

lery to the enemy, cut off from communication with Cape Colony, and with the hope of relief repeatedly deferred until the supplies of food were nearly exhausted.

3. Inspired by their Commander's example, the defenders of Mafeking maintained a never-failing confidence and cheerfulness, which conduced most materially to the successful issue; they made light of the hardships to which they were exposed, and they withstood the enemy's attacks with an audacity which so disheartened their opponents that, except on one occasion, namely, on 12th May, no serious attempt was made to capture the place by assault. This attempt was repulsed in a manner which showed that the determination and fighting qualities of the garrison remained unimpaired to the last.

4. In recording my high appreciation of the conduct of all ranks during this memorable siege, I desire cordially to support Major-General Baden-Powell's recommendations on behalf of those serving under his orders, and the civilians and others who co-operated with him in the maintenance of order, and in the care of the sick and wounded.

I have, &c.,
ROBERTS, Field-Marshal,
Commanding-in-Chief,
South Africa.

From Major-General Baden-Powell, Commanding at Mafeking, to the Chief Staff Officer to Lord Roberts.

MY LORD,
Mafeking,
18th May, 1900.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith my report on the siege of Mafeking by the Boers, from 13th October, 1899, to 17th May, 1900, for the information of his Excellency the Field-Marshal Commanding in South Africa.

I have, &c.
R. S. S. BADEN-POWELL,
Major-General.

Table of Contents.

- Part I.—Narrative of the siege.
Part II.—Minor points connected with the siege.
Part III.—Engagements with enemy
Part IV.—Recommendation of Officers and others.
I.—Résumé of Report on the Siege of Mafeking.

I arrived in the beginning of August in Rhodesia, with orders—

1. To raise two regiments of Mounted Infantry.
2. In the event of war, to organize the defence of the Rhodesia and Bechuanaland frontiers.
3. As far as possible, to keep forces of the enemy occupied in this direction away from their own main forces.

I had the two regiments raised, equipped, supplied, and ready for service by the end of September.

As war became imminent, I saw that my force would be too weak to effect much if scattered along the whole border (500 miles), unless it were reinforced with some men and good guns. I reported this, but as none were available I decided to concentrate my two columns at Tuli and Mafeking respectively, as being the desirable points to hold.

Of the two, Mafeking seemed the more important for many reasons, strategical and political—

1. Because it is the outpost for Kimberley and Cape Colony.

2. Also, equally, for the Protectorate and Rhodesia.

3. It threatens the weak flank of the Transvaal.

4. It is the head-centre of the large native districts of the north-west, with their 200,000 inhabitants.

5. It contains important railway stocks and shops.

6. Also large food and forage supplies.

Therefore I left the northern column in charge of Colonel Plumer, and went myself to Mafeking, and organized its defence.

Mafeking.

Mafeking is an open town, 1,000 yards square, in open undulating country, on the north bank of the Molopo stream. Eight miles from the Transvaal border. White population about 1,000.

The native Stadt lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south-west, and contains 6,000 inhabitants.

Defence Force.

700 whites, of whom 20 were Imperial Army, remainder Protectorate Regiment, British South Africa Police, Cape Police, and Bechuanaland Rifles (Volunteers). These were used to man the forts and outworks.

300 able-bodied townsmen enrolled as town guard. Employed to garrison the town itself.

300 natives enrolled as cattle guards, watchmen, police, &c.

Half the defenders were armed with L.M., half with M.H. rifles, with 600 rounds per rifle.

Total Numbers.

White men, 1,074; white women, 229; white children, 405; natives, 7,500.

Our armament consisted of—

Four 7-pounder M.L. guns, one 1-pounder Hotchkiss, one 2-inch Nordenfält—all old. Seven .303 Maxims.

To this armament we afterwards added—

One 6-pounder M.L. old ship's gun, one 16-pounder M.L. howitzer (made in our own shops).

I had two armoured engines promised from Kimberley. I had armoured trucks made at Bulawayo and Mafeking. One engine arrived, the other was cut off en route by the enemy and captured at Kraaipan.

The Siege.

On the 13th October the siege began.

General Cronje with an army of 8,000 Boers and 10 guns, most of them of modern pattern and power, surrounded the place.

On the approach of the enemy we sallied out and, in a sharp little engagement, dealt them a severe blow, by which they lost 53 killed and many more wounded, and which had a lasting moral effect.

During the first phase of the siege, October and November, General Cronje made various attempts to take the place. These attacks we beat off without difficulty in every case, and responded by sorties, varying their nature every time as far as possible, and making them so sudden and so quickly withdrawn as not to give the enemy's supports time to come up and overpower us. Of these "kicks" we delivered half-a-dozen, on 14th, 17th, 20th, 25th, 27th, 31st October, and 7th November (the Boers quote 14, but they include demonstrations and shelling of dummy forts, guns, and armoured trucks, &c., which we put up to draw their fire).

The enemy's losses in this period were very heavy as compared with ours—