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The Watchman-Warder

THURSDAY, OCT. 19th, 1899

THE MAJUBA HILL DISASTER

A DETAILED STORY OF A COSTLY FIGHT IN THE LAST TRANSVAAL WAR

The following detailed account of the fight at Majuba Hill in the last Transvaal war is recalled by the present threatened hostilities in the same country:-

Majuba Hill is a flat-topped and very steep mountain, which commands Laing's Nek. After his first repulse Colley found himself encamped opposite the Boer position waiting for reinforcements. The Boers were steadily entrenching their position at the Nek, so that the storming of it would be far more difficult than it had proved when first attempted. So far the Boers had made no start at holding Majuba Hill, on account of the difficulty of ascending it. Consequently, (a) if the Boers occupied it they would complete their line of fortifications, (b) if the British occupied it they would outflank the Boer line, and when the reinforcements arrived, could attack with excellent chances of success. Sir George Colley accordingly deliberately kept back his reinforcements, a strong force of infantry and cavalry, at Newcastle, so as not to tempt the Boers to occupy the hill, seized it by a night march, and then ordered by flag signal from the hill that these troops be hurried to the front. In two or three days they would be at his main camp, and then a combined attack would be made. This plan hinged upon one consideration, that either of the two small bodies into which he thus divided his army could be attacked and over-whelmed in detail. The hill appeared to be impregnable, and Sir George carefully provided for the defence of the main camp. The force which set out for the hill in the night was smaller than is generally given. It mustered 554 rifles, and 200 of these were left at detached posts on the four-mile road to the hill.

The top of Majuba Hill is flat, triangular, and covers about ten acres, and the crest-line measures about 1200 yards, so that 350 men made a small garrison for it. A hollow occupied part of the top. At the angle nearest the Boers the hill rose steeply to the edge and then from this tip a slope ran up for about 150 yards to a ridge, about 40 feet higher, which cut across the top. Behind this ridge lay the central depression, and from the summit of the ridge, owing to the convexity of the slope, the tip of the hill could not be seen, much less the steep hillsides. At the corner of the plateau nearest the Boers, and in advance of the curving slope just mentioned, was a kopje (or koppie), a rocky mound. A party of Highlanders, afterwards reinforced by some 58th men, held this kopje as an outpost. Behind them, on the true edge of the hilltop was a line of troops composed here of Highlanders. Behind the transverse ridge, in the central hollow, lay the reserves. Finally there seem to have been three paths up the hill. One was by the Highlanders' kopje. The second was in rear of and to the right of the transverse ridge. The third was that next to the British camp, by which the force had ascended.

When the Boers perceived the troops on the hill and determined to attack, a number of parties advanced to the lower slopes of the hill, and from early morning till 1.30 directed a heavy fire on the mountain top. Only three or four of the British were shot, and the fire appeared absolutely wasted. But while this was going on smaller parties of the Boers were silently climbing the hill. A good deal of the hillside is "dead ground," i.e., cannot be seen from the crest of the hill, so that they could climb safely over these portions. The fire from the covering force at once attracted the attention of the British, and by making it unsafe to show one's self on the skyline prevented them from watching the slope of the hill. By 1.30 the first of these parties, about 60 men, was close under the Highlanders' kopje. Something had been seen of them, and the post had been reinforced, but no idea of their numbers was entertained. The Boers deliberately prepared for the destruction of this advanced post. The party collected under a rock-ledge which hid them from the soldiers on the skyline above them. Then, at a word they stepped back with their rifles at the "present," and instantly discharged a volley, which brought down almost the whole of the picket. The rest, panic-stricken by the sudden slaughter of their comrades

fell back, the line along the true crest in their rear seems to have shared the panic, and fell back to the transverse ridge. To this ridge Colley and his officers were leading the reserve, and as the two waves the retreating and advancing, met there was a scene of intense confusion as Highlanders and 58th men mingled. For a while the retreating men bore the others back; then the officers got a little line of battle formed along this ridge, and here took place the fight of the hill. The line was confused, companies and corps were mixed up, the men were badly bunched, the flanks were left weak and unguarded and the men were disheartened by the sudden and amazing attack which had befallen them, and all was wild, dim and tumult. Then the Boer force which had thus stormed the true crest appeared.

For a while the two lines exchanged a heavy fire, but no loss occurred on either side. But the Boers were hugging the ground, covered by the convexity of the slope. All the British saw were spurts of smoke and rifle muzzles, and a head cautiously lifted. The British lead was whizzing over their heads. The Boer fire was striking the ground in front of the British line; gradually it crept up, and the soldiers began to drop. The Boer line was being fed by the climbers lower down the hill. Then a fresh party came up by the path to the right of the ridge on which the British line was; then that right was enveloped with fire, and, outflanked and outshot, the line gave way in rout. Colley stood to the end, and was killed while urging his men not to run. The official statement showed 30 officers and 266 men killed, wounded and missing.

HOW THESE TOWNSHIPS WERE NAMED

AN INTERESTING AND USEFUL PAPER BY INSPECTOR KNIGHT

In a recent issue we made reference to a new book entitled "Nothing but Names" by Herbert F. Gardiner, M. A. This book gives the origin of the names of the counties and townships of this province. Inspector J. H. Knight has taken the pains to make a digest of the pages that refer to the townships of Victoria county. Since to most people the names in their own locality give the book its chief interest, the Inspector's paper, will, if cut out and preserved, answer all the purposes of a copy of the book itself. It is as follows:-

The origin of the names of the townships in the county of Victoria, condensed from "Nothing but Names" by Herbert Fairbairn Gardiner, M. A. (Toronto, George N. Morang & Co. Limited), for the use of the teachers in East Victoria, by J. H. Knight, P. S. Inspector. This book should be in every library in Ontario.

Emily township was called after Emily Charlotte, daughter of Lord George Lennox, and sister to the Duke of Richmond, who was governor-general of Canada. She married in 1784, the Hon. Sir George Cranfield Berkeley, who became Admiral of the White and Lord Admiral of Portugal. Admiral Berkeley died in 1818, and his widow in 1832.

Ops is a Latin word meaning wealth, riches, generally used in the plural. Ops is personified as the goddess of plenty, riches and power, the wife of Saturn, and the patroness of husbandry; identical with Terra.

Mariposa is the Spanish word for butterfly.

Verulam was named in honor of James Walter Grimston, Earl of Verulam, born 1773, died 1845. He was a brother-in-law of the Lord Liverpool who was premier of England from 1812 to 1827. The title of Earl of Verulam is taken from Verulam, or Verulam, the ancient capital of Britain, and afterwards a Roman station in Hertfordshire, England.

Francis Bacon was an earl of Verulam. Fenelon is named after Abbe Fenelon who established a mission at a village of the C. I. on the Bay of Quinte, and afterwards lived at Pickering Harbour, which for 200 years bore the name of Frenchman's Bay. He was an elder brother of the celebrated French Archbishop of Cambrai. They were both sons of Count Fenelon-Salignac, though by different marriages.

Eldon took its name from John Scott, Lord Eldon, the famous Lord Chancellor of England. He was born at Newcastle in 1751, entered parliament in 1783, and died in 1838. He was a Tory in politics, and opposed to toleration of all kinds.

Somerville may have been named in honor of

(1) Sir W. Somerville, who was chief secretary for Ireland in 1846, and was raised to the peerage as Baron Athlumey, of Somerville and Dillardstown, County Meath, or

(2) after Anne Somerville, grandmother of Sir Francis Bond Head, 10th Lord Somerville, or

(3) from Rev. William Somerville, a brother of Lady Head, and who was married to Charlotte daughter of Rev. Walter Bagot, or

(4) from Robert B. Somerville, who represented Huntingdon county, Lower Canada, in the Canadian Assembly before confederation, and sat in that house from 1854 to 1867, or

(5) from Mrs. Mary Somerville, author of "Physical Geography," born 1780, died 1872.

Laxton is called after Laxton village in Northampton, England. There is another Laxton in Nottinghamshire, and a third in the East Riding of York.

Bexley was named in honor of Right Hon. Nicholas Vansittart, B. on Bexley, son of Henry Vansittart, Governor of Bengal, born 1766, died 1851. Admiral Vansittart, a cousin of Lord Bexley, came to Canada in 1834, and settled near Woodstock. He had also a place in Bexley township on the shore of Balsam Lake. Bexley is in the county of Kent, England.

Carden was named after Captain Carden, who was complimented by General Sir John Hope for his unremitting exertions in embarking the army after the battle of Corunna in 1809. General Hope took command when Sir John Moore was killed. Carden is the name of a village in Cheshire, England, 10 miles from the city of Chester, and close to the river Dee.

Digby is named after Captain Digby who helped to embark the English army after the battle of Corunna. Digby and other captains were complimented by General Sir John Hope, who took command after the death of Sir John Moore. The seat of Earl Digby is Sherborne Castle in Dorsetshire, England.

Dalton is named after Dr. John Dalton, the famous English chemist, born in 1766 at Eaglesfield in Cumberland, died in 1844 at Manchester. He left valuable papers on evaporation, rain, the aurora borealis, winds and dew. In the reign of William IV., the government voted him a pension. Longford is named after a town and county in Ireland. The river Shannon borders the county for about 50 miles. The earldom of Longford belongs to the family of Pakenham. The first duke of Wellington married a daughter of the Earl of Longford.

A DAIRY COW.

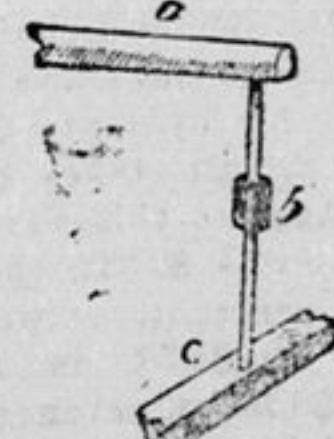
The Breeding, Fitting and Training of a Calf is Necessary to the Production of a Profitable One.

Breeding, fitting and training horses for the speed track requires knowledge, judgment, skill and patience. The young animal must be the get of an ancestry whose distinguishing traits are intelligence, action and endurance. He must be bred for speed, good judgment and skill gained from experience, and the breeder must determine whether the young thing gives promise of possessing the qualities essential in an animal bred for speed. Judgment, skill and patience are required in feeding, fitting and training the young thing for a winning performance in the speed contests. This feeding, fitting and training begins at a very early stage of the calf's existence, and is patiently persisted in until the time of development is reached.

The production of a profitable dairy cow begins with a breeding, fitting and train of a calf. The ancestry must be the best we can get for the purpose, and the calf must be fed and cared for with that end constantly in view. The food provided must be of that kind and quantity which will most completely develop a milk-giving animal, and not a flesh and fat-producing animal. Nature has furnished this food in the mother's milk and in grass, but as we must rob the milk of its fat we must replace this element with something equally good and much cheaper. One cent's worth of corn and flaxseed meal is worth as much to the calf in combination with sweet skim milk and grass as one pound of butter fat in the whole milk. The value of oats, fed in connection with skim milk and choice hay for a dairy calf food, should not be under-estimated. Vigorous growth, exercise and development is what we must get if we are to have a cow capable of large performance. The oats and hay are bulky and increase the capacity of the stomach and digestive organs, and their exercise develops the capacity of the animal for properly taking and using large quantities of bulky milk-making food. Good sweet hay, preferably early cut, well cured clover, should be supplied from the time the calf is three or four weeks old. A clean, well-bedded, well-ventilated, sunlit stable is the place for calves in winter and the same with screened windows for summer. Milk cows and calves should be kept in screened stables during the heat of the day in summer. There is no profit for the owner or comfort for the cows and calves in fighting flies in the hot sun. Developing the milk-giving habit, which comes with the office of maternity, is an important feature in the fitting and training of a good cow. Maternity should come neither too early nor too late. Growth and physical vigor are often sacrificed in forcing the office of maternity upon the young things. Much depends upon the development of the animal, but it may be safely said that no heifer should drop her first calf before she is 2 years old, and not later than when 30 months of age. The handling of the calves and heifers is also an important feature of this development and training. They should be trained to the cow habit of dependence upon and regard for their master from infancy to maturity. The heifer or cow that does not repay her owner for gentleness, kindness and intelligent care, has not sense or capacity enough for a dairy cow, and the man who withholds these from the good cow has neither sense nor capacity enough for a good dairyman.—Dairy and Creamery.

Loose-Proof Roost.

Make a foundation of 4x4 scantling, in the shape of a frame, about as long as the building, and wide enough to make the roosts of suitable capacity. For the perches use 2x4 or 4x4 scantlings, ripped through the middle so as to make two pieces 4x1 1/2 or 4x2. The upper corners are rounded off as shown, and the perches



LOOSE PROOF ROOST.

are supported on standards of inch pipe, 18 inches long, or half-inch iron rods. An old fruit can is attached to each support by being soldered at the bottom of the can, the top being left open. These cups are kept half-full of coal oil or crude petroleum.

The roosts can be lifted off the supports for cleaning and to give access to the floor of the building. They may receive an application of coal oil or be white-washed themselves occasionally. Instead of using the framework for foundation, the pipes or rods may be simply driven into the ground in their proper places. In the cut but one support and one end of a perch are shown. The perch may be any length, and is supported at the end not shown, in the same manner as at the one illustrated.—American Agriculturist.

Watching a Plant Grow.

Any of you who are fortunate enough to have access to a microscope may try the following experiment with little trouble: Take a coccinia seed and cut off a thin enough slice to let the light through clearly. Then place the slice on a slide, cover with the cover glass and place under the microscope. When the instrument is well focused, standing in a vertical position, moisten the slice of seed with a drop of water. Almost instantly the seed fragment will absorb the moisture and develop a number of little spiral fibers which illustrate an early process of vegetable germination.

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WATCH US GROW

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