

THE MAFEKING MAIL

SPECIAL SIEGE SLIP.

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No. 39

Wednesday, December 27th, 1899.

The Mafeking Mail.

WEDNESDAY, 27TH DECEMBER, 1899

Mafeking Garrison.

GENERAL ORDERS.

MAFEKING, 25TH DECEMBER, 1899.

Appointment.—With reference to General Orders of the 9th November and 6th December, 1899, Captain Goodyear's appointment to the command of the Colonial Corps is hereby antedated to the 4th October, 1899.

Passes to visit Women's Laager.—In future no one is authorized to sign passes to visit the Women's Laager except the Chief Staff Officer and Mr. Whiteley.

Court of Summary Jurisdiction.—The Court of Summary Jurisdiction will meet to-morrow, Tuesday, the 21st instant, at the Court House, at 10-15 a.m., for the examination of such prisoners as may be brought before it. President: H. H. Major Gould-Adams, C.B., C.M.O.; Member: Lieut.-Colonel C. O. Hore.

By order,

F. W. PANZERA, Major,
Acting C.S.O.

Operations against the Enemy's position at Game Tree.

Mafeking, Dec. 26th, 1899.

An attack was ordered on Game Tree this morning for the purpose of driving the enemy out of that position and thus breaking the cordon round Mafeking, with a view to ultimately re-opening communications northward; to extending our present grazing area; and to compelling the enemy to call more reinforcements to oppose any further attempts of a like nature.

Game Tree is 2,300 yards north of the Cemetery; reconnaissance had shown the work to be a fairly strong one, especially on its S. W. face, but accessible from the east side; the railway having been repaired by us up to a point abreast of it.

Two Squadrons Protectorate Regiment under Captains Vernon and FitzClarence respectively, had been detailed to carry out the attack from the east, covered by the armoured train, under Capt. Williams, B.S.A.P., with a 1-pounder Hotchkiss, a Maxim, and 20 men.

Our right flank being protected by 70 men of the "Bechuanaland Rifles," under Captain Cowan.

The whole of this right wing was under the command of Major Godley.

The left wing was composed of three 7-pounders, 1 Cavalry Maxim, and 1 Troop Protectorate Regiment, under Major Panzera; and two Troops in support: the whole being under Colonel Hore.

At daybreak the troops were all in their respective positions, but it was then found

that the railway had been again broken during the night, at a point short of Game Tree. The garrison there had been largely increased, and the works greatly strengthened—to such an extent, in fact, as to be almost impregnable.

The artillery commenced shelling the place from the south-west; their escort and Maxim also opened small-arm fire on it. This was taken up by the attacking Squadron who, advancing in skirmishing order, kept up successive volleys with perfect accuracy and order.

The advance was very well carried out, but, before the artillery fire had had time to have really telling effect on the enemy, Captain Vernon sent back to signal that "he was about to attack and the guns should cease fire." The attack was then delivered rapidly, and with admirable steadiness, and was gallantly pressed home up to the ditch of the work. It was stopped by the inaccessibility of the rampart with its ditch and wall (with double tier of musketry).

Our men fired in through the loopholes and endeavoured to scale the work, but were shot down in the attempt. Our losses were here very heavy; Captain Vernon, Captain Sandford, and Lieut. Paton and fifteen men being killed, while Captain FitzClarence, Sgt. Maj. Paget, and 23 men were wounded. Further assault was impossible and the attack fell back, the men moving slowly, and doggedly continuing to fire on the work from points near to it—until stretcher parties were sent out and the men ordered to withdraw.

The enemy's musketry fire was very hot, and his 94-pounder and 9 pounder Krupp kept up shell fire on our supports, though much effect.

The gallantry and steadiness displayed by all ranks was beyond any praise and could not be surpassed by the best regular troops. In the meantime our general situation is in no way affected. The enemy now know what kind of men they have to deal with here; that they cannot afford to detach from our front a single man to oppose the columns that are daily working nearer towards Mafeking; and they will be more than ever chary of undertaking any offensive steps against us in the open.

The following instances of gallant conduct, among many others, in the engagement this morning have been brought to the notice of the Colonial Commanding. Sgt. Moffatt of the Railway Division, went out from the Armoured Train and brought in Sgt. Martineau, of the Protectorate Regiment, who was wounded a distance of 400 yards under heavy fire.

Ln. Sgt. A. B. Hamilton, Protectorate Regiment, went out alone towards the Boer Fort at Game Tree, after the action to-day, with a red cross flag, while a heavy fire was going on. Had it not been for his pluck in advancing boldly, upright and alone, the flag would probably not have been respected until much later; and valuable lives might have been lost.

CHRISTMAS AND

HOW WE SPENT IT

As it was not considered safe to rely upon our friend the enemy leaving us free

to spend Christmas Day above ground, Sunday was declared by official notification to be the public holiday. This made it necessary to regard the 23rd as Christmas Eve, and, judging by the greetings one could hear being exchanged on all sides and the strains of music coming from various quarters, it was evident Mafekingers did not mean to let the Boer investment obtain much interest from them during the festive season.

Sunday was observed at the English Church, in the usual manner as the last Sunday in Advent, the Church being decorated late in the day and a choral service being held after evening service. At the Recreation Ground a most successful Gymkhana meeting was held with an attendance surprisingly large under the circumstances. The programme, which was printed in our issue of the 22nd, was faithfully adhered to with the exception of some details of minor importance, and brought out some good sport. The 100 yards was a first class race. The entries for the Lloyd Lindsay, V.C., and Thread and Needle were numerous, and the winning teams in the first named did good business, the time difference between them being less than a second. As time did not permit of sufficient dummies being provided for the V.C. race the committee decided to convert this event into a Cigarette and Flag race which resulted in a very successful competition, and the Bolster Fight on a Spar gave capital amusement. For a really artistic performance we should select the Officers' Tent-pegging, the pegs being sideways for the last run.

The following is a list of the winners:—

- 1.—100 Yards Handicap.
 - 1 Carr, C.P., £2.
 - 2 McLoughlin, Town Guard, 10s.
- 2.—Hop, Skip and Jump.
 - 1 Carr, C.P., 10s.
 - 2 Newton, B.S.A.P., 5s.
- 3.—Potato and Bucket Race.
 - 1 Low, P.R., 10s.
 - 2 Gash, C.P., 5s.
- 4.—Lloyd Lindsay.
 - 1 C.P. Team, £2.
Sergeant Matthews.
Coporal Gash.
Coporal Abrahams.
Private T. J. Webb.
 - 2 Protectorate, Corpl. Low's Team,
(names not received) £1.
- 5.—220 Yards Race.
 - 1 Carr, C.P. 10s.
 - 2 Leach, C.P., 5s.
- 6.—Throwing the Cricket Ball.
 - 1 Newton, B.S.A.P., 10s.
 - 2 Roland, B.R., 5s.
- 7.—Flag and Cigarette Race.

(In this the competitors rode 200 yards, lit a cigarette and rode back, a flag being carried the while).

 - 1 Hodgson, C.P.
 - 2 Bailie, P.R.
- 8.—Thread and Needle
Opl. Adams, C.P., and Miss Hammond
Sgt Baillie, P.R., „ Miss Ford
Pte. Carr, C.P., „ Miss Clark
Pte. Gash, C.P., „ Miss Campbell

10—Three Legged Race

1 Barry and Gibbs, F.R., 10s.

11—Tent Pegging

1 Captain Singleton.

12—Bolster Fight

1 Kennedy, 5s.

The Christmas celebrations by the various units of the garrison would make interesting reading if power and paper admitted of an account being printed but we can only give short references to them. To begin with the Protectorate Regiment the men of Squadron A, presided over by Captain Lord C. Cavendish-Bentinck, supported by Lieuts. Greenfield and Morson, and Regimental Sergt.-Major St. Clair Malley, numbering altogether over 100, sat down to sucking pig, roast beef, roast mutton, boiled hams, Christmas pudding and tarts, washed down by "the Beer that made Milwaukee famous," hock, whiskey or ginger beer. The usual toasts were well received but none so enthusiastically as "Sweethearts and Wives," while to Corporal Head was due the successful cookery.

(Subject continued in next Slip)

LATEST FROM
JOHANNESBURG.

An Interesting Letter.
From a Deserted City.

What Mafeking has done.

A well-known townsman has received an interesting letter from a friend in Johannesburg, dated the 19th of November, which he vouches for as genuine, and a portion of which we transcribe. After saying he has plenty of time on his hands, the writer continues: "I wish you could see this place as it is now and compare it with when you saw it last; what a change, there are scarcely 2,000 people all told. Robbery is the order of the day. You can see old Boers and their wives with gangs of Kafirs taking handsome suits of furniture, pier glasses, brass bedsteads, &c., away. It is a dastardly shame how barefaced robbery takes place in broad daylight with not the slightest effort made to stop it. The police say it is no good running them in, as the Landdrosts will not convict, saying the owners should be in town looking after their goods and chattels. In the stores the same feeling prevails; if you want anything they (the storekeepers) tell you to take it, as if you pay them the officials commandeer the money from them. One firm had £1,000 commandeered; it was no good kicking, as we should have been arrested on a charge of high treason. The Hospital, Exchange, and churches are full of wounded and dying men, as are also all the large Buildings in Pretoria. THERE IS NO DOUBT THE BRITISH ARE GIVING THEM "SOCKS." MAFEKING HAS TO ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT 800 MEN KILLED AND WOUNDED. There must be some brave men there and good luck to them. Burgers is the only official from the East Rand who is alive, all the rest have been killed. I never expected De Witt-Hamer would have behaved as he has done. I am sending this by X, who is leaving for Delagoa.

WITH REFERENCE TO
THAT SURRENDER.

the Rev. Mr. Matthews says: "After the stampede of the mules, the force remained without the support of the guns and got hard pressed by the enemy, but would have held out when some subordinate, without instructions, of his own accord, hoisted the flag of truce and obliged surrender.

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