

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

The People's Paper Read by Everybody

COVERS PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LIKE THE DEW

Charlottetown Guardian Two Cents
Morning Guardian, Founded 1887

CHARLOTTETOWN, CANADA, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1924

Annual Subscriptions Delivered \$5.00
By Mail, Canada and U. S. A. \$4.50

THE STORY OF PAARDEBERG

Tomorrow morning, to the Methodist Church, for the first time since the Great War, the veterans of the South African War will parade in commemoration of the twenty-fourth anniversary of Paardeberg. On Wednesday evening, February 27th, they will hold an anniversary banquet. It is well that not only they, but all Canadians, and especially all people of the Maritime Provinces, should remember Paardeberg, for it was there that Companies "G" and "H" of the Royal Canadian Regiment, recruited from Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, distinguished themselves by their indomitable courage and by the capture of Cronje, the Lion of the Veldt, the most feared of all the Boer generals. It was "G" Company—New Brunswickers and Islanders side by side—that bore the brunt of that day's fighting and suffered the heaviest casualties. Every school child in Prince Edward Island should know the story of Paardeberg.

A new generation has arisen since the South African War. To them the numbers engaged, and the casualties suffered, seem insignificant compared with the staggering losses of the Great War. But its history must not be forgotten. It is a stirring tale of heroic achievement, of weary marches under sweltering African suns, of lonely outpost vigils, of hunger, of bitter thirst, and hardships innumerable, endured without murmur or complaint.

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

On October 9th, 1899, the ultimatum of the South African Republic (the Transvaal) to Great Britain startled the world. That this little republic, a petty state with a white population about half that of the city of Toronto, should throw down the gauntlet to the greatest among the Great Powers seemed suicidal. The ultimatum demanded that "all troops on the borders of the republic should be immediately withdrawn; that all reinforcements of troops which have arrived in South Africa since June 1st, 1899, should be removed from South Africa;" and that "Her Majesty's troops which are now on the high seas should not be landed in any part of South Africa." Unless an affirmative answer were given to these astounding demands within forty-eight hours the Government of the South African Republic would regard the action of Her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war. As preposterous an ultimatum as Austria-Hungary was to launch against Serbia in 1914, and it would never have been launched in its extravagant form had not President Kruger depended on the support of Germany. Great Britain had but one course to follow—to take up arms. Within twelve hours after the receipt of the ultimatum a message flashed back from London to South Africa—a message that Kruger and his advisers expected: "The conditions demanded by the South African Republic are such as Her Majesty's Government deem it impossible to discuss."

Previous to this Kruger had for some time been seeking an alliance with Britain's greatest commercial rival, Germany. His Government had made secret arrangements favoring German commerce and Germans came to the country in large numbers, among them many military ex-



WILLIAM ALFRED RIGGS
Killed in Action at Paardeberg, Feb. 27th, 1900

parts who had been engaged to aid the burghers in creating an efficient artillery force and to design forts. The congratulatory message from the German Kaiser to President Kruger following the treacherous Jameson Raid had caused a flame of indignation throughout the British Empire, and it needed but a word to start a European War. But Germany was not then prepared to say that word. She had yet to create her Zeppelins and submarines, her monster siege guns and her poison gas. She knew Britain would sweep her commerce from the high seas; but she set herself from that time to speed up her preparations for "The Day." The Boers under Kruger were assisted in making preparations for war. Vast sums for secret service work were collected from the Uitlanders in South Africa (whose cause Britain had espoused); and in Germany, France, America and elsewhere newspapers were subsidized for the express purpose of attacking Britain. Every Boer farmer had been supplied with arms and ammunition, and the Transvaal commandos could be mobilized at a moment's notice. Vast supplies were collected at Pretoria. The forts dominating Johannesburg were strengthened and several hundred of the finest guns ever used in war, Krupps and Creusots, —vastly superior to any British guns in South Africa,—were at points of vantage in the Transvaal. Moreover, a wholly inadequate body of British troops guarded the frontiers of Natal, Cape Colony and Bechuanaland, and Kruger believed that a few initial successes would cause an uprising of the large Dutch population in British South Africa.

THE CALL TO ARMS

But Kruger, in his reckoning, failed to take into account the feeling left in the hearts of Britishers generally regarding the humiliating campaign of 1881 and especially the disgrace of Majuba Hill. He failed, too, to take into account Britain's Colonies, each and all ready to spring to the defense of the Empire. An offer from Canada to equip and forward a contingent was accepted at once by the Imperial Government.

Kruger had approximately 60,000 troops, counting the dependable rebels in the adjoining British colonies, and as these were practically all mounted men, they were equivalent to double their number of foot soldiers. Opposed to him in South Africa were 22,000 British regulars and about 10,000 Colonial militia, with an immense frontier to guard, the most critical point being the Natal border along which the Boers were concentrating, and where only 12,000 troops could be detached for its defense.

Even before Kruger's ultimatum was despatched to England the burghers of both the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were called out and on the instant were speeding to the concentration point. On October 11th war broke out;

on the 12th the Boers shelled and captured an armoured train forty miles south of Mafeking.

CANADA'S RESPONSE

The first contribution asked of Canada by the War Office was four units of about 125 men each, but so intense was the spirit of loyalty in Canada that the Dominion Cabinet, deeming it unnecessary even to summon Parliament for the undertaking, decided to send eight units, over 1,000 men in all. The troops were to serve for six months, or one year if required. Orders for the enrollment of the companies were issued on Oct. 14th. With the prevailing enthusiasm it would have been possible to recruit the entire contingent in a few hours in any one of the chief cities of Canada, had it not been desirable to have every part of the Dominion represented.



THE LATE REV. THOS. F. FULLERTON, D.D.
Chaplain, 1st Canadian South African Contingent Died in Charlottetown, May 23, 1921

Accordingly the leading cities of each province were made recruiting centres. "A" Company was recruited in Victoria, Vancouver and Winnipeg; "B" in London; "C" in Toronto; "D" in Ottawa and Kingston; "E" in Montreal; "F" in Quebec; "G" in St. John and Charlottetown; and "H" in Halifax. Each company included one captain, three lieutenants and 121 non-commissioned officers and men. Lieut. Col. W. D. Otter was given command of the Contingent to be known as the 2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry on special service.

How The Boys Left Home

The departure of the volunteers was celebrated throughout the provinces by banquets, church parades and grand farewell meetings. In Charlottetown each volunteer was presented with twenty dollars in gold by the Provincial Government, supplemented with ten dollars in gold from the City Council, while Souris forwarded twenty dollars in gold for each of her three representatives. The citizens of Charlottetown insured the life of every man for \$1,000 in the Independent Order of Foresters and later, through the instrumentality

of Sir Charles Tupper, the life of every Canadian volunteer was insured for \$1,000 in the London Guarantee Company, England. The island recruits were also presented by Mrs. McIntyre, wife of the Lieutenant Governor, with a gold souvenir pin, the gift of Mr. E. W. Taylor, whose son Roland was the first member of "G" Company to fall at Paardeberg.

The volunteers left home on Oct. 25, 1899, the St. John, Halifax and P. E. Island contingents meeting in Moncton where Premier Emerson bade them "au revoir." They were joined by the Fredericton quota at Chatham Junction and all along the line met with continual ovations. The Regiment was mobilized at Quebec, quartered in the immigration building where straw mattresses on the floor were provided. On Oct. 30th fully equipped, and after inspection by General Hutton, they embarked on board the troopship "Sardinian" of the Allan line and sailed for South Africa.

There were in all 1,061 men and officers on board, 1,039 belonging to the contingent proper, 11 officers attached for instructional purposes, 4 nurses, 4 special correspondents and one Y. M. C. A. representative. Lieut. Col. (afterwards Lieut. General Sir Sam) Hughes accompanied the force as a free lance and there was an Imperial officer returning to his regiment.

Cape Town was reached on Nov. 29th after a monotonous trip three days behind schedule, the coal bunkers and fresh water tanks being almost empty.

The Sardinian cast anchor at Table Bay about noon, in the midst of ships from every part of the widely scattered Empire. The Boers had no warships to attack and no cargo boats to seize. They were protected by mountain ranges,

Chaplain, Rev. Thos. F. Fullerton, Capt. W. A. Weeks; Sgts. J. Russell, E. Hessian; Corps. J. Morrison, F. W. Coombs; Lance Corps. D. Ward; Privates J. Boudreau, E. W. Bowness, Nelson Brace, H. H. Brown, R. W. Cox, A. R. Dillon, N. Dolron, R. J. Foley, F. G. Furze, L. S. Gaudet, J. A. Harris, LeRoy Harris, C. H. Hine, W. Lane, P. J. Leslie, R. E. Lord, J. Matheson, M. J. McCarthy, F. B. McInnes, H. V. McKinnon, H. L. McLean, J. B. Mellish, J. O'Riley, W. A. Riggs, T. A. Rodd, J. E. Small, Lorne Stewart, R. D. Taylor, J. S. Walker, J. F. Wayne.

The departure of the volunteers was celebrated throughout the provinces by banquets, church parades and grand farewell meetings. In Charlottetown each volunteer was presented with twenty dollars in gold by the Provincial Government, supplemented with ten dollars in gold from the City Council, while Souris forwarded twenty dollars in gold for each of her three representatives. The citizens of Charlottetown insured the life of every man for \$1,000 in the Independent Order of Foresters and later, through the instrumentality

of Sir Charles Tupper, the life of every Canadian volunteer was insured for \$1,000 in the London Guarantee Company, England. The island recruits were also presented by Mrs. McIntyre, wife of the Lieutenant Governor, with a gold souvenir pin, the gift of Mr. E. W. Taylor, whose son Roland was the first member of "G" Company to fall at Paardeberg.

The volunteers left home on Oct. 25, 1899, the St. John, Halifax and P. E. Island contingents meeting in Moncton where Premier Emerson bade them "au revoir." They were joined by the Fredericton quota at Chatham Junction and all along the line met with continual ovations. The Regiment was mobilized at Quebec, quartered in the immigration building where straw mattresses on the floor were provided. On Oct. 30th fully equipped, and after inspection by General Hutton, they embarked on board the troopship "Sardinian" of the Allan line and sailed for South Africa.

There were in all 1,061 men and officers on board, 1,039 belonging to the contingent proper, 11 officers attached for instructional purposes, 4 nurses, 4 special correspondents and one Y. M. C. A. representative. Lieut. Col. (afterwards Lieut. General Sir Sam) Hughes accompanied the force as a free lance and there was an Imperial officer returning to his regiment.

Cape Town was reached on Nov. 29th after a monotonous trip three days behind schedule, the coal bunkers and fresh water tanks being almost empty.

The Sardinian cast anchor at Table Bay about noon, in the midst of ships from every part of the widely scattered Empire. The Boers had no warships to attack and no cargo boats to seize. They were protected by mountain ranges,

(Continued on Page 8)

Town Topics

Tid-bits on the Tip of Everybody's Tongue

Vol. 1 No. 27 Charlottetown, February 23rd, 1924 FREE

Arizona:

"This is the same cake we got in the trenches. It seemed like manna from heaven then. And it is still the same delicious treat,"—extract from a letter from Arizona, referring to Moir's Sultana Cake.

KIMBERLEY:

"I am glad I am a Nova Scotian and come from the place where they make such good cake."—referring to Moir's Plain Pound Cake, sent to Kimberley, B. C.

MONTREAL:

An order for 800 lbs. Sultana, 320 Cherry, 160 Genoa, 200 Plain Pound: 1480 lbs. in all—eloquent tribute to Moir's Cakes!

ROLAND DENNIS TAYLOR
Killed in Action at Paardeberg, Feb. 18th, 1900.