

On this news reaching me, I directed Lord Methuen to despatch Douglas's Brigade from Kroonstad to Colville's assistance. This order had scarcely been issued when I heard from Lieutenant-General Rundle, at Senekal, that the Irish Yeomanry, which had arrived at Lindley only a few hours after the departure of the Highland Brigade, had found that place in the hands of the enemy. Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge, who commanded the Yeomanry, accordingly halted 3 miles west of the town, and sent messengers to Colville and Rundle apprising them of his dangerous position, which was aggravated by his having only one day's provisions in hand. Spragge was at first opposed by only a small force, but, on his defenceless position becoming known to the Boers, their numbers rapidly increased. General Rundle could not go to Spragge's relief, as he had been called upon to support Brigadier-General Brabant in the direction of Hammonia, nor could he leave Senekal until the arrival of Major-General Clements, who, with a portion of his brigade, was proceeding to that place from Winburg. Under the impression, however, that he might indirectly relieve the hostile pressure on Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge's detachment, General Rundle, with a force of six companies of Yeomanry, two Field Batteries, Major-General Campbell's Brigade, and the 2nd Battalion Royal West Kent Regiment, moved out four miles on the Bethlehem road and encountered the enemy, who were in considerable strength at Kuring Kraus. After an engagement, which had no decisive result, General Rundle fell back on Senekal, his casualties amounting to 30 killed and 150 wounded.

18. General Colville, with the head-quarters of the 9th Division and the Highland Brigade, reached Heilbron on the 29th May. During the latter part of the march the brigade was but slightly troubled by the enemy, the greater part of whom had turned their attention to the Imperial Yeomanry.

On this day Lord Methuen left Kroonstad in obedience to my instructions to assist the Highland Brigade. On the third march out he received a message from Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge, dated the 29th May, reporting that he was heavily pressed by the enemy and was short of food and ammunition, but hoped that he would be able to hold out until the 2nd June. This message Lord Methuen repeated to me by telegraph and I at once ordered him to push on to Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge's assistance, and on the 1st June, half an hour after the receipt of my reply, he started off with his mounted troops, Imperial Yeomanry, a Field battery, one section of pom-poms, and reached Lindley at 10 o'clock the following morning, having covered 44 miles in 25 hours. Unfortunately he was too late, as Lieutenant-Colonel Spragge had found it necessary to surrender two days before. Methuen, on nearing Lindley, attacked the Boer force, which had increased from 300 to 3,000 strong, and, after a running fight which lasted five hours, completely defeated them and occupied the town. I then directed him to leave one of his Infantry brigades (Paget's) and to march with the other (Douglas's) to Heilbron with supplies for Sir H. Colville's force.

19. To return to the operations at Johannesburg. I received the formal surrender of the town early on the 31st May and entered it at noon with the 7th and 11th Divisions, the Union Jack being hoisted with the usual salute in the main square. After the ceremony, I established my head-quarters at Orange Grove, three miles

north of Johannesburg on the Pretoria road, the 11th Division bivouacking four miles further north and the 14th Brigade of the 7th Division a short distance to the west. The 15th (Wavell's) Brigade was detailed to garrison the town and Lieutenant-Colonel C. J. Mackenzie, Seaforth Highlanders, was appointed Military Governor.

20. On the 1st and 2nd June my head-quarters remained at Orange Grove, while Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton's column moved from Florida to Bramfontein, four miles west of Orange Grove, and the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Cavalry Brigades, with Hutton's Mounted Infantry, were distributed ten miles to the north of the same place.

21. During these two days, disquieting news continued to reach me regarding the activity and numbers of the enemy who had opposed us in the Orange River Colony and who were now closing in behind us, threatening the single line of railway leading to Cape Colony, upon which I was dependent for provisioning the army. This information was the more disconcerting, as, owing to our rapid advance and the extensive damage done to the railway, we had practically been living from hand to mouth and, at times, had not even one day's rations to the good. It was, therefore, suggested to me that it might be prudent to halt at Johannesburg until the Orange River Colony should be thoroughly subdued and the railway from Natal opened. But, while fully recognizing the danger attending a further advance, I considered the advantages of following up without delay the successes we had achieved, and not giving the enemy time to recover from their several defeats, or to remove the British prisoners from Pretoria quite justified the risk being run. Accordingly I advanced on the 3rd June with Pole-Carew's division and the head-quarters and Maxwell's Brigade of the 7th Division to Leuwkop, a distance of 12 miles, Colonel Henry, with his corps of Mounted Infantry, moving to a point 4 miles to the north, Brigadier-General Gordon, with the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, 6 miles to the east, Lieutenant-General Ian Hamilton with his column to Diepsloot, 15 miles south of Pretoria, and the troops under Generals French and Hutton to Rooikrans, 13 miles south-west of Pretoria.

22. On the 4th June I marched with Henry's Mounted Infantry, four Companies Imperial Yeomanry, Pole-Carew's Division, Maxwell's Brigade and the naval and siege guns to Six Mile Spruit, both banks of which were occupied by the enemy. The Boers were quickly dislodged from the south bank by the Mounted Infantry and Imperial Yeomanry, and pursued for nearly a mile, when our troops came under artillery fire. The heavy guns were at once pushed to the front, supported by Stephenson's Brigade of the 11th Division, and the enemy's fire was soon silenced. They then moved to the south along a series of ridges parallel to our main line of advance with the object of turning our left flank, but in this they were checked by the Mounted Infantry and Imperial Yeomanry, supported by Maxwell's Brigade. As, however, the Boers continued to press on our left flank and thus threatened our rear, I ordered Ian Hamilton, who was moving three miles to our left, to incline to his right and close the gap between the two columns. As soon as Ian Hamilton's troops came up, and De Lisle's Mounted Infantry pushed well round the enemy's right flank, they fell back on Pretoria. It was now dusk, and the troops had to bivouac in the positions which they were occupying, the Guards Brigade near the most