

not Major-General Smith-Dorrien, Commanding one of Hamilton's brigades (the 19th), been moved on the previous day to a position from which he was able to deliver at the right moment an unexpected attack upon the Boer flank.

9. On the 23rd May I marched past Roodeval Station to the Rhenoster River with the 7th and 11th Divisions, Colonel Henry with the two corps of Mounted Infantry being in advance on the east of the railway. No opposition was met with, although the hills north of the river furnished a strong defensive position and all preparations had been made by the enemy to give us a warm reception. It must be concluded that they felt their line of retreat was threatened from the east by General Hamilton's column at Heilbron and from the west by the Cavalry and Mounted Infantry under Generals French and Hutton, which had effected a crossing lower down the stream.

10. On the 24th May I marched with the 11th Division to Vredefort Road Station. The 7th Division bivouacked near Prospect on the west of the railway, four miles in rear, and the 3rd Cavalry Brigade four miles east of the station. The troops under Generals French and Hutton moved to the north-west, the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades crossing the Vaal at Parys and Versailles. General Ian Hamilton's column halted at Eerstegehik, seven miles north of Vredefort Road Station and to the east of the railway.

11. In view of the probability of opposition at the crossing of the Vaal River and of the advantages which a turning movement to the west appeared to afford, I directed Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton to move his column across the railway on the morning of the 25th May, and to march in the afternoon to Wonderheuval and thence to the Vaal at Wonderwater Drift. By this move the enemy were completely deceived. They had expected Hamilton's column to cross the Vaal at Engelbrecht's Drift, east of the railway, and collected there in some force to oppose him. My head-quarters with the 11th Division advanced this day to Grootvlei and the 7th Division to Wittlepoort. The 4th and 8th Corps of Mounted Infantry proceeded to Steepan on the railway, 10 miles north of Grootvlei, and 3rd Cavalry Brigade to Welterseden to guard our right flank. Generals French and Hutton moved up the Vaal to a drift near Lindaque.

12. On the 26th May I marched with the 7th and 11th Divisions to Taaibosch Spruit, while Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry reached the Vaal at Viljoen's Drift and, after occupying the coal mines and railway station on the south bank, crossed the river and held the drift and bridge, one span of the latter having been blown up by the Boers. The 3rd Cavalry Brigade continued to guard my right and General Ian Hamilton's Column my left at Wonderwater Drift, which was crossed this day by Brigadier-General Broadwood's Cavalry Brigade. Generals French and Hutton advanced across the Riet Spruit encountering but slight opposition and the Highland Brigade, with the head-quarters of the 5th Division, was ordered from Lindley to Heilbron.

13. On the 27th May I crossed the Vaal with the 7th and 11th Divisions and 3rd Cavalry Brigade and bivouacked at Vereeniging. Generals French and Hutton moved to Rietfontein and General Ian Hamilton to Riekuil.

14. On the 28th May my head-quarters, with the 11th Division, proceeded to Klip River Station; the 7th Division to Witkop, south of the station; the 3rd Cavalry Brigade to the east,

and Colonel Henry's Corps of Mounted Infantry to the north. The troops under Generals French and Hutton, strengthened by the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, advanced to the north-west of Johannesburg, and those under Ian Hamilton to Sypfontein 15 miles to the south-west of that town.

15. On the 29th May, I continued my march to Johannesburg, arriving opposite the Germiston Railway Junction at 3.30 P.M. The 11th Division, with the 7th Division on its left, moved along the railway and occupied Germiston after some slight resistance. Colonel Henry, whose Mounted Infantry preceded the main body, met with opposition at Natal Spruit Junction early in the day and later on at Boksburg. Forcing the enemy back, he moved round by his left to the north of Germiston, supported on the right by Gordon's Cavalry Brigade. General Ian Hamilton, who was advancing to a point about 12 miles west of Johannesburg, found his way blocked at 2 P.M. by a considerable force of the enemy at Doornkop. They had with them two heavy guns and several field guns and pompoms, and were holding a strong position on a long ridge running east and west. Hamilton decided to engage with the enemy at once. The right attack was led by the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders, who captured the eastern end of the ridge and, wheeling round, worked along it until after dark. The City Imperial Volunteers led on the left flank and behaved with great gallantry; but the chief share of the action and casualties fell to the Gordon Highlanders, who lost 1 Officer killed and had 9 Officers wounded. The enemy, who had fought obstinately, retired during the night. Our casualties in this engagement were 2 Officers and 24 men killed and 9 Officers and 106 men wounded. General French also was opposed throughout his march on the 28th and 29th May, but he had succeeded by dark on the latter day in working round the very extended right flank of the enemy, thereby facilitating the progress of Ian Hamilton's column. French's losses were slight, 2 Officers being wounded and 2 men killed and 17 wounded.

16. The next morning I halted to the south of Germiston, the force being distributed as follows:—

The 11th Division, with the heavy guns, near my head-quarters.

The 7th Division, 3rd Cavalry Brigade, and Colonel Henry's Mounted Infantry on the heights to the north of Johannesburg.

Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's Column at Florida, three miles west of the town.

The troops under Generals French and Hutton a few miles north-east of Florida.

On this day I had an interview with Dr. Krause who had been left in temporary charge of Johannesburg and who agreed to surrender the town to me the next morning. In the course of the day the Queensland Mounted Rifles captured a Creusot field gun, a gun wagon, 11 wagons loaded with military stores and ammunition and 23 prisoners.

17. Meanwhile, on the 29th May, I had received information that the Highland Brigade was being hard pressed by the enemy at Roodepoort, 18 miles south of Heilbron. The Irish Battalion of Imperial Yeomanry had been ordered to proceed from Ventersburg-road Station to join this brigade at Lindley. It had, however, failed to reach that place before the Highlanders left for Heilbron and Lieutenant-General Sir H. Colville, in command of the troops, had started without it. This was very unfortunate, as Colville was much in need of mounted troops.