

From the General Officer Commanding, Natal,
to the Secretary of State for War.

(By the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief,
Cape Town.)

Spearman's Hill Camp,

Sir, 3rd February, 1900.

I have the honour to forward the enclosed report from Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren, in which he brings to notice the conduct of the troops, and the individual services of Officers, non-commissioned officers and men under his command, during the operations from the 17th to the 24th January, 1900, and I gladly endorse his recommendations. The behaviour of the troops throughout what was a most trying time, was all that a soldier could desire.

I also forward with this report, two reports from Major-General the Hon. N. G. Lyttelton, Commanding the 4th Brigade, relative to the operations of the 2nd Bn. Scottish Rifles and the 3rd Bn. King's Royal Rifle Corps on the 24th January, as these battalions, although not forming part of the troops under Sir Charles Warren's command, took part, together with those troops, in the attack of Spion Kop.

The advance of these two battalions was extremely well performed, and they attacked the heights with the greatest possible gallantry.

I have, &c.,

REDVERS BULLER, General.

From Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren, G.C.B., &c., Commanding Forces north of Tugela, to the Chief of the Staff, South Natal Field Force.

Hattings Farm.

Sir, 1st February, 1900.

I have the honour to bring to the notice of the Commander-in-Chief the exemplary manner in which the Force under my command behaved from the 16th January, 1900, when the night march commenced until the morning of the 25th, when he assumed direct command. During this period a great portion of the Force was continuously engaged with the enemy, many of them were in the firing line night and day, and others were employed in bringing up provisions and water under a heavy fire; they were in the lightest marching order, without tents, blankets, or waterproof sheets, and a large number of them were unable to obtain their great coats; but, both in fighting the enemy and in enduring privations, they showed, on all occasions, the best spirit attributable to the British soldier.

The night march to Trikkard's Drift, which took the enemy by surprise, was performed with the least possible noise, even the native drivers were mute throughout the operation, and the large force, nearly equal to an Army Corps with its enormous train of wagons, arrived at their position without any mishap, except the overturning of one pontoon wagon. The wagons, for supply and regimental purposes, alone occupied 11 miles if extended in one line, and if the mule wagons and ambulances were added the whole length would be 15 miles.

To get this enormous mass of wagons over the Tugela without injury from the enemy was a matter which required considerable forethought and care, but it was accomplished successfully by occupying the adjoining hills north of the Tugela, and passing the wheeled vehicles over by means of two pontoon bridges, and subsequently, over Trikkard's Drift, when the river had fallen.

During the operations from the 17th to the

24th, although the troops were continuously in action, there was no one special exploit of any large body of men which requires mention, except the fortitude with which the troops retained their hold on Spion Kop, from morning till nightfall, on the 24th, and I will proceed to mention individual actions of Officers and men, corps by corps.

Royal Dragoons.

1. The dispositions of the Royal Dragoons throughout the operations were carried out in a most skilful way by Colonel J. F. Burn-Murdoch, and he, himself, with Captain the Hon. A. Hamilton Russell, and 3729 Private W. Barnard and 3591 Private A. Holdsworth ascended Spion Kop after its evacuation, on the morning of the 25th, at great personal risk to ascertain whether it had been re-occupied by the Boers.

South African Light Horse.

2. On the 20th a detachment of the South African Light Horse, under Major Childe (since killed) did gallant service in the capture of Sugarloaf Hill. Corporal Tobin was the first man up, and was subsequently killed by a shell.

3. Lieut.-Colonel A. W. Hill, 2nd Bn. Middlesex Regiment, reports, with reference to the action on Spion Kop, that Lieutenant and Adjutant H. McEwan, of that Regiment, went out, under a heavy fire, and brought in a wounded man of the Scottish Rifles, who had fallen exhausted, the fire of that portion of our line having to be suspended to admit of the act.

2574 Private J. Gilmour collected some men together and formed them into a section, personally took command, supervising their action for over two hours; his conduct was specially commended at the time by Major Berners, Dorsetshire Regiment.

3493 Private W. Boyd set a conspicuous example of bravery and coolness, frequently standing up to find out where the enemy were.

2178 Private E. Wischusen picked up a live shell and threw it over the rocks before it exploded.

4. Lieut.-Colonel W. F. Nash, 1st Bn. Border Regiment, Commanding Imperial Light Infantry, reports, with regard to the same action, that—

565 Corporal Paek Weldon refused to surrender till compelled to do so; he was killed outside the trenches.

280 Private Chambers showed conspicuous bravery under fire when leading men in the firing line. He was killed.

929 Private T. Hughes, wounded five times, and wished to return to the firing line, but was prevented by those dressing his wounds.

Major-General Talbot Coke, commanding right attack, reports that the 2nd Bn. Dorsetshire Regiment rendered great service in carrying down a large quantity of ammunition in the dark, which would have otherwise have fallen into the hands of the enemy; and on the 27th a detachment of this regiment showed admirable discipline when acting as a burial party under trying circumstances at Spion Kop.

5. Colonel M. E. Crofton, Commanding 2nd Bn. Royal Lancaster Regiment, reports, with regard to the same action, that—

Second-Lieutenant J. R. E. Stansfield, 2nd Bn. Gordon Highlanders, attached to Ambulance Company, was conspicuously energetic throughout the whole day under fire, and doing splendid work for the wounded.

5375 Private Moore, H Company, 2nd Bn. Royal Lancaster Regiment, worked hard under a heavy fire, distributing ammunition, which rendered him a conspicuous mark to the enemy.