

lame from the effects of a lately broken leg, General Woodgate, who had two sound legs, was better adapted for mountain climbing.

As no heliograph could, on account of the fire, be kept on the east side of Spion Kop, messages for Sir C. Warren were received by our signallers at Spearman and telegraphed to Sir C. Warren; thus I saw them before he did, as I was at the signal station. The telegram Sir C. Warren quotes did not give me confidence in its sender, and, at the moment, I could see that our men on the top had given way and that efforts were being made to rally them. I telegraphed to Sir C. Warren: "Unless you put some really good hard fighting man in command on the top you will lose the hill. I suggest Thorneycroft."

The statement that a staff officer reported direct to me during the day is a mistake. Colonel àCourt was sent down by General Woodgate almost as soon as he gained the summit.

I have not thought it necessary to order any investigation. If at sundown the defence of the summit had been taken regularly in hand, entrenchments laid out, gun emplacements prepared, the dead removed, the wounded collected, and, in fact the whole place brought under regular military command, and careful arrangements made for the supply of water and food to the scattered fighting line, the hills would have been held, I am sure.

But no arrangements were made. General Coke appears to have been ordered away just as he would have been useful, and no one succeeded him; those on the top were ignorant of the fact that guns were coming up, and generally there was a want of organization and system that acted most unfavourably on the defence.

It is admitted by all that Colonel Thorneycroft acted with the greatest gallantry throughout the day, and really saved the situation. Preparations for the second day's defence should have been organized during the day, and have been commenced at nightfall.

As this was not done, I think Colonel Thorneycroft exercised a wise discretion.

Our losses I regret to say were very heavy, but the enemy admitted to our doctors that theirs were equally severe, and though we were not successful in retaining the position, the losses inflicted on the enemy and the attack generally have had a marked effect upon them.

I cannot close these remarks without bearing testimony to the gallant and admirable behaviour of the troops, the endurance shown by the Lancashire Fusiliers, the Middlesex Regiment, and Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry was admirable, while the efforts of the 2nd Bn. Scottish Rifles and 3rd Bn. King's Royal Rifles were equally good, and the Royal Lancasters fought gallantly.

I am writing to catch the mail, and have not any particulars yet to enable me to report more fully on details.

I have, &c.,  
REDVERS BULLER.

Report by Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Warren, K.C.B., upon the Capture and subsequent Evacuation of Spion Kop.

CHIEF OF THE STAFF,

I MAKE the operations against Spion Kop in a separate report, because they did not enter into my original plans.

Under the original instructions of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, of 15th January, 1900, I was to act as circumstances required,

but according to instructions was generally to continue throughout refusing my right and throwing my left forward until I gained the open plain north of Spion Kop.

Upon the 19th of January, on arrival at Venter's Laager, I assembled all the General Officers, Officers Commanding Royal Artillery, and Royal Engineers of Divisions, and Staff Officers, together. I pointed out to them that, with the three and a-half (3½) days' provisions allowed, it was impossible to advance by the left road through Acton Homes. In this they unanimously concurred. I showed them that the only possible road was that going over Fair View through Rosalie, but I expressed my conviction that this could not be done unless we sent the whole of our transport back across the Tugela, and attempted to march through with our rations in our haversacks—without impedimenta.

The hills were cleared on the following day, and very strong entrenchments found behind them. The Commander-in-Chief was present on the 21st and 22nd January, and I pointed out the difficulties of marching along the road, accompanied by wagons, without first taking Spion Kop.

Accordingly, on the night of the 22nd, I ordered General Coke to occupy Spion Kop. He, however, desired that the occupation might be deferred for a day in order that he might make a reconnaissance with the Officers Commanding battalions to be sent there.

On 23rd January, the Commander-in-Chief came into camp, and told me that there were two courses open, (1) to attack, (2) to retire. I replied that I should prefer to attack Spion Kop to retiring, and showed the Commander-in-Chief my orders of the previous day.

The Commander-in-Chief then desired that I should put General Woodgate in command of the expedition, and detailed Lieut.-Colonel àCourt to accompany him as Staff Officer.

The same evening General Woodgate proceeded with the Lancashire Fusiliers, the Royal Lancaster Regiment, a portion of Thorneycroft's Horse, and half company Royal Engineers, supported by two companies of the Connaught Rangers and by the Imperial Light Infantry, the latter having just arrived by Trichardt's Drift.

The attack and capture of Spion Kop was entirely successful. General Woodgate, having secured the summit on the 24th, reported that he had entrenched a position and hoped he was secure, but that the fog was too thick to permit him to see. The position was rushed without casualties, other than three men wounded.

Lieut.-Colonel àCourt came down in the morning and stated that everything was satisfactory and secure, and telegraphed to the Commander-in-Chief to that effect. Scarcely had he started on his return to head-quarters when a heliogram arrived from Colonel Crofton (Royal Lancaster). The message was: "Reinforce at once or all lost. General dead."

He also sent a similar message to Head-quarters. I immediately ordered General Coke to proceed to his assistance, and to take command of the troops. He started at once and was accompanied by the Middlesex and Dorsetshire Regiments.

I replied to Colonel Crofton: "I am sending two battalions, and the Imperial Light Infantry are on their way up. You must hold on to the last. No surrender."

This occurred about 10 a.m.

Shortly afterwards, I received a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, ordering me to appoint