

Paardekraal by a considerable force of the enemy which was driven off with loss. Having repulsed this attack, Colonel Wilson resumed his march on Heilbron, where, instead of joining Colonel Rimington's command, he was temporarily assigned the duty of covering the line of block-houses from Heilbron to Frankfort.

Major-General Elliot's Operations in Eastern Orange River Colony.

8. After two or three days' halt at Winburg, Major-General Elliot's Division again started on 10th September to march east towards the Wittebergen. It seemed desirable to revisit this district once more, with the object of endeavouring to come up with some of the parties of Boers which had evaded capture during the previous movement. Lieut.-Colonel Barker and Major Pine Coffin remained to operate from Winburg to the west of General Elliot's line of advance, whilst Major-General B. Campbell continued to maintain his position on the eastern slopes of the Wittebergen. Brigadier-General Dartnell, with the Imperial Light Horse from Bethlehem, was also ordered to assist in the operations by blocking the passes at Retief's and Slabbert's Nek.

The movement from Winburg was commenced in four columns; General Broadwood's Brigade being on the right, Colonel Bethune's on the left, and the troops of Colonel Lowe and Lieut.-Colonel De Lisle in the centre. Lieut.-Colonel De Lisle came in sight of a convoy, under Commandant Koen, which was then trekking towards the Korannaberg, and after a long gallop overtook and captured 15 prisoners, 47 wagons, 22 carts, 250 horses, and 2,500 cattle. On the 12th Colonel Bethune drove 70 Boers from a position near Wonkerkop, and on the following evening he made a night march to Rietvlei, where he was again slightly engaged.

From the 14th to the 18th September the Division was employed in searching the western slopes of the Wittebergen, moving gradually northwards upon a line parallel to that followed by Major-General Campbell inside the Brandwater Basin from Steynsberg towards Retief's and Slabbert's Nek. This combined movement yielded good results. 17 Boers were taken by Major-General Campbell, and large quantities of supplies and vehicles were found hidden away in the mountain kloofs. A continual sniping was maintained from the summits of the hills by small parties of Boers under the leadership of Commandant Prinsloo. Having accomplished all that was possible in this district, General Elliot pushed north from Tafel Berg on the 19th by Bethlehem to Harrismith, a destination which seemed advisable in consequence of the development of events in Natal, and arrived there on the 26th.

The result of the operations which then closed was reported to be as follows:—7 Boers killed, 5 wounded, 46 prisoners, 3 voluntary surrenders, 2,560 horses, 9,100 cattle, 127 wagons, 101 carts, 2,700 rounds of ammunition.

The 2nd Imperial Light Horse with General Dartnell had already been brought into Harrismith, and proceeded thence by rail and road to Eshowe, in Zululand, and on the 29th of September Colonel Bethune, with 600 men of General Elliot's Division, followed General Dartnell to the same destination.

The other brigades of General Elliot's Division remained temporarily in the eastern portion of the Orange River Colony in readiness to act against any parties of the enemy who might seek to penetrate into Natal in co-operation with General Botha's enterprise. On the 28th and 29th Colonel De Lisle and Brigadier-General

Broadwood moved north from Harrismith towards Muller's Pass and Vrede to disperse certain hostile bands which were reported to be hovering about the frontier. Colonel De Lisle was at Muller's Pass on the 2nd of October, and the same night General Broadwood bivouacked at Boschoek, a few miles to the west. Few Boers were seen, and it was evident that the parties which may have been meditating an inroad into Natal had thought better of their project, and retired west towards Witkoppies and Vrede. Our columns accordingly made a reconnaissance on the 5th in that direction trying to gain touch with the enemy, and watching for an opportunity of communicating with Colonel Rimington, who was then known to be moving east from Cornelia along the Vaal valley.

Operations in the Harrismith and Bethlehem Districts.

9. Allusion has already been made to the part taken by Major-General B. Campbell's column in the operations about the Wittebergen. The remainder of Sir Leslie Rundle's Division has been occupied in blocking the passes leading into Natal between Van Reenen's and Witzie's Hoek, in relieving the garrisons upon the Albertina-Van Reenen's line which have hitherto been furnished from the Natal command, and in passing supplies by convoy into Bethlehem.

After the departure of Brigadier-General Dartnell for Zululand, the 1st Imperial Light Horse, under Lieut.-Colonel Briggs, remained to act independently from Bethlehem. This force which was especially organised with a view to mobility has already justified its existence, and some excellent long distance raids have been undertaken. The most successful of these took place on the night of the 28th of September, when after a circuitous march of 38 miles from Bethlehem, Lieut.-Colonel Briggs surrounded the town of Reitz at dawn on the 29th. Here he captured 21 prisoners (including Landdrost Piet de Villiers), 9 Cape carts, 2 wagons, 24 horses, 9 rifles, 250 cattle and some ammunition. His return march, however, was much opposed, and several unsuccessful attempts were made at night by parties of Boers, said to be under De Wet, to surround and rush his force.

Operations in Southern Orange River Colony.

10. After Commandant Smuts had crossed to the south of the Orange River at Kiba Drift, as mentioned in my last despatch, the remainder of the Boers in the south-eastern portion of the Orange River Colony, under Commandant Kruit-zinger and other leaders, broke up into a number of small commandos which have moved rapidly about, evading the pursuit of our columns in the area marked by Wepener-Dewetsdorp-Bethulie and Zastron.

On the 8th September, the positions of the different columns under Major-General C. Knox, in this district, were, approximately, as follows:—Colonel Thorneycroft at Quaggafontein and Meyerhoek, guarding the line of the Orange River to the south of Zastron; Lord Basing at Jurysbaken, patrolling thence to Commissie Bridge on the Caledon; Colonel Sir Henry Rawlinson on the march south from the Elandsberg to Aliwal; and General Plumer at Smithfield. Major Damant had already returned to Springfontein.

From Smithfield, on the 9th September, General Plumer moved up the valley of the Caledon to Arcadia and Bastard's Drifts against the Boers who had been driven north from the Elandsberg on 7th September, by Sir Henry Rawlinson. From these drifts he detached Sir John Jervis upon Wepener in pursuit of two large parties of