

belonging to burghers who had violated their oaths of neutrality, and he secured 50 prisoners. On arriving at Hoopstad on the 17th October, I instructed him to co-operate with Hunter by marching on Bothaville. Hunter, who was then near Kopje Alleen, about 14 miles north-west of Ventersburg Road Station, had received information that 1,600 Boers were moving from the south-east on Bothaville, and was following them up with half the 1st Bn. Sussex Regiment and half of the 1st Bn. Cameron Highlanders, of Bruce Hamilton's Brigade, Rimington's and Le Gallais' mounted troops, and the 3rd Cavalry Brigade (Porter's). Hunter reached Bothaville on the 20th October, and sent the 3rd Cavalry Brigade to Commando Drift to reconnoitre that crossing of the Vaal and to communicate with Settle.

10. Meanwhile Settle was attacked on the night of the 19th October at Elizabeth's Rust. After a sharp little engagement, lasting 45 minutes, the Boers retreated to the north bank of the Vaal. Our casualties were one Officer and 15 men wounded. On the 21st October, the 3rd Cavalry Brigade met Settle's advanced troops under Colonel Sir Charles Parsons, as neither force had seen anything of the Boers, Settle retraced his steps on the 22nd to Hoopstad, and Hunter reached Kroonstad on the 26th October. On the 23rd October, whilst on his way to Hoopstad, Settle was closely engaged by a Boer force, numbering about 650 men from the commandos under Potgeiters, De Villiers, and Wolmaranstad, which had probably crossed the Vaal from the north. The Cape Police and Cape Mounted Rifles bore the brunt of the fighting, covering the baggage of the column (78 wagons), and were heavily engaged for two hours before the Boers were driven off. The Cape Police were forced to abandon their two Maxims (having first rendered them useless), owing to the horses being shot and darkness setting in. Our casualties were seven men killed, 12 men wounded, and 17 missing. Settle arrived at Boshof on the 30th October, and from there made arrangements to send Sir Charles Parsons to Honeynest Kloof to relieve Koffyfontein, he himself following in support.

11. On the 26th October, Hunter reached Kroonstad and reported that the Boers, with some guns, were in position to the east of the railway between Ventersburg town and the railway station. As it was necessary that this gathering should be dispersed and the whole of that neighbourhood cleared of the enemy to prevent further attack on the railway in that vicinity, I ordered Hunter to sweep the district, using for that purpose Bruce Hamilton's troops and the 3rd Cavalry Brigade.*

In pursuance of these instructions, Hunter, after some opposition, occupied Ventersburg before daylight on the morning of the 30th October. The 3rd Bn. of The Buffs was hotly engaged and behaved with conspicuous steadiness. The enemy retired north, leaving three of their dead on the field. In this engagement, I regret to say, Major Hanwell, Commanding 39th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, was mortally, and 10 men severely wounded.

Having completed the work in this neighbourhood, Hunter proceeded to Bloemfontein and took over Kelly-Kenny's command, and Bruce Hamilton moved with a convoy to Lindley and Frankfort.

* Half Cameron Highlanders, half Sussex Regiment, three 15-pr. guns, Royal Field Artillery; Rimington's Scouts, 120; Imperial Yeomanry, 70; Mounted Infantry, 40. Additional sent by Gen. Knox—3rd Bn. The Buffs, 300; one 5-inch gun.

12. Meanwhile, De Lisle's Mounted Infantry, with the remnant of the Colonial Division, had been watching De Wet in the neighbourhood of Reitzburg, and after three days' fighting had driven him north of the Vaal near Venterskroon, but De Lisle's little column was not strong enough to follow him up, and as it seemed likely that he would make an attempt again to damage the Krugersdorp-Potchefstroom railway, I directed Barton to proceed on the 9th October to the pass over the Gatsrand at Buffelsdoorns (578). Barton reached Banks Station on the 11th, and Wolverdriend on the 13th October, and on the 15th he came in contact with De Wet's force, said to consist of four guns and 1,800 men, all well mounted, every man having two, and some three, horses. A fight took place at Buffelsdoorns, where the Scottish Yeomanry, under Sir James Miller, and the 1st Bn. Royal Welsh Fusiliers, behaved with great gallantry. Six dead Boers were left on the ground, and a large quantity of small-arm ammunition was captured. On the 18th October, Lieut.-Colonel Wools Sampson, with the Imperial Light Horse, joined Barton at Frederikstad, and on the 20th the camp was attacked and an engagement ensued. The 2nd Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers had one Officer and one man killed, and the Imperial Light Horse 12 men wounded.

On the 22nd October, I ordered the 1st Bn. Essex Regiment and some 550 mounted men to join Barton, and the same day instructed Charles Knox, then at Heilbron, to take command of a column consisting of the Colonial Division and De Lisle's and Le Gallais' forces, and to move across the Vaal against the Boers opposed to Barton, who was more or less invested at Frederikstad until the 25th October, when he attacked the enemy with half the 1st Bn. Royal Welsh Fusiliers and three companies of the 2nd Bn. Royal Scots Fusiliers, supported by his guns and mounted troops, and scattered them in all directions. The Boers suffered heavily, leaving 24 dead and 19 wounded on the ground, while 26 were taken prisoners. Our own casualties were severe, one Officer and 12 men killed, and 25 men wounded. On the 28th October, Barton moved to Potchefstroom and established a permanent garrison there with three months' supplies.

13. De Wet, notwithstanding the severe treatment met with on the 25th October, endeavoured to recross the Vaal, but finding the drifts blocked, he moved along the north bank of the river in the direction of Lindeque, Charles Knox pushing on rapidly from Potchefstroom, caught him at Rensburg Drift halfway between Venterskroon and Parys. The Boers tried to escape south-east, but being headed by Le Gallais' mounted troops, which Knox had sent from Venterskroon towards Vredefort, they made for Parys. They lost considerably in this engagement leaving behind seven killed, while nine prisoners, two guns, and three wagons were captured, and an ammunition wagon was blown up by a shot from "U" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery. Darkness and a heavy storm stopped pursuit. Our only casualties were two men wounded. De Lisle handled his troops with great skill over very difficult country, and Le Gallais' ready co-operation merits much praise.

14. On the 3rd November Le Gallais was again in touch with De Wet's scouts east of Bothaville, and on the night of the 5th surprised the Boer force three miles south of that place, and was heavily engaged for five hours when he was reinforced by Charles Knox with De Lisle's Mounted Infantry. The enemy was completely defeated. This was a most successful engagement, reflecting great credit on Major-General