

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE BATTLE OF PAARDEBERG

(Written for The Guardian by W.S. Louson, City.)



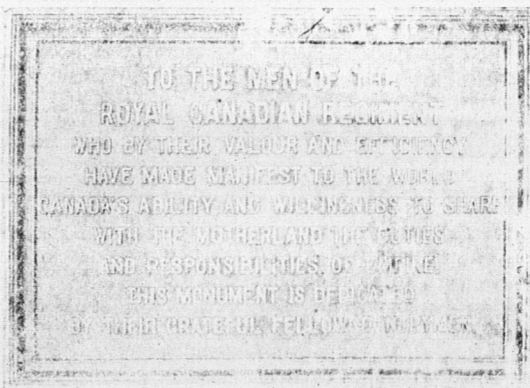
THE LATE ALFRED RIGGS Of this City who died in action at the Battle of Paardeberg.



SOLDIERS MONUMENT ERRECTED IN QUEEN SQUARE, CITY.



THE LATE ROLAND TAYLOR Of this City who died in action at the battle of Paardeberg.



Some little time ago I promised the readers of The Guardian to give illustrations and a short account of the monuments, (or those erected by public or private subscription) in this Province.

I cannot say at the moment how we compare in this respect with our sister provinces, but as far as I can ascertain there are but four such monuments erected on Prince Edward Island. That they ought to be others erected in memory of some of the illustrious Sons of this Province is the opinion of many.

The Rev. Mr. Fullerton in his suggestion of erecting a monument to Robert Burns, revives the matter to our minds, and ought to have careful and sympathetic consideration.

Next week will be celebrated the anniversary of the Battle of Paardeberg. Every loyal Canadian is proud of the officers and men who fought so bravely during the engagements extending from the 18th Feb. to the 27th terminating in the victory at Paardeberg.

The beautiful monument erected in Queen Square to the memory of Riggs and Taylor should inspire loyalty to the Mother Country, among the thousands who see it from time to time.

Major Weeks, who commanded the Prince Edward Island Contingent in South Africa, has kindly written a brief account of the engagements, and victory at Paardeberg. This will doubtless be of much interest at this time, and reads as follows:

The Soldiers' Monument was erected by public subscription, and cost \$4,250.00. This beautiful monument was unveiled Monday, July 6th, 1903, by Lord Almer, a vast number of people being present.

In next Saturday's issue it is hoped a short account of the Monument erected to the memory of the Brudenell Pioneers, on Brudenell Island, near Georgetown, P. E. I. will be given.

THE CANADIANS AT PAARDEBERG.

After having marched all night from Klip Drift, a distance of twenty-two miles the Regiment arrived near Paardeberg, drift on the south side of the Modder River about six a. m. on Feb. 18th 1900. The men had barely time to partake of a biscuit and cup of tea when orders were received to parade at seven a. m., and twenty minutes afterwards moved out to support the artillery about half a mile away and was at once ordered to cross the river. The water at the drift was about five feet deep with a current of nine miles an hour. A rope had been laid across and the men passed over by holding on to it, they passed over in fours linked arm in arm. The companies were immediately pushed forward. The enemy were concealed in the strip of woods along the edge of the river and were completely hidden from view. They also occupied a series of dongas enfiling the Canadian left from which they were continually sniping all day and were not discovered till the afternoon when our Maxim gun was turned upon them. The advance of the battery was ever perfectly open, level ground with slight undulations affording little or no cover except that given by a few ant hills.

The firing line gradually advanced. Capt. Arnold of Winnipeg Commanding A. Co. was the first to fall, being mortally wounded by a Mauser bullet through the head. The nature of the ground prevented any rapid advance, but the firing line gradually approached the enemy and our men

began to fall. A heavy downpour of rain added to the difficulty of the situation and all were drenched to the skin. The rain stopped as suddenly as it began, succeeded by a scorching heat with blazing sun.

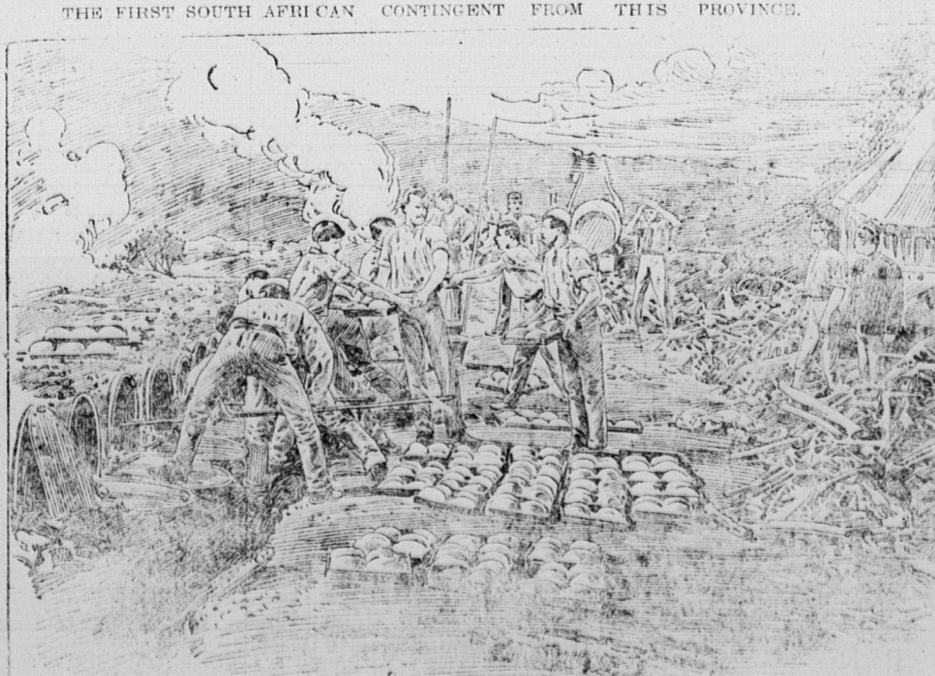
In the afternoon, about four o'clock p. m. Lt. Col. Alworth of the



REV. T. F. FULLERTON CHAPLAIN.



LIEUT. LOEB STEWART.



BALING ON THE VEELDT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Cornwalls, came up to Col. Otter and said he had been sent "to finish this business and proposed doing so with the bayonet." At five o'clock p. m. the general advance began and the whole line with the exception of part of the G. & H. Companies held in reserve went forward with a rush. The fire of the enemy became intense and after an advance of about two hundred yards no farther progress could be made. The loss to the Cornwalls



LIEUT. F. B. MCRAE.

and Canadians was severe. The Col. and Adjutant of the Cornwalls were killed and many of our men bit the dust. Roland H. Taylor of the Island Contingent was killed. The work of the stretcher bearers began. The collection of the dead and wounded continued during the night. The Boers withdrew to their lodges about two miles up the river. On the following morning the wounded were sent to the rear and the dead were buried. Roland Taylor with sixteen of his comrades was laid to rest in a bend of the river where he fell in the fight.

Capt. Arnold, who lived until Thursday morning, was buried on the River bank at the ford of the River. On Tuesday the 29th the Canadians with the Shropshire Light Infantry on their right and the Gordon Highlanders on their left were detached from the out posts and advanced against the trenches of the enemy. As before, the ground was flat and open, but well covered with ant hills, which afforded cover but not much protection. The day was very hot and it was impossible owing to the enemy's fire to get water to the men. For the first time the dreaded pom-pom was turned upon us, and as our men lay flat this shell of the celebrated Vickers-Maxim creched close overhead but without damage—only four men were wounded this day. As it was folly to advance the battalion withdrew at six p. m.

Rest and out-post duty was the lot of the Canadians for the next six days.

In the meantime the Gordons, Shropshire and Cornwalls in their turn had worked up along the river bank and had succeeded in entrenching about 550 yards from the nearest Boer trench.

On the evening of the 26th February the Canadians' turn came. The plan of attack was that our six companies in this main trench should advance on the Boer trenches; about 2 a. m. on the 27th the front rank to move with fixed bayonets and not to fire until fired upon, the rear rank to place their rifles forward and to entrench themselves. A detachment of engineers accompanied them along the river bank ready to make a base trench from the river.

The line advanced about 450 yards when it was met by a terrific fire, our men immediately threw themselves on the ground but the effect of the fire was severe. Our men returned the fire when someone unknown called out "return and bring back your wounded." The other companies retired to the main trench but G. & H. held their ground. About 2 a. m. one of the enemy advanced with a white flag and the firing ceased. The result was an unconditional surrender of Cronje with his whole force of 4,000. About sixty paces from the Boer trenches Alfred Riggs fell with his face to the foe, and was killed on the spot.

Before the general advance began I superintended the erection of large wooden crosses over these graves with the names of the fallen heroes printed thereon. The crosses were covered with tins of tins to prevent their destruction by wild beasts; with yoke poles taken from the Boer waggon and some wire we placed substantial fences around them.

There were no finer young men in the whole Regiment than Taylor and Riggs, never complaining, obedient to honour and duty and faithful to the end.

GUILTY OF ASSASSINATION.

A man, razor in hand was caught by his wife assassinating not an enemy, but a corn—what he needed was Putnam's Corn Extractor; it's safe, painless, and sure. Try "Putnam's"—nothing sells so good.



MAJOR W. A. WEEKS.