

ported, the hill was won, for the Boers had already begun to retire, and many had run to their horses. But the fire was still heavy, and the hill was steep, while many of the horses of the mounted troops were quite untrained to fire. The support troop was checked; the leading troop, fatigued and broken by the charge, with its leaders all down, could not push on, and the whole gave way down the hill.

19. Meanwhile the 58th Regiment had begun to climb the steep ascent of the spur, when the Boers on the isolated hill having repulsed the Cavalry attack, moved down the ridge and opened fire on the right rear of the Infantry now exposed, the enemy on the Table Hill at the same time collecting to resist them at the brow of the hill. The 58th now pushed on eagerly, forming a few men to the right flank to return the enemy's fire. But the climb was a very trying one, and when the men got near the top they were too fatigued and breathless for a charge, while the fire from the ridge behind continued to tell heavily, and the Boers on the brow shot down on the men as they struggled up. The officers led nobly, and Colonel Deane, with splendid gallantry, tried to carry the hill by a rush. His horse was shot, but he extricated himself, and dashing forward on foot, fell, riddled with bullets, 10 yards in front of the foremost man. Major Poole, D.A.Q.M.G., who joined him in the charge, with Lieutenant Inman, 60th Rifles, his orderly officer, and Lieutenant Elwes, Grenadier Guards, my A.D.C., were killed close by him, and Major Hingeston, commanding the 58th Regiment, and all the mounted officers of the regiment, were shot down or dismounted. The men continued to hold their ground unflinchingly for some time, but the ground was too unfavourable and the fire too severe, and ultimately the regiment was compelled to retire, covered for some time by the fire of two companies posted under direction of Major Essex, 75th Regiment, Column Staff Officer, behind a slight ledge. Part of the 60th pushed forward to cover the retirement, and the 58th, which had fallen back leisurely, without haste or confusion, reformed at the foot of the hill, and marched back into position in as good order and with as erect and soldierly bearing as when it marched out.

20. The main attack having failed, it became necessary to withdraw the advanced parties on the left. This was done without loss, though the Boers began to show in increasing number on that flank, and the force was re-formed on its ground. I remained on this ground for some time, partly to cover the removal of the wounded, and partly in the hopes that the enemy might attempt to follow up his success. But as the Boer Commander would not allow me to send succour to the wounded on the hill so long as I maintained my advanced position, I withdrew slowly to camp in the afternoon. All the wounded, and the bodies of the dead officers, were brought into camp that evening; and the dead were buried under a flag of truce, some of them that evening and the remainder the next day.

21. I send herewith a list of casualties,* which, I regret to say, are very heavy. I have especially to deplore the death of Colonel Deane, Commanding Natal Field Force, in whom this force has suffered an irreparable loss. His experienced knowledge of all staff and regimental work, and his unremitting attention to every detail having for its object the comfort, the efficiency, and the security of the men under his command, coupled with his charm of manner, had made him alike

beloved and looked up to by all serving with him, and his death was in keeping with his character as a chivalrous gentleman and officer.

22. I have also deeply to deplore the loss of Major Poole, R.A., D.A.A.G., Lieutenant Elwes, Grenadier Guards, my A.D.C., and Lieutenant Inman, 60th Rifles, Orderly Officer to Colonel Deane, who all fell with Colonel Deane, in his determined effort to carry the hill. Major Poole was an able and most promising staff officer, and had been of the greatest service since he joined my staff, while I have suffered a heavy personal loss in the death of my A.D.C., Lieutenant Elwes.

23. Of the conduct of the 58th Regiment during this trying day I cannot speak in too high terms. Major Hingeston, commanding the regiment, was mortally wounded; Captain Lovegrove, second in command, severely wounded; Lieutenants Dolphin and Baillie killed; Lieutenant O'Donel wounded; the Sergeant-Major and most of the Colour-Sergeants killed or wounded; but to the last the men were perfectly in hand, cheerful, and ready to fight on. They only fell back when further fighting was hopeless and the order given to retire, and then moved down the hill leisurely, not a man running to save himself from the heavy fire which followed them down. The perfect order and soldierly bearing of the remains of the regiment, as they marched back into position under command of Lieutenant Jopp, deservedly called forth the admiration of all who witnessed it.

24. I have already reported the gallant charge made by the Mounted Squadron under Major Brownlow, and I would now express my very high sense of the services rendered by that officer. With only a small number of dismounted Dragoons, Army Service Corps, and volunteers from infantry regiments, at his command, and great difficulty in obtaining horses and equipment, he has, with indefatigable industry and zeal succeeded in creating a most serviceable mounted force with which he has admirably performed the scouting and other cavalry duties of the column. In the charge his conduct was conspicuous, and his escape wonderful. Associated with him, alike in organising and training this force and in the charge, his Sergeant-Major, Troop Sergeant-Major Lunny, King's Dragoon Guards, died beside him as they crested the hill together in sight of the whole force, and no man ever died more gallantly.

25. Of the conduct of the force generally I can speak in terms of the highest praise. From Lieutenant-Colonel Ashburnham, commanding 3-60th Rifles, Commander Romilly, commanding Naval Brigade, Major Dartnell, commanding Natal Mounted Police, and Captain Greer and Lieutenant Parsons, R.A., I have received constant support and assistance. The 60th Rifles were not closely engaged in the action of the 28th, but skirmished steadily and well, and covered the withdrawal of the 58th. The Artillery was well served, though from the nature of the ground, and the cover it afforded the Boers, the fire was not very effective. Much credit is due to Captain Greer and Lieutenant Parsons for the efficiency of my Artillery force, seeing that there were originally only two guns properly manned and equipped in the country, the other four having been equipped and horsed locally, and manned partly by Artillerymen from a Garrison Brigade, and partly by volunteers from the 60th Rifles. The Naval Brigade threw their rockets well, and covered the left flank of the force in action. The Natal Mounted Police, a remarkably fine body of men, though not directly engaged on the 28th, rendered most valuable

* Casualties already published.