

soon in possession of the high ground on our front and the Undabakaombie Kraal. The object of Lieutenant-Colonel Buller's reconnaissance was to advance towards Ulundi, and report on the road and whether there was a good position where our force could make its stand if attacked.

I was also anxious, if possible, to cause the enemy to show his force, its points of gathering, and plan of attack.

Lieutenant-Colonel Buller completely succeeded in the duty entrusted him. Having collected his mounted men near Undabakaombie from the thorny country near the river, he advanced rapidly towards Ulundi, passing Nondwengo on his right. He had reached the vicinity of the stream Untukuwini, about three-quarters of a mile from Ulundi, when he was met by a heavy fire from a considerable body of the enemy lying concealed in the long grass around the stream. Wheeling about, he retired to the high ground near Nondwengo, where he commenced to retire by alternate portions of his force in a deliberate manner. The Zulus were checked; but in the meantime large bodies of the enemy were to be seen advancing from every direction; and I was enabled with my own eyes to gain the information I wished for as to the manner of advance and points from which it would be made in the event of our force advancing to Ulundi. Though the Zulus advanced rapidly, and endeavoured to get round his flank, Lieutenant-Colonel Buller was able to retire his force across the river with but a few casualties. He informed me of a position which, on the following day, my force occupied, and which subsequent events showed was admirably adapted for the purpose I had in view.

I consider that this officer deserves very great credit for the manner in which he conducted this duty.

That night the Zulus were moving about in large bodies, as testified by the sound of their war songs, but they in no manner interfered with us.

At 4 A.M., the 4th July, the troops were silently roused, the bugles, however, sounding the reveillé at the usual hour—5.15 A.M.

I left the camp, with all the wagons, oxen, &c., garrisoned by the 1st Battalion 24th Regiment and casualties. Colonel Bellairs, C.B., D.A.G., at my special request, remained in command of them. (Vide Enclosure G).

At 6.45 A.M., the force, as per return enclosed (marked B), crossed the river. Lieutenant-Colonel Buller's mounted men, going by the lower ford, seized the high ground on our front without opposition.

Passing over a mile of very bushy ground, the force marching in a hollow square, ammunition and entrenching tool carts, &c., in the centre, the guns moving also in the square in such positions as to enable them to come into action on each face with delay, reached the high ground between the kraals Undabakaombie and Nondwengo at 7.30 A.M. The mounted men were now out, covering our front and flanks, while the 17th Lancers covered the rear.

By this time our advance from camp was evidently observed, and dark clusters of men could be seen in the morning light on the hill tops on our left and left front. To our right, where the largest number of the enemy were believed to be, we could see but little, as the mist from the river and the smoke of their camp fires, hung heavily over the bush below.

Leaving Undabakaombie to our left (this kraal was burnt by our rear guard), I advanced to the position referred to by Lieutenant-Colonel Buller;

this was about 700 yards beyond Nondwengo, and about the same distance from the stream that crossed the road half way to Ulundi; this was high ground uncommanded from any point and with but little cover, beyond long grass, near it.

At this point I wheeled the square half right, so as to occupy the most favourable part of the ground.

The portions of the Zulu army on our left and left front were now formed in good order and steadily advancing to the attack; masses also appeared from the Thorn country on our right and passed round to Nondwengo and to our rear, thus completing the circle round us.

The battle commenced about 8.45 A.M. by our mounted men on the right and left becoming engaged. Slowly retiring until the enemy came within our range, they passed into our square, which now opened fire with artillery and rifles.

Shortly before 9 A.M. the Zulu army attacked us on every side.

The square was formed as shown in enclosure C.

The Nondwengo kraal, a vast assemblage of huts, probably numbering 400 in number, afforded good cover for concealing the movements of a force, which appears to have been the Ulundi, Ngobamakosi, Uve, and Umbakauli Regiments. No order was to be seen in their movements, which was caused (so state prisoners) by these regiments having been taken by surprise by an early and silent advance. Hurrying up from their bivouacs they had no time to form up separately, but, in a cloud advanced to the attack beyond the cover of the kraal; the fire by which they were met however from our right face proved too heavy, and the bulk of these regiments, failing to advance, rapidly passed to their left and joined the Umcityu Regiment, which was pressing up to the attack in a determined manner. As the ground here fell suddenly, and cover was afforded them in this advance, men were killed within 30 yards of the companies of the 21st Regiment forming the rear face at this point.

The fire of the enemy from a few minutes to nine to 9.20 was very heavy, and many casualties, I regret to say, occurred, but when it is remembered that within our comparatively small square, all the cavalry, mounted men, natives, hospital attendants, &c., were packed, it is a matter of congratulation that they were not heavier.

The fire from the artillery and infantry was so effective that, within half an hour, signs of hesitation were perceivable in the movements of the enemy. I then directed Colonel Drury-Lowe to take out the 17th Lancers. Passing out by the rear face, he led his regiment towards the Nondwengo kraal, dispersing and killing those who had not time to reach the shelter of the kraal or the bush below, then wheeling to the right charged through the Zulus who, in full flight, were endeavouring to reach the lower slopes of the mountains beyond.

Numbers of the enemy in this direction, who had not taken part in the actual attack, were now firing, and, momentarily strengthened by those flying, were enabled to pour in a considerable fire on the advancing Lancers below them. Our cavalry did not halt, however, until the whole of the lower ground was swept, and some 150 of the enemy killed. Many of those they had passed in their speed had collected in a ravine to their rear, these were attacked and destroyed by our mounted natives.

The flight of the Zulu army was now general—the slopes of the hills were, however, beyond the reach of our already fatigued cavalry, and, having no fresh troops to support him, Colonel Drury-