

June 17: The column marched and reached Standerton, to obtain supplies and remounts.

June 18, 19, and 20: In camp.

June 20: At 5.30 a.m. was aroused by heavy firing at the outposts. On proceeding to ascertain cause, found that an advanced outpost of scouts, in the darkness, had fired into one of the day relieving posts, mistaking them for Boers; they, not answering or possibly hearing the challenge, were fired into, and the following troopers were accidentally wounded: No. 4078, H. Houchen; No. 4090, A. Macfarlane; No. 4054, A. Thom; No. 4052, J. Sellers. I was exceedingly annoyed and demanded an inquiry, and found that two mistakes had occurred—namely, the brigadier had himself sent out the advance post without advising the picquet officers; second, that the brigade-major had mistaken his orders, and made the time for relieving outposts 5.15 instead of 5.45, which would have been daylight, and for which he was subsequently censured.

June 20 and 21: Again moving on trek in direction of Bethel.

June 22 and 23: Trek No. 3. Were engaged each day with the enemy. No casualties on our side.

June 24: Trichardsfontein. At this place we found the grave of Stanley Hurry, of the Sixth Contingent, together with one of the Royal Artillery, and had photographs of the grave taken. Before marching the Boers showed up in considerable force on the kopjes surrounding, and all posts were reinforced. Captain Seddon with his squadron was sent to take up position in the right rear, and was nearly captured, owing to a ruse of the Boers. They boldly filed along, in imitation of our own movements, and used a looking-glass as a helio. Captain Seddon, alone, rode in the direction of the party, and would probably have been captured had not firing in the rear caused the enemy suddenly to retire, so disclosing who they were. A rearguard action was fought as far as Winkleup, at which place it was discovered a fairly large commando had camped the night previously.

To-day communicated with Colville's column, by helio., about seven miles to our left. One of my rear posts, to-day, were nearly betrayed by the Boers under the white flag. They had shot a Boer from among three others, who fell from his horse, or pretended to do so. The others dismounted and held up a white flag, but when our men advanced towards it they were fired at by fifteen Boers from cover, killing one horse. Heard heavy firing in the direction of Colonel Colville's column, big guns and "pom-poms."

June 25: Expected, and were prepared for, an attack last night, which did not take place. The column marched at 8 a.m., the brigadier and Colonel White moving to the right flank with all the mounted men except two squadrons of New-Zealanders, comprising the advance of the rearguard of the convoy; I was directed to move with the convoy to Watervaalhoek. I asked that another squadron might be left to use as a left-flank screen, but was told that there would be no necessity, as Colonel Colville's column was moving parallel with us on our left. This subsequently proved incorrect, as, on the contrary, a large Boer commando was so moving. Just after noon I had advanced with the convoy across the "spruit" at Watervaalhoek and was preparing to outspan to encamp when my advance screen became engaged with the enemy, who had opened a heavy rifle fire and also a pom-pom. I ordered the convoy not to outspan, but to keep cover, and at once proceeded to reinforce the advance with the reserve squadron and a pom-pom. My screen was driven in and I found a firing-line along the ridge in the front, and on the left flank covering the convoy. The Boers were in very heavy force, upwards of four hundred with one pom-pom. With my pom-pom we drove theirs out of position, further to the right front, when the action became more extended and general. I was able to keep the enemy off until reinforced by the main body under the brigadier on the right flank about an hour before dark, they having been drawn in by hearing the firing. The firing at times was heavy and fierce, both from rifle and pom-pom, shells bursting among our men and horses, one horse being shot through by one shell. One Boer was blown to pieces by a shell from our gun, and others wounded, afterwards discovered by us. There were many narrow escapes on our side, but fortunately the only casualty was No. 4321, Robert McLean, killed, and several horses.

The enemy was repulsed, and firing was kept up until dark, when I was able to rejoin the column with the squadrons, who had a very hard day, and behaved well. It was No. 21 (Auckland) and No. 22 (Wellington) and parts of No. 23 (Nelson).

From prisoners we received the information that the commando, between four and five hundred strong, with one pom-pom and one gun (no ammunition) was under Commandants Meyers and Viljoen, who had attacked Colville's camp the previous night, and had marched parallel with us, on the left, during the day. Colville had not moved as was supposed by the brigadier.

June 26: The actions to-day were mostly during the march, on the right flank and rearguard. Our casualties—Wounded, No. 4262, F. Blair, foot (slight), and four horses killed. Known losses of the enemy—Four killed, two wounded.

June 27 and 28: Marching towards Greylingstad to obtain supplies and remounts. The enemy troublesome only in rear.

June 29: In camp at Greylingstad. To-day the command of the column was assumed by Colonel Garrard, Brigadier Colonel Grey having to proceed to Rhodesia, much to the regret of all ranks.

"*Farewell Brigade Order by Colonel Raleigh-Grey.*—Owing to urgent private affairs I am obliged to say good-bye to the column. I desire to thank every officer, non-com., and man for their cordial co-operation and assistance. The column has been in existence for six weeks, and during that time much hard fighting and good work has been done. I am proud to have commanded so fine a lot of men, and I am confident you will distinguish yourselves. I wish you all every success, and with great regret I bid you farewell."

July 1: Trek No. 4. The column marched from camp, Greylingstad, to operate in the direction of Watervaalhoek.