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The Watchman-Warder

THURSDAY, OCT. 26th, 1899

THE BOERS ARE WORSTED

Heavy Engagements Result in British Victories.

HEAVY LOSSES ON BOTH SIDES—GEN. SYMONDS MORTALLY WOUNDED—GEN. KOCK KILLED—DESCRIPTIONS OF BRILLIANT FIGHTING.

Heavy fighting has already occurred between the Boers invading Natal and the British forces in the colony. On Friday last Glencoe camp, 40 miles north of the British headquarters at Ladysmith was attacked by 4000 Boers. The British under Gen. Symonds repulsed the attack with great slaughter, but was himself mortally wounded in the action. On Saturday another engagement took place at Elands-laagte, not far from Ladysmith from which Gen. White made an advance with a strong body of troops. Of Friday's battle the correspondent says: A simultaneous attack on Glencoe by three different columns, aggregating 9,000 burghers was contemplated.

The first column, under Gen. Erasmus, left the great Boer camp on the Ingagane river, and halted at Hattingspruit, on the main road between Dannhausen and Glencoe, on Thursday.

The second column, which was the largest and most powerful, was commanded by General Lucas Meyer. This column made a long detour, and took up a position on Smith's Hill, commanding the Glencoe camp.

The third column, consisting chiefly of Free State burghers under Commandant Viljoen, marched from Waschbank, on the railway, south of Glencoe. This last column destroyed railway and telegraphic communication between Glencoe and Ladysmith.

General Joubert's instructions were that General Erasmus should lure the whole British force on the northern road towards Hattingspruit. While the British were engaged in the apparently easy task of destroying General Erasmus' forces, Viljoen and Meyer would attack their flank and rear and annihilate them.

General Symonds foresaw what was intended, and took measures accordingly.

The plan of the Boers failed, however. They lost telegraphic touch between the three columns, which proceeded, regardless of time, with the result that Gen. Meyer precipitated the battle before the column from Hattingspruit was even in striking distance, while Commandant Viljoen was a long way south.

Thus, Meyer's 4000 men, with six guns, bore the chief brunt of the battle.

With the other Boer columns in view only half of General Symonds' 4,000 men attacked the hill, the remainder being in position behind the camp watching events.

After two and a half hours' fighting advanced detachments of the Hattingspruit column were seen lining the hill west of the camp. A battery behind the camp opened fire, and made good practice, scattering the Boers. Thus the Hattingspruit column really did not get into the action except as it was fired upon by the artillery, and later when it came in contact with the Hussars and mounted infantry, who were pursuing General Meyer's column as the Boers fled from the hill.

THE FIGHT

The first incident of the battle of Glencoe occurred at 4 a.m., when the pickets exchanged a few shots, two miles outside the camp, which all might have been on the qui vive. At 5:30 the Boers fired the opening shot from a battery on the hill. This shot fell in Dundee, but did no damage. Then all the Boer guns got to work. Shell after shell whizzed into the camp and town. The range at first was good, but none of the shells burst, and no one was injured. The British meanwhile stood to arms or lay prone on the ground. At 5:40 the British battery opened, and planted shell after shell among the Boers. Each exploded to perfection and wrought havoc. The Boers' range and aim steadily became worse.

The artillery fight was most unequal. The Thirteenth, Sixteenth, and Sixty-seventh Field Batteries have no superiors in the British army. The range at first was 5,000 yards (3 1/2 miles), yet scarcely a shot failed to reach the top of the hill. A majority burst right on the mark, and the

best declined troops in the world would have been tried to the utmost to withstand such a fire.

At 6:15 several of the Boer guns had been silenced or deserted. In another half hour all were silent. The Boers could be seen moving over the crest of the hill but a majority remained protecting the probable lines of assault.

Gen. Symonds now ordered the infantry to advance. Meanwhile there was a strange lull in the battle.

THE ASCENT

The British covered two miles of broken ground, and then rested for five minutes on a foot-hill. Then they started on the stiff ascent.

The Thirteenth and Sixty-Ninth batteries were moved to a new position, and again took up the fight. For a full hour there was a terrific sustained fire upon the hill, and the slope where the Boers were awaiting attack. It is wonderful how they withstood such an awful fire, but they brought their Maxim to bear, and kept up a steady rifle fire also.

The British, however, had splendid cover, of which they took the fullest advantage. They never halted again until they reached a big shoulder, a third of the way up. Here they rested under shelter until the final charge was ordered.

TO CUT OFF ESCAPE

Meanwhile the Hussars had left camp, worked round the hill, and taken up a position ready to fall on the Boers when they fled before the storming parties. Mounted infantry were also hidden in a plantation on the Boers' right, ready to fall on retreaters on that side.

THE CRITICAL MOMENT

Then came the critical moment on the hill. The artillery ceased, the charge sounded, and the infantry fired two volleys. Then, with wild battle cries, the intrepid Irishmen found vent for the pent-up emotion and energy in an irresistible rush and swinging charge, right into the enemy without check or halt. For fifteen minutes there was bloody work at short range, and then at close quarters.

There was gallant work on both sides. Scores of British fell within 200 yards of the enemy. Then the Boers broke and fled disorderly, closely pursued by the infantry. As they stampeded down the hill they found to their dismay that the Hussars had forestalled them. The Hussars captured many horses, and stamped the rest. They delivered a fusillade and the Boers swerved. Some surrendered there. Then others made for Hattingspruit and others for Landsman's Drift, as closely pursued by the cavalry and a field battery. The cavalry charged repeatedly with desperate ferocity. Many Boers finally flung away their arms, making no attempt to fight or escape. Many fled two on a horse. The artillery and cavalry returned after dark. The pursuit was conducted through a very heavy rain.

BOER LOSS OVER 1,000.

The Boer loss must have been over 1,000, but they were scattered over such a wide area that it is difficult to compute with accuracy.

BATTLE OF ELANDSLAAGTE

A CRUSHING DEFEAT FOR THE BOERS
London, Oct. 22.—The War Office this afternoon published the following despatch to the Secretary of State for War, the Marquis of Lansdowne, from the General Commanding in Natal, Sir George Stewart White, regarding the engagement yesterday at Eland's Laagte, between Glencoe and Ladysmith, when the British, under Local Lieut-General French, routed the transvaal forces under Jan H. M. Kock, second in command in the Transvaal army, who was himself wounded and captured, and has since died.—

"White, Commander in Natal, to the Secretary of State for War. Fyled Ladysmith, October 22 (10.30 a.m.)—In the action at Eland's Laagte yesterday the troops engaged were the following: Cavalry, 5th Lancers, A Squadron of the 5th Dragoon Guards, the Imperial Light Horse, and two squadrons of Natal carabineers, 21st Field Battery, 42nd Field Battery. Infantry, the Devonshire Regiment, Half a battalion of the Gordon Highlanders and the Manchester Regiment. The whole force was under General French, with Col. Hamilton commanding the infantry.

"I was present in person from 3.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m., but did not assume direct control of the fight, which was left in the hands of General French. Although desultory fighting took place early in the day, while reinforcements, sent out later on ascertaining the enemy's strength, were arriving from Ladysmith, the real action did not begin until 3.30 p.m. At that hour the Boers held a position of very exceptional strength, consisting of a rocky hill about a mile and half southeast of Eland's Laagte station.

"At 3.30 p.m. our guns took a position on a ridge 4,100 yards from the Boers, whose guns at once opened fire. This fire was generally well directed, but somewhat high. Contrary to previous experience, their shells burst well.

"The Imperial Light Horse moved towards the left of the enemy's position, and two squadrons of the 5th Lancers towards the right. During the artillery duel mounted Boers pushed out from their left and engaged the Imperial Light Horse. In a few minutes the enemy's guns ceased firing, and our artillery was turned on the mounted Boers, who had engaged the Imperial Light Horse, and who at once fell back. After the artillery preparations our infantry advanced to the attack, supported by our guns in the second position. The Devonshires held the enemy in front, while the Manchester regiment and Gordon Highlanders turned his left flank.

"The Boer guns although temporarily silenced, invariably opened fire again on the slightest opportunity, and were served with great courage.

"After severe fighting our infantry carried the position. This was accomplished at 7.30 p.m., the enemy standing his ground to the last with courage and tenacity. The 5th Lancers and A Squadron of the 5th Dragoon Guards charged

thrice through the retreating Boers in the dark, doing considerable execution.

"We captured the Boers' camp with tents, wagons, horses and also two guns. The Boer losses were very considerable, including a number of wounded and unaccounted prisoners. Among the former are Gen. Jan Kock and Piet Joubert, nephew of Commandant General Joubert. One goods train with supplies for the regiment was recovered. Our loss, I regret to say, was heavy. It is roughly comated at 150 killed and wounded.

"The collection of wounded over a large area in the dark, and the arrangements for sending them in, have thus far occupied our time and attention. A full list will go to you later.

"Our wounded and those of the enemy are now arriving in trains. Besides Boers we have many Hollanders, Germans and other prisoners of mixed nationalities.

"The behavior of our troops and of the colonial forces was admirable."

Transvaal and Orange Free State

The following facts concerning the two little republics that are about to be extinguished are taken from the Montreal Herald:—

The area of the Transvaal, including Swaziland, the latest Boer acquisition, is 119,200 square miles.

The population was given as 750,000 at the last census in 1896, but as 600,000 of these were Kafirs, too much reliance cannot be placed on the figures.

The white population of the Transvaal was given at the last census as 150,000, but it is now believed to be nearly 250,000, practically the whole of the additional 100,000 being Uitlanders, or "Outlanders"—i. e. persons with no political rights.

The actual Boer population of the Transvaal—men, women and children of Dutch descent—was 63,000 at the 1896 census, and making liberal allowance for natural increase, it cannot exceed 70,000 at the present time.

In 1896 the number of natives who paid hut tax in the Transvaal was 450,000.

The head of the state is President Kruger, who was first elected in 1883, and has since held power over uninterruptedly. He holds office for five years, and was last re-elected in February, 1898.

General Joubert, the commander-in-chief of the army, is vice-president.

The government of the Transvaal is vested in the Volksraad, of which there are two Houses, each consisting of 27 members.

Practically all power and authority is in the first Volksraad—abbreviated "Raad"—elected by the first-class burghers, who consist almost exclusively of persons residing in the republic prior to 1876 and their descendants.

The second Volksraad, which has no governing legislative power, is elected by second-class burghers, naturalized aliens and their children, enjoying very restricted privileges.

The total revenue of the Transvaal, accordingly to the largest published returns, is £4,480,218 sterling.

The Transvaal imports amount to £13,583,827 for the year. The gold output amounts to £11,653,727.

The area of the Orange Free State is 48,326 square miles.

The population is 207,503 of whom only 77,716 are white.

The Orange Free State is essentially a pastoral country.

The President is Judge Steyn, who was elected in February, 1896, for a period of five years.

Legislative power is vested in the Volksraad, which consists of 58 members.

The public revenue amounts to £402,230. There is no standing army in either republic but all burghers capable of bearing arms may be called out for service.

The process in which they are called is known as commanding, and the officers entrusted with this duty are called field cornets.

The field cornet is responsible for the organization and supplies required for the force.

When mobilized the burghers are formed into divisions, which are known as commandos, each commando being under the direction of a general officer.

Veldt is the broad steppes and bush on the mountain table lands on the Dracken, bung and Witwatersrand ranges.

Witwatersrand is the great gold-bearing mountain range which stretches east and west of Johannesburg.

The Rand is the popular abbreviation for Witwatersrand.

The Transvaal being situated south of the equator its seasons are the reverse of ours. The winter there is summer here and the spring there the autumn here.

It is now the middle of spring in the two republics, and heavy rains are soon expected.

There is an hour and three-quarters difference between the time in the Transvaal and London or Greenwich time, the Transvaal time being, of course, ahead of London.

Five o'clock in the afternoon in the Transvaal would be 3.15 in the afternoon in London and 10.15 in the forenoon in Montreal.

TO CURE A COLD IN ONE DAY

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. 25c. E. W. Grove's signature is on each box.

Spraying Will Save a Pickle Crop.

The proof seems complete that pickles can be grown at a profit upon Long Island if on good soil, properly cared for and thoroughly sprayed.

The New York state station recommends no particular cultural methods, leaving these to the judgment of the grower. It does say, though, with all emphasis, that thorough spraying, between July 15 and Aug. 1, as the season demands and continued at intervals of eight or ten days until frost kills the vines, will most effectually prevent mildew and allow the plants to mature the best crops the soil and surroundings will produce.

THE CANADIAN CONTINGENT

—of which we hope to see our gallant Colonel Hughes a conspicuous Staff Officer—will show to Britain that Canada is a living part of the Empire, that we are standing side by side with the Mother country and giving some of our sturdiest sons in the mother's defence. May the boys return to us covered with glory!

This seems a convenient opportunity to refer also to another pleasing fact, that—

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