

were found on the kopje, and their pompom was captured. The success of this attack was decisive. It was carried out in view of the main Boer position, and the effect of it was such that the enemy gave way at all points, flying in confusion to the north and east. Next morning Buller was able to occupy Machadodorp almost without opposition. On this day, the 28th, Dundonald's Cavalry pushed on to Helvetia, where they came into touch with the enemy's rearguard. French's Cavalry and the 11th Division moved due east to Elandsfontein, 8 miles west of Helvetia. On the 29th August, leaving garrisons at Dalmanutha and Machadodorp, Buller marched to Helvetia and occupied Waterval Boven with his advanced troops. Pole-Carew sent on three battalions to support French, remaining himself with the rest of the 11th Division near Helvetia. On the 30th, French, supported by the Guards Brigade, occupied Waterval Onder, while Buller reported from Weltevreden that Nooitgedacht had been vacated by the Boers, and that the British prisoners confined there were to be seen moving along the road to Waterval Onder. By nightfall the prisoners, numbering 1,800, and including seven Officers, reached our camp at Waterval Onder, and were subsequently sent by rail to Pretoria. The remainder of the officers had been removed to Barberton. The prisoners stated that President Kruger, ex-President Steyn, and Commandant-General Botha had left for Nelspruit on the 29th August. On the 31st August, Buller fell back to Helvetia, preparatory to marching on Lydenburg, Pole-Carew, with the 11th Division holding Waterval Onder, and Henry's corps of Mounted Infantry occupying Waterval Boven. French returned with the 1st and 4th Cavalry Brigades to Machadodorp, whence I directed him to move, v.a. Carolina, on Barberton, there being no practicable road to the latter place, from the railway east of Machadodorp.

In the meantime reinforcements had been moving up from the west. A brigade, under Smith-Dorrien,* had been railed to Belfast between the 26th and 29th August. Mahon† marched from Pretoria on the 30th August. He was followed the next day by Cunningham's Brigade.‡

34. On the 1st September, I issued a proclamation annexing the Transvaal under the orders of Her Majesty's Government. On this day Buller moved from Helvetia to Elandspruit on the Crocodile River. Next morning his advance was opposed by the enemy, who were holding a strong position at Badfontein, and had with them three 6-inch guns. Buller described the position as resembling Laing's Nek, and I agreed with him that it would be wiser to defer his attack until I could send him assistance. Accordingly, on the 3rd September, I despatched Ian Hamilton from Belfast§ to turn the right flank of Boer force in front of

Buller. Ian Hamilton reached Swartkopjes, on the Dullstroom road, meeting with but slight opposition. On the 4th, he entered Dullstroom—the enemy, with two guns, fighting a rearguard action, and disputing every yard of the way—and on the same day continued his march to Palmietfontein. During his march he was joined by Brocklehurst's Cavalry Brigade from Buller's column. On the same day, French occupied the bridge over the Komati River between Machadodorp and Carolina, while Mahon's mounted troops reached Wonderfontein, and Cunningham's Brigade reached Balmoral. At Wonderfontein, the 76th Battery Royal Field Artillery and the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment were placed under Mahon's orders, and he was directed to join French at Carolina on 6th September. On the 5th September, Ian Hamilton advanced about 12 miles to Wemershoek, whence, by a night march, he occupied Zwagershoek with the Royal Scots, thus securing the debouchment through the defile into the Lydenburg Valley, and threatening the right rear of the Boer position at Badfontein. The same day Buller demonstrated strongly against the enemy's left flank, the 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and the 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps dragging the guns of a Field battery up a steep hill, whence a heavy fire was brought to bear on the Boers.

35. On the 6th, owing to the right flank of their position having been turned, and to the pressure on their left flank, the Boers evacuated their stronghold at Badfontein, and fell back through Lydenburg, some going to Kruger's Post, but the majority with two 6-inch guns, taking up another formidable position at Paardeplaats on the mountains overlooking the town, and 7 miles to the east of it. On the same day, Dundonald's mounted brigade and the Cavalry attached to Ian Hamilton's force occupied Lydenburg, Buller's and Hamilton's Infantry halting 5 miles in rear. French reached Carolina on this date, and he was joined there by Mahon's column, and the 2nd Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry. Cunningham's Brigade arrived at Pan Station, and Hutton began to concentrate Alderson's Corps of Mounted Infantry from the line of communication preparatory to marching from Machadodorp along the heights south of the railway towards Tafelkop. On the 6th September, Buller attacked the enemy at Paardeplaats, whence, with their 6-inch guns, they were firing into the camp and town of Lydenburg. The Boers held a precipitous ridge, 1,800 feet above the valley, horse shoe in shape and only easily approachable by paths which were completely commanded from the crest. One great feature of the attack was the skill with which the guns were pushed forward from point to point until they reached positions from which they silenced the enemy's artillery, and greatly subdued the rifle fire. Another was the dash with which the Infantry pressed forward over rocks and across ravines, and other apparently impracticable ground until they carried the ridge. A third was the simultaneous arrival of the right, left, and centre of the attack, namely, the Royal Scots, the Royal Irish, and the 1st Battalion Devonshire Regiment in the enemy's position. The Boers lost considerably, but their retreat was concealed by heavy mist. Our casualties amounted to 13 killed and 25 wounded, three of the former and 16 of the latter belonging to the Volunteer Company of the Gordon Highlanders, which came under

* 20th Battery, Royal Field Artillery; Mounted Infantry of the City Imperial Volunteers; 2nd Bn. West Yorkshire Regiment, 1st Bn. Royal Scots, 1st Bn. Royal Irish Regiment, and 1st Bn. Gordon Highlanders.

† "M" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery; 3rd Corps of Mounted Infantry, Queensland Mounted Infantry, and New Zealand Mounted Rifles, 79th Company of Imperial Yeomanry, Imperial Light Horse, and Lumsden's Horse.

‡ "D" Field Battery, Canadian Artillery; Elswick Battery, 1st Bn. King's Own Scottish Borderers, 2nd Bn. Berkshire Regiment, 2nd Bn. Shropshire Light Infantry, and 1st Bn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

§ 10 Field guns, Royal Scots, Royal Irish, and Gordon Highlanders.