

Nek between Wagon Hill and Middle Hill, and with the remainder of his force passed round the southern end of End Hill (where he left a squadron of the 5th Lancers to hold a ridge, dismounted), and gaining the plateau pushed on about 3,000 yards and opened an effective fire on the Boer camp. The enemy evacuated their camp and took up a position on a ridge to which they brought up field guns. Major-General French, having fulfilled his mission, withdrew his force, reaching camp by 10 a.m. Our casualties were one man wounded.

As he returned to Ladysmith a telegram was received from General Sir Redvers Buller, desiring that Major-General French and his staff might be sent to the Cape. Communication by wire and rail were still open, and although trains were constantly fired upon, advantage had been taken of the fact to send southward as many of the civil population of Ladysmith as were willing to depart. Major-General French and his staff left by train about noon on 2nd November, and a telegraphic report was received here that, although the train had been heavily fired on near Pieters Station, it had reached Colenso in safety. Immediately afterwards the wires were cut by the enemy, and railway communication was interrupted. Ladysmith was thus isolated from the world outside it, and from this date the siege may be held to have commenced.

5. On 3rd November, four squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, under Major Karri Davis who were reconnoitring to the south, found a body of the enemy, with one gun, on Lancer's Hill, and asked for reinforcements to drive them off. The 5th Dragoon Guards, 18th Hussars, 19th Hussars, and 21st Battery, Royal Field Artillery (the whole under Brigadier General J. F. Brocklehurst, M.V.O.), were accordingly sent down the Long Valley to their assistance. The 19th Hussars seized Rifleman's Ridge and endeavoured to turn the enemy's left, while the 18th Hussars covered the right rear; two companies of Infantry, detached from Cæsar's Camp, occupied Wagon Hill, and a Mounted Infantry company seized Mounted Infantry Hill to protect the left rear; while the 5th Dragoon Guards and 21st Field Battery were moved straight down the Long Valley. Meantime two squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, were holding Middle Hill, while the remaining two squadrons were facing the enemy on Lancer's Hill. The squadrons on Middle Hill were opposed to a considerable body of the enemy, who were moving up from the east. The 21st Field Battery opened fire on Lancer's Hill and quickly silenced the enemy's gun. Believing that the enemy were evacuating the hill the two squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, made a gallant but somewhat ill-advised attempt to occupy it, but though they seized and held a portion of the hill the enemy was in too great strength for further progress. In the meanwhile I had sent out the Natal Mounted Volunteers and the 42nd and 53rd Field Batteries to join Brigadier-General Brocklehurst, and to cover his retirement, if necessary. General Brocklehurst sent the Natal Mounted Volunteers to reinforce the Imperial Light Horse squadrons on Middle Hill, and brought both batteries into action in the Long Valley. Finding, however, that the numbers of the enemy in his front and on both flanks were continually increasing, and that he could not hope to press his reconnaissance further without serious loss, he determined to withdraw. With the assistance of a dismounted squadron,

5th Dragoon Guards, under Major Gore, the squadrons, Imperial Light Horse, on Lancer's Hill were retired under cover of Artillery fire till they reached the main body, when the whole force engaged was gradually withdrawn to camp. Our loss was two Officers and two non-commissioned officers and men killed. Three Officers and 23 non-commissioned officers and men wounded, and one man missing. The enemy's loss is reported to have been considerable, chiefly from our Artillery fire.

In the afternoon the enemy made demonstrations of an attack in force on Devonshire Post, which was reinforced as a measure of precaution, but the attack was not seriously pressed, and was repulsed with ease. The bombardment this day was very heavy, a large number of shells falling into the town, and specially in and around the hospitals, which were in various churches and public buildings near the centre of the town. In the evening a deputation of civilian residents of Ladysmith waited on me with the request that permission might be obtained for them to pass through the enemy's lines and proceed to the south. The Principal Medical Officer of the Force also represented that the effect of the bombardment on the large number of wounded in his hospitals was very bad, and asked that, if possible, an agreement might be arrived at for the hospitals to be placed outside the town. Next morning I sent Major Bateson, R.A.M.C., under flag of truce, with a letter to General Joubert, asking that these requests might be agreed to on grounds of humanity to sick, wounded, and non-combatants. In reply, General Joubert agreed to my hospitals being moved out of Ladysmith to a point on the flats, 4 miles down the railway and close to the Intombi Spruit. He refused to allow the civil inhabitants to go south, but permitted them to accompany the sick and wounded to the Intombi Camp. Food and all other requisites for this camp were to be supplied from Ladysmith, and, for this purpose, one train was to be allowed to run each way daily, and by daylight only, under flag of truce. On this same day General Joubert sent into Ladysmith six Officers of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 10 Assistant Surgeons, and 98 of our wounded from Dundee; together with a number of Indian hospital attendants. There was a threatening of attack on Cæsar's Camp on this night, 4th November, but it was not pressed. Our first communications by pigeon post to Durban were sent off on this date.

6. 5th November was Sunday. Throughout the siege Sundays have generally been observed by both sides, as far as possible, as days of rest from fighting. There has been no special arrangement on the subject, but a kind of tacit understanding came into existence that neither side would fire unless specially provoked to do so by the construction of fortifications or other signs of movement on the opposite side. 5th November was no exception to this rule, and advantage was taken of the day to send our sick and wounded and all such civilians, men, women, and children, as elected to go, to the Intombi Camp.

7. The defences of Ladysmith were, for the purposes of command, divided into four sections, "A," "B," "C," and "D." "A" section, under Colonel W. G. Knox, C.B., commenced at Devonshire Post and extended to the point where the Newcastle Road passes between Junction Hill and Gordon Hill. "B" section included all the defences from Gordon Hill round to Flag-