



SUPPLEMENT

TO

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War Office, January 15, 1880

DESPATCHES, of which the following are copies, have been received by the Secretary of State for War from General Sir Garnet Wolseley, commanding the troops in South Africa :—

*Army Head Quarters, Camp,
Sekukuni's Town, Transvaal,
South Africa, December 1, 1879.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward for your information the enclosed report from Lieutenant-Colonel Baker Russell, C.B., 13th Hussars, commanding the Transvaal Field Force, of the action fought here on the 28th ultimo, the successful result of which I communicated to you by telegram on that same evening.

The conduct of the troops, both regulars and volunteers, was everything that could be desired. The steadiness of Her Majesty's young soldiers in action, their fire, discipline, and the dashing manner in which they assaulted the "Fighting Koppie" showed they were as well capable of sustaining the military reputation of the British army as any men who have ever served in it.

The skill and gallantry with which the Volunteer Corps worked over those scarped and difficult mountains was most conspicuous, and I have great pleasure in bringing especially to your notice the invaluable services performed by Commandant Ferreira, of Ferreira's Horse.

The action began at 4.30 A.M. and lasted until 10 A.M., when the "Fighting Koppie" was stormed by a general charge of all the corps engaged, the assault being led by Colonel Russell in person.

Of Colonel Russell, who had his horse shot under him, I cannot speak too highly; the force under his command, which may be roughly estimated as consisting of about 2,200 British and about 10,000 Natives, was hastily collected from all sides, and where native levies are concerned, it is no easy matter to plan and carry out an extensive operation extending over some miles of a very difficult mountain country with the skill, accuracy, and success which have characterized Colonel Russell's operations here.

The Chief, Sekukuni, who did not personally take any part in the action, is now in a cave about fifteen miles from this. The cave is closely surrounded by troops, and I hope that want of water will soon compel him and those with him to surrender.

In a few days more I hope to clear out all the robber chiefs living in these Zulu mountains, when the Transvaal Field Force will be broken up.

I believe that the success which has attended this little campaign will confer lasting benefit upon the Transvaal by securing peace to a district where neither life nor property has been safe for many years past.

The destruction of Sekukuni's stronghold and of his power, and the breaking up of the robber clans who looked up to him as their King, cannot fail to have a quieting effect upon the native mind generally in South Africa, and will, I am sure, go far towards settling all native difficulties in the Transvaal.

In the organization and concentration of the forces engaged in these operations, and in all the many complex arrangements required for supplying them with stores, food, &c., &c., during the campaign, I have received the most efficient and able assistance from Lieutenant-Colonel H. Brackenbury, Royal Artillery, who is acting as my chief of the Staff.

Surgeon-Major Jackson, C.B., who is attached to my head quarters did good work during the action in attending to the wounded, many of whom he dressed under fire.

Captain Maurice, Royal Artillery, my Camp Commandant, acted as Staff officer to one of the attacking columns, and did excellent service until he was unfortunately wounded.

My Aides-de-Camp, Major McCalmont, 7th Hussars, and Lieutenant A. G. Creagh, Royal Artillery, both performed their duties to my entire satisfaction.

I have, &c.,

G. J. WOLSELEY, General.

The Right Honourable
the Secretary of State for War,
War Office, London.