nothing except as I have said already.

Some shelling at dawn this morning around Lemith from Bulwaria ^{and} other guns all firing shells which fell thick about the Camps. Killed one Artilleryman one Gordon Highlander & a civilian, several other men were slightly wounded by splinters but none seriously.

Dec 17th Depressing news is now made public from Buller who made his effort on 7th day for our relief failed. He bids us wait in patience for another month, until siege artillery can reach him.

There has been gloom over the town today, which ^{evening} bldgs sunshine cannot dispel. Colonialists in their anger use strong language for which a temperature of 107° in the shade may be in some measure accountable.

Dec 18th

No shelling began at day break as usual lasted with little intermissions until nearly dark from the guns all round our positions. Bulwain began by throwing a chaprel which burst over the camp of Natal Carabineers, where the men were at morning stables. Four of them were killed seven wounded & a man of the Royal Engineers was so badly ^{that} ~~hit~~ ^{he} ~~only~~ ^{lingered} a few hours.

The same shell killed 11 horses.

Dec 19th

In the town many people had narrow escapes when ^{the shells from} Buller's 6 inch Crews swept around.

The enemy started firing an hour after dawn, the shelling became hot about headquarters they however changed its direction nearly to Capt Valentines house, in which Col Rhodes was generally found about breakfast, lunch, & dinner times as a member of the 7th Bde mess.

Later the Police Station or some building near it seemed to have a curious fascination for the gunners of Bulwain. They dropped shells ^{just} in front then in rear of the Courthouse but always in the same line, so that for half an hour or so Col Dartnell & his men had a warm time, one of their tents ^{being} ~~was~~ hit but luckily not very happened to be in it at that time.

Buller's force fighting in the morning which made the Board most persistent than ever.

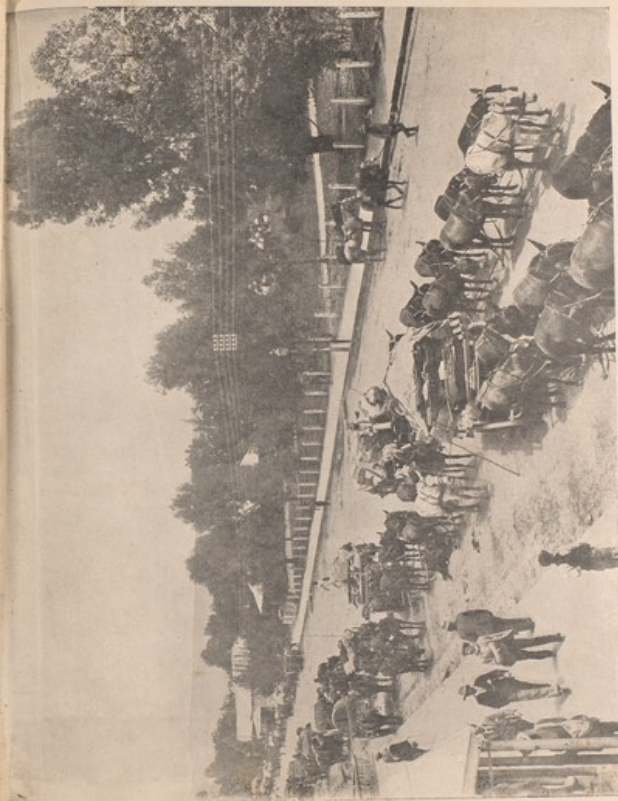
to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since..."

Dec 20

Firing continued about the same time, several ^{buildings} ~~houses~~ were hit, including Town Hall. We returned with a few shots. One of the first shells from Buluzian was burst close to the Police Camp, after passing through a row of slender trees and along the fence, inside which a soldier was just preparing to charge. He had his looking glass on a rail of the fence, when between it & himself, a distance of not more than two feet, the shell ripped with a deafening shriek to bury itself ^{at} the root of a tree, not three yards off. How this man escaped death is a wonder.

The wall behind him was scarred by splinters, the iron fence in front being torn & twisted into strange shapes, & the rails crushed to matchwood by the force of concussion.

We hear this evening that Gen Buller had lost Ten Guns.



MAIN STREET, LADYSMITH.

Train of commissariat wagons waiting to move out with column. The Post Office is shown in the background on the right of the road.

to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since 1800."



View of Ladysmith, with troops parading on cycling-truck, before the siege.

PARADING OF TROOPS.

21. Sir Peter Buller's heavy batteries opened fire early this morning towards Colenso.

We feel, though we have no means of knowing for certain, that large reinforcements must have been sent that way recently from around about Ladysmith leaving the lines of investment comparatively weak.

Our enemy however makes a great show of being strong here by keeping up a ~~most~~ ^{most} vicious bombardment. It is hard to have been cooped up for fifty days under fire but we must make the best of it.

Several shells from Bulwer's ^{na} ~~na~~ burst into a house, smashing the furniture to atoms. Sir Leo White is ill with low fever & there is naturally much anxiety on his account.

22nd

This was a day of heavy calamity for our regiment & marked by more serious casualties than any other since the siege began. At 6 am a shell struck the Camp of the Gloucesters on Junction Hill, while the men were at breakfast. Killing

six & wounding nine. A little later, one shell burst among the 5th ranks wounding several officers & men; one sergeant had an eye knocked out; but the others were only slightly wounded. We still hear firing from Colenso way. But we have almost ceased to speculate on the meaning of such sounds while they come no nearer this way, they are no message of relief to us now.

Dec 23.

After early morning on Saturday came a strange lull in the bombardment; people who count the shells as they fall, for lack of other employment found their favourite occupation gone. Even the pigeons that are kept in training here for future military use, seemed reluctant to fly in the still air, missing probably the excitement of sounds that urge them to revel in multitudinous chaotic currents when shells are about.

And long-tailed Tamaqua Doves flitted merrily about the pine branches



LADYSMITH NAVAL BRIGADE.

Exterior view of Princess Victoria Battery on Cape Roboide, with Lieut. Halsey, R.N., and gunners of H.M.S. *Proserpine*.

to him said "that he is the best commissariat officer since 1800."



One of the guns that saved the garrison. Interior of Princess Victoria Battery on Cove
Reconob. Lt. Halsey, R.N., and gunners of H.M.S. *Thetis*, with the 47 gun.

LADYSMITH NAVAL BRIGADE.

Dec 22

as if unable to coo.
An amorous note without the usual
accompaniment. Quiet did not reign.
all day however, towards evening the
gun. ^{the} Riflemen's Peppercorn. Lanciers' Peppercorn
opened straight over the Gen's new quarters
to which Sir G. White had only changed
half an hour earlier.

We are now getting reconciled to the
idea of waiting, irksome though it may
be & heavy with many unpleasant
possibilities. We have done our best to
endure chilly privations & the approach
of a sickly season with fortitude & not
cheerfulness & our hope is that though
the position here may not seem a very
glorious one, it will be recognized
henceforth as an example of the way
in which British soldiers & Colonists
of British descent can bear them-
selves in circumstances ^{which} ~~that~~ try the
best qualities of men & women.
I wonder what they think of us.

to him said "that he is the best commissariat officer since 1800."

in England now? Do they regard us as heroes or fools for stopping here?

This question was transmitted in a slightly varied form by heliograph signal to our comrades, south of the English, yesterday and the answering flashes came back.

"You are heroes: no!" were the message. It was interrupted by clouds & lost in a series of confused dashes which the receiving signaller could not read. We flatter ourselves however that the meaning words were full of generous appreciation.

Here is little enough, reaching us from the outer world, calculated to "back up" that's all very well, but counting 800 bullets and jagged bits of iron within the bursting area of the Chrapnel shell from Buluzian, is not very cheerful & myself having of course none of these shells flying or dropping, but ~~maybe~~ ^{likely to be} struck by disease in this unhealthy camp. The thermometer registered 105 in the shade.

Dec 27 During bombardment much about to come but not so persistent. It needed perhaps all the music that could be collected in town to remind the beleaguered Garrison & inhabitants that the festive season was upon them. It was inevitable that at such a time the thoughts of all should turn a little restlessly to other scenes; but it takes a great deal to depress the British soldier to the point at which he is so willing to forego his life for his King; and on all hands, in spite of adverse fortune preparations were made to keep tomorrow in as fitting a manner as the restricted means allowed with ~~that~~ success. Some tradesmen were glad enough to have their old stock taken over wholesale by the military authorities at a profitable price, but others who foresaw chances of a richer harvest, were inclined to grumble at the arbitrary exercise of power of officials whose acts they regarded as little better than confiscation, and

unfortunately, some of them managed to evade the first call so that they were allowed to go on, selling privately and running up the prices to a fabulous extent.

This was a mistake. I think all should have been treated alike so that none might complain that "Pissing goes by favour" even in the most immaculate & best regulated armies.

Dec 25 Xmas Day

as it was, the military commissariat secured much that would add to the comfort of soldiers but for what was left civilians had to pay dearly. Some idea by a quotation from the prices fixed at our Xmas market on Saturday -

Eggs 9/6 per doz. their freshness being taken on trust & no questions asked. 1 Cow 9/6 of large Bone but scanty flesh, butter 1 lb. tin 8/6 jam 3/6 per tin Condensed Milk at 8/6 a tin 4/6 28 new potatoes 3/6

Christmas goods were on view plum puddings Buns, buns, mince pies, jellies,



LADYSMITH NAVAL BRIGADE.

One of the guns that saved Ladysmith. Interior view of Lady Anne battery, on Junction Hill, showing gun of H.M.S. *Porpoise*.

to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since Moses."



Counting tower on "Gordon" Hill, where the Naval Brigade of H.M.S. "Penguin" kept a look-out upon Boer movements and directed the fire of the naval guns.

LADYSMITH NAVAL BRIGADE.

Dec 22

cakes - crystallized fruits etc. etc.
- call and see at.

Cross & Blackwell
Loko Square
London W.

we have no Covent Garden, or Leadenhall
here but it was felt that some sort
of show ought to be made at this
festive season & according wrapping
in the form of Christmas fare that
could be got together was brought out
for sale. My auction did not amount
to much.

and for once the British soldier
here spent Xmas day with strict
temperance.

26

Boer guns sent as greetings in the
shape of shells that did not explode,
when dug up they were found to contain
rough imitations of Plum pudding
that had been partly cooked by the
heat of explosion in the gun barrels.

41

& some with the compliments of the seasons engraved in bold capitals, ^{and} after wasting some ammunition for the sake of this practical joke, started in earnest at the defenceless town, shells, not - with - standing.

Hot Drops managed to have a fairly festive time for all that, we at Inlombi were not forgotten; for the patients - the morning train was laden with fruit, flowers & such delicacies as the resources of the beleaguered town could furnish.

Dec 27

Heavy musketry fire commenced at 1-30 pm. until about 2-30 am. in the ^{vicinity} of the town.

It has been very hot all day. The thermometer registered 105° in the shade; what a climate Natal has, at night it went down to 65° & the brilliant summer weather broke up suddenly, in a fierce thunderstorm,

42

Surprise Hill howitzer, surpassed previous performance by throwing three shells over Convent Hill into Fort. A shell from Bulwark guns struck a mess tent ~~of the 100th~~ of the 100th. Capt. Safford was killed, Lieut. Price - Dent, co. seriously injured that there is little hope of his recovery, 6 other subalterns were hit.

Two special orderlies were

Lieut. Price - Dent.

Dec 28

Shelling less. Official information received of a victory for England. at Toffortin on Khag. day also patients are deserting the Boers owing to scarcity of food. a report also received that the enemy at the Battle of Colenso, lost heavily.

This morning there was just a pale glimmer of dawn when our large naval gun assumed the aggressive part & sent 6 shells in

rapid succession to Pulwanna ^{na.} 27/11 am
our guns fired 2 shots

Dec 29

Yesterday & today the bombardment has been significant, in spite of heavy rain, but it's a daily event except on Sundays.

The enemy's fire is usually heaviest about dinner time & afternoon tea time & after many shells are thrown at the cattle troughs and at our grass cutters when they go out to work & the sniping of the outposts hardly ceases even on Sundays to all this shooting our guns have replied effectively at intervals. Ammunition for them must be precious, so they take care not to waste it on chance shots as they (the enemy) Artillerymen do. From 5 o'clock last night until this morning rain fell heavily

Dec 30 The river rose four feet in about an hour; at night many horses & mules were swept down stream by the roaring torrent & were drowned before anybody could attempt to save them.

The sun shone out about 11 am. The boys go out with their Martinis & lunch baskets & settle down comfortably under trees or behind rocks for a day's shooting we can from here almost recognise them & nick-name them, one we call 'Old Mortality' & another Blue-beard. Their bullets sometimes come into camp here, but seldom hit anyone

Dec 31

On Friday the Town Hall the Bank & the Dutch Church were hit by shells from Pulwanna. We notice it is usually quiet for a while after heavy rain which now falls nearly every night but it is good for the grass. The river is much swollen & thick with mud & many of the caves & shelters dug in

65

high banks for refuges. The mounted Infantry of the Leicesters lost 6 horses by the flood on Friday night. Today the rain was not so bad. The sun shone brilliant bringing back tropical heat in contrast is the cold that always accompanies thunder-storms.

1900

Jan 1st

The enemy even on the first day of the new year were not willing to leave the garrison in doubt as to their presence it again took the form of blind shells incited "Compliments of the Season."

We have plenty of necessaries in the way of mealies flour & meal but luxuries such as wine spirits & tobacco are no longer obtainable. The civilians refugees, Staffis & coolies are now organised as paid nurses & labourers.

The Gun on Bulwanna fired several shells at the Camp of the Liverpools this morning but no casualties.



LADYSMITH GARRISON.

Colonel Royston, and Staff Commandant of the Natal Volunteers, consisting of the "Carbineers," "Mounted Rifles," and "Light Infantry." Standing behind the Colonel and on his left is Captain Molyneux, Commander of the Town Guard. Colonel Royston—who fought in all the battles with the Ladysmith Column—has since died of enteric fever.

to him," said "that he is the best commissariat officer since 1805."

1900
Jan

LADYSMITH "COMBATANT" RESIDENTS.

Group of women and children who refused to leave the town, preferring to have the dangers of the siege. The late General Buller sent them to the Neutral Camp as combatants. This photo was taken by request of the Mayor.



2 Firing continues at intervals Two men were killed yesterday. The Bulwaan gun fired 11 consecutive shells yesterday afternoon, the previous record having been seven.

Our naval guns replied effectively & also shelled the Boers in the neck-between Bulwaan & Lombard Kop. It is reported that the Boers are withdrawing their wagons behind the Biggarsberg & that they are utterly disconcerted. They get bread once a week & coffee is very short.

Genl. Buller's search-lights, signals often illuminate the southern sky like a comet's tail pulsating secret despatches not a great distance off.

Forage for horses is getting very scarce & the poor beasts suffer greatly.

3. The Boers have two powerful search lights at work, & with one of them a very brilliant electric light on Mount Bulwaan. They try to confuse our flash light

to him said "that he is the best commissariat officer since 1800."

Signalling but so far they have failed
 So two days the Boers fire from
 Bulwaan^{na} has been directed at the Town Hall.
 & Royal Hotel. we have heard very little firing
 towards Colenso, News that the Duke-of-
 Westminster is dead

Firing early this morning & at intervals
 during the day I went over the civilian
 camp & obliged with 2 songs but had to return
 early for duty at 8 o'clock in Officers Mess

Between mid-night & 4 am, a heavy
 thunder storm was raging which flooded
 the place up to our knees.

The Boers have mounted a
 new gun near Popoethe which sends
 snipers into town & about Mount Hill.
 with irritating persistency & its smokeless
 powder makes a flash so small that
 the exact position cannot be located

Jan 5 Days in succession pass unbroken by
 any incidents dissimilar to the routine
 which in the very constancy of danger
 becomes monotonous. Yesterday & today
 are so much alike that one hardly remembers
 which was which unless of some personal
 adventure. Today one officer of the S.L.H. was
 hit but not seriously. One shell struck
 the police camp where it burst with
 destructive force completely wrecking Col.
 Dartnells tent with all its contents but
 injuring no one. between the hours of 2 & 3
 am some firing started on Waggon Hill
 which was kept up all the morning.

Jan 6th Saturday (never to be forgotten)
 Nobody here had credited the Boers with
 a determination to attack unless chance should
 give them overwhelming superiority in all
 respects & for that it seems probable the
 game of long bowls with heavy artillery
 varied by "sniping" from behind rocks
 a mile off would continue to be played
 day after day in the hope of starving us.

49

into subjection before Buller could bring up his relieving force, everybody knew that issue to be well-nigh impossible because our resources ^(have not yet reached) ~~are~~ from starvation point yet it is inconceivable that eight or ten thousand British soldiers could be hemmed in by three times their number of Boers & compelled to yield without a desperate fight in the last extremity.

We were fully aware that if ever an opening offered for the enemy to creep up within shorter range under cover & without being seen they would be prompt to take advantage of it in expectation of another Majuba and that is a danger to which our extenuated defensive lines necessarily expose us, but we trusted with justice (as events have proved) to the steadiness and discipline of well-trained troops, to hold the Boers in check wherever they might gain any temporary advantage & drive them back at the bayonet point. & so it was to-day the attack began before day-break with

50

a determined attempt to capture the whole range of Bester's Ridge which is divided officially into Casars Camp & Waggon Hill forming the southern chain of our defences. It is scarcely entrenched at all having only a few sangers dotted about as rallying-points.

The Boers' movements were marked by a searchlight from Bulwarraⁿ which played for hours in a curious way across our camp (hospital camp).

The first operation, without which recovery would have been hopeless. A large force of the enemy who attacked us were driven off at the bayonet point suffering great loss and unable to withstand any longer proved a brilliant victory for us with a loss of 420 men killed & wounded which was due to close fighting. The Goddons' loss was heavy. In a moment the air was torn by bullets from both sides which fell unpleasantly thick ^{and} as fast as possible. The Boers unable to with-

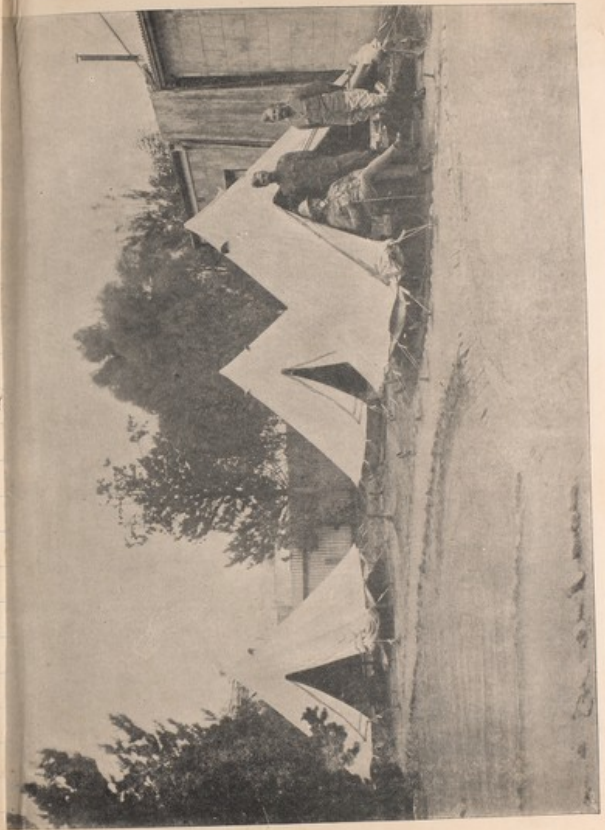
stand any longer the sight of that fine
front sweeping like fate upon them,
to fired a few hundred shots and fled down
the hill followed by shots from the Devons
who in a few minutes more, had cleared
the position of every Boer. That was the
end of the fight and through some ^{of the} enemies
still clung to Intombi's crest waiting for
darkness their fire soon slackened, and
the hard-fought battle ended in a complete
deport of the enemy at all points

Col. Dick Lunsingham, P.S. was shot by a
spent bullet whilst crossing a bridge to
take command of his Regt.

There was a ^{Jan 7th} ~~Thanksgiving~~ service held
in camp this evening.

The enemy must have lost a large
number over 90 were carried off Waggon. Well
bayoneted they are very busy & seen moving
the dead. Bodies and horses were washed down
the spruit & seen this morning

Several of our men ^{were} hit with ~~rope~~



LADYSMITH GARRISON.

Colonel Darnell, C.M.G., and Inspector Clark, N.P., at the door of the tent which was totally destroyed
by a shell on the day following that on which this photo was taken. The Colonel escaped unhurt.
to him, said, "that he is the best commissariat officer since 1800."

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Major Henderson and scouts who, as guides, led the Gan Hill expedition on the night
 of 20th December, when one "Long Tom" and one 47 gun were destroyed, and one
 Maxim captured. The boys' cooking food was that used by the Boer gunners.

LADYSMITH GARRISON.



noses bullets of the Gordons had the base of his skull
 blown out Dum - Dum - cartridges not found.
 on the Boer wounded (still no news of Buller)
 The Devons got specially praised for their behaviour
 yesterday, firing is about the same as usual
 from Bulwerama,
 Buller's heliograph at work this
 evening.

8
 We started on half rations without tobacco
 I visited Com. Stone in ^{whom} which I had a
 trouble in finding as he was on outpost
 duty with his company, but found him
 alright & spent the night with him in the
 trenches where I witnessed the star light
 fired for the first time in Ladysmith.
 Several shots were fired. We had a long talk
 of Derby about 8:30 pm. a man was hit on
 the chest I used my first field dressing
 upon him when I arrived back to camp
 I found a good number of wounded had
 arrived. Sir Redvers Buller's heliograph
 congratulating Sir Geo White on the gallant

to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since Block."

defence of Ladysmith by this force, giving special praise to the Devons for their behaviour, but making no mention of the Imperial Light Horse. (An unfortunate omission)

Very quiet today. Buller hopes to be with us soon himself. Lord Methuen sends seasonal greetings he makes the second attempt, we also received a message from the Queen; we indeed are revived ~~by~~ Disease following upon many long weeks of privation, ^{at the} nights & days passed in the trenches under a wrenching rain & the fierce rays of the sun began now to make havoc among the troops what ever may have been the precise cost to the Devons of their bold attempt to rush the British defences on the 6th; it was certainly heavy enough to prevent its being renewed. From this time forward they settle themselves resignedly to wait until disease & starvation in the town

Jan 9th

should have done for them what their best & bravest had failed to do, man against man many a brave fellow of ours who had fought swon at Dundee or at Islandlaagte who with fierce courage had endured in the foremost line in the struggle at Bleters Ridge now fell a victim to Enteric fever or dysentery in this camp (Entombi) The lists of the sick & the mortality returns grew daily more formidable, rations soon had to be reduced, & all within the town, patients as ^{had} been their endurance, now began to look eagerly towards the relief that "Buller" had promised in a month.

Jan 10th

Nothing unusual occurred today several deaths from Enteric Fever of many a brave fellow. The fortunes of the day as the hours lengthened were reflected in a series of telegrams which were flashed through by Sir Geo White to Buller in his camp south of the Tugela. One of these I am to

believe reported that the defenders were "hard pressed," and in the afternoon, somewhat tardily as it seems, Genl. Buller made a demonstration with all his available force towards the enemy's trenches. The object we know not but presumably it was to hold the Boers to their positions on the river, and to prevent the commandos attacking Ladysmith from being reinforced.

Death of Lord Roa.

Announced from wounds received while fighting on the 6th he was a favourite with men & officers alike.

The bombardment has gone on vigorously for several days & the Boers are busy on new works I'm told, probably with the idea of "bluffing us into the belief that they mean to mount new guns while in reality they are sending reinforcements southward to intercept Genl. Buller.

The reception yesterday of the message from the Queen thanking the Troops here for their gallant defence.

aroused much enthusiasm

Lord Roa's death to-day causes profound regret in every regiment.

Conspicuous for pluck. Among the ^{of the} ~~of~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{front} he met death — where he had faced it. In nearly every action since the siege began this body was buried in the little cemetery a scene impressive in its simple solemnity

Jan 11th Jan 12

I was transferred to 26 British Field Hospital today where I took over a large Marquee containing 30 patients suffering from Enteric Fever, with the assistance of Pte. Charles Campbell which ran us every other night on Duty.

But we are now expecting the relief column in every day now.

Death of Col. Sergt. Demard. Col. Right Pte. Wood's in my ward.

Jan 13th

Buller's guns are heard in the distance he assures the Troops here that he is coming to their assistance. The Governor also

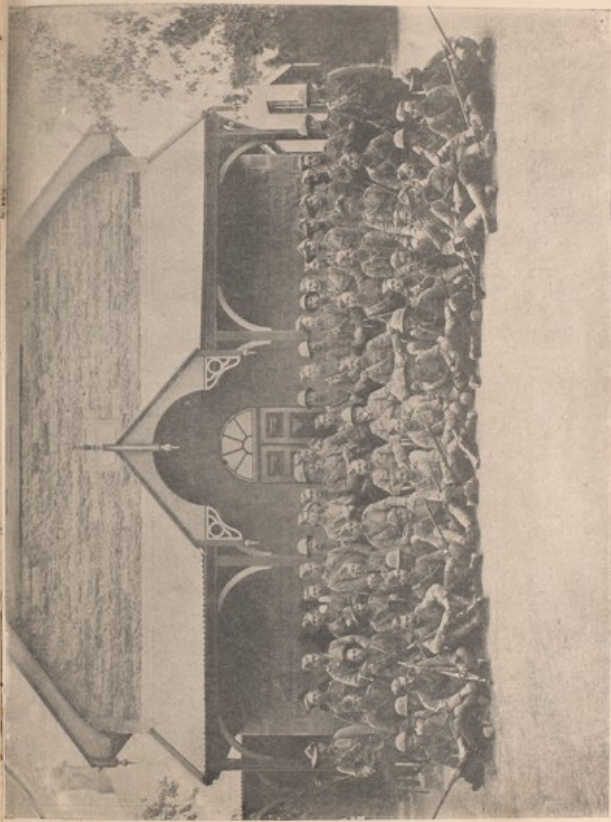
57

compliments the troops for their victory of the 6th inst
 the troops also for their behaviour during the siege;
 Deaths in the magazine firing very quiet today
 a very persistent rumour prevails that the
 Relief arrives on the 15th. Well on my Birth-Day
 "what to?"

Jan 14
 Helio-graph message from Genl Buller concluded
 with words very hard pressed, then the sun
 was obscured and no more signals

The scarcity of vegetables are slowly
 felt and substitutes for ordinary food were
 supplied by the manufacture of horse sausage
 & soup. But the garrison are prepared to
 fight to the last who shall do justice to
 soldiers-like these? (Good Old Cats-meat)

Jan 15
 My Birth-Day early this morning sixty shots
 from heavy guns were heard far off to the
 south-ward giving us hope that Genl
 Buller had begun his promised advance
 for our relief. A few hours later some more
 heavy firing was heard. In night there was



LADYSMITH GARRISON.

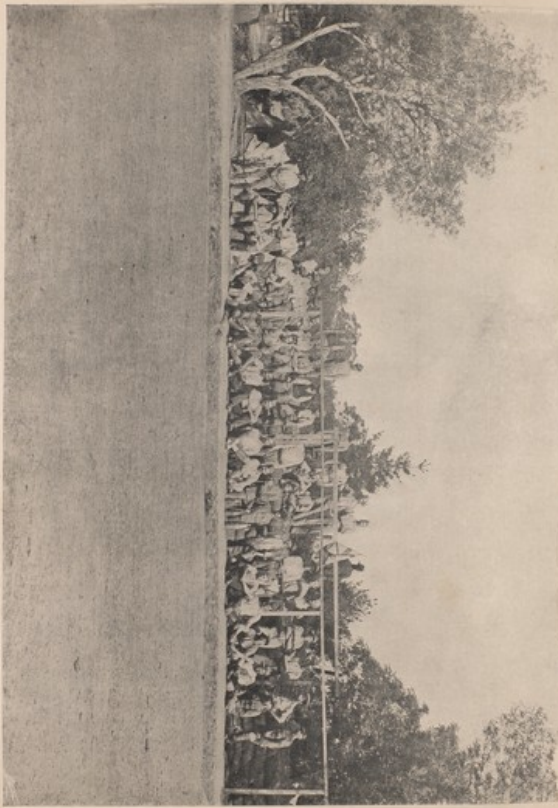
Colonel Dartnell, C.M.G., officers, and men of the Natal Police, who fought in
 the engagement on the 6th January, 1900, and performed regular pocket duties.
 It will be remembered that the Colonel conducted the retreat from Dundee.
 The following is the best commissariat officer since Mince.
 to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since Mince."

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Group of Naval Gunners at the trenches, used as a protection against shells, one of which fell in their camp, killing four men, twelve horses, and wounding five men.

LADYSMITH GARRISON.



58

another sorrowful gathering of correspondents in the cemetery round the grave of Sir Stevens who died this afternoon from sudden collapse.

I received a letter from Tom Stone (no news of Buller) but distant firing ~~which~~ tells us they are trying ^{hard to reach us,} to quit for the day as rain started.

M^r Benn died in my ward (Enteric Fever)

Heavy firing on both sides result undrainable therefore we may go to bed & sleep in peace.

The 5th Lancers who with a company of King's Royal Rifle are holding Observation Hill have hit upon a happy idea for drawing Boer fire by deputy. They dug a man of straw for that purpose with a straw coat & helmet, by showing his now & then they not only find out exactly where the enemy are but get occasional chances of putting in a pot shot with effect. The suggestion probably came from Devonshire Hill where Col. Knox.

~~A~~ ~~who~~ who commands all divisional troops on that defensive line had a dummy battery mounted. This drew fire from ^{the} Boer guns at

the issuing of orders to the troops, & that he in the last communication, subject since Moss.

tree, and gave Col. Knox a good suggestion as to the sort of earth works best adapted to resist the artillery fire that could be brought to bear upon them. At three o'clock this afternoon rain began to fall, steadily and mist to creep about the hills, putting a stop to further bombardment.

It is reported by Staff runners that Gen. Littleton's divisions crossed the ^{at} Potgieters Drift. These stories may be true for we hear heavy firing to the southward at frequent intervals we expect an attack on one of our outposts tonight; Sir Chas Warren ~~is~~ crossed the Richards Drift today we also hear of Lord Dundonald being near Acton Holmes with a force of irregular horse some of whom wear sakabulu feathers in their hats and carry assegais possibly these are Sancers but we cannot identify them.

Firing started here about 8 am this morning by both sides. It has been very hot today 116° still no news of Buller there is no doubt

The siege of Ladysmith will long remain in the memory of the age with its many fierce struggles I should like very much to hear from home God Bless them all they are not eating horse flesh & biscuits I'll be bound.

Things are really much the same day after day I get letters stating the same thing over again.

Firing early this morning yesterday but they soon got tamed down.

It has been reported that Gen. Warren's force has had a good battle which lasted several days near Tabanyama several ridges captured, & the first contingent of City of London Imperial Volunteers left for South Africa still they come.

Several shells were sent into town this morning 20th but no damage was done. One falling into garden & bursting in mid air people are taking no fear of them swalk about unconcerned about the streets. Hospital getting larger day after day

61
Since Friday ~~last~~ Buller's guns have been
pounding away for several hours of every day
beginning sometimes at dawn or carrying
on far into the night. The throbbing vibrations
of heavy artillery afar off seemed to fill the air
all through Sunday, and we have seen shells
bursting along the heights of Intaba Nyama
or Black Mountain, not much more than
twelve miles in a straight line from Ladysmith.
If our troops are attacking positions successively
where there is no more water than can be
brought to them from Tugela they must be
having a hard time, for the shade temperature
at midday rises to 104°, and we know
by experience what that means in the
full blaze of sunshine on bare kopjes
where the smooth boulders feel scorchingly
hot to the touch. I watch the distant
cannonade with a keen personal interest,
~~for~~ when there is fighting along the
Tugela.

Before daybreak this morning
Col. Knox in command of Mounted

Jan 21
Jan 22



KLIP RIVER AT LADYSMITH.

The kopje running out on the left of the picture is known as Devoni's Post, and was much exposed to the fire of the Boers from Cam Hill—on left of picture—and Umfoloweni, just apparent at the right corner.

the name of the kopje is "Devoni's Post" and the name of the Boer commander who was in command of the Boers at the time was "Morka".

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Slaughtering fat horses for consumption by the garrison. The hill in the background is "Cecilia's Camp", or that of the Manchester Regiment.

A SAD END.



Infantry, Carabiniers, Border Mounted Rifles
 and a detachment of Colonel Dartnell's
 frontier Field Force, went out to make a
 reconnaissance round one shoulder of
 Bulwaan. They got up through the wooded
 neck, ~~and~~ had a look into the Boer position
 but saw not an enemy, and got back
 without having a shot fired at them until
 they showed in the plain again. Then 'ping!
 ping!' came the Mauser bullets, and a 'Pom-
 Pom' opened on them. Col. Knorr gave an
 order for his men to form loose order &
 gallop, and they ^{being} got out of danger
 with ~~not~~ a man ^{hit}.

24 All day long I can see from my margule
 & ~~the~~ take observations but I am unable
 to ~~say~~ write every day as I am on duty
 & can only do so while I'm off. I see
 Buller's batteries shelling the whole range
 of Intaba Mayama from the peaked "paps"
 or "sisters" past the Kloof north-west of
 them and along the most commanding

the issuing of rations to the 21,000 troops... to him, said, "that he is the best commissariat officer since Mosca"

Wags Back. The Boers call part of this range Spion Kop and that name has been adopted by our Intelligence Staff as presenting less difficulties of orthography than the Zulu designation, as Spion Kop it must be henceforth. From a laager behind one peak I saw an ambulance cart with its Red Cross flag go up to the crest, which seemed a dangerous place for it, especially as a piece of light artillery opened ^{fire} beside the cart a moment later. I could see needles of light flashing out like electric sparks, only redder, but could hear no report. Nothing but a "Pom-Pom" could have made those quivering flashes, yet how it got there with an ambulance cart beside it I must leave the Boers to explain. The shelling of the heights with Lyddite & shrapnel went on hour after hour, and ~~was~~ towards evening some thought they heard a faint sound as of rifle volleys. The Boers came hurrying down in groups from Spion Kop's crest their waggons were fetching from laagers, across the plain towards Van Rensselaer, and men

could be seen rounding up cattle as if for a general rearward movement. So as watching it seemed as if Boers were beaten & new it.

Jan 25th

The Boer trek continued for several hours this morning & well on into the afternoon when it slackened. Then we saw some horsemen turn back to make for the cleft ridge of Doorn Kloof, where one of the big Creusets had opened fire, Buller's naval guns or howitzers replying with Lyddite shells.

The roar of our field-guns has died away instead of drawing nearer, and we look in vain for any sign of British cavalry on the broad plain where they should be by now, if Sir P. Buller's infantry attack had succeeded.

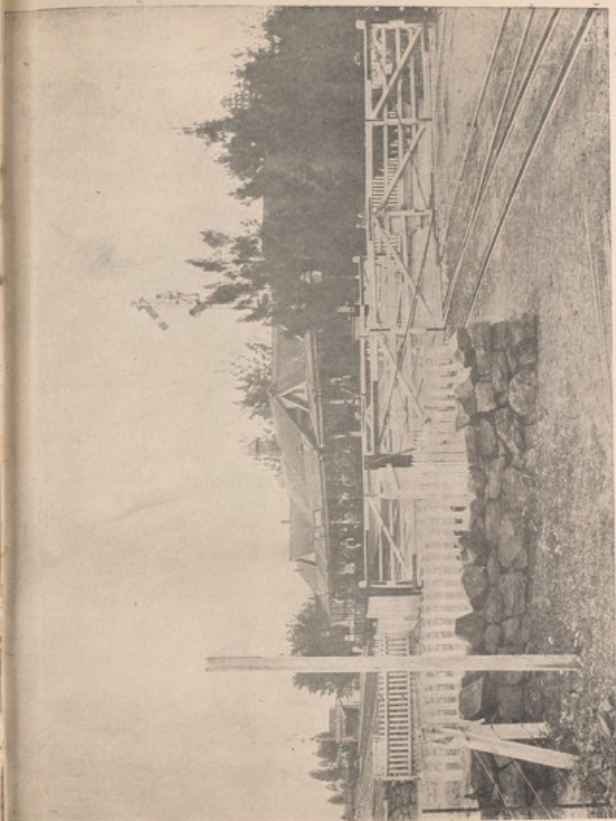
Jan 26th

The Boers are back in their former laagers. There is no sound of fighting this side of the Tugela, only a few shells falling on Spion Kop, where Boer tents can

be seen once more whithering the steep. We need no heliograph signal to tell us the meaning of all this. For us there is to be another sickening period of hope deferred; but we try to hide our dejection, and persuade the anxious townfolk that it is only a necessary pause while Genl. Buller brings up his big guns & transport.

Jan 27/92

It is now no longer possible to conceal the fact that the Spion Kop ended in another reverse for Genl. Buller, though from our side it seemed as if he had the enemy beaten & demoralised. It is now published in orders that he captured the heights with part of one brigade which, however, retired after Genl. Woodgate was wounded, when the Boers retook it. From Taffir runners we hear another version which makes out that our troops were complete masters of the situation. If there had been any one in command at that moment, with a soldier's genius, prompt to take advantage of the enemy's discomfiture, had reinforcements



RAILWAY STATION.

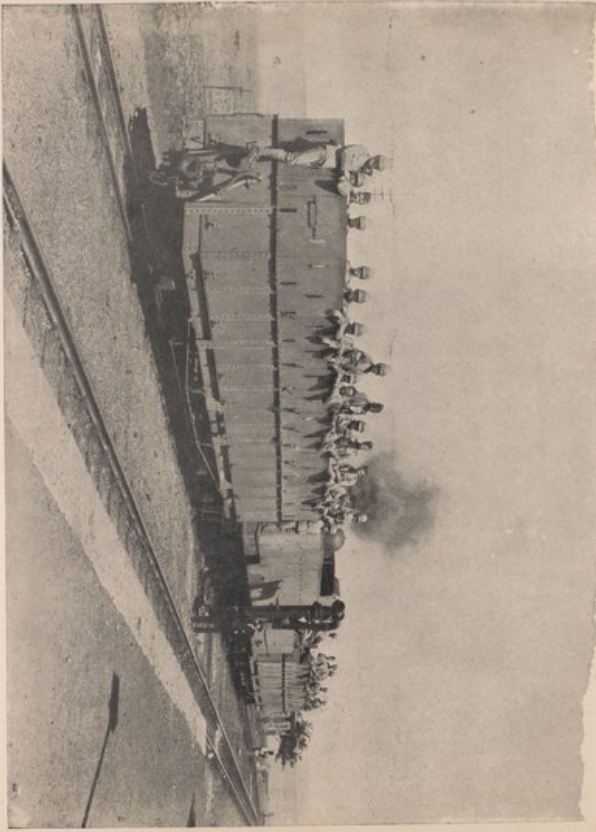
This station was frequently shelled, owing to the constant assembling of soldiers and civilians to await the arrival of the daily train from the Neutral Camp. The Boers fired from a position on the hillside, and the man on the right of the picture, "the man of the Limbabwe," is the only one who was not killed. The Boers were very angry with the commissariat officer since Mosek.

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Armoured train which was kept in readiness, but not used during the siege.

ARMURED TRAIN READY FOR ACTION.



been sent up in time ^{is} Spion Kop need never have been abandoned, and Buller might have kept the key to Ladysmith, which was then in his hands.

Not another position between him & us remained for the Boers to make a stand on. We would then have outflanked & made untenable the entrenched heights facing Colenso. But perhaps he was anxious about his own line of communications. We only know that he has gone back, and the work accomplished at much sacrifice of life must be done over again from some other point.

980

In spite of all we know, there are still persistent rumours ^{rosy-tinted} but all equally improbable. According to these, Kimberley has been relieved, & Lord Roberts is marching on Bloemfontein. Genl. Buller has retaken Spion Kop. He has gained a victory at some other point, but

the issuing of rations to the 21,000 people, and General Buller, in a message to the commissariat officer after the Boer attack, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since Marco."

where or when nobody knows. four hundred Boers are surrounded south of the Tugela with no chance of escape. A similar rumour reached us weeks ago. Those four hundred Boers must be getting short of food by this time. And yet another story makes out that numbers of the enemy attempting to fall upon Puller's supply column at Skiet's Drift were completely annihilated. But this does not reassure us. On the contrary a general feeling of depression seems to have set in, caused perhaps by the enervating weather.

A deluge of rain has drenched the land from which mephitic vapours rise to clog our spirits. The knowledge that rations are running short may also have some effects. We have not felt the strain severely yet. There is no ^{our} luxuries but no reductions in the issue of meat & bread and the quantities of tea, sugar, coffee and similar things diminish ominously. Vegetables were exhausted long ago, and a daily

ration of vinegar has been ordered for every man, whose officer must see that he gets it, as a precaution against scurvy.

Feb 1st

It has come at last. Horseflesh is to be served out for food, instead of being buried or cremated. We do not take it in the solid form yet, or at least not consciously, but Colonel Ward has set up a factory for the conversion of horseflesh into extract of meat under the inviting name of Chevrol. This is intended for ~~the~~ use in hospitals where nourishment in that form is sorely needed, since Borril & Liebig are not to be had. I have tasted the soup & found it excellent, prejudice notwithstanding. We have no news from Genl. Buller beyond a heliogram warning us that a German engineer is coming with a plan in his pocket for the construction of some wonderful dam which is to hold back the waters of the Tlip River and flood out of Ladysmith

68
Feb. 29.3.

Horseflesh was placed frankly on the bill of fare today as a ration for troops & civilians alike, but many of the latter refused to take it. Hunger will probably make them less squeamish but one cannot help sympathizing with the wretched who are already suffering from want of proper nourishment, and for whom there is no alternative. Market prices have long since gone beyond the reach of ordinary purses.

Feb 4th
One pathetic incident touched me ~~nearby~~ this morning, as a forerunner of many that may come soon. I found ~~that~~ sitting on a doorstep apparently to wait to meet a young fellow of the "Imperial Light Tots" scarcely more than a boy - his stalwart form shrunk by illness. He was trying with a spray of wild jasmine, as if its perfume brought back vague memories of home. I learned that he had been wounded at Blandlaagte and again on

70

Waggon Hill. Then came Intombi and malaria. He had only been discharged from hospital that morning. His appetite was not quite equal to ^{the} horseflesh test, so he had gone without food the same as hundreds are doing at present, and I never felt more thankful than at this moment for the health & strength that gave an appetite robust enough for any fare.

Feb 5

Just now one could not be wakened by a more welcome sound than the boom of Buller's guns. It stirred the hazy stillness at dawn this morning like sweet music. It grew louder & apparently nearer as the morning advanced, until in imagination one could mark the positions of individual batteries pounding away opposite Colenso and Skiet's drift. At last the roar died away in sullen growls, giving us the hope that a position

the issuing of rations to the 21,000 people, and General White, in returning to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since Morsk."

71
had been gained.
Feb. 6th.

Again at daybreak we hear the guns of our relieving force at work in a vigorous cannonade away to the southwest, where Skibo Drift lies. They quicken at times to twenty shots a minute, the field batteries chiming in faintly between the rounds of heavier artillery. From Observation Hill I'm told they can see the enemy's Creuset on a notched ridge by Dootin Kloof recharging. Soon after seven o'clock a Lyddite shell bursts there. Its red glare is followed by flames that does not come from Lyddite.

Above this starts a black dense cloud speckled with solid fragments that shoot into the air like bombs.

Before we have time to think that a magazine has been blown up a double report merging into a low rumble reaches our ears something has happened to the Boer battery and the big gun there remains silent. Buller's artillery continues firing



LADYSMITH GARRISON.

Colonel E. W. D. Ward, C.B., A.S.C., alongside his wagon. This officer controlled the issuing of rations to the 21,000 people, and General White, in referring to him, said "that he is the best commissariat officer since Maccs."

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Cycling track occupied by hospital tents, subsequently removed owing to exposed position.

LADYSMITH HOSPITALS.



72

mod. slowly but steadily, at the rate of eight shots a minute, and rifle fire can be heard rolling nearer. all the afternoon.

Boers are reported to be inspanning their teams and collecting cattle on the Drakensberg peaks. ~~are~~ ^{they} only dimly visible, but there are clouds of dust winding that way, and we know that the Boer waggons are trekking on the off-chance that a general retirement may be forced upon them. Is this hundredth day of siege to be the last or shall we wake tomorrow to hear that the Boerlaagers are back again, & the relieving force once more south of the Tugel Tugela

While the fight rages near ^{the} Tugela heights we are left in comparative peace here. "Puffing Billy" has not opened today and his twin brother of Telegraph Hill has been silent many days. Probably he was taken away to reinforce the artillery now opposing Gen. Buller's advance

If relief does not come soon we shall have something worse than privation to dread. For scurvy has broken out here in this camp & medical comforts are scarce having been frittered away. At noon today we had hopes that the Boer night flank was being hard pressed. That is the only practicable way in but the effort has apparently not been pushed far. The heliograph has begun to blurt out a long message, and that is always a bad sign.

Feb. 8th

Small things assume an importance altogether out of proportion just now & one worries about a last smoke when issues of vital moment to us are being fought out ten miles off. I have come to the end of my tobacco & there is no more to be got for love or money. A ton of Kafferleaf has just been requisitioned from coolies who were selling it at twelve shillings the pound to soldiers and who have now to accept a twelfth of that price. There are thus thirty-six thousand

ounces for distribution, but even that quantity will not last long. Nobody would have the heart to give that price for it. I have even smoked dried sunflower-leaves & even tea-leaves. Six shots were fired from Bulweran battery this afternoon after a silence of nearly two days. We generally accept such sudden outbursts as indicating that something has gone ^{wrong} with our enemies elsewhere but we can see no signs of hurried movement among them, and though Genl Buller's guns have been active half the day they sound no nearer. A long message was heliographed through just before sunset and rumours of ill news are whispered about with bated breath by people who wish to establish a reputation for early knowledge, but at the risk of being charged before a court-martial with the dissemination of news calculated to cause despondency. We had a case of that kind the other day when Goss, the Champion swimmer of South Africa

45

was rightly convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for deprecating the skill of our Generals in conversation with soldiers. Tommy may hold his own opinions on that point, but he resents hearing them expressed for him through a pro-Roeer mouthpiece, and this man may consider himself lucky to escape summary chastisement as a preliminary to the durandee vile which is intended to be a wholesome warning for others of like tendency.

and indeed the garrison & civilians of Ladysmith who now began to feel the sharp pinch of hunger, had need to silence any whose voices might be raised to rob them of our attenuated hopes.

No official statement had yet been made on the subject, but it was already becoming evident that we had yet a time of painful waiting before relief could come. To the hundred days which we and had trusted might complete the period of our trial a score were to be added before our sufferings could be forgotten in the joy of deliverance.



HUMOURS OF THE SIEGE

A civilian's mess party, showing "pig-weed" (wild spinach), "poop" (mescal meal), and horse-flesh as the daily fare.

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LADYSMITH HOSPITAL CORPS.



76

9th About 2 am. this morning, was, sent by
the sudden glare of search-lights
from Bulweran, and soon came the scream
of shells hursting over the town. It was
the Boer psalm of victory, and it sent
people hurrying to their underground refuges,
to which the unco' guid had given the
name of "funk-holes," but did no
damage. Its purport was half-
divined by the defenders. The news was
still said to be good, but there were lead-
shakings, and even the stoutest optimism
found itself unequal to the strain when
it was announced that rations were to be
cut down. If things were going well,
"why, in the name of success," should
our universal provider, Col. Ward, take
this occasion to reduce rations?

We are now down to 1 lb of
horsefesh, four ounces of mealie meal, four
ounces of bread, made of mealie's with
a sausage ration daily as far as
possible? Sausages may be

mysteries elsewhere, but we know them here to be horse-flesh, highly spiced, & nothing more. Bread is a brown, 'clitty' mixture of mealie meal, starch, and the unknown. Vegetables we have none, except a so-called wild spinach that overgrew every neglected garden, and could be had for the taking until people discovered how precious it was. Tea is doled out at the rate of one-sixth of an ounce to each adult daily or in lieu thereof, coffee mixed with mealie meal."

Feb 10th

The day which had been looked forward to as the one on which relief would arrive, it did not come, and though the messages flashed over the hills from the beleaguered town at the time were full of an heroic cheerfulness, the disappointment was hard to bear.

For with rations reduced, with disease harrowing for death where fire & steel had failed, the defenders were now face

to face with the grimmer realities of war. Yet hope was never absent, and never at any time did the stern determination to bid the enemy defiance to the last flicker or grow fainter, it does justice to the splendid spirit of the Garrison:-

Feb 11th

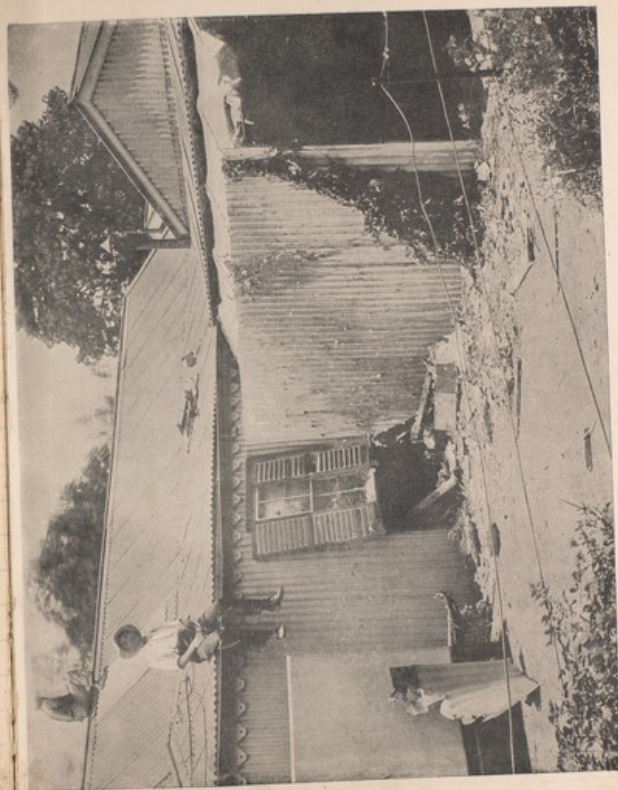
Helio-graph signals have been twinkling spasmodically, but their language is written in a sealed book. We only know that these "helios" come not from Popper this side of the ^{5th} Lugela, nor from the former signal-station south of Potgieters & Riets Drifts, ~~and~~ as they did a few days ago, but from hills near Keener, as in the months before Buller crossed the Lugela, thus indicating a retrograde movement.

It may be a hopeful sign of communication with some flanking column away eastward and therefore kept secret, but we have our doubts.

47
Depression sets in again, and ~~we have~~ as
always happens when there is bad news,
or ahead of it, the death-rate in this
Camp (Intombi) Hospital has gone up
to fifteen in a single day.

Since the date of investment
four hundred & eighty patients have died
here from all causes. It does not seem
a large proportion out of the eighteen
thousand under treatment from time
to time, but it is very high in view of
the fact that we have only had thirty-
six soldiers & civilians in all. Killed
by the thousands of shells that have been
hurled at us in fifteen weeks.

The market's sensitive pulse
also shows that there is a suspicion of
something wrong. Black tobacco in small
quantities may still be had by those
who care to pay forty-five shillings
for a half-pound cake of it, a box
of fifty inferior cigars sold for \$6.10
a packet of ten Virginia cigarettes



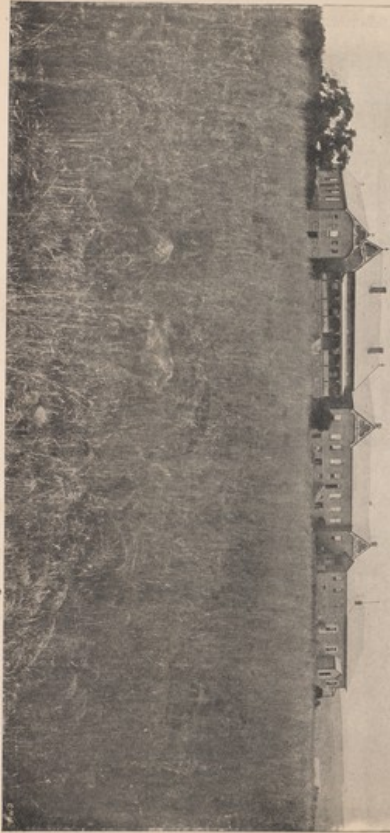
THE EFFECTS OF A SHELL

Exterior view of building after a solid shell had burst within the house.

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Built on "Convent Hill" above the town. The buildings were much exposed and were struck several times by shells and splinters. Lately the edifice was used as a Convalescent Home.

LADYSMITH CONVENT.



80
 for twenty-five shillings and eggs
 at forty-eight shillings a dozen
 Soldiers who cannot hope to
 supplement their meagre rations
 by private purchases at this rate
 stroll about the streets & camps
 languid, hungry, silent
 Here is no laughter among them.

31
 Still heavy firing into town & camp from
 umbulwana the enemy have allowed
 Mrs Doxton whose husband lies
 wounded & dying, to pass through these
 lines, Major Doxton was known as one
 of their most strenuous opponents &
 a leader who has played his part
 manfully in every fight where the
 T.S. Force has been engaged. He
 was badly wounded among the band
 of heroes who held Waggon Hill.

32
 Good news at last. It comes by
 heliograph, telling us that Lord Roberts

81

has entered the Free State with a large force mainly of mounted troops and artillery, wherewith he hopes to relieve the pressure round Ladysmith in a few days.

I have been across the offices this afternoon & make a copy of the heliograph which is as follows.

London 23rd June.

Patrician India a monⁿotes meeting of Hindus & Mahomedans was held yesterday at Calcutta when resolutions expressing deep loyalty to the Queen were adopted. Rs. 63,000 were subscribed in the room which brings the India War fund up to £40,000.

A body of 350 Canadian mounted rifles have sailed from Halifax for South Africa.

Jan 24

The Daily News understands that the Government will ask immediately for not less than 20,000 Sterling towards the cost of the war. The Times thinks it probable

82

that still greater demands on the nation will have to be made and advises the rest of the Militia being called out & the immediate despatch of the Cavalry Brigade.

Jan 25

The Johannesburg Diggers News is observing a significant silence regarding the operations on the Tugela P. M. Berg Jan 30th

It is reported that Pres Steyn is about to remove his residence to Pretoria. The report that a suitable residence for Pres Kruger is being prepared at Mt. Tellena has caused much consternation at Pretoria.

Feb 2

The prisoners of war at Pretoria are complaining of the rations which they receive and state that they are treated as criminals by the Boer Authorities. The daily ration consists of mealie pap, bread, beef, & soup with vegetables twice a month ~~only~~. During

to ^{the} scarcity of fuel hot water is not given so that tea or coffee cannot be made & the only beverage is water.

Feb 9th Natal Witness (extract from a Berlin paper) The British soldiers in South Africa have shown themselves in all the battles which have been fought up to the present time under the most adverse times & circumstances to be "hearts" of oak of their native songs

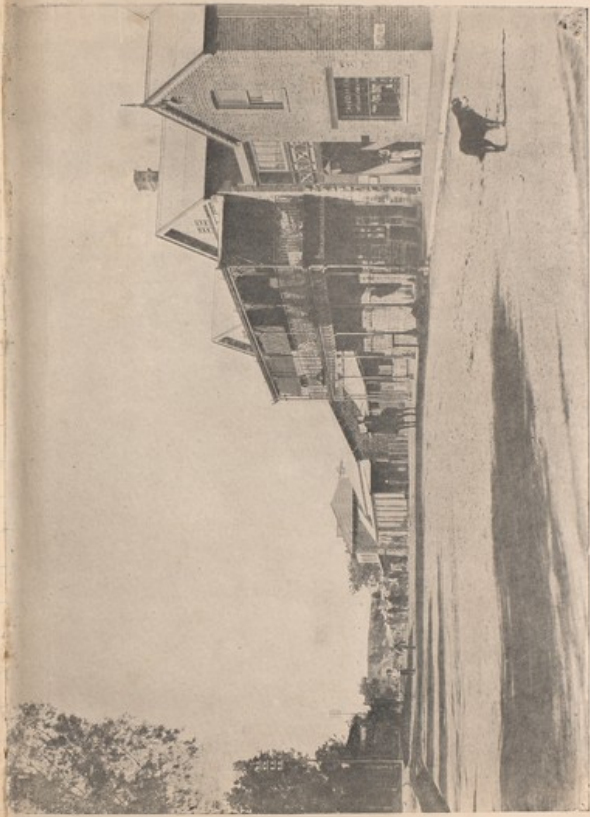
The S.A.R. says that Delago Bay award will be made. will be made public this month. The award is said to be favourable to Great Britain

Extract from London Daily News 10th Jan

The French Press has unreservedly accepted the news of Genl White's success Jan 6th. Ungrudging praise is bestowed upon the bravery and endurance of the Ladysmith Garrison.

Colesberg is besieged by Genl French but still holding out Feb 7th.

Genl Bataere was fighting at Sterkstroom on the 7th the result not



MURCHISON STREET, LADYSMITH.

Main street, with Royal Hotel and Photographic Studio in the foreground. Colonel Frank Rhodes and other officers and journalists stayed at the hotel, at the door of which Dr. Shuk was killed, but owing to the persistent shelling the building was vacated and closed.

Camera mounted on the hill in the background.

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The house from which General White removed owing to its being damaged by a shell. The wagon in the foreground is the Field Printing-office.

SIR GEORGE S. WHITES HOUSE.



84

yet Brown.

Fifteen transports conveying
 13,100 troops 8,000 horses and 6 Guns
 leave England on the 12th Feb for South
 Africa. The force comprises a Cavalry
 Brigade Infantry & Yeomanry.

Heavy firing south of the town but it's
 not continued through the afternoon.

I visited the manchesterers on Caesar's
 Camp, and the poor fellows that
 furnished outposts and fatigue parties
 every day for four weary months looked
 done up. It any wonder that they
 are the ^{most} raggedest, most weather-
 stained, and most unkempt crowd
 who ever played the part of soldiers.

There is not a whole shoe or a
 sound garment among them.

They are ill-fed and overworked.
 yet they go to an extra duty cheerfully
 knowing that their General has faith
 in their watchfulness & grit. (General

camp showing over camp on the hill in the background.

Hamilton) All honour to them? Like "the dirty half-hundred" of Peninsula fame, they have been too busy to wash & mend.

We received some more good news by heliograph from Genl Buller's Column today as follows posted outside the offices as follows:-

Telegram from special correspondent Natal Witness dated Potgieters Drift 7th Feb

The battle panorama during the last two days has been magnificent the hills ^{resounding} to the crash of numerous pieces of artillery on our side, and of the enemy's heavy ordnance and quiet fire on the other, also the rattle of musketry. The British troops attacked at grey dawn on Monday. The line of the enemy's positions was swept with a terrific shell fire

The infantry deployed from Kopjes north of the river and steadily advanced against the Boercentres at Brakfontein and Yaal Krantz. The Field Artillery unlimbered immediately on the flat

On the firing line coming in touch

with the enemy, it ceased to advance and our guns opened and shelled the Boers from 7:15 am till 1:30 pm. In the interval the engineers threw a pontoon across the Tugela in a loop of the river. Before the false attack was disclosed.

Genl. Buller's purpose became apparent & the Boer's guns hitherto silent began shelling our artillery from noon to 1:30 pm

Our batteries ~~could~~ ^{continued} pounded away amidst a shower of shrapnel shells, which burst all around & amongst them

The ground was raked ^{by our} guns, ~~and they were~~ ^{we} ~~offent~~ ^{obscuring} the ~~batteries~~ ^{from view} from view. The behaviour of officers and men under this trying ordeal was one of the finest sights of the campaign.

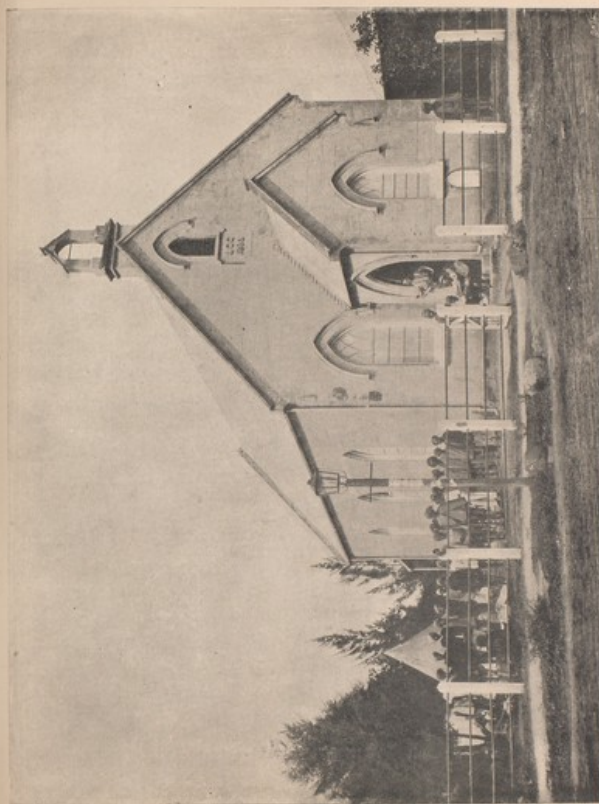
The small loss sustained is marvellous considering the terrible fire the Gunners underwent. On the Boers retiring, the infantry advanced and ~~walked~~ ^{ran} the gauntlet of the same shell fire, ~~losing~~ ^{having} a number ^{of} ~~of~~ wounded

87
The real attack was now disclosed, Lytle's
Brigade crossing from the end of Zwaart
Kop, another position. A pontoon was laid
down under a hot fire opposite Dornkop
The engineers losing & wounded

With the Durhams leading and the
Rifle Brigade next with two other
Battalions in support the men met with
a warm reception. Their objective was the
enemys right on Vaal Krantz Spruit running
across the base of the Kopjes. Moving
forward with great steadiness our infantry
drove in the enemy and rushed them from
the spruit with fixed bayonets & charges
cheering up the steep side of the Kopje.

The Boers fled, the crest was
gained when the men again cheered
Some 40 Boers ~~struck~~^{drove} too late to get
clear away and made as if to lay down
their arms. The majority bolted but
a number were taken prisoners

Meanwhile the Rifle Brigade
stormed the succeeding Kopjes and the



LADYSMITH HOSPITALS.

Presbyterian Chapel converted to a Hospital for wounded from the field of battle on the 6th January, 1900.

View showing over camp on the rear in the background.

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Interior view of building after a shell had burst underneath the sitting-room floor.

THE EFFECTS OF A SHELL.



Battalions occupied the position

15th Staff's report that the Free State Boers are all trekking towards Van Reenan's. This native report, true or false, marked the beginnings of a renewed hope that was not again to suffer defeat, but was now quietly to grow into the substantial expectation and the certainty of relief. Lord Roberts was already across the borders of the Free State, and simultaneously.

Sir Redvers Buller was preparing for his last attempt to roll back the burghers from the Tugela, and to break down the barrier so long maintained between his army and here. His operations during the week following were watched with intense anxiety, but with growing confidence.

Camp, showing Boer camp on the hill in the background.

89
Feb 16/14

For a whole week daily we have heard the roar of artillery southward and westward along the Tugela, seen Lyddite shells bursting on Boer positions, & watched the signs of battle, from which we gather hope that slowly but surely Buller's army is drawing nearer to us. Though, by a different and harder road from ^{the} one he tried last.

We know that for a whole week or end those troops have been fighting their way against entrenched positions that might baulk the bravest soldiers and still the roar of battle rolls on way, until between the muffled boom of heavy guns we can hear faintly the fluter-like thud of rifle volleys. Amid all this strain, intent upon vital issues, one hardly takes note of trivialities. Even the daily bombardment seems of little importance, and nobody cares how



SKETCH PLAN

COUNTRY ROUND LADYSMITH.

Map of ground between Tugela and Ladysmith, compiled during the siege. Starting from Caesar's Camp, south of the town, a line drawn in a zig-zag direction through "Observation Hill," "Devon's Post," "Riflemen's Post," "Caesar's Camp," "Wagon Hill," "Riflemen's Post," "Observation Hill," "Devon's Post," "Caesar's Camp," would embrace the area of defence by the garrison, its perimeter giving a length of about 13 miles.
 * Camp, showing Boer camp on the hill in the background.

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Feb 16

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Group of wounded officers from Dundee and Edinburgh, in hospital in the Neutral Camp.

LADYSMITH HOSPITALS.



many shots "Puffing Billy" fired yesterday. For me. H. Strain is frightened by news heliographed this morning from Genl Buller again. Good news. reads

On Tuesday morning the bombardment was resumed. The enemy's heavy guns shelled the captured position and then turning their attention to the troops baggage waggons under Mgwato's Top forced the latter to retire and obliged the former to take cover.

The day passed with nothing more stirring than an artillery duel. One Boer Maxim - Nordenfolt was overturned and the ammunition supply of the hundred pounder on the crest of Dornkloof Mountain was blown up at 4 pm 600 of the enemy made a desperate attempt to recapture the two kopjes but was forced to retire and with considerable loss after half an hour fierce fighting.

Camp, showing Boer camp on the hill in the background.

At dusk. Wildyards Brigade were successfully replaced by fresh men and night closed. to the accompaniment of rifle fire the two days fighting has resulted in an approvable gain. It is yet too soon to say that we are to get through.

The Boers are fighting desperately and they have the advantage of the usual commanding positions.

Our Troops are in splendid form maintaining to the full the grandest ^{tradition} ~~conditions~~ of the Army. Genl Buller is conducting the operations in person.

From Spearman's Camp 7th Feb Genl. Buller commenced his advance to relief of Ladysmith. On Monday the "Natal Gun" opened at 7 am. A feint attack was made on the front of our positions. Three battalions advanced towards Bakafontein with 6 batteries at 11 am, the Boers opened an artillery fire and set several shells amongst

us. The infantry retired an hour later. Meanwhile on the extreme right the engineers expeditiously constructed a pontoon.

Feb 14th

The artillery fire sounded far off on the other side of the Tugela. From morning we could see shells bursting along the nearer crest of Monte Cristo and up to eleven o'clock the fierce cannonade was ceaseless.

Now the action had ended we could only judge by Boer movements.

Feb 15th

Firing still continues from Bulweran but of no importance. I took leave & went into town this morning. And I saw from Observation Hill, 12 ambulance waggons trudging heavy across the plain behind Riflemen's Ridge, then a ^{larger} waggon uncovered, drawn by a large span of oxen. There may have been a long

93

gun in that waggon, its movements were slow & cumbersome. Two ambulance waggons passed in the opposite direction, lightly moving at a gallop.

Feb 19

of importance

Nothing ~~hardly~~ occurred today except a little sharp firing from our naval gun into a nest to the right of Bulwaan, being the first time into that position. Something must have caught their eye there. We also received the following message from Genl Buller. Field Marshal Lord Roberts Commander-in-Chief in Africa has directed General the Right Hon Sir R. Buller to transmit the following to Genl. White.

With a large force which is very strong in M.I., Artillery, & Cavalry I have invaded the O.F.S. Tell this to your troops and say to them from me that I hope the events of the next few days may enable me help Ladysmith.



NEUTRAL CAMP.

General view of Civilian Hospital at N'lonia Spruit, or Neutral Camp, showing Boer camp on the hill in the background.

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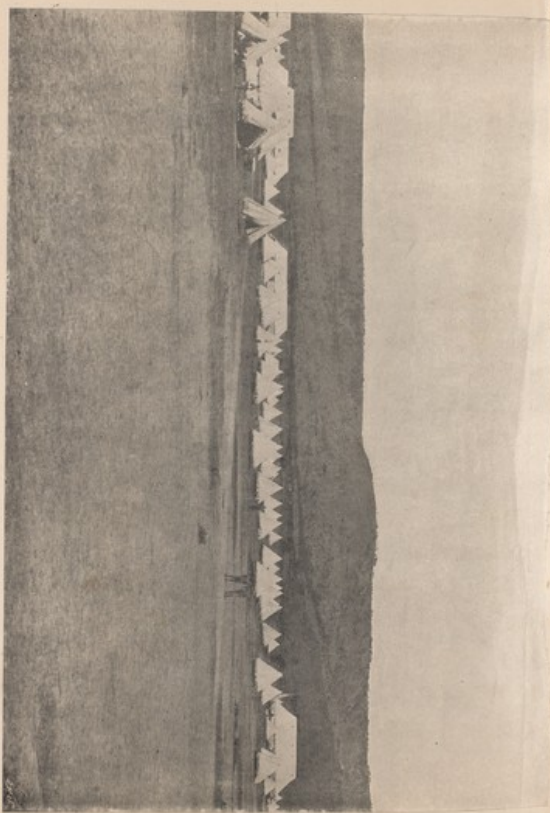
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Military Hospital at the Neutral Camp, where all the wounded were cared for during the siege. The site was determined between Generals White and Joubert, and the neutrality religiously respected. The camp was patrolled by the Dutch.

NEUTRAL CAMP.



94

The message continues,
Timberley was relieved on the 15th
by Major Genl French, Cronje &
Free State Army are hemmed in
on three sides by Lord Roberts,
Lord Methuen and Genl French.
Lord Roberts has a siege train
with him.

4-20th

On this date news reached us of
Genl Buller's success in the capture
of Cingolo Hill. but before it was
signalled we had seen from
Caesar's Camp British infantry
crowning the nearer ridge of Monte
Cristo. They came up in column,
and deployed with a steadiness
that showed them to be masters
of the position and its to believed
that Buller had gained another
success. To-day, again, shells
from the southern guns have
been bursting about ridges south

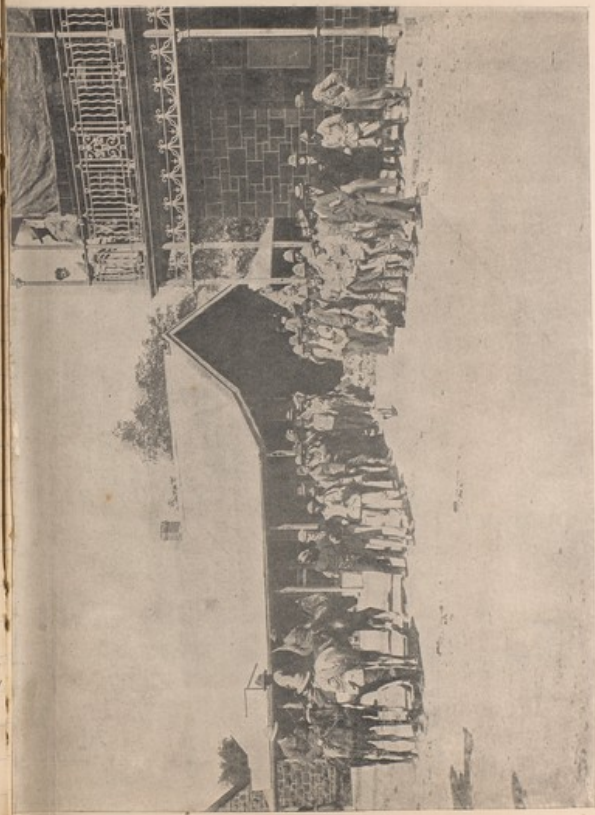
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Camb (Intomb) causing much
consternation. One result of this is that
Bulwaan tries to keep down the 12-pounders
fire and leaves the two comparatively quiet.

This afternoon there was another
surprise for the Boers. "Lady Anne" one
of the big twin sisters of the naval
armament to which we owe so much
had not fired for just a month until
she astonished the gunners on Bulwaan
by planting a shell in their works today.

They ran in all directions, not
knowing where to hide and at the second
shot bolted back across the hill.

Their tents have disappeared
from Bulwaan now.

Today a Boer, or rather German
fighting for the Boers, was caught by
our patrols. He had a rifle, a bandolier,
pockets full of cartridges, and a red-cross
badge, concealed, but ready for use when
fighting might be inconvenient.



WAR CORRESPONDENTS AT LADYSMITH.

Mr. Pearce's (*Daily News*) house, with gable end knocked out by a shell from Peperworth's Hill and the guests in the Royal Hotel alongside, who were having lunch at the time, tumbled from their chairs, seeking "cover" underneath the tables. Colonel Frank Rhodes stands on the left of the picture, apparently engaged in conversation with the late Lord Avebury, killed on the 6th January, 1900.

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The Daily News Correspondent's (Mr. Pearce) house, after being struck for a second time by a rain shell from Umbalwana. The cottage in the background was used as a rendezvous by the London journalists.

WAR CORRESPONDENTS AT LADYSMITH.



8 98

24 Very quiet early part of the morning
Our guns started to fire from Waggon
will kept up a continual fire for
some time into the same position
to the right of Umbalwana
some sharp musketry about 2 pm.
on the ridges south of our camp.
it sounded so near that we
thought our outposts were engaged
with the enemy.

25 Numbers of Boers were seen retiring
from Pieter's Station across the ridges
towards Pieter's Valley, but no sign
of a general retreat yet beyond the
report of scouts, who say that several
guns have been seen going back at
a gallop behind Paulwaan followed
by nearly two hundred waggons.
Kaffirs say the firing of yesterday
was a Boer attack on Pieter's
Station, but their story is not
confirmed.

99 Feb 26th

Gen. Buller heliographs that he is still going strong, but the country is difficult and progress slow. Lord Roberts according to another helio-signal, has Cronje surrounded. Two attempts to relieve him have been frustrated. All his spare men left into the garrison here. A newspaper telegram was also heliographed announcing that Cronje had surrendered with 6,000 men, after losing 1,400 killed and wounded.

This is probably a bit of journalistic enterprise in anticipation of events.

Feb 25th

Wajuba Day:

We expected the Boers to celebrate it at daybreak or before by a salute of shotted guns, but they were silent, apparently watching us, we watch, and awaiting the issue of events

100

elsewhere. We know that a fierce fight is raging not twelve miles distant.

The thuds of big guns are frequent, we hear the booming of field artillery in salvo, and the shrill rattle of rifles is almost incessant. But our view is narrowed by hills, and we can only see shells bursting on the crests of Grootlaars Kloof and about flat-topped Table Hill.

Wagon passed without any Wajuba Day salute but an hour later Prulwaan battery fired twelve shots. At night came a signal from General Buller "Doing well" followed by a longer message announcing that Cronje was a prisoner in Lord Roberts' Camp. Hurrahs are ringing through every camp at this news. So Wajuba Day has brought glad tidings to us after all.

Intelligence

The following telegrams received

101

from Lord Roberts published for information

Major Genl. French with Cavalry³ Dist seized drift on Beit River east of Enslin capturing five laagers, some stores, arms, and prisoners. My leading Infantry Div has occupied Jacobsdal. The Beit River is a southern tributary of the Modder River and joins it where the Kimberley Railway crosses that river. Jacobsdal is about 23 miles south of Kimberley and about 10 miles east of the Modder River and about 40 miles from Bloemfontein.

24 Feb. from Genl Roberts.

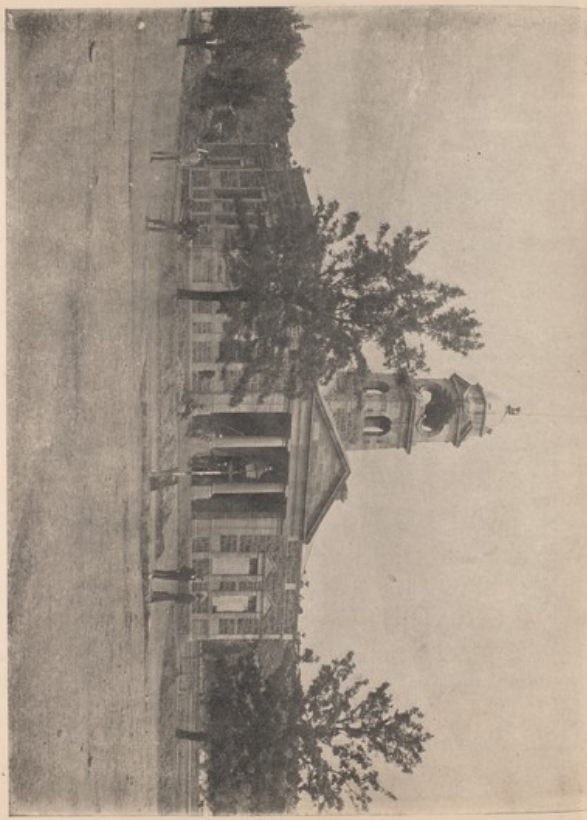
Genl. Cronje & all his force were captured unconditionally at Daybreak. This morning he is now a prisoner in my camp. Strength of his forces will be communicated later. I hope Her Majesty's Government will consider that this event satisfactory occurring as it does on the anniversary of Majuba.



NEUTRAL CAMP.

View of No. 12 Field Hospital at the Neutral Camp, with the Umshahane Mountain in the background.

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4



LADYSMITH TOWN HALL.

After being struck by fourth shell, which passed through the tower. In this picture the clock is not shown, having been removed after the building had been struck a second time.

102
25th

The fortune of war is on our side now. Every sign points to that conclusion. Ladysmith was alarmed soon after midnight, what seemed the beginning of another attack. Rifles rang out sharply round the whole of our positions. The furious outburst began on Gun Hill, Surprised Hill took it up.

Our troops did not fire a shot but still the fusillade continued for half an hour. The Boers were evidently in a state of nervous excitement.

Dulwain fired a single shot after that a steady fire was kept up on the battery to prevent, if possible, the Boers from moving their guns.

Afternoon sunshine enabled Genl. Buller to ~~send~~ heliograph the reassuring message for which we were waiting so anxiously. He said:-

I beat the enemy thoroughly yesterday and am sending my ~~own~~ Cavalry on as fast as very bad roads will

103

admit to ascertain where they are going.

"I believe the enemy to be in full retreat."

As night closes in, there are cheers rolling towards us from the plain beyond Blip River, ^{and Smith} so quiet and undemonstrative in its patient endurance of a long siege goes wild at the sound, we all rush out to meet them, where they must cross a drift

The voices of strong men break into childish treble as they ~~to~~ cheer, women laugh, and cry by turns, and all crowd about the troopers of Lord Dundonald's escort, giving them such a welcome as few victors from the battlefield have ever known.

The hour of our deliverance has come after a hundred and nineteen ^{days} of close investment, & a hundred & twenty-two days of bombardment.

God Save the Queen
was sung

104

March 1st

The relieving force joined hands with us last night, & there was an outburst of wild enthusiasm at the sight of troops so long expected, and so often heard fighting in the distance, that some despondent people had almost begun to think they would never come.

After the roar of battle ceased on Tuesday, we knew by signs that could not be mistaken that Sir Redvers Buller had gained a great victory even before the heliograph flashed to us the glad tidings in his own words.

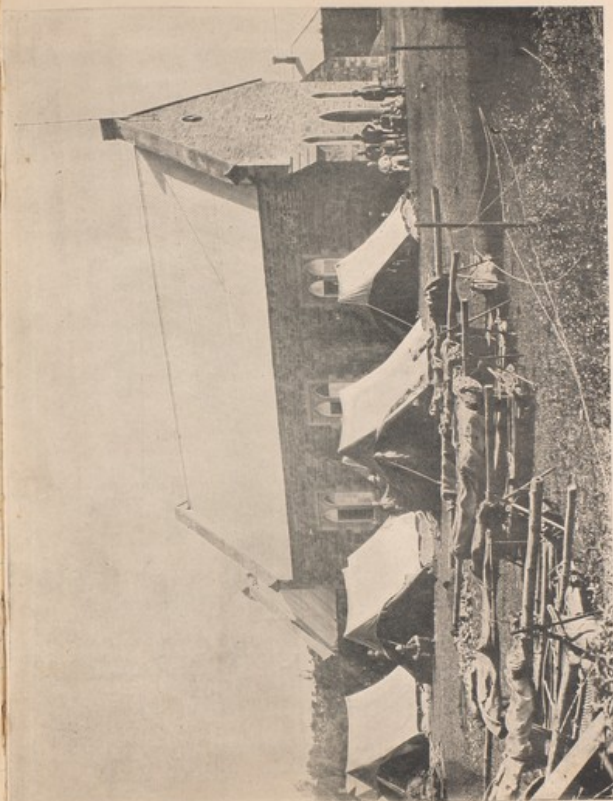
But the best indication of all was the attempt to remove the big gun from Dulwaan that has shelled us persistently and destructively for a hundred and twelve days, causing us much anxiety but comparatively small loss of life.

Our artillery of the Naval Brigade to which Lady Smith owes a deep debt

debt of gratitude, tried to prevent the guns from being carried off, but apparently their admirably aimed & accurate fire was too late to effect that object. The advance guard consisted of Imperial Light Horse, Carbineers, Natal Police of the frontier Field force, and Border Mounted Rifles numbering only one hundred and seventy, under Major MacKenzie.

They had pushed forward after the last feeble resistance of the Boer rearguard was overcome, & Lord Dundonald brought to Sir Geo White the good news that ~~the~~ Ladysmith's relief was accomplished.

The crowd of soldiers & civilians shouted itself hoarse in cheering when he came with the object of meeting Lord Dundonald. He could not get through ^{the} crowd outside the gate, where Boer prisoners were standing on the balcony curious to know what all this commotion might mean. When a bull gave him an opportunity of speaking, he said in a



LADYSMITH HOSPITAL

Dutch Reformed Church converted to a Hospital for the reception of wounded after the battle of the 4th January, 1900.

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debt of being aimed at
 Pavilion on cycling-track occupied by nuns. The Convent appears on the hill above
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LADYSMITH HOSPITALS.



106

voice trembling with emotion but clear & soldierly for all that:—

I thank you men, one and all from the bottom of my heart, for the help & support you have given to me

for the help and I shall always acknowledge it to the end of my life.

It grieved me to have to cut your rations, but I promise you that I will not do it again. I thank God we have kept the flag flying.

Three cheers were given for Sir Redvers Buller and Gen. Sir Archibald Hunter, and then the whole crowd joined in singing "God Save the Queen," with an effect that was strangely impressive under the circumstances.

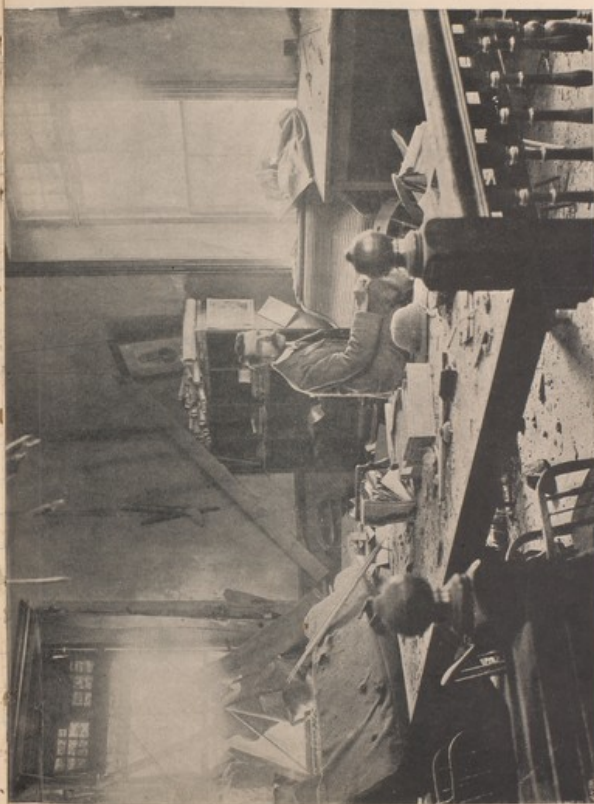
Genl. Buller & staff rode through the hospital camp about 11 am on his way to Ladysmith everyone jubilant & great excitement, we were on half a lb of mealie pap a day & supplementing

our meat ration by horses & mules

The South African Dept. made a reconnaissance & found that the Big Gun on the top of Bulwana has been removed during the night a number of tents plentifully provisioned were however discovered & were found to contain kegs of butter, fowls, & also a quantity of ~~iron~~ ^{large} weapons wearing apparatus. There were also ~~great~~ ^{large} supplies of ammunition for rifles & carbines. In the Gun's breast works was found a shooting record book, which showed that Bulwana Gun had fired 3,000 rounds. One can scarcely realize the fact yet we are relieved on the other hand it is true to disbelieve as appearance in every way proves it to be a true & welcomed fact

March 2nd

Often & often during this long & weary siege have all of us at times allowed our imagination to stray towards this welcome time but alas what a difference between imagination & realization now when the anticipation has become a reality.



INTERIOR OF LADYSMITH TOWN HALL

Town Clerk's office in Town Hall after a shell had passed through and burst in the yard at the back.

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Where civilians received their rations at 6.30 every evening during the siege. Backwash (spraying) were hung round the sides to cover the lights from the enemy. The rations were removed by the soldiers and passed through the Town Clerk's office.

LADYSMITH MARKET HOUSE.



our hearts seems too full to be able to express our ~~own~~ real thankfulness.

Work continues the same but without the air of confinement ^{thoroughly} felt.

A lot of Officers & men galloping about all the day caused much excitement.

I personally thought it a most opportune time to discharge my overflowing heart by writing to my loved ones at home & acting on the impulse. I commenced ~~work~~ four letters.

Troops are still passing through. Infantry quite close, the artillery, cavalry, baggage, ambulances, a good way to the left of Bulwaana.

March 3rd

Only those who have been under siege and so closely invested that all communications with the outer world, except through Raffin runners, were cut off for 119 days can imagine what the first sight of a relieving column

means to the beleaguered garrison.

Happily, such experiences have been rare in the history of British campaigns, and nobody here would care to repeat them, though all are proud enough now of having seen it through. Those who went away while they had a chance in the first rush for safety, when shells began to burst in the town, may claim credit for foresight, but we do not envy them. All hardships, dangers, and privations, seem light now that they are things of the past. Our enthusiasm in welcoming the first detachment of the relieving force has swept away the impression of discomfort, and, for a time at least induced us to forget everything except the reflected honour that ^{we had} ~~was~~ in having suffered with British troops.

Relief had come none too soon.

I myself who have weathered the storm unscathed and in good health, ^{as well} ~~it~~ is stated in a telegram that when Lord Dunsdonald's troops arrived in ^{at} the remainder of the besieged feel thankful for our deliverance.

the town only four days full rations were available, and there were 800 sick & wounded in hospital, by far the larger proportion being down with dysentery and enteric fever.

Truly it seemed that deliverance had come in the nick of time. "Thank God," Sir Geo White had said, "we have kept the flag flying."

Thank God also that the brave defenders had been spared the worst horrors of a siege, and that help had not longer been withheld in their extremity.

Only a concluding word remains to be said.

In this moment I want to place it on record how cordially we all recognize the fact that Sir Geo White has done everything that an able commander could do, not only for the defence of a town whose inhabitants ^{were} ~~it~~ entrusted to his charge, but also for the larger issues of a

campaign that might have been seriously jeopardised by any false move on his part.

In many respects, when his critics, including myself thought he lacked the enterprise of a great leader, events have proved that his more cautious course was right. If mistakes were made at the outset they have been nobly atoned for.

Such a commander was worthy of such troops, and they no less worthy.

During the whole dreary four months of the siege they had proved themselves men in whom any General in the world, any people might feel an exultant pride. In long days of wearisome monotony, broken only by the scream & thud & burst of shells, at noon beneath the fierce glow of the African sun, at night in the sodden trenches, in season and out, they have been patient, vigilant, ready, hearing all things, braving all things, hoping all things and always. In the midnight

attack through dark defiles and over rugged heights, where the broken boulders made every step a toil and a danger, they trod with a grim tenacity of purpose, and struck with a daring that wrested a tribute from the unaccustomed lips of their enemy. On the rocky ridges of Raggon Hill & Casar's Camp, when the burghers in one supreme effort dashed against them the pride & pride of the commandos, they fought through the hours of night till dawn gave place to day, and the daylight waxed & waned, with a dogged, half-despairing courage that laughed to scorn even the regardless valour of a worthy foe man. Who shall do justice to soldiers like these? Wherever, and as long and as widely, will the story of the defence of Ladysmith be held in glorious memory.

It is my opinion the siege of Ladysmith will long remain in the

memories of the age.

The annals of war furnish the record of many fierce struggles, in which men & women have undergone sufferings most terrible and possibly shown a devotion rising to sublimer heights.

But the Boer War of 1899-1900 will mark an epoch, and throughout its opening stage of four months the minds of men and the hopes & fears of the whole British race centred upon the little town in mid-Natal where Sir George White with his army maintained a valiant resistance against a strenuous & determined foe without, and disease & hunger & death within.

For that reason alone the story of Ladysmith will remain memorable.

But it is a story which is brilliant in brave deeds, which tells of danger boldly faced, of noble self-sacrifice to duty, in calm endurance of many and growing evils—

It is a story worth the telling

March 5th no unusual occurrence no news of the War. Patients improving greatly especially the patients.

Orders for the Day were full of messages & congratulations & praise.

March 6th

For several days now we have not heard any news concerning the war. A Boer Doctor & 6 men came into the hospital for treatment this morning.

As the Boers retreated they destroyed every railway bridge after it had served their purpose.

This however will not delay our movements long.

Large gangs of Buffers & other workmen are engaged with Royal Engineers are repairing the damaged line & will soon be in

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working order as soon as the troops & Genl Buller are ready, as his plans of course is unknown but are not likely to be idle long.

March 7th.

The Governor of Natal Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson visited the hospital.

The field force of H. Mr. Prowter who have done such good service for us here left for Durban, this being the first train down.

I visited Bulwerana & the Dam on Mr. Prowter this afternoon its a wonder we were not flooded out which is no doubt what they intended doing with us. A train loaded excursionists both civil & military came through this evening. March 10th

we have been removing the sick to Chirwell. I went down with the first train it was the first to cross the temporary bridge at Colenso



THE DRAKENSBERG.

Switching-station at Van Reenen's Pass, on the Ladysmith-Hartemith Line. The Pass is now held by the Boers, being on their line of communication between the Free State and Natal.

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Colenso Railway Bridge, destroyed by the Boers to retard the advance of General Buller and his brave troops, and partly the scene of the fight on the 15th December, 1899.

THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.



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I saw all the positions down the line where the fighting took place.

Trenched positions so well nigh impregnable to all appearances the whole country between ~~Days~~ Ladysmith to Colenso, strewn with empty tin cases boxes & carcasses of oxen & horses & graves here & there one can image from these the fighting that took place & the fearful difficulties the troops had to contend with.

120th

Most patients removed going through to Durban for passage to England per S.S. Kerman.

The hospital now has a deserted appearance, only 179 patients remaining & anxious to know what they intend doing with them.

We are anxious ourselves as several rumours exist as to our whereabouts.

March 21 ¹¹⁷

we have given ^{into stores} the most of the equipment of unoccupied tents & marquees a rumour passed round this evening that the Boers were in large numbers at Acton Homes. but was unfounded. Some patients were removed by Princess Christian Hospital Train but chiefly from the volunteers & 26 Field Hospital

March 25

Very busy packing up & loading waggon with equipment & left Intombi where we had been since the 5-11-99. we proceeded to tin Town Ladysmith. and it was quite a chance for us to sleep under a roof & a bed.

Will we leave Intombi alone.

It long Tom. be. alone

Went into Town this evening felt quite refreshed especially at night service at the Wesleyan Chapel.

Splendid sermon by Mr Cawood.

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March 27

Statistics of the Siege

When the siege commenced on November 2nd the effective strength of the garrison was 572 Officers & 12,924 men. There were 20 Officers & 229 men sick & wounded.

The horses numbered 5,309, the mules 4,539, the oxen 1,701, the attendants 2,412. There were 55 guns & 18 machine-guns. During the siege 18 Officers were killed & 193 men, 78 Officers and 539 men were wounded, eight Officers & 54 men died, & 12 Officers, 529 men, & 22 followers died of disease.

It is instructive that the only losses due to casual bombardment were one Officer & 33 men killed, 25 Officers & 207 men wounded (of whom two Officers & 16 men died) and three men missing. The total admissions to hospital during the siege were 10,688. Disease, chiefly enteric & dysentery, commenced to assume serious

proportions towards the end of December, and attained its greatest height at the end of January.

The death-rate increased at the end of December, and from the second week of January averaged over eight deaths per diem. The effective strength at the termination of the siege (March 1) was returned at 403 Officers and 9,761 men, but a significant note is added, "these are the only troops fit to do even a two miles march." There were at that date 154 Officers & 2,624 men in hospital. The horses had dwindled to 2,907 the mules to 3,713 and the Oxen to 252.

April 7 79 12 Field Hospital was stationed at Intombi Camp with view proceeding to Klandsbaate. They were all pleased to leave Ladysmith we took some patients over from them. I was employed with Staff Surgt Carroll in the Green Store side received today the long expected Queen Chocolate.

Annexation of Orange Free State 24.5.00

Kroonstaad entered 13.5.00

Entering Pretoria 5.6.00

Left Ladysmith for Howick
6.7.00

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7th. 10. 50 Towick General Hospital

The Hospital is intended for a sort of Base Hospital for the troops now under Genl. Buller. It is 1000 bedded hospital but at present not more than three quarters of the beds are occupied.

I have been down here about six or seven weeks & in that time I have been on two or three different employments.

I first went into the Equipment Stores but as I had quite enough of that in Ladysmith I took the first opportunity of getting relieved. I next took charge of a ward containing 21 patients suffering from various diseases.

Life here is very dull the same thing day after day we cannot go out of the camp because the bounds are so narrow. We go on parade at six a.m. & marched to our duties & we are kept at it seven p.m. with very little time allowed us for our

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meals so you see we have not much time for anything. However we must not complain if we were at the front I expect things would be much worse than it is here.

The hospital is laid out very well but owing to the distance from the firing line I think that the original idea is a failure it is built of corrugated iron but additions have been made in the shape of marquees it is worked on a very good principle but owing to the small staff things do not go on as they should do at least at present. To give you an idea how short of men we are last week about 50 of St Johns men left us for England & about 25 of the S.H.C. were also discharged wth invalided 50 patients to England this week but we are expecting more down today in their place.

It is an interesting sight to watch patients entrain for Durban en route for England, convalescents who can walk are gathered together talking

in excited groups & laughing & chaffing at the idea of going home. Then you see a line of stretchers on which the poor fellows are who cannot walk (many of whom will never be whole again) are stretched. It is a sight to see their faces lighted up with joy while others look as if they are going to their own funeral. They seem to think they will never see England again although they are going there now. Another sight we see here is the arrival of patients from the front. What broken down starved looking wretches they look that it speaks well for this hospital that two days after they come here they all seem something like their old selves. I remembered an incident that occurred when the last batch of patients arrived myself & another fellow took from the train, a patient who was down with rheumatism.

We carried him down to one of the wards on a stretcher and

when inside & into his bed. he looked around. He sighed looking at me & said with content beaming in his eyes, "This is champagne orderly, this place is like Heaven to me."

Such are the scenes we are getting used to now. I have heard a lot of talk of a Hospital Commission that has come to Africa & should they come round this way they will have very little to complain of here.

One of our Civil Medical Officers died here the other day. His funeral as military funerals always are was a very impressive affair & was attended by nearly all the Officers of this Camp & Comrades camp a short distance away.

The country around is pretty on the whole. but the only thing worth seeing is Howick water falls on the Umgenia River. These are a grand sight & said to be the second highest in the world.

The town of Howick is

two miles from the hospital but it is only a small village consisting of a Church, a few shops & houses, & the Barge Hotel. Such are our Quarters here.

Attached to the hospital is a large Convalescent Camp at the time of writing there will be perhaps a 1500 men there of all Corps. These men have mostly been sent here, from other hospitals after being discharged they are sent here to recruit up before they are sent to their regiments of the front again.

They are divided into three classes 1-2-3 there is Medical Inspection once weekly when they are transferred from one class to another according to the state of their health & when finally transferred to No. 1 they are considered fit for the front again.

It is pitiable to see how suddenly the poor fellows are taken bad on the approach of the doctor the complaint not prevalent seems

chronic pneumatics. The only thing that seem to do them any good, for this, is mid-day parade when they all parade for a bottle of Beer for a moment they seem to be quite well again, they are well out of the firing line.

The only ammunition served out to them is Heatings powder, and their ~~most~~ opponent, common boarding-house flies, although the camp is within a short distance from a liberal supply of water there is a great scarcity of the same in camp.

But this is no doubt is owing to the fact that the Boer women. Lager is within a couple of hundred yards away and it is presumably used for them, who no doubt, require it a great deal more than Tommy I. don't know whether it is compulsory for them to use water, it is not from my experience of them I think there must be a lot wasted, and judging from

their appearance. The only use they put to it is drinking & even at that, from their fat bloated appearance of them generally one would be inclined to think it was often diluted with something a little stronger. To give you a slight idea of Boer women generally as regards appearance. If it was not for their feminine attire you would feel sure you were talking to one of the opposite sex.

21. 8. 17

I was detailed to proceed with an hospital train to relieve one that was admitted with Enteric Fever.

which I was pleased, as I often thought a good chance to see a bit of the country elsewhere.

We now proceed to Newcastle the last town of importance in Natal. It is prettily situated as most towns in this part of Natal

The Transvaal are very - In a hollow through which flows a lovely river.

In the centre of the town is situated a very fine Church and a pretty large number of windmills in stores, a large amount of the smaller being owned by Jews & money grabbers of unferrous nationalities it contains one of the Base hospitals situated on the outskirts of the town close to the railway station. To this hospital a large number of the wounded & invalids from the columns employed on operations in the O.F.S. & on the northern Natal borders are taken.

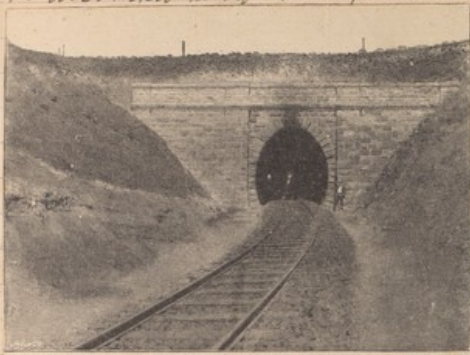
It is an important centre for the Re-equipping of the Columns large quantities of Government supplies, such as horses, mules, forage and the inevitable bully beef & biscuits are stored here in sufficient quantities to supply the urgent needs of our Army. The town is strongly guarded by our troops & as the wily Boers may

at any time when hard pressed make an attempt to capture the town for the purpose of securing for himself our stores & munitions of war. But we are well prepared for any such emergency. It is also a centre to the supply of coal for use on the railways & Natal & the Strand containing as it does an important coal mine which affords employment to a large number of the poorer inhabitants.

About 1/2 an hour's ride by rail after leaving Newcastle the keen eye of the observer is directed towards Puguana Hill which commands the railway line & surrounding country for a considerable distance. On this Hill the enemy mounted one of their bench mounted guns (familiarily called "Long Tom") they had also a long line of trenches which stretched from the base of the Hill to Mpajuba, distance of about 2 1/2 miles. By means of those trenches & guns they conceived the idea of checking the advance of Gen. Buller's Army but in this move they were submerseured as the main

body of the Boers were totally routed. at Bothas Pass under Mt Prospect where our 5 inch guns were mounted which inflicted on the enemy a crushing defeat. They must have taken a considerable amount of time & labour to bring a gun of this calibre into action on the summit of Puguana. In going next claims my attention this is a small station unimportant in itself but part of the surrounding country is many ways memorable, from here the eye can behold that historic place known as Neil's Farm where the Treaty of 81 was signed & on the other side can be discerned the graves of Gen. Colley & the brave men of the Northampton Regiment who fought under him for righteousness & to uphold the integrity of the British Empire unimpeachable. Loring's Nek Tunnel was the next point of attraction on route here. During the month of June 1900 the enemy when in hot retreat before our victorious Army endeavoured to delay our advance by blowing up this tunnel at both ends which they partially succeeded

in accomplishing as the picture shows



Laing's Nek Tunnel occupies a very noteworthy position in that it is a main entrance into the Transvaal from Natal. It passes the Benkenburg and is half a mile in length. The tunnel is built of freestone. The Boers had originally intended to hold Laing's Nek, but it was occupied by Lord Durnford on the 19th, the British rapid advance having prevented the enemy making any stand. The original idea of the Boers for the destruction of the tunnel was to send two engines loaded with dynamite from each end under full steam, but this pretty scheme was not carried out, though telegrams from Volkerst state that a terrific dynamite explosion took place which completely wrecked the line and had rendered communication impossible. Later intelligence, however, states that the damage caused by the blowing in of the tunnel can be easily repaired. Our photograph is by Robert Gell, Newcastle.



After the blowing of Almond's Nek the Boers evacuated Laing's Nek and Majuba. When our men reached Laing's Nek, about 100 yards each end of the tunnel were found to have been blown in by the enemy. The debris was lying about in heaps, but the line was otherwise unaltered. Our photograph is by J. Ferguson.

but only for a time as our hard worked engineers soon cleared away the debris & had our communication by rail again restored after passing through the Tunnel we came in view of the Historic Majuba whose history requires no criticism from the pen of an unaccomplished writer & which I am sorry to say I had

the misfortune to belong but, as every Englishman & especially every British Soldier knows our defeat of '81 has been amply avenged.

We next approach the last British town in Natal viz: - Charles town. It is a small town of unimportance & contains but few houses though, I was informed it was in a thriving condition before the commencement of the War however this may be presented to my readers as the appearance of a small English village whose inhabitants were scattered at long intervals apart from each other. We now enter after leaving Charles town the first town of the Transvaal. This place is called Volksrust; here the duties of all articles of manufacture were assessed by the Volksraad. Government of President Kruger. Republic I am not aware of the same state of things exist during our administration.

After a trying journey Standerton was reached. This town is considered an important one by the Burghers of

the Transvaal. The large iron bridge was under reconstruction it having been blown down by the enemy during their retreat from Sainys Nek & Bothas Pass the Railway line crosses it about 12 mile before the station is entered. There are large engine sheds at the station & work shops where a large body of engineers are constantly employed. It contains a large number of stores of all kinds a good & 2 splendid churches. The town is commanded by a large Hill about 1/2 a mile distant known as "Standerton Hoopje" on which are mounted 2.47 Guns & 2,12 powder.

There is also a large general Hospital here splendidly situated & accommodation can be provided for over 1000 patients who are mostly wounded men brought in from the various Columns operating in that part of the Transvaal, which are numerous owing to its central position. There is a splendid Dining

Hall at the Railway Station where a good meal can be served for the moderate price of 2/6. The Vaal River runs through Standerton and a beautiful stone bridge called "Trugers Brig" crosses it.

It is memorable as being the meeting place of the Commanders of both Armies for the discussion of peace conferences. In the upper part of the town is a Convalescent Camp where patients are sent to recuperate their health after being discharged from hospital.

In this camp they enjoy themselves thoroughly as Games of all kinds are provided for their use besides other kinds of recreation. Its houses are for the most part constructed of Galvanized Iron & I consider on the whole one of the nicest towns I have visited in the Transvaal Republic & I am sure after the termination of hostilities it will take its place as one of the foremost towns in S Africa.

The next station we arrived at was Vlaklaagte it is a great station of call for all trains travelling up or down the line on account of the easy supply of water to be obtained there.

It is strongly guarded by our troops on this account alone as the enemy may at any time cause the supply of this precious fluid to be cut off by damaging the tanks & pumps which furnish the water for the use of the engines & I can personally assert that water is a precious commodity in this part of the country no other part of the line on which I have travelled can a more splendid supply be obtained than at Vlaklaagte.

Between this station and Graylingstaad runs a range of hills where many of our trains were blown up by the notorious train wrecker Jack Winton by this means the Boers often obtained good supplies of horses &

food, which enabled them in a large measure to carry on their guerilla tactics.

Those hills were a favourite place of resort for Meyer's Commando which Winton belonged to.

Graylingstaad the next station on route is a small mining town from the station can be seen the Boer depot Gold Mines which were not working at the time I arrived there. It has been in a thriving condition before the war I was told by Mr. Campbell the proprietor of the only hotel in the place he also informed me that previous to the war he done a splendid trade and it would seem so as on my asking him the price of a pair of ladies shoes he politely told me they were 33/6 the same could easily be bought in England for 7/6 in fact he told me that it was only lately silver was in circulation around that place, all transactions in purchases etc being in gold. I noticed a splendid inscription

in stone on the Veldt, viz. Scottish Rifles formerly called the Camerons who must be at the time the English troops protecting the mails as well as the lines of communication there. About 8 miles further on is another small station called Vlaatsfontein the Boers made an attempt close to here to make a stand against Gen. Selous but they were cleverly outwitted by that accomplished Military tactician whose books on Military Tactics are studied by both the French & German Armies Heidelberg is the next stop on the line.

Heidelberg is considered as one of the important towns of the Transvaal about 5 minutes walk from the railway station the market place is reached it is a very up to date town containing a large number of fine buildings and is very much like most English towns in appearance a little over 2 miles from Heidelberg is Dublin Hill, this

receives its name from the gallantry displayed there by the Dublin Fusiliers who charged the hill with fixed bayonets & compelled the enemy to beat a hasty retreat at this place was erected a large Rafter location on account of the ill treatment they received at the enemy's hand, Our people had a 4.7 Inch Gun erected on this hill for their protection & for commanding the surrounding country of which a good view could be obtained. Heidelberg is also an Eastern Depot for the training of Baden Powell's Constabulary Vlaatsfontein contains properly speaking towns, one close to the railway station, the other about a mile distant.

It is a large Junction as at this point all trains branch off for Johannesburg Cape Colony & Natal Johannesburg is easily discernable from here.

It is a very important place for the accumulation of Government stores etc. Between it & Johannesburg are

situated the noted African Gold Mines
 to landfontein itself being built on the edge
 of the reef. There is a large "Rest Camp"
 here for troops proceeding up & down the
 line. Close to the Railway Station is
 situated one of Lady Roberts coffee shops
 which has often come to the rescue of a
 hungry Tommy; "were he to the man that
 is in a hurry to proceed on his journey
 from here," he will find himself sorely
 mistaken as he will have at the least 2
 or 3 & sometimes 24 hours to wait before
 proceeding on his journey. It is a great
 mining town well lit up by electricity,
 miners from all parts of the shops & stores
 being owned by Englishmen, I would
 like to have spent a few days but the call
 of Duty hurried me on & I next found
 myself at the President Capital
 Pretoria which is well known the Chief
 town of the Transvaal. It has oftentimes
 being described by more competent
 pens than mine. I will however

endeavour to give a brief account of it here
 The first thing that attracts the eye of
 the Visitor is the Barracks which is
 a large red brick building, built to
 accommodate about 1000 Troops here were
 stationed in times of peace the 1st
 Artillery, it contains stabling for upwards
 of 500 horses, it is well lit up by
 electricity and its rooms and accommoda-
 tions for men is superior to any of our
 Barracks in England. In front
 In front of the Barracks on the green
 a monument is erected to President
 Pretorius the 1st President of the Republic
 and after whom the town itself is named.
 The next thing that catches the
 eye is the Government's buildings, including
 the Bank & on the opposite side of the
 square is the "Dutch Reformed Church"
 where President Kruger often times
 offered up his devotions, many times
 I can suppose for assistance to
 drive to English into the sea or for

the purpose of as he himself termed it "Staggering Humanity, Poor misguided man little did he know the task he took in his hands but that gallant Genl. Joubert pointed out to him the uselessness of his task.

I am also sure that at the Government Buildings where the meetings of the *Volksraad* or Parliament took place many schemes were concocted by Dr. Leyds, Reitz & other members detrimental to the British but John Bull kept an eagle eye on their doings and outwitted them at the close.

On the market square can be seen the granite pedestal built for the erection of everlasting memento to president Trueger, what he did to deserve this mark of respect I am unable to say except it was for his hatred of the English this I do know it was never finished so the poor President's pedestal is now scattered into

oblivion, probably some day he may get it completed but I think that day is as far off as that is when England will cease to hoist the Union Jack.

I next visited the President's House where a military guard was mounted I thought at first probably the President came back but on enquiring I was informed Mrs. Trueger resided there. It is a modest building one story high with a Verandeh in front.

The principal thing of note here was the two Lions outside, but still more remarkable was the fact that while one had his eyes closed the other had them open.

I concluded from this omen that the Lion with open eyes was John Bull and the one with eyes closed the President.

I deeply regret having to leave Pretoria after my short stay there but the call of duty and more claimed me & I returned to Howick on the Hospital train on which we had a large number of wounded & Invalids.

On the 3rd 9th 01 I was pursuing my usual avocations as Ward-Orderly & preparing for the Medical Officer's visit in my Ward when the Orderly Sergt astonished me considerably by saying that I had been detailed to accompany Boer Prisoners of War to Durban & that I was to start from Howick the same afternoon to join the S.S. Manlia at Durban for passage to Bermuda. Three other Privates were also warned to proceed with me.

Of course we were all extremely pleased at this order as besides the change of scene & climate for us no doubt it might bring forth home coming we should be some

3,500 miles nearer to it than we were in Natal. Of course we all had friends at Howick whom we were sorry to part with.

But good acquaintance in the Army is impossible as moves are so frequent: we got a new kit etc. casting out a lot of the worst worn articles & by 2 p.m. that's three hours after we received the order to move marched off to the station leaving Howick where we had spent several happy months to the strains of Caled Song Lane sung by the fatigue party (we squashed them with 3/6) who had carried our luggage to the station.

On arriving at Durban station we packed our kits on to three rickshaws & set off to the point where the S.S. Manlia was laying. Previously to this we

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reported ourselves to the City Officer
Durban where we met Lieut. Park
& Cpl. Hill who gave us to understand
that as the Manlia was out
in anchorage & so we spent a
night in town & went to the Theatre

The company then on was
Halls Australian Juveniles a very
talented lot of youngsters though
some of the said juveniles well
well on in their teens & far from
ill favoured in appearance. They
were playing the Bill of New York
& it was really good, one little girl
of about 12 years old took my eye
entirely the way this little girl
sung "Teach me how to love dear
will live long in my memory

After the performance
as over I took an excellent
supper at the Pand Cafe & returned
(feeling extremely pleased with
myself) early next day the "Reville

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sounded the troops prepared to
transfer on to the Manlia which
was lying about two miles out
we of the Rambo went on board
a tug with the Officer; & 200 men of
the Royal Warwickers were packed into
a lighter & towed by our tug & I think
we had decidedly the best of it

I will describe the way it
was done. all the Warwickers were out
on lighters, sent down below and the
hatches were battered down, & fastened
to our tug, & off we went. What the
sufferings of those 200 Tommies
must have been I cant describe
because I wasnt in the lighter.

but as we crossed the harbour
bar that lighter was tossed up
& down like a cork. we on the tug
had to hold on tightly but they
with only standing room & nothing
to hold on by must have had a
wretched time of it we could hear

them shouting & of course using
bad language at the way they were
being buffeted about.

After we had passed Pt. Bar
the water was much smoother but
it must still have been unpleasant
for them. On arriving alongside the
S. mania we were slung aboard
in a basket eight at a time this
took some time as will be seen by
218 men. Their kit & equipment had
to be taken on board the winch
lowered the basket at the rate of about
three minutes for each journey though
Tommy Atkins was in full marching
order was packed in & on a time
yet the officers many of them
poor things could not bear to be
there at once in the basket & they
were wearing only their saris.
occasionally as it was hauled in
a kit bag would fall over board
with much laughter & witticisms

on the part of those who had got
themselves aboard alright my kit was
packed in an old Drug Box & was
safely hauled aboard though one of my
party lost all his kit during the trip
from shore to the ship.

However we perfectly reequipped
him on giving a pair of socks
another a shirt another trousers
&c so in the end he had a better
kit than what he started with.

We had a meal of Bread &
Bully mutton as soon we all got
on board but not myself I was
already having the "Rocked in the
cradle of the deep" feeling.

The journey from Durban
down to Cape town took us about 3 days
& the South African winter too being
commencing we found it very cold
on deck even in the day time.

The mania got along fairly
well on the morning of our third

149 day we woke to find ourselves just
sounding Simons town. This told us
that Capetown was still at hand.

About 10 am we anchored in
Table Bay. The same night the
ship put out to sea & headed for
Fermuda.

Nothing particular happen
on the voyage that I need state in
this book. we worked together
pretty smoothly & there was no trouble
at all amongst us or the Boer prisoners
throughout the voyage. The first
few days was pretty rough & the
ship was very lightly loaded.
& she rolled like a hunder. not being
lover of the sea. I used to feel
sorry for some of my comrades
whom any one could see were
feeling somewhat bilious whenever
she gave an extra big lurch, and
for three or four days she used to
cut capers like this much to Tommy

150 discomfort, just underneath where
some were berthed. There was several
tons of potatoes stored up for use
during the voyage. And these in
conjunction with some 200 barrels of
lime used in the habit of rolling
about at their own sweet will.

I hope to have one more sea
voyage & that is my return to England.
& then I shall have had quite
enough by then.

now a little about Fermuda or

Somer's Islands.

Fermuda. The Land of the Lily & Rose.
The Land of Shelving cedar, sloping
hillsides green with verdure & shimmer
ing under a southern sun a calm &
serene feeling hanging over everything.

A sea of emerald blue
shaving at times to turquoise. There
with purple patches marking the
submerged shoals & ever & anon
the white sails of a yacht or fishing

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Boat flashing in the sunlight.

A land of steep & rugged
gorges, sheltering valley under its cliffs
The waves have worn out rocky coves
& hollows decorated by nature's handiwork
with stalactites with alternate looped
& vaulted roofs veritable neptunes grottoes
all the islands of the group ~~are~~ are
of coral formation & rising from
the contorted strata visible where
roads have been cut through the rocks
leaving a wall on either side a miniature
canyon there must have been in the early
periods of the earth's history successive
upheavals & submersions through thousands
of years due to volcanic actions either
beneath the islands themselves in the
near vicinity.

The Bermuda Islands were
discovered according to early history
about 1515 Juande Bermudas.

They were afterwards called
the Somers Islands after Sir Geo Somers

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who was shipwrecked here in 1610 &
whose heart was buried here.

They are situated, some
400 miles southeast of New York & in
the midst of the Atlantic Ocean

The population is about
19,000 both coloured & white included

The scenery of Bermuda is
very romantic on account of the non
prevalance of fences such as seen in
most country places. They substituted
by stone walls mostly very old.

They dotted with the
universal life plants, ferns & creepers
of all kinds have not the non-stony
of the stiff rail fences.

Most of the flowers that grow
in abundance here are the hot house
plants of more northern climates & I
believe there is no period during the
year that the flower does not greet the eye

The water supply of Bermuda
is largely dependent on the quantity

of rain that falls.

This year the rain fall has been very scarce consequently there has been much anxiety amongst the inhabitants as regards the length of time the water that remains in the tanks will last

Although so much depends on the rain very little preparation is made for the collection of such a valuable liquid:

The islands are composed of about 100 large & 500 small ones

The City of Hamilton the capital of course ranks first. It is a very pretty place but very dusty the roads are covered with a very fine white dust the houses are mostly made of white stone & the whole whitewashed.

Under a brilliant rays of the sun create quite a dazzling brilliancy which is almost blinding & is rather hurtful to the eyes most of the commercial business is carried on here which for the most part

consists of the export of onions potatoes Limes & Arrowroot to New York and the United States

Prospect is a small village about 2 miles distant from the City and is situated on the top of a Hill called Mount Prospect

Here is stationed the Military Hospital the troops that are doing duty in the Island & of course considering the amount now needed for guarding Boer prisoners they called Prospect Headquarters.

St. Georges which is the next place of interest is from 12 to 14 miles from Hamilton & is connected by a long road & a causeway of stone & bridges the scenery is magnificent here & there. The mail coach is well worth patronizing for the beauty of the surrounding country along the route.

Ireland Island is of neat

importance. Here it is that all the repairs for the fleet & mercantile ships are conducted. The dock yards are places of great interest & are at present a very busy spectacle from 7 a.m. till 5 p.m. daily.

A floating dock is reported to be the largest in the world now that is being renewed by a much larger one this having been completed before. I left St. Georges where I have been stationed after a previous long stay on Port St. Island the whole island then a hospital for Prisoners of War.

Presumably I might be well qualified to form an opinion as to the condition of things on the islands where the prisoners of war are confined from personal observation.

Having worked amongst them (of the prisoners) noted their food

their clothing, their sanitary & hospital conditions, I would say in advance of details - that the stories stated sensation-monger in some journals about poor food, bad clothes, much sickness & great mortality among the Boers in Bermuda, are not true.

I will proceed to deal with these several points in detail: first with regard to food. Having enumerated the different articles and the quantity of each article constituting the daily ration of a prisoner of war telling whence it is procured and how it is prepared.

With such a menu it can safely be said that talk about 'scantily fed' prisoners is mere spume, and I hazard little in saying there are hundreds of thousands in our large cities who would be glad to fare as amply as do the Boers in Bermuda.

With regard to clothing.

I saw none unseasonably clad, without hats or wraps.

The government gives each man a supply of clothing.

Now regarding sanitary conditions

"Let it be noted, first & foremost, that the very locale of the camp is, in the fullest degree, fitted to favour the well-being of the captives along hygienic lines. All needful precautions & regulations are rigidly observed. Attest of these facts is found in their healthful appearance which was my impression on reaching their laager - and in the convincing fact of a specially small sick-list and death-rate."

"Regarding hospital care," he continues "the captives are fortunate for they are in charge of Major Lodge, one of the most accomplished medical men in the English Service who, with two assistant

surgeons, looks well to the welfare of all ill. Porto Island is as I have said before, entirely a general hospital of 200 beds. Sick are at once sent to hospital - a wooden building and several marquees, where they are seen morning and night by the doctors. The hospital outfit is large & varied. The food supply is ample and of most excellent kind.

Briefly told, the best proof of good care is the fact that since the hospital was opened on July 1, 901 cases have been admitted January 14, & only twelve deaths. Surely, that is a record, generous & humane.

In their living islands, they have really home rule government, & the punishments inflicted by their tribunals & provisions that have been made for their amusement & instruction; of the means afforded for secular &

and for religious teaching; of their toy factories and the profits derived therefrom, so the "lot" of the average prisoner of war is not a "happy one," it can be said, that the "lives" of those in a land like Bermuda have, in many ways, been "cast in pleasant places" for they are in a land blessed with health-bringing breezes, are free from care, need not work, unless they wish, are well-fed, and especially well-cared for when ill.

Many of them admit it.

Captain Schouten, one of the Commandants said "Our treatment in general as prisoners of war is, in all respects fair. I don't see in what way it can be improved."

Our impression

England cannot afford to ill-treat her fallen foes & that she does not in Bermuda at least must concede, as far as my

experience teaches me.

There is of course, always, some trouble between irreconcilables and Moderates. In the prison camps, here as in camps at St Helena also in concentration camps of South Africa there are many men who are keenly anxious for the termination of the war.

Realising that the Boers have been hopelessly beaten in fair fight, that the story of foreign intervention, with which they have been beguiled, is a myth, and the independence of the former Boer Republics is a thing of the past, a large number of the prisoners of war here have taken the oath of allegiance; others among the Boer-prisoners made application from time to time to be admitted to British citizenship. Such an application & the consequent administration of the oath of allegiance to several prisoners of war now confined

on Hawkins Island recently gave rise to a serious incident.

The prisoners of war confined on that Island are chiefly irreconcilables and some of these are very bitter against the British.

A week ago on learning that several of their fellow-prisoners of more moderate views had taken the oath of allegiance, a party of the irreconcilables attacked the former & attempted to drown them in the Great Sound. The attempt was frustrated by the military guard and the perpetrators of the attempt have been punished. They are now undergoing a period of discipline in the military prison at St. Georges.

All along, the conduct of the Dutch Chaplains here has been open to question. In any case, they have always sought to foster and encourage the irreconcilable spirit

manifested by a very large number of the prisoners of war.

The latest instance of this occurred a few days ago.

One of the Boer Chaplains sent to Hawkins Island a box filled with copies of a book entitled "Cromwell's Soldier's Pocket Book," intended for distribution among the prisoners of war—a book teeming with scriptural denunciations of the wicked, and with Divine promises to the faithful of assistance and of victory over the enemy. The application was obvious and in the hands of the Boer prisoners such a book could prove only a source of mischief. The Commandant at Hawkins, Major Scheerme R.G.A. promptly confiscated the box & its contents.

Sir Henry Seary, the new Governor & Commander-in-Chief approved of the Commandant's action, and administered a sharp admonition

to the Order Chaplain who had sent
the books to Hawkins Island

Hitherto these Chaplains have been
allowed to pass freely to & fro between
the different Order camps between
the islands in the Great Sound &
other parts of the colony & they have
also enjoyed unrestricted intercourse
with the prisoners. Many believe that
herein lies the secret of the smuggled
letters which from time to time have
been published in the newspapers
of the United States of America

However, this unrestricted privilege
will probably cease very shortly

In the near future a
redistribution of camps will be made
with a view to classifying the
prisoners of war, and then by Sir
Henry Geary's order, each Order
Chaplain will be required to take
up his residence at the camp
where his duties lie and there

not leaving the island without
permission

The society to provide
recreation for the Order prisoners of war,
which was formed in July last has
been dissolved - Its dissolution was
concurrent with the departure from
Bermuda of Miss Katherine De Blives,
who was the founder and promoter
of the society.

As Governor of Bermuda
Sir Henry Geary is already winning
golden opinions. The reception
extended to his excellency on his arrival
here was most cordial in its character.

Although the reception took place
at 9 o'clock at night it was attended
by more than 1,000 people.

I deeply regret having
to leave Bermuda after my short
stay of 9 months, but as I have
said before, the call of duty once
more claimed me & I embarked on

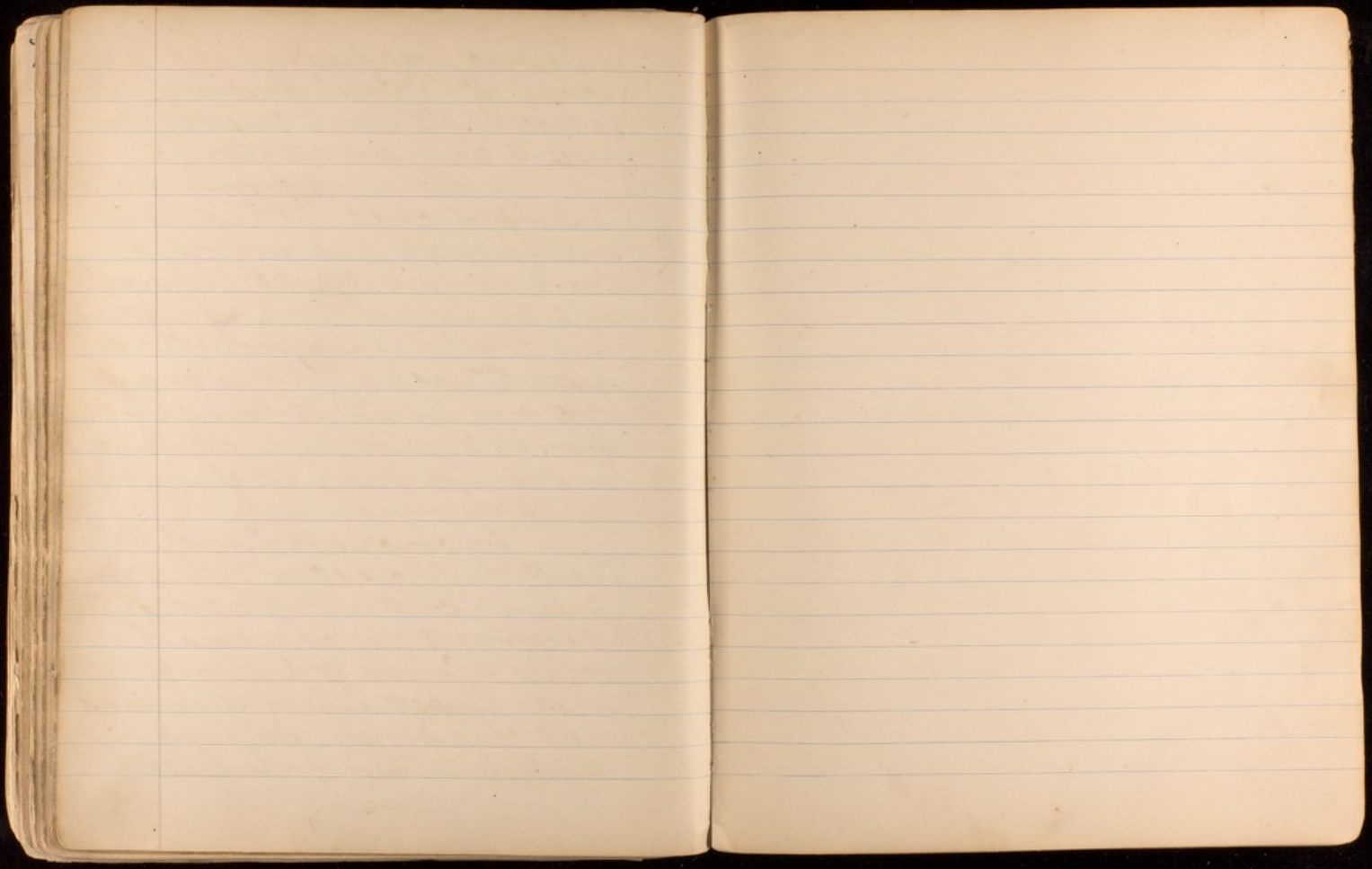
the Transport S. Beta for Halifax
Nova Scotia from whence I
proceeded to Quebec & St. where I
again embarked on the S.S. Lakes
Ontario for Liverpool.

A Brief description of the
voyage hom. may not be out of
place here. The Lakes Ontario of the
Elder Dempster & Co. line of Boats
is now one of the oldest boats of the
Company her tonnage is about 7000
and taking everything on the whole
from my experience of her a very
comfortable boat for travelling myself
& two patients with me. All speak
very highly of the employers of the Coy
we had the greatest attention
bestowed on us food of the best
quality and issued out most
liberally, as for civility it seemed
to be redeeming feature of all
whom we came in contact with
The view down the River

St. Lawrence was beautiful, and the
scenery off the Frick boat very
attractive the Quait's Causeway seemed
most to claim my attention.

The voyage from Quebec
to Liverpool could not have been
more favourable and everyone on
board seemed to benefit immensely
by it. On Sunday morning September
we docked at Liverpool & though
happy to have reached old England
we were ^{glad} to have separated
from the friends we left behind
in Bermuda with which we made
during the voyage.

In conclusion I wish to
thank the Officers & crew of the Lakes
Ontario & shall not hesitate to
recommend to anyone desirous of a
voyage to Canada to patronize the
Elder Dempster line of Steamships
as I consider them excellent in many
respects, the Steamers of other lines.



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