

and its immediate neighbourhood. During the day I sent on a squadron of the 10th Hussars to seize and hold Maiders Farm.

A column* was formed at dusk under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. W. Fisher, 10th Hussars. They reached Maiders Farm about 9 P.M., and were joined there by myself and staff.

Orders were issued that the column was to be formed at 1.30 A.M. on the road leading across the plain towards Colesberg; that the Berkshire Regiment and Mounted Infantry were to head this column, followed by the guns and Cavalry. The attack and seizure of the hill (the position of which he knew well) was entrusted to Major F. W. N. McCracken, Berkshire Regiment. It was arranged that on arriving close to the hill the four companies were to be formed for attack and were to rush it. The Mounted Infantry were to support them closely. The Cavalry and Artillery were to remain close at hand in their order of march under cover of Coles Kop.

I was myself in command of the column and accompanied Major F. W. N. McCracken.

The attack was carried out in every detail as ordered. The four companies of the Berkshire Regiment rushed the hill most gallantly, driving off a strong picquet of the enemy, who retired in great disorder and with loud shouts. They were completely surprised. The hill to the east of this, immediately overlooking Colesberg town, was strongly occupied by the enemy, and a hot fire was for some minutes poured on the column in the darkness.

The Berkshire Regiment commenced their assault at 3.45 A.M., and the dawn of day found our troops in possession of this important outwork of Colesberg. At the first appearance of light I despatched the Cavalry under Lieutenant-Colonel Fisher to the north-west corner, with orders to seize and hold the hills there with a squadron and work round the northern face of the square. This was well done, and Colonel Fisher's patrols reached the positions on the Colesberg wagon road, the southernmost of which (known as Grasse Hill) was that which the Suffolk Regiment attacked on the night of the 5th-6th. With the idea of driving the enemy away from before the hills we had seized, and, if possible, from the western face of the position, and distracting his attention from the Cavalry on the left, I massed all the ten guns opposite that face, and, so soon as it was light enough to see, opened a heavy fire. This was replied to with great vigour by the enemy's artillery and quick-firing guns, and our Artillery were for some time exposed to a most galling fire, fortunately with but comparatively few casualties.

I cannot speak too highly of the gallantry displayed by the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and men of the Royal Horse Artillery, or of the coolness, intrepidity, and efficiency with which they stood to and worked their guns. Eventually they succeeded in silencing the enemy's artillery. Over night, I had ordered Colonel Porter, 6th Dragoon Guards, to move out from Rensburg with the force named† to Porter's Hill, which was held by one squadron of the Carabiniers and one Company New Zealand Mounted Infantry. His orders were to ascertain the state of our operations at daybreak and to co-operate.

This he did throughout the day with great

* 10 guns, Royal Horse Artillery; 6th Dragoons; 10th Hussars; 1 company Mounted Infantry; 4 companies Berkshire Regiment.

† 2 guns, Royal Horse Artillery; 2 squadrons Carabiniers; 1 company New Zealand Mounted Rifles.

effect at Porter's Hill, and along the southern face of the position. The New Zealand Mounted Rifles made a most gallant attempt to effect a footing in the south-western corner, but were obliged to retire before greatly superior numbers.

In the afternoon an attempt made by at least 1,000 Boers (reported to have been personally commanded by General Schumann) to break out and get round my right flank was frustrated by the Carabiniers and a detachment of Major Rimington's Scouts, which I had posted at Jafontein Farm to watch my right flank (about 6 miles east of the Rensburg position).

Owing to a misconception of my order and instructions, I regret that the Cavalry on my left did not quite fulfil the task allotted to them. Throughout the day I sent constant messages to the Brigadier to push forward to the Colesberg road and occupy the position indicated above. Had he found himself able to do this, I have no hesitation in saying that we could have occupied the town on that day. As it was, the enemy was allowed to push too forward on that flank and to occupy positions from which we have since been unable to move him.

On the following day (2nd) Major-General J. P. Brabazon, C.B., came out from Rensburg and took command of the troops on the left flank of our position, and I ordered up four companies of the Suffolk Regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel A. J. Watson, to occupy the hills on the north-western corner, releasing the 10th Hussars from that duty.

The 2nd and 3rd were spent in strengthening our positions and arranging the units and commands.

On the early morning of the 4th, about 1,000 of the enemy, under command of General Schumann, made a determined attempt to turn my left flank, which, had the attack succeeded, would have rendered our position on the western face of the Colesberg position untenable.

At dawn the enemy was found to have established himself in strength at some hills running about east and west at right angles to the left rear of our position. The Cavalry on the left should not have allowed him to do this unseen, but in turning him out they rendered signal service. The 10th Hussars, with two guns which I sent to them, threatened to take them in reverse and they were heavily fired upon by the remaining four guns of "O" Battery in front. This caused several hundred to abandon the position and the plain was covered with flying horsemen. The 10th Hussars on one flank, and a squadron of the Inniskillings on the other, dashed after them. The 10th Hussars were checked by some of the Boers taking up a strong position in some rocks to cover the retreat of the others. In a most gallant style Colonel Fisher dismounted his men and led them on foot against this position, which they carried with great boldness and intrepidity.

In this daring operation, I regret to say, Major Harvey was killed and Major Alexander severely wounded.

The 6th Dragoons, led by Captain E. A. Herbert, showed no less dash, pursuing the enemy, mounted, and inflicting some loss with their lances.

Some 200 of the enemy had, however, still clung to the hills, and after shelling them for some considerable time, both in front and flank, I decided to clear the position with the Mounted Infantry. Advancing under cover of the fire of the Artillery Captain De Lisle moved his men with great skill to a position where he could move against the enemy's right flank. Here he dismounted and advanced to attack, choosing the ground with