

The advance of the 2nd and 11th Brigades was extremely rapid, the men ascending the very steep slopes with great resolution and rapidity. The 3rd Mounted Brigade joined in the assault, and scrambled up on the right of the 2nd Brigade.

By 3 p.m. our troops were in possession of the whole crest line of the Drakensberg, from Inkweloane to Botha's Pass. Very little opposition had, so far, been encountered, which was probably due to the enemy not being prepared to face our Artillery fire on the exposed crest of the mountain range.

After crossing the crest, the troops of the 2nd and 11th Brigades met with a considerable amount of rifle, shell, and pompom fire but this fire was inaccurate and evidently hurried. The 2nd Brigade found themselves in face of the enemy's entrenchments, south-west of Inkweloane. The action of the advanced company of the 11th Brigade, on the left of these entrenchments, cleared the enemy out of them, but under cover of a grass fire, which drove our men back, they reoccupied the trenches, to some extent, to cover the withdrawal of their guns and wagons. The 3rd Mounted Brigade had by this time got up its Colt guns and two guns Royal Horse Artillery, and one pompom of the 2nd Brigade having also been got up the steep slope into action, the enemy were soon driven out.

The 11th Brigade had meanwhile advanced to a low grassy ridge about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the crest, driving the enemy before them, but the grass fires which they lighted as they retreated stopped our further action.

The moment that the head of Botha's Pass was seized by the 11th Brigade, the 2nd Cavalry Brigade and Artillery were brought up it, but the last mile of the road is desperately steep and very stony, and by the time the horsemen and guns had got to the top, the grass fires lighted by the enemy were causing so much smoke that they were unable to get on terms with them. They did, however, pursue about 4 miles, and fired a few shots at long range.

The enemy pursued their usual tactics, and the moment there appeared a chance of our attacking, had sent their wagons back in advance.

The South African Light Horse got up the berg to the left of Botha's Pass, and pursued for some miles, though they were not able to come up with a party of the enemy who had retired to the westward.

It was now night, and the Infantry bivouacked on the position they had gained, the mounted troops returning to the valley to be near water.

The baggage was ordered up at once, but the road was so steep, and the Pass so difficult, that few of the troops got either their blankets or coats. The night was bitterly cold and misty, so the Infantry, especially the 2nd Brigade, suffered very considerable discomfort, but showed the same spirit of readiness to undergo hardship that they have always evinced.

The casualties during the day had amounted to two men killed, one Officer and 12 men wounded.

The position was a very strong one, nearly 2 miles of 4-ft. 6-in. trenches and several gun positions having been prepared. But it was visible from the top of Inkwelo, and General Hildyard had so directed his attack that the centre of the attack exactly came on the flank of the position, which was thus rendered practically untenable from the first.

The Naval guns and the 10th Brigade were brought down from Van Wyk during the night. I may here remark that hard and well as Cap-

tain Jones and the men of the Naval Brigade have worked during this war, I do not believe they ever had harder work to do or did it more willingly than in getting their guns up and down Van Wyk. They had to work continuously for 36 hours.

On the 9th the force halted, as it took the whole day to get our wagons up the berg, but during the afternoon the 11th Brigade moved some 5 miles along the road towards Gans Vlei. Nothing was seen of the enemy.

On the 10th the whole force moved on the junction of Gans Vlei with the Klip River. Nothing was seen of the enemy until the advance guard of the force reached Uys Farm, about 2 miles south of Gans Vlei, where a high mountain on the right bank opposite the farm was found to be held by the enemy. The heavy guns had been assigned a forward position in the column and came rapidly into action, and under cover of their fire, the South African Light Horse cleared the enemy off the mountain without difficulty.

The 9th having been a hard day for the oxen, the force was directed to bivouac at Gans Vlei Spruit. While bivouacs were being taken up, the South African Light Horse reported a strong movement of Boers across our front from east to north. In order to check this movement the 11th Brigade and the Artillery were at once ordered forward. The post on the mountain on the right of the bivouac was reinforced, the 2nd Cavalry Brigade were moved to the left front, and the South African Light Horse pushed forward about 2 miles to some kopjes to the north of our position. The fire of our Artillery checked the movement of the enemy, who returned to the hills on the east, but three squadrons of the South African Light Horse were closely engaged with a party of them until dusk. Our casualties during the day were six killed and seven wounded, all of the South African Light Horse. Ten of the enemy were buried on the ground, and 12 more on the following day.

The force had now reached the extreme northern point of its turning movement, being on the northern spurs of the Iketini or Long Krantz Mountain, and the route to be followed turned to the east, and after passing about 6 miles of rolling ground crossed Allemann's Nek beyond which 3 more miles would bring it into the Volksrust Plain.

On the 11th the 11th Brigade first occupied the low hills on the left and front of our bivouac, thus covering the right wheel which the force had to make; the 2nd Cavalry Brigade covering the extreme left flank.

The baggage was moved forward and parked under cover of the 11th Brigade. At 11 a.m. the heavy guns moved forward to the Artillery position in front of Allemann's Nek, the 2nd and 10th Brigades on the left and right, respectively, moving with them. While this movement was in progress, the 3rd Mounted Brigade, which was covering the right of the advance, became engaged with the enemy on the hills south of the Nek, and the 2nd Cavalry Brigade, which was operating on the extreme left, were also engaged with the enemy.

We were thus engaged on both flanks at a distance of about 7 miles apart.

At 1.30 p.m. as we were taking up a position with the main force in front of Allemann's Nek, the enemy opened fire with a high-velocity gun, but it was soon silenced by our heavy guns.

At 2.30 p.m. our Infantry advanced to the attack, covered by the fire of our heavy and