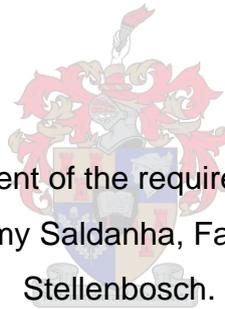


**MAJOR GENERAL SIR HENRY TIMSON LUKIN
(1860-1925):
THE MAKING OF A SOUTH AFRICAN HERO**

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Military History at the Military Academy Saldanha, Faculty of Military Science, University of Stellenbosch.

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I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously submitted it in its entirety or in part at any university for a degree.

Signature:

Date:

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ABSTRACT

Henry Timson Lukin was born and educated in Britain. After completion of his schooling at the Merchant Taylor's School in 1875 he had hoped to enter the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, but failed the entry examinations. However, seizing the moment of a war in South Africa, he left in 1879 for Natal, where he worked first as a road foreman, but soon, with the help of a cousin, Lieutenant Jack Spurgin, he was commissioned into the 77th Regiment and under the command of Major H.M. Bengough and saw service during the Anglo-Zulu War. Having distinguished himself in the field in Zululand, Lukin was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR) and served with this outfit in the Basuto War (1881), the Langeberg campaign (1896-97) and the South African War (1899-1902). During the South African War he received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for the defence of Jammersbergdrift and played an important role in capturing key rebel commando leaders, including Commandant Johannes Lötter and Commandant Gideon Scheepers. After the war he received the Commander of the Order of St Michael & St George (CMG) and was appointed as the Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces. He played an important role in establishing the structures of the Union Defence Forces (UDF) and was appointed as Inspector General of the Permanent Force in 1912. He influenced the debate on colonial warfare with the writing of the maxim handbook and a training pamphlet, *Savage Warfare: Hints on Tactics to be adopted and Precautions to be taken* and during the First World War distinguished himself as commander of a force of the South African troops in German South-West Africa (1914-1915) and as commander of the South African Brigade in Egypt (1916) and in France (1916-17). He was promoted to Major General when he assumed the command the 9th Scottish Division in December 1916. In 1917 one of the highest honours was bestowed upon him when he was knighted. The illness of his wife, Annie Marie (Lily) necessitated a transfer to Britain, where he commanded the 64th Division until the end of the war. He retired from the military shortly after the Armistice and returned with his wife to South Africa, where he remained active in a variety of ex-servicemen's organisations, including that of 1 South African Infantry Brigade. He was also a guest speaker at various functions, including the unveiling of monuments and memorials, and served on the Defence Commission of Enquiry (1924). Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin died after a full, varied and distinguished military career in December 1925. Lukin and the Brigade had an enormous impact on the creation of a new South African identity during the First World War and period immediately after and played an important role in the formation of a new South African military organisation and culture.

Key terms: Henry Timson Lukin; military leadership and hero construction; creation of a South African identity; military force integration

OPSOMMING

Henry Timson Lukin is in Brittanje gebore, waar hy sy skoolloopbaan in 1875 aan die *Merchant Taylor's School* voltooi het. Hy wou hom daarna by die *Royal Military College*, Sandhurst inskryf, maar het sy toelatingseksamen gedruip. Dit het hom egter nie laat afsien van sy voorneme om 'n soldaat te word nie. Hy het gevolglik vir 'n berede kursus by Knightbridge ingeskryf en daarna 'n junior vrywilligeroffisierskursus in infanteriedril by *Chelsea Barracks* gevolg. Met die vooruitsig van oorlog in Suid-Afrika het hy hom in 1879 daarheen gehaas in die hoop om sy strewe na 'n militêre loopbaan te verwesenlik. Na 'n kort dienstydpark as 'n padvoorman, het hy met die hulp van sy neef, luitenant Jack Spurgin, 'n offisiersaanstelling in die 77th *Regiment* onder die bevel van majoor H.M. Bengough bekom. Dié regiment is na die Anglo-Zoeloe Oorlog ontbind, waarop Lukin se uitmuntende diens onder Bengough hom 'n offisiersaanstelling in die *Cape Mounted Riflemen* (CMR) besorg het. As offisier in die CMR het hy in die Basoetoe Oorlog van 1881 gedien, asook in die Langeberg-veldtog van 1896-1897. Gedurende die Suid-Afrikaanse Oorlog van 1899-1902 het hy die *Distinguished Service Order* (DSO) ontvang vir sy optrede tydens die beleg van Jammersbergdrift te Wepener. Lukin het voorts 'n beduidende rol gespeel in die klopjagte op en arrestasie van rebellebevelvoerders soos kommandante Johannes Lötter en Gideon Scheepers. Ná die oorlog is Lukin met die *Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George* (CMG) vereer en is hy as Kommandant-Generaal van die Kaapkolonie aangestel. Hy het 'n leidende rol in die stigting van die nuwe Unieverdedigingsmag gespeel en is in 1912 as die Inspekteur-Generaal van die Staande Mag aangestel. Lukin het ook deel geneem in die debat oor koloniale oorlogvoering met die skryf van 'n handboek oor die maxim masjien geweer en 'n opleidings pamflet, *Savage Warfare: Hints on Tactics to be adopted and Precautions to be taken*. Gedurende die Eerste Wêreldoorlog het hy hom as taakmagbevelvoerder in Duits-Suidwes-Afrika (1914-1915) en as bevelvoerder van die Suid-Afrikaanse magte in Egipte (1916) en Frankryk (1916-1917) onderskei. Ná sy bevordering tot generaal-majoor het Lukin van Desember 1916 tot aan die einde van 1917 in Frankryk oor die 9th *Scottish Division* bevel gevoer. In 1917 is hy tot ridder geslaan vir sy voortreflike militêre diens. Sy eggenote, Annie Maria (Lily), se swak gesondheid het hom in 1917 genoop om 'n pos in Brittanje te versoek, waarop hy as die bevelvoerder van die 64th *Division* aangestel is. Hy het kort daarna sy ontslag uit die leër gevra en in 1920 met sy gade na Suid-Afrika teruggekeer. Hy was daarna nog aktief by verskeie organisasies, waaronder die oudgediende-organisasie van 1 Suid-Afrikaanse Infanteriebrigade. Lukin het ook as gasspreker by verskeie funksies en onthullings van oorlogsgedenktekens opgetree. Een van sy laaste take, in 1924, was om as president van 'n kommissie van ondersoek in verband met die Staande Mag op te tree. Generaal-majoor sir Henry Timson Lukin is na 'n lang en betekenisvolle militêre loopbaan in Desember 1925 oorlede. Lukin en die lede van sy brigade het nie net 'n bydrae tot die vorming van

'n nuwe gees van Suid-Afrikanisme gelewer nie, maar het ook 'n besondere rol gespeel in die daarstelling van 'n nuwe Suid-Afrikaanse militêre struktuur en kultuur.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1 st SAI	1 st South African Infantry Regiment
2 nd SAI	2 nd South African Infantry Regiment
3 rd SAI	3 rd South African Infantry Regiment
4 th SAI	4 th South African Infantry Regiment
2-i-C	Second in Command
3/CT	Town Clerk Municipality of Cape Town
3/GR	Town Clerk Municipality of Graaff-Reinet
3/KWT	Town Clerk Municipality of King William's Town
A	Alpha
A 459	The Brabant Papers
AB 186	The Archbishop Carter Papers
AG 14	Adjutant General, Group 14
AG 1914-1921	Adjutant General 1914-1921
BC 67	Dr K. Campbell Papers
BC 233	John Maxwell Papers
BC 293	Sir W.E.M. Stanford Papers
BC 676	Major General Sir H.T. Lukin Papers
BC 766	Greenwood Miscellany
BCS 122	Reports and Notes on Central African States
Brigade	1 st South African Infantry Brigade
C	Charlie
CMR	Cape Mounted Riflemen
CB	Commander of the Order of the Bath
CMG	Order of St Michael and St George
CO 8319	Secretary Colonial Office
DC	Secretary of Defence, Group 2
Division	Colonial Division
Diverse	Diverse, Group 1
DD	Department of Defence
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
GSWA	German South-West Africa
HQ	Headquarters
JP 764	Jeffrey's Phamflet
KCB	Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath
LC 8/07	The Clerk to Legislative Council

MI	Mounted Infantry
MOOC	Master of Supreme Court, Cape Town
NCO	Non-commissioned Officer
OM	Oorlogmuseunversameling, Bloemfontein
P1	Personal File
PM	Prime Minister
QR	Queens Rifles
SAB	South African Brigade
SE	South-east
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
UDF	Union Defence Forces
UG	Union Government
WWI DA	World War I Diary
WWI Diverse	World War I Diverse
WWI GSWA	World War I German South-West Africa

INTRODUCTION

It was only a few years ago that the 100th commemoration of the South African War was celebrated and 2014 will mark the centennial of the First World War. Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin played a major role in both of these wars as well as the colonial campaigns conducted in South Africa between 1879 and 1897, and the internal unrest of 1913 and 1914.

Every year new biographies are written and as time passes, it becomes more and more difficult to write a best seller or find someone interesting enough to write about. What is becoming even more problematic for biographers and historians is that many people no longer keep diaries. Why then another biography and specifically about a military leader? Critics of biography, such as Martin Amis, who dismiss biographies as ‘a lowly trade’ ask: ‘What the hell are they doing day after day, year after year (gossip? Ringing changes on the Zeitgeist?), if the life doesn’t somehow account for art?’¹ On the other hand there are those that promulgate the writing and reading of biographies, including W.S. McFeely, who says that when one writes or reads a biography or even ‘tell our own story or see ourselves in someone else’s, we embark on what can be an exciting journey.’² S.A. Leckie takes it one step further and gives five reasons why biographies are important. Firstly, because people need them for ‘inspiration, consolidation, and companionship.’³ Secondly, so that we know how other people reacted to difficult situations and choices similar to those that we may encounter daily. Thirdly, biographies are a ‘way of encountering the personal myths of others, so that we might reflect on our own personal mythmaking and perhaps achieve a deeper understanding of ourselves through others.’⁴ Fourthly they help us to ‘understand the extent to which history moulds individuals and, in turn, is influenced by individuals.’⁵ And the last reason she gives for the importance of biographies is that they cannot be seen apart from history, they are in relationship with history.⁶ F.E. Vandiver writes that military biographies are important

¹ This was the comment of Martin Amis reviewing a biography of Philip Larkin, see W.S. McFeely, ‘Preface: Why Biography?’ in M. Rhiel and D. Suchoff, eds, *The Seduction of Biography*, ix.

² McFeely, ‘Preface: Why Biography?’, ix.

³ S.A. Leckie, ‘Biography Matters: Why Historians Need Well-Crafted Biographies More than Ever’, in L.E. Ambrosius, ed, *Writing Biography: Historians & Their Craft*, 13.

⁴ Leckie, ‘Biography Matters’, 13.

⁵ Leckie, ‘Biography Matters’, 13.

⁶ For other perspectives on why biographies or history are important, see C.N Parke, *Biographies: Writing Lives*; M. Rhiel and D. Suchoff, eds, *The Seduction of Biography*; J.F. Veninga, ed, *The Biographer’s Gift: Life Histories and Humanism*; G. Lerner, *Why History Matters: Life and Thought*.

‘because the careers of great captains do loom above the mass of lives — and in the careers of these men can often be glimpsed lessons for younger leaders.’⁷

Henry Timson Lukin proved an interesting topic because of my own context as a soldier-historian, but over and above this, Lukin was, and arguably may still be, an excellent example of a person that set out to reach a goal and achieved it, and he may also fall into the category of great captains that Vandiver describes. J.M. Cooper describes the importance of writing biographies and highlights and supports my reasons for choosing Lukin as a topic: Lukin had and still has some ‘historical significance’ and he ‘illuminate[s] important things about the times in which they lived and the events in which they participated.’⁸

This study has a dual purpose. Firstly it describes the life of Lukin and what he achieved personally, and secondly, it shows what he contributed to South Africa and her people. He played a major role in the amalgamation of the different colonial forces into the Union Defence Forces in 1912 and he and the surviving members of the 1st South African Infantry Brigade (Brigade) played an important role in promulgating post-union South Africanism. His life is therefore a useful window through which to observe several processes: the unification of forces and the formation of a new military system after 1912; officer and men relationships and the forging of a South African identity.

The bulk of the published work on the Union Defence Forces (UDF) and its predecessors focuses on major wars and especially the two World Wars. There is, generally speaking, a lack of military biographies in South Africa and the biographies that do exist were largely produced by amateur historians/journalists/line officers who were not very critical with their sources and many of whom did not undertake primary research. This is true for the single biography of Lukin, which was published in 1926, a year after his death. This present study thus serves to fill a historiographical lacuna. Some of the authors who have included small sections of Lukin’s life in other works are J. Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France* (London 1920), the Cape Commando Series of T. Shearing and D. Shearing, (Sedgefield 1998-2000), F.L. Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986* (East London 1988), P.K.A. Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies: The 1st SA Infantry Brigade in Libya, France and Flanders 1915-1919* (Rivonia 1993), and W. Steenkamp, *The Soldiers* (Cape Town 1978). What was of great concern was that only a few of Lukin’s letters are available at the University of Cape Town’s Archives and Manuscripts Collections. Some letters were also found in archive groups held in the Military Archives Depot in Pretoria, but it is almost certain that the bulk of Lukin’s letters are in the possession of one of his relatives. Access to these letters would have allowed a more personal perspective. Here again Cooper says that if one does

⁷ F.E. Vandiver, ‘Biography as an Agent of Humanism’, in J.F. Veninga, ed, *The Biographer’s Gift: Life Histories and Humanism*, 14.

⁸ J.M. Cooper, ‘Conception, Conversation, and Comparison: My Experience as a Biographer’, in L.E. Ambrosius, ed, *Writing Biography: Historians & Their Craft*, 81.

not have the luxury of diaries, letters and other private writings, one must take other avenues to supplement one's work.

One of these avenues is to do more extensive research. For this paper several archives, university libraries and private collections were researched, as well as the diaries, letters and private writings of several people who were close to Lukin. Public records were also used to get more information on Lukin. Cooper also suggests that one interview people that knew your subject, but that proved impracticable as the last of the men of the Brigade died several years ago. By utilising the Internet Nellie's family in Canada was located. Her grandson, Mr Derek Lukin Johnston is now aged but through communication with his children it was established that he does not remember anything significant about his great uncle. F.E. Vandiver correctly asserts that historians must 'steep themselves [oneself] in data, work with the data for some time, let them [the data] work on them [oneself], and then begin to pick and choose what they [oneself] perceive as necessary to shape a person from the past - more than that, to evoke a person into being.'⁹ That was mostly the process followed throughout this research.¹⁰

A problem formulation was conducted to give better guidelines as to how to approach this thesis. Several (if not most) generals who served in the South African War suffered severe criticism after 1902. How did Lukin survive this rampant criticism? Lukin was supposedly an expert in mounted infantry. Yet he seemingly was able to take command of artillery forces in the South African War and of infantry forces in the First World War quite effectively. How was he able to innovate and adapt at a time when such characteristics were so absent elsewhere? The formation of the new Union Defence Forces witnessed much tension between former Imperial, Colonial and Boer forces. Why was Lukin appointed to one of the three top posts? Why was Lukin appointed to command a force in German South-West Africa, and made a field commander in Egypt and the Western Front? And, in the latter case, why was one of the great Boer generals of the South African War not chosen? After his defence of Delville Wood (July 1916), Lukin received several invitations and congratulatory letters from a wide section of South African society. And this at a time when several (most?) generals on the Western Front were facing censure. Why, again, did Lukin achieve popularity rather than notoriety?

It is important to note that this is not a complete biography of Lukin. For that reason Chapter One, 'A Short Biography of Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin (1860-1925)' gives the reader an overview of Lukin's life, highlighting the most important events. In this chapter Lukin's involvement in the Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR), in the Cape Colonial Forces and as Inspector General of the Union Defence Forces (UDF), are prominently depicted. This gives the reader a

⁹ Vandiver, 'Biography as an Agent of Humanism', 4.

¹⁰ Cooper, 'Conception, Conversation, and Comparison', 82-83;

better perspective of why his colleagues, staff and other ranks had such admiration and respect for him.

Chapter Two, 'Moving up through the ranks: The South African War (1899-1902)' shows the reader how Lukin, as a captain commanding only a few soldiers on the Eastern Cape border before the war, was now given the responsibility of artillery commander of the CMR and how Lukin and his artillery troop saved the Colonial Division from the Boer forces on several occasions. It also shows how Lukin was soon appointed to the command of the CMR and how, during the strenuous operations against the Boer commandos, he received more responsibility as second in command of a column and later, as commander of a column.

Chapter Three, 'To a Distant Continent (1915-1916)' shows the confidence the South African government had in Lukin by appointing him as the commander of the Brigade to represent the South Africans in the First World War in North Africa and Western Europe. During this period Lukin and his troops made a name for themselves and after a while everyone knew that they were a first-rate outfit. The aim of Chapter Three is to give more detail about the much-written battle of Delville Wood as well as Lukin's personal involvement in this battle. This battle can also be seen as the forging place for the new South Africanism that the government tried to instil from 1912 onwards. It was not only the South African government that had shown confidence in the abilities of Lukin, but also the Allied command when they appointed him to the command of the 9th Scottish Division in 1916.

Chapter Four, 'Memories, Memorial and Historiography' gives the reader an insight into the last few years of Lukin's life and how he was appreciated not only by most of his fellow soldiers, but also by the greater South African community. Furthermore, it shows how Lukin and the rest of the Brigade helped to build a new South Africanism by bringing Afrikaans and English-speaking communities together, and thus this chapter contributes to a broader body of scholarship on South Africanism.¹¹ Many Allied countries had their heroes and for South Africa, Lukin and the Brigade were those heroes. The government utilised them to try to bring unity to the diverse people of South Africa, when they returned to the Afrikaans and English-speaking and the indigenous communities.

J.F. Veninga writes that 'Biographies that evoke full lives — inner and outer persons — provide us with knowledge about how other persons have shaped their existence. We see the process by which that shape comes into being. We may like that shape, be disgusted by it, or stand in total awe of it, but, in an immediate sense, our reaction to the shape of the life is of less

¹¹ See, for example, S. Dubow, 'Colonial Nationalism, the Milner Kindergarten and the Rise of "South Africanism", 1902-10,' *History Workshop Journal*, No 43, 1997, 56; J. Lambert, 'South African British? or, Dominion South Africans? : the evolution of an identity in the 1910s and 1920s', in *South African Historical Journal*, Vol 43, November 2000, 197-222.

importance than the fact that we see the shape and the process that led to it.¹² The aim of all of these chapters was to portray Lukin, the soldier and leader, in the way that his superiors, colleagues, juniors and enemies saw him and thought of him. Lukin, as a person, like many other people in history and today, is important to study, because as C.N. Parke, in *Biographies: Writing Lives* says, 'The fundamental social quality of human existence helps to account for the enduring and varied history of biography, for the way this form rivals fiction in its imaginative appeal to the most powerful emotions of hope and fear, desire and hate, attraction and repulsion, as well as for the fact that in its long history biography has identified issues and tackled problems endemic to life, which are in equal measure practical, metaphysical, quotidian, and mysterious, and which nearly every age, to date, has felt the obligation to rethink.'¹³

Hereby I wish to thank all the people and institutions that were of assistance in the research and writing of this study. Firstly, my supervisor, Lieutenant Colonel I.J. Van der Waag, who is a great teacher and mentor. I thank him for all the assistance, guidance and help that he has given me at all times. Equally, I wish to thank my co-supervisor, Dr S.S. Swart, who gave me good assistance and guidance, specifically the feedback she gave me regarding themes that definitely brought another perspective to this study. Special thanks must also be given to Betty Russell-Smith for the proofreading and editing of the thesis. I have spent many hours in many archives and libraries while researching and searching for better material on Lukin. Therefore I want to give special thanks to all the willing staff at the South African National Defence Force Archive Depot, especially Steve de Agrela, Anri van der Westhuizen and Gerald Prinsloo. Also to the staff at the National Archives of South Africa, Cape Town, the South African National Library, the University of Cape Towns Special Manuscripts Department and the South African Military Museum in Johannesburg. I also want to thank the helpful staff at the Anglo-War Museum, Bloemfontein, specifically Elria Wessels. Thanks are also due to Dr Andre van Dyk for the time he gave me to work through his private collection while I visited Bloemfontein. Special thanks as well to Lieutenant Colonel J. A. Jacobs for the drawing of two maps. Maps, figures and photographs not referenced, have been specially commissioned or taken for this work.

All of this could not have been done without the love and assistance of my friends and loving family members, specifically, my wife Adri, for all her help and understanding.

And last, but not the least, I want to give thanks and praise to our Lord who gave me the opportunity to take on this study and complete it.

¹² Veninga, ed, *The Biographer's Gift*, 61.

¹³ Parke, *Biographies*, xii.

CHAPTER 1

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF MAJOR GENERAL SIR HENRY TIMSON LUKIN (1860-1925)

Henry Timson Lukin always wanted to be a soldier. Even his boyhood pranks assumed a military nature. Before the age of seven, his favourite pastime was burying, with full military honours, his sister's dolls in the garden, and by the age of sixteen he was able to recall the history of every British Regiment and was never to be found without an Army List. For a boy of Lukin's background this was not strange. Immediate relatives included an admiral, a major general and a colonel as well as others who had served in the military. On one occasion Mr Davies, the headmaster of Merchant Taylor School which he attended, summoned him. He was in trouble again. Davies enquired what he wished to do after leaving the school. Without hesitation Lukin replied:

Yes, sir, I am going to be a soldier.¹

Davies' response may have given him some inspiration:

I am so glad, my boy. You will make a thorough[ly] good soldier.²

This incident always stayed with Lukin and may well have been one of the reasons why he persisted in the hope of becoming a soldier.³ His family background was undoubtedly another.

Childhood years and growing up in Britain

Born on 24 May 1860 in Edith Villas, Fulham, a suburb of London, Lukin was the only son of Robert Henry Lukin, a lawyer at the Inner Temple, and Ellen Watson. The Lukin family dated back to around 1400 and had owned large estates in the areas of Mashbury and Dunmow. Lionel Lukin (1742-1834), the first of the family to be renowned, invented the lifeboat. His elder brother, Vice Admiral William Lukin, inherited the estate of Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk from William Windham, the Secretary of State for War, on condition that he take the name of Windham. Henry Timson Lukin, the subject of this study, is descended from a younger brother, George, who was Dean of Wells and Rector of Felbrigg. From the 1870s, facing few opportunities in Britain, younger sons and the sons of younger sons left Britain for the colonies: some for a vocation or adventure, others for

¹ R.E. Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood, The Life Story of Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin*, 12.

² W. Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 51; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 12.

³ J. Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', *Militaria*, 5(3), 1975, 40; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 1-12; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 51-52.

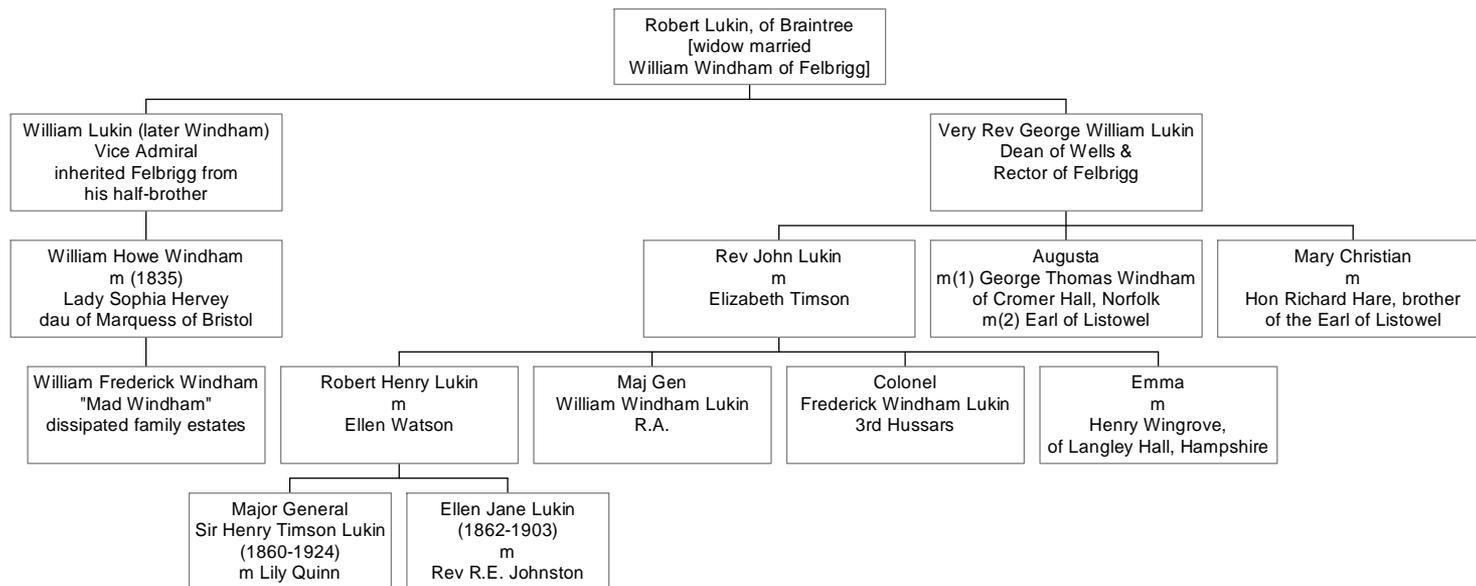


Figure 1.1: Descent of Major General Sir H.T. Lukin.

health reasons. The few with means attempted to re-create vanishing lifestyles where agricultural land was cheap, furthermore positions more prominent than those to which they could lay claim at home could be enjoyed and genteel occupations could still be pursued. Here they would, largely unsuccessfully, make a life for themselves and in the process build new countries and have a good time. The army would be an ideal vehicle for Lukin to maintain a genteel lifestyle.⁴

Throughout the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries the Lukins sent most of their younger sons into the armed forces, which did not have the stigma of trade, was financially more rewarding than the Church, and held the prospect of adventure. The places they were sent were often on the periphery of the empire. Lukin sons tended to rise to senior rank: Henry's uncles included Major General William Windham Augustus Lukin, who received the Medjidieh medal and the Legion of Honour, and Colonel Frederick Windham Lukin of the 3rd Hussars. This military background further reinforced Henry's determination for a military career.⁵

Young Henry and his sister Ellen Jane (Nellie), born on 5 February 1862, were brought up in a loving and caring environment and one of the most important cornerstones of their family life was the Christian faith. Henry had great love for Nellie and their mother; and although their father, Robert, placed his family first, overseas travel was his other major interest, meaning that he was often away from home. This loving environment ensured that after Mrs Lukin's death in 1867, the two children became very close and although Nellie was younger than Henry, it was she who kept the family together through times of hardship and loneliness. Her smiles and relaxing attitude helped when the tensions of normal family life became too much. Early on in their lives they learned one of life's most important lessons, how to cope with the death of a close family member. This intimate friendship with his sister meant a great deal to Lukin and he later wrote: 'I hope your influence will be as great with your boys when they are entering manhood as it was with your brother.'⁶ Nellie's influence on him and his father, together with the help in the household of an old aunt of Mrs Lukin, who stayed with them until Nellie's seventeenth birthday, ensured that they had an almost perfect upbringing. This resulted in a fulfilled and happy childhood played out in a stable environment.⁷

Henry grew up to be a physically strong and sturdy young man who was able to participate and excel in any sport. Sport, deemed to be one of the cornerstones of education and training of the armed forces, played a very important role in empire building during the latter half of the nineteenth century. William Baker, Davies' successor as headmaster of Merchant Taylor's School, had this in view when he developed new sites for games 'to foster a corporate and public spirit

⁴ D. Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 429; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 1-5.

⁵ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 1-5, 7.

⁶ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 8-9.

⁷ Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 51; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 6-12; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 40.

among the boys of the school, by drawing them together in common amusement and giving them common interests.⁸ On sport Baker wrote in 1872,

Besides this, I regard such an arrangement as desirable for the healthy development of a boy's character and as furnishing a wholesome corrective to the narrowing effects of excessive competition.⁹

This proved to be very successful in Lukin's case, as he always had a keen interest in sport and did everything to promote it, even when he and his men were deployed in later years.¹⁰

Lukin was never an outstanding academic and this proved an obstacle when he applied for the British armed forces. Merchant Taylor's School, founded in 1561 and one of Britain's 'great schools', aimed, throughout its history, to meet the demands of the changing educational environment and the concomitant needs of its pupils. During Lukin's time there, the school developed a new curriculum to comply with the demand for modern languages, science and commerce. When the time was ripe for the lads to make a choice of career, there was only one path for Lukin; he wanted to be a soldier. He had two choices, Woolwich or Sandhurst. The entrance exams to these military establishments were very difficult and Lukin's father appointed an Army coach, Mr Winter from Woolwich, to prepare him for these examinations. Lukin, however, failed the entrance examination for Sandhurst and was extremely disappointed.¹¹

Disappointed, but not discouraged, he and a very good friend, Syd Higgins, enrolled at the military riding school at Knightsbridge. This proved to be very important for his future military career, both as soldier and instructor. Lukin, at the same time, took a Junior Volunteer Officer's course in infantry drill at the Chelsea barracks and by taking part in sport, such as boxing and rowing, improved his fitness, self-control and endurance. During this time, while walking back from his day's work, he came upon a quarrel between an abusive husband and his wife. Lukin tried to intervene and, the target of both their punches, came away with a black eye and a few bruises. This incident reflects his sincerity, sense of fair play, and his conception of how spouses should treat each other. At the same time it clearly showed that he did not have the skill or experience to handle and defuse such volatile situations. His father, quite rightly, now became agitated with his son's persistence in becoming a soldier. Lukin, after all, had failed the entrance examination and would struggle to receive a commission in the British Army. Facing parental pressure and the need to start earning his keep, Lukin seized the opportunity presented by the deteriorating politico-military situation in southern Africa and the possibility of war against the Zulu kingdom of King

⁸ Anon, 'History of Merchant Taylors School', <http://www.mtsn.org.uk>, (Accessed 05/05/2003).

⁹ Anon, 'History of Merchant Taylor's School', <http://www.mtsn.org.uk>, (Accessed 05/05/2003).

¹⁰ R. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion*, 296; J. Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth-Century Warfare*, 60-61; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 7, 13, 52-53; Anon, 'History of Merchant Taylor's School', <http://www.mtsn.org.uk>, (Accessed 05/05/2003).

¹¹ Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson' 40; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 7-13; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 51-53; Anon, *History of Merchant Taylor's School*, <http://www.mtsn.org.uk>, (Accessed 05/05/2003).

Cetewayo in 1878.¹²

This was part of the ideology of Empire encapsulated in Sir Samuel Makenzie's words,

Englishmen ... are naturally endowed with a spirit of adventure. There is in the hearts of all a germ of freedom which longs to break through the barriers that confine us to our own shores; and as the newborn wildfowl takes the water from its deserted eggshell, so we wander over the world when launched on our own resources.

This innate spirit of action is the mainspring of the power of England. Go where you will, from the north to the south and from the east to west, you meet an Englishman.¹³

War was one way in which to find adventure and southern Africa a perfect military playground. Yet, Lukin was a little different to other genteel adventurers who had fortunes or monthly remittances. Having failed the military entrance examinations and without an estate to inherit or a personal fortune, Lukin had to make a success of his undertaking. This did not mean that he would not thoroughly enjoy a colonial campaign, but, unlike some of his counterparts, this was a risk he had to take and one in which he had to succeed.¹⁴

Arrival in South Africa

Lukin had to convince his father that the looming war in southern Africa represented the only opportunity he had to pursue a military career. He was successful. Lukin sailed for Durban on the *RMS Nyanza* on 2 January 1879 and was bid a safe journey by his father, sister and cousin, Henry Wingrove. After a long voyage he landed at Durban armed only with letters of introduction, having lost his money gambling on board. These letters had little impact, and did not gain him a commission, but he felt that at least he was in a promising place. Lord Chelmsford's ultimatum to the Zulu King expired on 10 January 1879¹⁵ and after the disaster of Isandhlwana on 22 January 1879¹⁶, it was clear that an expanded war was imminent.¹⁷

The only job Lukin could get was as a road foreman. He had no knowledge of the work, but

¹² Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 13-15; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 53; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 40

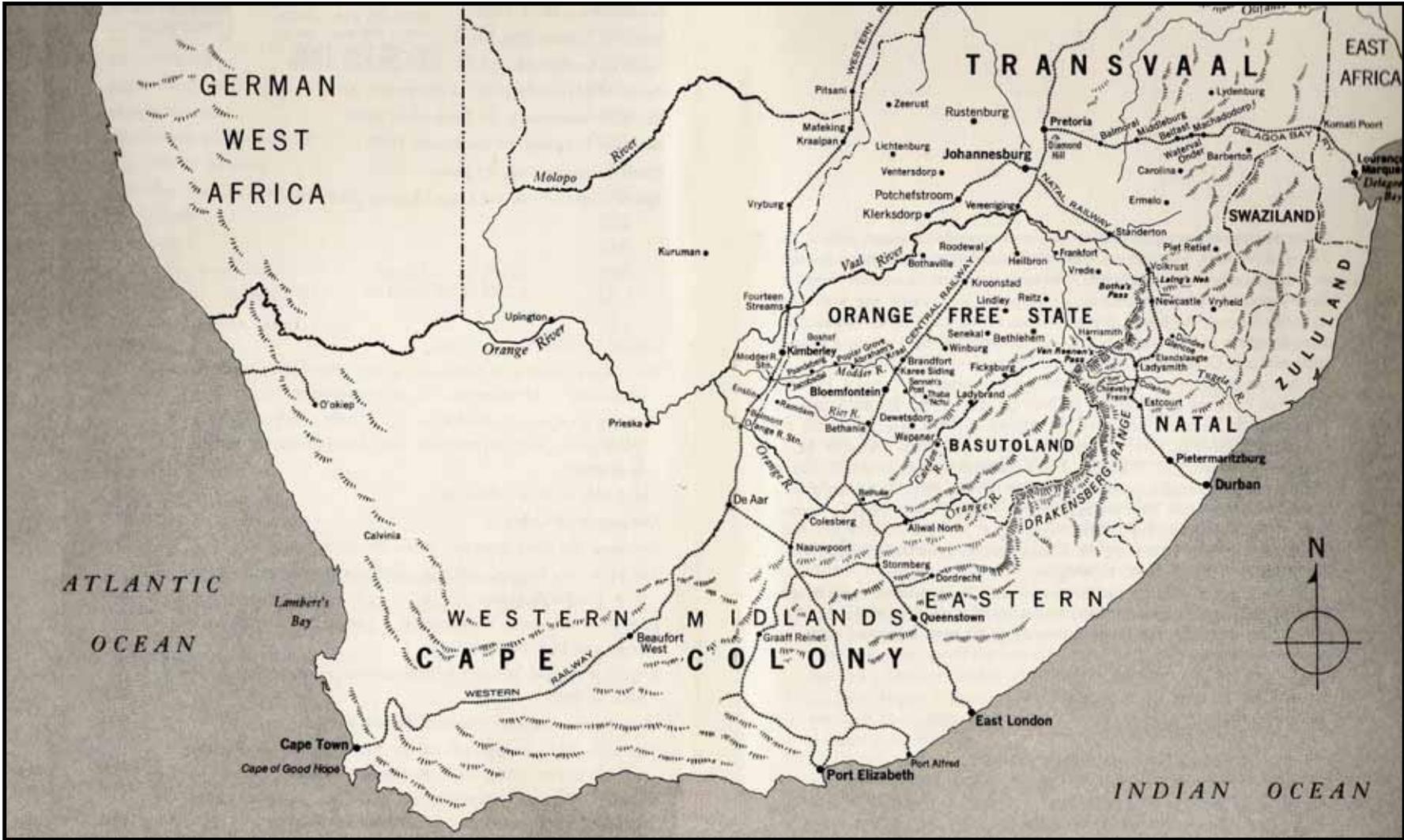
¹³ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914*, 280.

¹⁴ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914*, 280-282.

¹⁵ There is some speculation that an ultimatum was ever delivered to King Cetewayo from Lord Chelmsford. A Colonel Harry Sparks, of the Durban Mounted Rifles, was told by Chief John Dunn, to whom the ultimatum was handed to be delivered to Chief Cetewayo, that it was never given to the Zulu king because it meant certain death to anyone attempting to do so. See University of Cape Town Archives (Hereinafter UCT), BC 67, Report by Colonel Harry Sparks, Chelmsford's ultimatum to Cetewayo. Never delivered to the Zulu King.

¹⁶ Sir William Beaumont, who was the Magistrate of Newcastle and Commandant of the No1 District, says in his personal narrative that the slaughter at Isandhlwana could have been prevented. He mentions information he got in a letter from a leader of one of the Impis, called Woodroffe (he was not sure of the name), which stated that Mayana was given full authority by Cetewayo to raid the camp at Isandhlwana. Sir Beaumont dispatched a special messenger to Lord Chelmsford, at Isandhlwana, with this information, but he states that he never knew if this information ever reached Lord Chelmsford. See UCT, BC 67, Report by Sir William Beaumont, Isandhlwana could have been averted. Fateful message that was never delivered.

¹⁷ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 15-17; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 53; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 40-41.



Map 1.1: South Africa, 1900s.
(Source: Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, viii-ix)

he needed the money and at least it was a start. He probably also had the satisfaction of contributing, even if in a small way, to the communications network that opened the Empire for further colonisation and development.¹⁸ The work on the roads was not without adventure. Although not in the military, Lukin had to put down a strike within his first few days as foreman. His actions in doing so were those of any colonial official. He lined the workers up and told the headman to step forward and then announced:

Here is my revolver. I've got one in each hand. The first man that refuses to obey orders I shoot dead! Now get on with the work.¹⁹

Lukin's actions were, almost to the letter, how the British were able to rule over the world's people according to Ronald Hyam, 'The Empire held together, then, by exercise of "master's magic and gunman's gun"; by psychological bluffing techniques.'²⁰ The local inhabitants did not possess these weapons and ammunition and therefore the British were able to dominate and control them, as Lukin did. He did not have to do this job for long. While they were building a wagon road for the advance of the British troops, he heard that a battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers would pass by that afternoon. He decided to offer the officers some tea if they reached the top. When they reached the top, the officers wandered to the tent and Henry offered them tea. The adjutant accepted and at the same time recognised Henry. The Adjutant was Henry's cousin, Jack Spurgin.²¹

At last a soldier: The Zulu War

After they had talked over tea Spurgin invited Henry for supper at the mess that night and promised to see what he could organise to get Lukin a commission in one of Lord Chelmsford's forces. This was exactly why Lukin had come to South Africa. As Chelmsford started to prepare for his operation against Cetewayo, he knew that he needed more cavalry. Major H.M. Bengough of the 77th Regiment was entrusted with recruiting a cavalry force made up of British officers and the Native Contingent. With a letter of recommendation, Bengough applied for Lukin's commission and within days Henry's dream became a reality, although six thousand kilometres away from his birthplace, Lieutenant Lukin received a commission in Bengough's Horse.²²

The experience and knowledge Syd and Henry had gained from the military horse-riding course was useful in the training of the Native Contingents while Chelmsford waited for more reinforcements from Britain. Chelmsford, who had regrouped his forces after the tactical defeat at

¹⁸ J. Morris, *Pax Britannica: The Climax of an Empire*, 361.

¹⁹ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 18.

²⁰ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914*, 307-309.

²¹ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914*, 307-309; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 53; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 41; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 18-20.

²² Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 53; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 41; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 19-22.

Isandwana, invaded Zululand again in June 1879. Lukin's first encounter with war was when he was tasked to be part of a search party for the Prince Imperial of France, who was killed while on reconnaissance. The operations against Cetewayo began on 18 June 1879 with the combined movement of Chelmsford's second Division and Colonel E. Wood's Flying Column towards the Zulu kingdom. From 30 June 1879 it became clear that war was the only outcome of the ultimatum that Chelmsford had sent to King Cetewayo. With the ultimatum ending on 3 July 1879, Chelmsford sent out a reconnaissance force under Lieutenant Colonel Buller to get the necessary information for the attack.²³

On 4 July 1879, at 6 a.m., the operations against the forces of Cetewayo started. Chelmsford ordered the majority of his forces to form a hollow square for the advance towards the Zulu forces. The Native Contingent, of which Bengough's Horse formed part, was positioned inside this square. The Zulu forces first attacked the right side of the square, but because of the very effective small rifle, gattling and artillery fire, they did not succeed in breaking up this formation. They also tried to break up the left side of the formation, but again without any success. At 9.25 a.m. Chelmsford sent out the 17th Lancers, under Colonel D. Lowe, from within the square to engage the enemy and after the Zulus started to disperse, the mounted Native Contingent, under Bengough, was tasked to deliver the final blow to the fleeing Zulu forces.²⁴

Lukin formed part of this force and while busy chasing the fleeing Zulu forces, Bengough noticed Lukin was wounded. Lukin made as if it was nothing serious, but just after this he fell off his horse, unconscious. He lost a large quantity of blood and was admitted to the ambulance station. The battle of Ulundi lasted just over three hours with 12 killed and 88 wounded on the British side and some 1500 dead on the side of the Zulu forces. Lukin was admitted to hospital and had to undergo several operations to ensure the proper recovery of his leg. After these operations he was advised to leave for England to recuperate. The end of the war also meant the disbanding of Bengough's Horse and so Lukin was once more without a job. Bengough confirmed that Lukin promised to become an excellent soldier and officer when he stated that,

He has distinguished himself from the first day of joining the Battalion by the active and zealous performance of his duties, and I consider him one of the most promising young soldiers who have served with me during the war. He is anxious to obtain a commission in the Imperial Army, and I would gladly second his wishes as far as in my powers lies, as I believe him to possess all the qualifications necessary to make a good officer.²⁵

²³ Military Archives Depot: Personnel Archive Repository (hereinafter MAD), P1/568 H.T. Lukin, Archive Number 17879 (hereinafter P1), Record of Service of the late Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., 21 January 1926; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 23-35; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 53; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 41.

²⁴ For details on the forces and a complete description of the battle at Ulundi see D.D. Hall, 'Squares in the Zulu War', *Military History Journal*, 4(5), June 1979, 184-187; J. Laband, *The battle of Ulundi*, 28-42; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 35-38; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 53-54; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 41.

²⁵ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 38-39.

With this recommendation and that of the Commandant General of the Colonial Forces of the Cape, Colonel Sir C.M. Clarke, Lukin saw the possibility of admittance to an Imperial Regiment. This was not to be the case.²⁶

Lukin is commissioned

For the second time Lukin was not able to get a commission in the British military forces and by this time he might have felt that there was no future for him in the military. Once more, he seized an opportunity to further his military career in South Africa. The Cape Colony Government annually offered two commissions to officers who had distinguished themselves: Henry Timson Lukin was one of the two. On 23 March 1881, Lukin received his commission in the Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR). At the time Lukin joined the CMR, some time close to the end of the Basuto War, the force comprised two wings, Lukin was attached to the left wing of Colonel F. Carrington. The Basuto War started in September 1880²⁷ because the Cape Colony forced the Peace Preservation Act on the local inhabitants in Basutoland. This act enabled the Cape Government to deprive the Basuto people of the arms they possessed.²⁸ Lukin was determined to succeed and took on every task with energy and enthusiasm. Even as a young officer in the regiment he was noticed by his superiors and was in 1897 one of the recipients of the Cape of Good Hope General Service Medal with the clip 'Basutoland, 1881'.²⁹

For the following few years he was stationed at Umtata, the headquarters of the Left Wing of the CMR. There were several other outposts manned by the CMR and one of their tasks was to protect the people and their possessions in their area from the local inhabitants of the Cape Colony. While at Umtata, Lukin concentrated on the training and efficiency of his troops. He was strict but just, as one troop remarked, 'My word! He is a devil, but he is a just devil.'³⁰ One of the reasons for training is to be able to operate effectively and efficiently in the field. Lukin, at one time, had to contend with the uprisings of the Pondos. He took three guns to show the effect of the guns on a clump of trees, and when the Pondos saw the effect of this incredible weapon the uprisings were temporarily set aside. R.W. Connell explained that 'violence on the largest possible scale is the purpose of the military'³¹ and Lukin did exactly this. He used 'violence' not to kill any of the

²⁶ Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 54-55; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 41; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 38-39.

²⁷ The Basuto war started on 13 September 1880 when the forces of Chief Lerothodi and Carrington met on the battlefield, see MAD, Adjutant General (hereinafter AG) 14, Box 5, Basutoland Rebellion 1880-81; UCT, BC 233, Basutoland campaign 1880-1881.

²⁸ This was also known as the Disarmament Act no 13 of 1878 and was first enforced on the Basuto from October 1879, see MAD, AG 14, Box 5, Basutoland Rebellion 1880-81.

²⁹ B. Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 45-48; MAD, AG 14, Box 5, Basutoland Rebellion 1880-81; MAD, P1; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 40,45-51; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 55-56; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 41-42.

³⁰ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 52.

³¹ R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 213.



Illustration 1.2: Lieutenant H.T. Lukin, Cape Mounted Rifleman, 1881.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR700019940, Shelf Number 700019940)



Illustration 1.3: Lady A.M. (Lily) Lukin.

(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR700019936, Shelf Number 700019936)

Pondos, but only to show them what they could expect if they wanted to continue with the uprising and he used this 'violence to sustain their dominance'³² over the Pondos. This was the case for a long time; the colonials were able to sustain their dominance because of their superior weapons.³³

Lukin knew that training and hardship would not always get the required results. Being a great sportsman he promoted events that would take the soldiers minds off their work and training. These included gymkhanas, polo and cricket matches, and horse races. Most of the time he was among the winners. Sport has always played a role in the military, because, as S.W. Roskill noted, when officers play team sports with their men they will be able to get to know them better under different circumstances. According to Roskill, all young men have some or other interest in sports or games and the officer should, as Lukin did, try to find out what their interests are and what other talents they possess on the sports field. The sports field is a very good measure of what a person may do on the battlefield or under difficult circumstances, because they learn to take risks and disregard personal safety. Other amusements they took part in were concerts, amateur theatricals, and dances. All of these relaxing activities made the hard training and operations in the field worthwhile.³⁴

Lukin was transferred to Alice as commander of the outpost and it was here where he met his wife to be, Miss Annie Maria (Lily) Quinn born 1 August 1866. She was one of the daughters of a very prominent farmer in this district, M.H. Quinn. They were married in 1891, never had children, but were definite soul mates. As much as he had admired his mother and sister, his love for his wife was greater.³⁵ To be a successful soldier and leader, one needs to have a stable and well-balanced family life. S.W. Roskill said that,

To the leader in the fighting service, who even in peace time can be subjected to an uncommon degree of mental strain during his working days, the tranquillity of home life, the benediction of love giving and receiving, and the companionship of problems shared and understood, can bring spiritual refreshment of the deepest kind.³⁶

Lily conformed to this kind of support provision, as Lukin himself said in 1925, shortly before passing away, she was 'A wife, a comrade and helpmate as perfect as ever fell to the lot of man.'³⁷

The Colonial Government already knew the potential of the artillery and the advantage they

³² Connell, *Masculinities*, 83.

³³ Connell, *Masculinities*, 83; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 52-57; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 57; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 42.

³⁴ S.W. Roskill, *The Art of Leadership*, 74-75; G.D. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches: Officer-Man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army in the Era of the First World War*, 44-48; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 51-53; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 56; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 42.

³⁵ Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 42; MAD, AG 14, Box 10, File 12, Black Wars; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 53-54; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 56-57.

³⁶ Roskill, *The Art of Leadership*, 33.

³⁷ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 54.

had over the local population if the guns were used effectively. Lukin was appointed as the Artillery Troop commander and Instructor of the CMR. While in command of the Artillery Troop of the CMR, he had the opportunity, in 1893, to undergo a gunnery and signal course at Woolwich and Shoeburyness, in Britain.³⁸ During this year of extensive training, he had time to introduce his wife to family and friends in Britain. After returning in January 1894 to Alice, he was promoted to the rank of captain on 1 February 1894. He had learnt a lot from the course, and had much to teach his subordinates on his return to the Cape Colony. He established a very efficient Horse Artillery Battery for the CMR and in 1897 introduced maxim guns to this battery. While posted at Alice, Lukin wrote and published a handbook on machine-gun fire and the use of the maxim gun. The Signaller Troop likewise benefited from the knowledge and experience he had gained in Britain by being able to communicate over longer distances and therefore improve communication between commanders during operations. He was the outpost commander of Alice until 1898 and then transferred to the Barkly East–Dordrecht district. The people of Alice showed their appreciation for the Lukins by means of a banquet and farewell parties in their honour. The words spoken at these occasions showed their admiration for this couple. At this early stage of their marriage, they already made an excellent couple who complemented each other in their work.³⁹

The Bechuanaland Campaign

Lukin did not have to wait long to test the skill and experience he had gained from his time in Britain. From the time of the first colonisation of the people of Bechuanaland in 1870, there was always some rivalry between the Bechuanas, the Griquas, and the prospectors.⁴⁰ Rumours were that the indigenous people were already thinking of a rebellion, even before the precautions to stop the rinderpest disease from spreading were implemented. The Bechuanas saw these restrictions as restraining orders and disorder erupted. Incidents such as the Cape Police being fired on and some European traders being murdered needed swift intervention from the Government. The leaders of these revolting Bechuanas continually escaped and therefore a small force of the Cape Mounted Rifles, under the command of Captain H.V. Woon, was ordered to launch operations against Chief Galishwe. The aim was to capture these leaders and subdue the unrest.⁴¹

³⁸ MAD, AG 14, Box 10, File 12, Black Wars.

³⁹ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 53-58; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 56-57; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 42.

⁴⁰ For more background on the resistance of the Bechuanas from 1870 to 1900, see H. Saker and J. Aldeidge, 'The origins of the Langeberg Rebellion', *Journal of African History*, XII (2), 1971, 299-317; K. Shillington, *The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana 1870-1900*; P.H.R. Snyman, *Kuruman-verloë pad na Afrika*; UCT, BCS 122, Anon, Reports and Notes on Central African States during the late 19th Century - early 20th Century, 12-13; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 57-61.

⁴¹ N. Orpen, *The Cape Town Highlanders 1885-1970*, 19-21; Saker and Aldeidge, *The origins of the Langeberg Rebellion*, 299-317; Williams, 'Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen', 48-51; P.J. Young, *Boot and Saddle- A narrative record of the Cape Regiment, the British Cape Mounted Riflemen, the Frontier Armed Mounted Police, and the Colonial Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 105; F.L. Coleman, *The Kafrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 37-38; Shillington, *The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana 1870-1900*, 235-238; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 57; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 42-43.

The first expedition failed to achieve this objective and therefore Colonel E.H. Dalgety with some one thousand men, two maxims and an artillery detachment under the command of Lukin, arrived at Kuruman on 14 March 1897. Lukin, being the commander of the artillery detachment, also had to perform the duties of the field-adjutant and established a very professional heliographic service within the force. After the re-organisation of the forces, Dalgety set out on 28 March 1897 to the Langeberg hills to defeat the Bechuanaland people who had revolted. The first attack was on 5 April 1897, but Dalgety's forces, who advanced in three columns, were not successful. After this reverse, Dalgety asked for reinforcements⁴² and by June 1897 he had some 2326 soldiers at his disposal.⁴³

The terrain around the Langeberge made this mission very difficult and the resistance they encountered was heavier than they had expected. The absence of water exacerbated the situation. They had to transport water from Ryan's farm, some 16 miles away, to the battlefield. Lukin, as field adjutant, was responsible for this logistic burden, and succeeded quite effectively in supplying the forces in the field with the necessary stores and water. This good work by Lukin was confirmed by a remark made by Dalgety,

Of the services of Captain Lukin, CMR, I cannot speak too highly.⁴⁴

With regards to communication, of which Lukin was also in control, Dalgety was even more impressed and thankful,

...drawing attention to the excellent work done by the signalling staff under Captain Lukin, which established, I believe, a heliographic record in South Africa, working daily between the Langeberg hills and Kuruman, a distance of nearly fifty miles.⁴⁵

These logistics, communications, and reinforcements ensured that the colonial forces were able to launch a series of attacks on the rebels starting on 30 July 1897⁴⁶. By early August Dalgety was able to report that the operations in the Langeberg hills were successful and that the rebellion was crushed. The positive response of his superior and the successes Lukin achieved showed that he

⁴² Among these reinforcements were 150 Volunteers from East London including a certain Greenwood. They arrived at Kuruman at around 1 o' clock on 28 June 1897, see UCT, BC 766, Dairy of Greenwood in Bechuanaland, 18 September 1897; Snyman, *Kuruman-verloë pad na Afrika*, 72.

⁴³ Orpen, *The Cape Town Highlanders 1885-1970*, 21-28; Williams, 'Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen', 49-56; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 105-108; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 37-39; Snyman, *Kuruman-verloë pad na Afrika*, 70; Shillington, *The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana 1870-1900*, 237-240; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 61-62; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 57; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 42-43.

⁴⁴ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 63. Other comments on Captain Lukin were in Colonel Dalgety's report where he singled out Lukin for special commendation, see Williams, 'Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen', 56 and just after Colonel Dalgety addressed the troops before they left for Kuruman from Ryan's Farm, the 23 companies gave three cheers to Colonels Dalgety and Spence, and Captains Johnstone and Lukin, see Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 43.

⁴⁵ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 63.

⁴⁶ Private J. Greenwood from the Volunteers of East London woke up at 2 o' clock on Friday the 30th of July 1897 and the advance for this first attack started at 2.30 that morning, see UCT, BC 766, Dairy of Greenwood in Bechuanaland, 18 September 1897.

was ready to take on more responsibility. This was also the case during the South African War in 1899. Until July 1899 there was division within the British Government about whether to go to war against the Boer republics and this delayed military preparations although Chamberlain and Milner were very keen to act as quickly as possible. The mobilisation was eventually ordered on 7 October 1899. It was during this campaign that Lukin proved that he was not only a good instructor, but also a good follower and leader.⁴⁷

The South African War 1899-1902

The first shots were fired on 12 October 1899 at Kraaipan, close to Mafeking, and the Boer forces had their first success when they captured an armoured train. This signalled the long awaited war in South Africa. The Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, Mr Schreiner, made his and the Colony's intentions clear in his speech on 28 August 1899 in the Cape House of Assembly, when he said, 'I shall do my best to maintain for this Colony the position of standing apart and aloof from the struggle, both with regards to its forces, and with regards to its people.'⁴⁸ But as time progressed it became clear that the Cape Colony would also have to defend itself against a probable invasion. Therefore the Cape Colonial forces were placed under the command of General Sir Redvers Buller on 31 October 1899.⁴⁹

At the outbreak of the war Lukin was stationed at Umtata with the CMR and their primary role at this stage was the protection of the border against any aggressive action of the Xhosa people in Transkei. There was some fear, after the failed Jameson Raid, that Xhosa groups were preparing to rebel if no compromise was reached between the Boer Republics and the British Government. It was only some two months after this that Lukin and his artillery would be asked to take part in the battles against the Boers. Sir W. Gatacre, with a force of two thousand six hundred men attacked the railway junction at Stormberg on 10 December 1899. This unsuccessful attack turned out to be an extension of the well-known black week of 10 to 17 December 1899, when the Boers beat the British forces.⁵⁰ At this time, Lukin's maxims and artillery, under the command of Major Sprenger,

⁴⁷ Orpen, *The Cape Town Highlanders 1885-1970*, 24-39; UCT, BC 766, Dairy of Greenwood in Bechuanaland, 18 September 1897; Williams, 'Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen', 53-57; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 108-111; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 39-49; Snyman, *Kuruman-verloë pad na Afrika*, 70-73; Shillington, *The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana 1870-1900*, 237-240; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 62-69; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 57; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 42-43; A.C. Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 225-226; L.S. Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, 58-60.

⁴⁸ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 68.

⁴⁹ A.C. Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 225-226; L.S. Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, 58-60; Williams, 'Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen', 58-59; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 110-111; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 46-49; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 67-69, 88-90; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 57; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 43.

⁵⁰ P. Warwick, *Black People and the South African War 1899-1902*, 114-116; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 70-72; Williams, 'Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen', 60-64; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 110-111; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 57.

other details of the CMR and the Montmorency's Scouts, in total 235, were deployed at Penhoek and were to join the main force at Molteno on 9 December 1899.

So Lukin and his men were spared the defeat at Stormberg, but it was not too long after this that they would have their first encounter with the Boer forces in the field. Lukin, as commander of the artillery and maxim guns, again proved the necessity and importance of these weapons on the battle fields of Labuschagne's Nek near Dordrecht in February 1900, Aliwal North in March 1900, the siege of Wepener in April 1900, and during the operations against the Rebels in the Cape Colony. During the South African War he was very lucky to survive the enteric fever that cost so many British soldiers their lives. He was diagnosed with enteric fever just after the Brandwater Basin operations, 10 November 1900. He was hospitalised in Lindley, which was largely under Boer occupation, and with the loving care of his wife and the nursing staff, was able to rejoin the CMR in February 1901. With the successes he and his men achieved it did not seem odd that the Cape Government entrusted him to command the Cape Colonial Forces in the No 1 Area, in the Eastern Cape during December 1901, and appointed him as the Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces from 1901, with the rank of Colonel.⁵¹

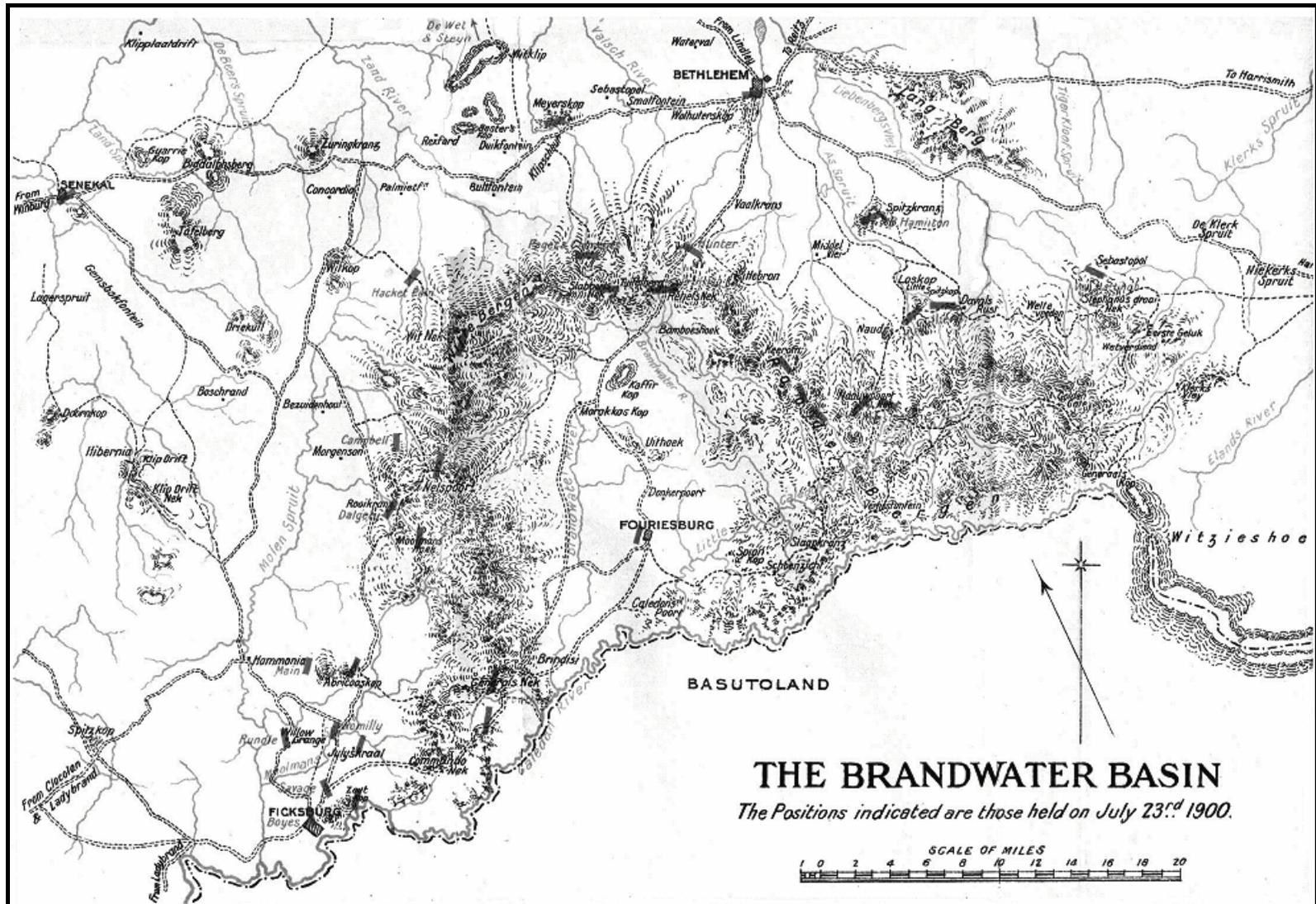
Commandant General in 1901 and Inspector General in 1912

Lukin learned much from the South African War and from his experiences while he was deployed in the Eastern Cape. From 1901 until he was appointed as Inspector General of the South African Permanent Force on 1 July 1912⁵², with the rank of Brigadier General, his mission was to improve the general readiness, training and skills of his officers, non-commissioned officers and men, and to ensure that mistakes were not repeated.⁵³ He devoted many hours to training and bettering the skills and efficiency of the staff work of his subordinates. Lukin encouraged his staff to go overseas for courses, because the little training available in the colonies was not sufficient or as professional as they could get in Britain, and the training was similar as the Union Defence Forces (UDF) structure was based on the British and Swiss models. Lukin also thought that the soldiers would benefit more if they attended these courses themselves rather than have a British instructor come to South Africa to present them. These courses would not only improve their personal skills

⁵¹ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Rifleman*, 65-117; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 111-119; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 60-94; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 67-107; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 57-62; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 43-44.

⁵² MAD, P1, Acting Under Secretary for Defence-Lukin, 6 July 1912.

⁵³ In a memorandum to the Honourable Minister of Defence on 13 December 1910 Lukin confirmed his intentions of developing his subordinates, see MAD, Diverse, Group 1 (hereinafter Diverse), Box 24, Citizen Force Letters 1910/11/12, Colonel Lukin-Minister of Defence, 13 December 1910. He at the same time did not hesitate to give recommendations to his subordinates for work well done, see MAD, Diverse, Box 24, Citizen Force Letters 1910/11/12, H.T. Lukin-Under Secretary for Defence, 22 January 1912; CA, A1691, 'Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin, KCB, CMG, DSO by Colonel B.C. Judd, OBE', W.M. Bisset-Colonel R.R. Langham-Carter, 30 June 1987.



Map 1.2: The Brandwater Basin, July 1900.
 (Source: Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, 342)

and training, but also benefit the larger military environment, as, on their return, they could train and teach their subordinates as well as apply what they had been taught. He also placed heavy demands on the Volunteer regiments and the school cadet system by means of regular inspections and training exercises.⁵⁴

Lukin's persistence paid off and the results could be seen at the regular training exercises of the UDF. In 1903 and 1904, while busy with this reorganisation he experienced much sorrow. Two of the people closest to him passed away. His sister Nellie died in September 1903 and a few months later he received word of his father's death. This was a time of great sadness, but he had to carry on and live out the dream both of them had supported him in. His first test as Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces was with the Bambata rebellion in Natal in 1906. Lukin instructed that the CMR garrisons on the Cape and Natal borders must be ready to act quickly if any instability should overflow from Natal. By June, when this rebellion started to get out of control, the Natal Government accepted the help offered by the Cape Government. The CMR was prominent in the success of subduing this rebellion and Lukin may have played a large role in this with a lecture he gave on *Savage Warfare* to Volunteer Corps of Instruction in 1905 at Fort Beaufort. A pamphlet of this lecture was used for a five-day camp of the Pretoria Garrison, which Col H. Wyndham attended in late August 1906. Three hundred of these pamphlets were later published to help all the CMR regiments in training to fight against the rebellious local inhabitants.⁵⁵ In his capacity as the Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces Lukin played an important role in the Defence conferences that took place in Johannesburg in January 1907, in Durban October 1908 and Pretoria 1908 and 1909.⁵⁶ The colonies knew that they would not be able to cope with any more rebellions such as the Bambata rebellion of 1906, as they had neither enough men, nor enough help from the other colonies. Simultaneous conflict situations at different places would also cause a problem. One of the main reasons for these Conferences was to ensure that a plan was in place for such possible scenarios.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ CA, DD 1/98, A 1285, Cadets, 24 September 1904; CA, DD 1/46, Cadets; CA, DD 1/99, A 1507, Publications, 24 June 1905; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 107-109; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 118-126; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 120-132; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 97-109; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 61-62; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 44.

⁵⁵ H.T. Lukin, *Savage Warfare-Hints on Tactics to be adopted and Precautions to be taken*; CA, CAD, CO 8319, File x5114, *Savage Warfare*, P. Truter-Colonel Lukin, 10 May 1906.

⁵⁶ C.L. Grimbeek, *Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag, met spesifieke verwysing na die Verdedigingswette van 1912 en 1922* (D.Phil dissertation, University of Pretoria, November 1985), 10, 20, 21-40; Transvaal Archives (hereinafter TA), L.C. 8/07, Commander-in-Chief of the Transvaal, January 1907; TA, PM 75, Colonial Conferences 1907; MAD, Secretary of Defence, Group 2 (hereinafter DC), Box 4, File 43, Vol II, South Africa, Johannesburg, 1907; MAD, DC, Box 4, File 43 Vol II, South African Conference Johannesburg 1907, MAD, DC, Box 4, File 38, Defence Conferences Durban 1908, part I and II; MAD, Diverse, Box 60, South Africa Defence, Part I, Durban Conference October 1908, 1-37, MAD, Diverse, Box 60, South Africa Defence, Part II, Pretoria Conference May 1909, 39-44; MAD, DC, Box 15, File 254, Proceedings of Imperial Conferences 1909.

⁵⁷ Grimbeek, *Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag*, 8-40; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 110-111;



Illustration 1.4: Colonel H.T. Lukin with Cape Mounted Riflemen Staff, 1905.
 (Source: MAD, Document Number SAR761006743, Shelf Number 761006743)

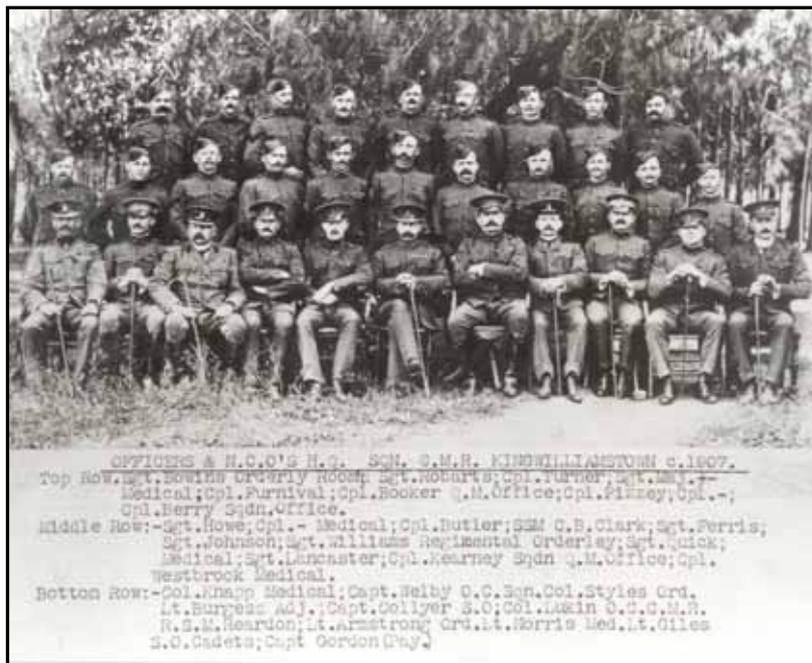


Illustration 1.5: Colonel H.T. Lukin with Cape Mounted Riflemen Staff,
 King William's Town, 1907.
 (Source: MAD, Document Number SAR781002185, Shelf Number 781002185)

These conferences, together with the inter-colonial conference on tariffs in May 1908, political conferences in Durban and Johannesburg and meetings of the Prime Ministers of the former South African colonies, led to a national convention where a draft constitution was drawn up. This was accepted by all the legislatures of the colonies and submitted to the British Parliament as a Bill for ratification. On 20 September 1909 both Houses passed the bill, which was now the South African Act 1909. This became the charter of the Union of South Africa. The first opening of the Union Parliament, by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, took place in Cape Town in 1910. As one of the senior commanders, Lukin was selected to be the escort commander for this first opening of the Union Parliament. This was not the only time that such honour was bestowed on him.⁵⁸

Being highly rated and seen as one of the most experienced officers in the Union of South Africa, Lukin was appointed as the commander of the South African detachment to attend the coronation of King George V in 1911. To complement this he was selected as an escort for the King's carriage and held the position of honour just behind the King, and he also led the cavalcade through the streets of London the following day. This was not only an honour for Lukin personally, but also for the young Union of South Africa. The leaders of the Union saw Lukin as the appropriate figure to represent them at this important event and he did not disappoint them and was an excellent ambassador for the country.⁵⁹

After these celebrations Lukin did not return to South Africa. He was tasked to attend a Swiss military exercise as an observer and study the Swiss military system.⁶⁰ A draft South African Defence Bill was already under discussion and all involved wanted the best possible legislation in order to implement a proper new Defence Bill for the Union. The reason why the Swiss military system was the one under evaluation was that there were several similarities between the two countries. Both countries were divided up into provinces, had language problems, made use of cadet systems in their schools, and their forces were divided into types of militias. In Switzerland these were the *Auszug* (men between the age of 20 and 32 years), the *Landwehr* (men in the age group 33 to 40 years) and the *Landsturm* (men aged between 41 and 48 years). The situation in South Africa was similar as soldiers from different backgrounds were to be amalgamated into the Union Defence Forces. Lukin's report, as well as previous reports and opinions by other members

Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 44; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 133-144; Williams, 'Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen', 119-122; S. Marks, *Reluctant rebellion- The 1906-8 Disturbances in Natal*; K. Gillings, 'The Bambata Rebellion of 1906: Nkandla Operations and the Battle of Mome Gorge', in *Military History Journal*, Vol 8, no 1, June 1989; Greyton Museum, 'Bambatha's Rebellion', <http://www.battlefields.co.za/history/bambatha.htm>, (Accessed: 04/04/2002), 1-7.

⁵⁸ TA, PM 62, Inter Colonial Conferences 1908, May 1908; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 104-105, 110-111; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 44.

⁵⁹ Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 44; TA, PM 62, Inter Colonial Conferences 1908, May 1908; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 104-105, 110-111.

⁶⁰ MAD, DC, Box 26, File 1e/530, Report on Swiss Military System, Lukin-Secretary for Interior, 11 September 1911; MAD, DC,



Illustration 1.6: Brigadier General H.T. Lukin, Inspector General of Permanent Force,
Union Defence Forces.

(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR771000839, Shelf Number 771000839)

paved the way for the UDF (see Figure 1.7 for the proposed structures set out in 1911) as provided for in the Defence Act of 1912.⁶¹

Lukin and Lily had a warm welcome on their return from Switzerland. He writes that ‘any number of friends, and an old comrade⁶² welcomed them back after the trip and when they arrived at King William’s Town at 10 o’ clock at night, every officer accommodated in the mess welcomed them back. He confirmed his love for his adopted country, people, and the CMR, when he wrote, ‘Can you be surprised at my being fond of the country and the old corps in which I have spent the best years of my life?’⁶³

The Defence Act of 1912 constituted the UDF into six components (as proposed in Figure 1.7). The Permanent Defence Force of which Brigadier-General Lukin was appointed the commander, the Citizen Force of which Brigadier-General C.F. Beyers was the commander, and the Cadet forces under the command of Colonel P. Beves. The Citizen Force was further divided into the Active Citizen Force, the Citizen Reserve and the National Reserve. General J.C. Smuts was appointed as the first Minister of Defence to run this newly established organisation. Lukin could continue where he had left off with the CMR and improve the staffwork and training of the UDF members. Lukin had not been in this post very long when he had to send troops to subdue the Indian rising in Natal in November 1913. The reason for this uprising was the Immigrants Regulation Act that was passed in the Cape Parliament in 1913, which prohibited any more Asian immigrants and also prohibited the migration of Asians between the different provinces.⁶⁴ This was his first test as Commander-in-Chief of the Permanent Forces and judging by the praise he received from the Minister of Defence for his handling of the situation⁶⁵, it seems it was a job well done. During the Industrial Strike of January 1914, Lukin was appointed as the controlling officer for the Pretoria area, and according to reports, his forces achieved great success in this operation. These operations confirmed the professional manner in which Lukin handled any type of situation and he also gained valuable experience.⁶⁶

Box 26, Mr Smuts Portfolio, File 1(a)530, Some notes on the conditions of Service in the Swiss Army.

⁶¹ P.H. Frankel, *Pretoria’s Praetorians: Civil-military relations in South Africa*, 1-28; R.S. Godley, *Khaki and Blue: Thirty-five Year’s Service in South Africa*, 106-108; UCT, BC 294, Duncan Papers, A49 Union of South Africa, Memorandum explanatory of the South African Defence Bill, 1911; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 111-114; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62; Brink, ‘Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson’, 44-45; MAD, P1; Grimbeek, *Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag*, 43-56.

⁶² Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 112.

⁶³ Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62; Brink, ‘Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson’, 44-45; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 111-114; MAD, P1.

⁶⁴ UG 16-1914, Indian Enquiry Commission Report, 1914; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 114-115; B. Spies, ‘Unity and Disunity, 1910-1924’, in T. Cameron, ed., *A New Illustrated History of South Africa*, 231-233.

⁶⁵ MAD, P1, Appreciation by Minister of Defence for handling of Indian Strike, Under Secretary for Defence-Lukin, 19 December 1913; MAD, P1, Accepting appreciation by Minister of Defence, Lukin-Under Secretary for Defence, 24 December 1913; UG 16-1914, Indian Enquiry Commission Report, 1914.

⁶⁶ Grimbeek, *Die Totstandkoming van die Unieverdedigingsmag*, 141-142, Frankel, *Pretoria’s Praetorians: Civil-military relations in South Africa*, 1-28; Godley, *Khaki and Blue*, 106-126; D. Yudelman, *The Emergence of Modern South Africa: State, Capital, and*

FIRST LINE

THE ACTIVE CITIZEN FORCE
Composed of citizens between their 17th and 25th year (both included) who are undergoing 'peace training'.

THE COAST GARRISON FORCE
Partially paid, composed of Citizens who enter voluntarily and allotted to Coast Defence.

THE PERMANENT FORCE
South African Mounted Riflemen

SECOND LINE

A.C.F. RESERVE CLASS 'A'
Citizens not past their 45th year, who have undergone four year's peace training.

A.C.F. RESERVE CLASS 'B'
Formed of Citizens not past their 45th year, who are serving or have served in Rifle Associations

C.G.F. RESERVE
Formed of ex-members of C.G.F., to the required strength, who elect to perform reserve service in that force.

THE FIELD RESERVE S.A.M.R.
Formed of
(1) Ex-members of SAMR who volunteer.
(2) Specially selected Class 'A' A.C.F. reservists who volunteer.

THIRD LINE

THE NATIONAL RESERVE
Comprising all Citizens between their 17th and 60th year (both included), who do not belong to the First or Second line.

ORGANIZATIONS WHICH DO NOT TAKE THE FIELD

CADETS
Boys between their 13th and 17th year (both included).

THE POLICE RESERVE, S.A.M.R.
Formed of members of Class 'B' A.C.F. Reserve, not less than 30 years of age, who volunteer.

Figure 1.7: Diagram illustrating the System of Military Defence proposed for the Union, 1911.

(Source: UCT, BC 294, Duncan papers, A49 Union of South Africa, Memorandum explanatory of the South African Defence Bill, 1911)

NOTE:

- (a) The R.N.V.R. being designated to aid with Naval Service, is not included above.
- (b) The Police Reserve, S.A.M.R., occupies the areas normally policed by the SAMR, when the latter force takes the field.
- (c) Members of existing Militia and Volunteer Forces may be transferred to Class 'A' or 'B' of the A.C.F. Reserve, as well as to the A.C.F.

World War I: The challenges as South African commander

Britain declared war against Germany on 4 August 1914 and the question was whether the Dominions would support her in this declaration of war. On 7 August 1914 the Union of South Africa was requested via telegraph to seize important radio stations, towns and areas under German control in German South-West Africa. On 10 August 1914 Prime Minister L. Botha, after consultation with his colleagues, agreed to 'co-operate with the Imperial Government and to assist in sending an expedition for the purpose indicated, the naval part to be undertaken by the Imperial authorities and the military operations to be undertaken by the Union Government.'⁶⁷ After this announcement there was a real threat of a split in Botha's cabinet because of disagreements between the members. Many of the Boer leaders did not agree with the notion of taking part in the war against the Germans.⁶⁸ The National Party fiercely contested helping Britain when the motion was tabled in South African Parliament, but the motion carried, bringing the first test for South Africa and the new UDF.

By declaring its help to Britain, the UDF got the opportunity to operate for the first time beyond South Africa's borders. General Botha was to be the supreme commander of the three forces who would take part in this operation. The first force would land at Walvis Bay and Luderitz. The second, under Brigadier-General Lukin's command, would land at Port Nolloth and march to Steinkopf. The third force, under Colonel Maritz, would move from Prieska and Upington towards their objectives. Lukin would cross the river at Raman's Drift and Maritz at Schuit Drift to meet at Kalkfontein and then they would advance together to occupy strategic positions in German South-West Africa. But this force was very inexperienced in conventional warfare and even Archbishop William Carter of Cape Town stated in a letter that 'I wish that those various detachments which have gone up would wait until all is ready.'⁶⁹ He furthermore said that he was 'not sure that amateurs as these men are, are quite a match for professional German Officers.'⁷⁰ This proved to be the case in the early stages of the German South West Africa campaign.⁷¹

Lukin's forces reached Raman's Drift by 24 September. As they advanced they came under fire and Harvey, a soldier from the 4th Regiment, was killed. It transpired to be only one German soldier and Lukin instructed a party to capture him and cut all communication to keep the invasion

the Incorporation of Organized Labour in the South African Gold Fields, 936-112; Spies, 'Unity and Disunity, 1910-1924', 233-236; UCT, BC 294, Duncan Papers, A49 Union of South Africa, Memorandum explanatory of the South African Defence Bill, 1911; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 113-115; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 45.

⁶⁷ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 116-117.

⁶⁸ Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 45; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 116-117; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62.

⁶⁹ Wits University Archives (hereinafter Wits), AB186 Carter Letters, Carter-Alga, 18 December 1914.

⁷⁰ Wits, AB186 Carter Letters, Carter-Alga, 18 December 1914.

⁷¹ Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 45; Wits, AB186 Carter Letters, Carter-Alga, 18 December 1914; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 116-119; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62.



Illustration 1.8: Brigadier General H.T. Lukin in group photo at Artillery School, Auckland Park.

(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR771001437, Shelf Number 771001437)

secret. Lukin received an order to occupy Sandfontein and instructed Lieutenant Colonel R.C. Grant to do so. Lukin was not aware that Maritz did not act as planned because he and his men joined the Germans and initiated the rebellion against the Union Government. This meant that the Germans could divert their main effort to Grant's forces at Sandfontein. After putting up a stiff fight, Grant, now amongst the wounded, surrendered with his force. However, the Germans did not exploit this advantage as Lukin himself acknowledged,

The Germans could have eaten us up if they had made a bold bid.⁷²

Lukin held out with his force at Raman's Drift for the whole of October and the forces at Walvis Bay and Luderitz did the same.⁷³

Botha decided to first get the rebellion under control before continuing any further operations in German South-West Africa. He took command of men that he believed would be loyal to the cause and, according to some authors, he was the neutralising factor that kept many of the Afrikaners loyal to the government. During November and December of 1914 Lukin and the other staff and soldiers loyal to the Union launched attacks on, and pursued, the rebels in the Free State and Transvaal. This rebellion did not last very long and the last of the few battles that were fought occurred at Mushroom Valley, close to Windburg. It was during this operation that Lukin had his third fortunate escape from death. Lightning struck close to his party causing a fatal blow to a sergeant who stood in front of Lukin and his legs were paralysed for a few hours but he was fit for work within a few weeks.⁷⁴

During this operation it could be detected that a complete reconciliation and a proper working relationship between the Boer and British or Cape Colony leaders and men were not yet in place. It is said that during this operation Colonel C. Brits signalled Botha by heliograph saying that,

⁷² Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 120.

⁷³ South African Military Museum (hereinafter SAMM), A.416, Battle of Sandfontein; MAD, AG 14, WOI, Box 32, Slag van Sandfontein, 5 December 1963; S.S. Swart, *The Rebels of 1914: Masculinity, Republicanism and the Social Forces that shaped the Boer Rebellion*, (MA thesis, University of Natal, August 1997), 26-34; R. Warwick, *Reconsideration of the Battle of Sandfontein: The First Phase of the German South-West Africa Campaign, August to September 1914*, (MA Thesis, University of Cape Town); M. Nathan, *South Africa from Within*, 150-151; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 119-120; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62-63; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 45-46; P. van der Byl, *From Playgrounds to Battlefields*, 97, 100-101.

⁷⁴ F.V. Engelenburg, *General Louis Botha*, 293-296; Van der Byl, *From Playgrounds to Battlefields*, 97-104; Swart, *The Rebels of 1914*, 34-35; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 120-122; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 63-64; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 45-46; See telegraphs from 7 November 1914 to 4 January 1915 which explain troop movements, enforcements and normal administration during this rebellion, in MAD, WWI GSWA, Box 14, June 1914; MAD, Diverse, Box 57, G353, General Botha's Operations against Rebel Forces, 9-12 November 1914; MAD, Adjutant General (hereinafter AG) 1914-1921, Box 154, G29B, File 9199, Brigadier-General Lukin's Force after leaving Birdfield, 4 November 1914-5 January 1915; W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol III, June 1910-November 1918*, 219-220; E. Rosenthal, *General De Wet-A Biography*, 234-240. For more on the rebellion see G.D. Scholtz, *Die Rebelle, 1914-1915*; T.R.H. Davenport, 'The South African Rebellion, 1914' *The English Historical Review*, LXXVII, No 306, January 1963, 73-94; N.G. Garson, 'The Boer Rebellion of 1914', *History Today*, Vol xii, No 2, February 1962, 132-139.

If you do not remove this damned Lukin I will shoot him.⁷⁵

Not long after this, another incident occurred that put even more strain on the relationship between the two groups. The plan was to push De Wet into a neck in the Mushroom Valley and that Lukin's force was to go around and cut off his escape route. Unfortunately Lukin's signaller did not relay a heliograph to Lukin because he thought it was a cable from the rebels to deceive them. Because of this De Wet and his men were able to escape from the trap that was set for them. Later, during the German South West Africa Campaign, Botha again mentioned this tension between the different groups. In a letter to Smuts, Botha clearly states that 'you can have no idea how strong racial feelings still is here *on both sides* among our troops, and it is a fact with which we shall have to reckon.'⁷⁶ Lukin's name is mentioned several times in this letter and Botha wrote that the idea was to leave Lukin to complete the last arrangements of the surrender, but that this would cause 'great dissatisfaction among the Dutch Afrikaners'.⁷⁷ The reason for this was that Lukin was English speaking. There must have been some trust in Lukin to cope with the tension that was evident, because they did leave him to take care of these arrangements. There is also the belief that this paved the way for some reconciliation between the Afrikaners and English in South Africa and that the positive result of the stand at Delville Wood, with Lukin as commander, was because of the courage and teamwork of all the men of the 1st South African Brigade.⁷⁸

It was clear that there was still a lot of tension and mistrust between the different groups in the UDF, but they stuck together and were able to reach the objective that was set out at the beginning of the rebellion. De Wet was beaten at Mushroom Valley but escaped to Bechuanaland but Brits chased and captured him. This was the final blow to this short rebellion and, from January 1915, Botha could concentrate most of his forces, almost 50 000 men,⁷⁹ on the campaign in German South West Africa. The new plan for the occupation of German South West Africa was to attack with three forces. The first force was to land at Walvis Bay; the second at Swakopmund and the third was to advance overland from Upington. The primary challenge was the logistical burden over this vast territory and the destruction or damage of railway lines and sabotage of the water supplies by the Germans did not make it any easier. The Germans never had the advantage, because Botha made effective use of his forces' mobility and manoeuvred to keep the Germans running and guessing much of the time. By 28 April Smuts issued a proclamation that the whole southern territory of German South West Africa was under the control of the Union's forces. On 10

⁷⁵ Van der Byl, *From Playgrounds to Battlefields*, 114; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 64.

⁷⁶ Hancock and van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol III, June 1910-November 1918*, 289-293.

⁷⁷ Hancock and van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol III, June 1910-November 1918*, 292.

⁷⁸ Engelenburg, 'General Louis Botha', 293-300; Van der Byl, *From Playgrounds to Battlefields*, 114-125; Rosenthal, *General De Wet-A Biography*, 240-250; 'New South African Nation', *Natal Mercury*, 30 May 1918; 'Editorial', *Cape Times*, 31 May 1918; J. Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 261.

⁷⁹ MAD, AG 1914-1921, Box 154, G 29B, File 9199, Brigadier-General Lukin's Force after leaving Birdfield, Lukin-Defence Staff, 5 January 1915.

June 1915, Lukin moved out of Swakopmund with his forces and by 18 June 1915 Botha moved out of Karibib with Lukin's force in the centre, the forces of Brigadier-General Myburg to his right and Brits' force to the left. By 9 July 1915 the Germans had no other choice but to surrender. Lukin was put in charge of the demobilising operations while General Botha returned to Pretoria.⁸⁰

The Union Government's commitment to Britain in this war was initially to clear the German threat from German South West Africa, but on Botha's return to Pretoria, there were already some discussions about whether the Union's forces should be committed to the bigger theatre of war. Botha was only back in Pretoria a few days when he announced that the Union would send a South African contingent to Britain for further service. Colonel Hon. Sir C. Crewe⁸¹ was appointed as the Director of Recruiting at Potchefstroom and he and his staff ensured that thousands of recruits gathered to form part of this force. Within a few weeks a whole brigade was enrolled and Lukin was appointed as 1st South African Infantry Brigade commander. That was when his initial intention of becoming a soldier in the Imperial Army after completing his school career, materialised. He was appointed to an Imperial Commission as Colonel or temporary Brigadier General on 11 August 1915.⁸² The rivalry between Englishmen and Afrikaners was raised again when Botha and Smuts had to choose between Lukin and Brigadier General J. van Deventer. Lukin's experience, reputation and his British background made him the best choice of the two. In the little time available, Lukin was able to prepare his brigade for their departure to Britain. The first of the men embarked on 26 August 1915⁸³ on the *Dunvegan Castle*, the rest of the Brigade followed, with Lukin and his staff sailing on the *Balmoral Castle*.⁸⁴

Lukin, from previous experience and knowing that the time spent on the preparation of this force at Potchefstroom was not enough, wasted no time while his brigade was on the high seas. Preparation continued at a time when the men would otherwise have been lethargic. This is evident from Lance Corporal G.W. Warwick's explanation of the routine on the ship *Balmoral Castle*,

⁸⁰ Hancock and van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol III, June 1910-November 1918*, 265-266, 269-293; Van der Byl, *From Playgrounds to Battlefields*, 112-186; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 122-125; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 63-65; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 45-46; Engelenburg, *General Louis Botha*, 301-307; Swart, *The Rebels of 1914*, 35-37.

⁸¹ Colonel Crewe raised and trained the Border Horse during the South African War and actively took part in a mobile column. He then became very involved in the political environment from 1902 ending up as a member of the Defence Council in 1912, see I. Uys, *South African Military: Who's Who 1452-1992*, 52.

⁸² MAD, DC, Box 4, File 123/49, Major General H.T. Lukin, General Order 819: Officers Seconded for Duty with the South African Overseas Expeditionary Forces.

⁸³ MAD, World War I Diary (hereinafter WWI DA), Box 4, HQ 1st Infantry Brigade South African OEF WFF, September to December 1915; MAD, Brigade (hereinafter Brigade), Box 3, War Dairy.

⁸⁴ Solomon, E., *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood (with the 3rd South African Infantry): Together with some experiences as Prisoner of War in Germany*, 9-11, 21; G.W. Warwick, *We Band of Brothers: Reminiscences from the 1st S.A. Infantry Brigade in the 1914-18 War*, 15-18, Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 11-22; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 124-128; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 64-65; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 46.

Each company paraded on its allotted deck. We paraded for lectures on discipline, on musketry, for medical inspections, for life-belt drill, and there was even pay parade. There were sports and concerts. ... And, if later, the Brigade became the first-class fighting machine that it undoubtedly was, the reason was that everyone responded heartily to the call for discipline.⁸⁵

This 'if later' became evident in the Senussi Campaign, the Battle of Delville Wood and the other operations on the Western Front in which the 1st South African Infantry Brigade was involved. The *Balmoral Castle* arrived in Plymouth on 13 October 1915⁸⁶ and the 1st South African Infantry Brigade was stationed at the training camp at Borden in Hampshire. They commenced with their preparation for deployment in Flanders⁸⁷ and while busy with this training and preparation, they were inspected by General Sir A. Hunter, the Officer Commanding of Aldershot who was responsible for the training of the new volunteers. On 2 December 1915 Queen Mary, wife of the British monarch, accompanied by Princess Mary and Prince Albert also inspected the brigade. King George could not make this inspection but Brigadier General Lukin read a message from the King to the men.⁸⁸

Yet Flanders, the intended destination for the 1st South African Infantry Brigade, had to wait. The Suez Cannel was endangered by a Turkish invasion of Egypt and it was further believed that most of the Egyptians were pro-German or pro-Turk. In addition to this, the Senussi to the west of Egypt were not allies of the British. The British fought a battle against the Senussi on 25 December 1915, but it was not decisive and most of them escaped. The British forces then asked for reinforcements and this was the reason why the 1st South African Infantry Brigade did not depart for Europe, but for Alexandria on the *H.M.T. Corsican*, *R.M.T. Saxonia* and *H.M.T. Oriana* on 29 and 30 December 1915.⁸⁹ The 1st South African Infantry Brigade arrived at Alexandria between 10 and 13 January 1916 and started to prepare for the campaign at Mex camp, some 5 miles from the docks. Until early February additional forces and equipment arrived to ensure that a proper campaign could be launched against the Senussi. For a short while Lukin assumed command of the Western Frontier Force until Major General W.E. Pyton took over command as from 9 February 1916.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 21.

⁸⁶ MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ 1st Infantry Brigade South African OEF WFF, September to December 1915; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Dairy.

⁸⁷ MAD, Brigade, Box 40, Vol 55, Tpt, POW, CM, File C.R.A.C. 21/7443(M), 22 November 1915.

⁸⁸ MAD, World War I (hereinafter WWI) Diverse, Box 25, Buckingham Palace, 2 December 1915; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 11-17, 20; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 21-23, Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 128; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 65; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 46; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ 1st Infantry Brigade South African OEF WFF, September to December 1915.

⁸⁹ MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ 1st Infantry Brigade South African OEF WFF, September to December 1915; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Dairy.

⁹⁰ Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 22-31; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 20-21; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 128-133; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Dairy; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 65-66; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 46.



Illustration 1.9: The Senussi Campaign. Camp scene of 4th South African Infantry Regiment.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR761003736, Shelf Number 761003736)



Illustration 1.10: The Senussi Campaign. The Fort at Sidi Barrani.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR761003866, Shelf Number 761003866)

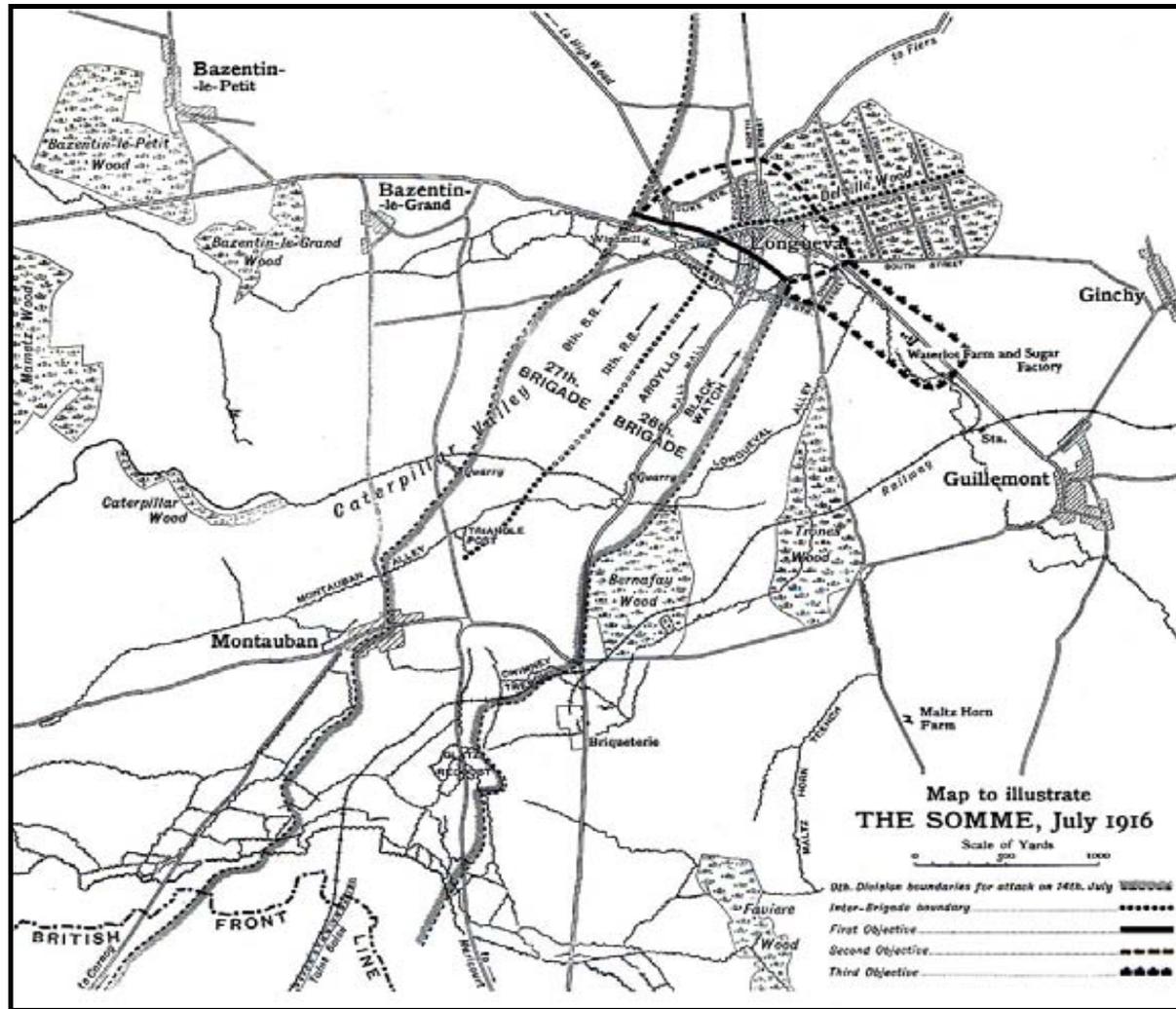
All the forces were in place and the battle plan was ready when Pyton ordered the start of the operation on 26 February 1916. Lukin moved out with his force at 9:30 a.m. and throughout this attack made quick decisions to ensure that the battle was won quickly so as to minimise the loss of his own forces. Throughout this operation he led from the front and this may be one of the reasons why his men were so successful and fought as they did. The 1st South African Infantry Brigade had to continue to Solum, which was the main objective, but they stayed at Sidi Barrani on 9 March 1915 to reconsolidate and regroup. It took Lukin's force just another six days, until 15 March 1915, to reach Solum and this without any resistance. The Brigade stayed until April and shipped out on the *Megantic*, *Oriana*, *Scotian* and *Tintoretto* to arrive at Marseilles on 12 and 13 April 1916. Lukin received the Commander of the Order of the Bath (CB) from George V for his services in Egypt and the Khedive appointed him to the Egyptian Order of the Nile and gave him an Arab charger as a personal gift.⁹¹

The 1st South African Infantry Brigade was attached to the 9th Scottish Division and for the whole of March and April 1916 they prepared for trench warfare. They underwent further training at Steenbecque and Morbecque and on 14 June 1916 the Division was ordered to move up to the Somme. It was here, or more specifically in Delville Wood, that Lukin and his 1st South African Infantry Brigade showed their South African mettle. The Brigade's mission was to occupy and retain Delville Wood in the hands of the Allies and that is exactly what they did, from 14 July for 10 days with the loss of 502 men killed, 1 735 wounded and 578 missing. By 23 August 1916 the 1st South African Infantry Brigade was at full strength again and was on its way to the Somme. On 12 October 1916 Lukin was instructed to attack the trenches of the Germans at Butte de Warlencourt. This was not successful and again the Brigade suffered many losses. On 30 November 1916 Lukin was promoted to Major General and received command of the 9th Scottish Division.⁹²

For the whole of 1917 Lukin's division took part in operations around Arras, Passchendaele and Cambrai. While Lukin was fighting on the battlefields of Europe, his wife continued to do her best to help and comfort the troops in Britain and on the battlefield. She was the chairperson for the Club for South African Officers in London. While trying to make the soldiers lives more tolerable, her health deteriorated. Despite her not being in good health, Lukin could not ignore the responsibility he had to himself and his subordinates to effectively command his division and ensure success against the Germans on the Western front. This dedication and obligation paid off

⁹¹ MAD, Brigade, Box 60, Staff Captain Pepper, Field message book, Feb 1916; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 31-42; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Dairy; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 31-42; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 37-48; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 133-139.

⁹² MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, B.H.Q. 1st S.African Brigade, June 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 60, Message Book, July 1916; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 42-103; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 45-70; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 63-123; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Dairy; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 140-157; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 67-70; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 48.



Map 1.3: Somme, July 1916.
 (Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 122)

when he was appointed as a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB) by the end of 1917. This, a highlight of his career, was ironically also its end. He requested a tour of duty in England to be with Lily, whose health was deteriorating rapidly. Lukin was never to be deployed operationally again.⁹³

His request was approved. Soon messages of congratulations streamed in. Lukin was appointed as the commander of the 64th Division at Norwich where he did not have a quiet time, but at least he could help his wife to recuperate from her illness. While Lukin was busy with this new challenge in his career, he heard of the terrible loss of the South African Infantry Brigade at Bouchasvenes in March 1918. They suffered almost as many casualties as at Delville Wood and because he still knew many of the Officers and soldiers, he was very sad, but could do no more than send condolences. The weather in Norwich was very good for Mrs Lukin and she quickly recovered. When the First World War had drawn to an end and Lukin was 58, he thought it fair to retire from the Imperial and South African Armies.⁹⁴

Retirement in his adopted country

Before his retirement Major General Sir Tim Lukin received the distinction of Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur from the French Government. Sir Tim and Lady Lukin stayed in Britain until early 1920, but then retired to South Africa. They sailed for South Africa on the *Balmoral Castle* on 26 March 1920⁹⁵ and arrived in Cape Town on 12 April 1920. There were already some suggestions that he should stand for the Cape Parliament as a candidate for the East London district, but he politely declined by saying that 'old soldiers are seldom good politicians'.⁹⁶ On their arrival in Cape Town the Lukins were welcomed as honourable guests and attended several receptions. Because of illness Lukin only had a few years in sunny South Africa, and in this time, almost five years, he chaired a Commission of Enquiry, was very active in the planning of the Delville Wood Memorial in France, unveiled many war memorials and played an important role in various organisations. These included being the Executive of the Governor General's Fund, a member of the Diocesan Council, a member of the Settlers' Committee, Vice President of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, President of the Boxing Association, Steward of the South African Turf Club and President of the British Empire Service League of South Africa.⁹⁷

Conclusion

⁹³ MAD, Brigade, Box 42, Brigade Dairy 1917; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 104-164; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 157-189; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 76-78; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 48-49.

⁹⁴ Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 49; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 78-82; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 189-197.

⁹⁵ MAD, WWI Diverse, Box 3, Brigade, Orders and papers on operations, October 1916.

⁹⁶ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 200.

⁹⁷ UG 20-25, Report of the Defence Commission of Enquiry, 1925; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 203-215.



Illustration 1.11: The Western Front. Brigadier General H.T. Lukin and his Staff.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR781002379, Shelf Number 781002379)

Lukin followed his dream and lived it out completely. In addition to this, he made a great success of his career and testimony to this are the words and recommendations of his superiors, his colleagues and the men that served under him. He used every opportunity to gain more knowledge and get more experience as a field and staff officer. His success and experience as an artillery commander, second in command and sometimes commander of fighting columns during the South African War, paved the way for the new challenges that faced him as Commander of the CMR, Commandant of the Cape Colonial Forces, Inspector General of the Permanent Force of the UDF and operational commander of the UDF during the First World War.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ MAD, DC, Box 551, File DC 55212, Commission of Enquiry Defence Department, 1925; MAD, DC, Box 394, File 41422, Vol I-III, Delville Wood Committee; CA, A 1691, Final Report of South African National memorial (Delville Wood) Committee, July 1931; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 204-215; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 82; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 49-50.



Illustration 1.12: Major General Sir H.T. Lukin.

(Source: MAD, Document Number SND840007970, Shelf Number 841000617)

CHAPTER 2

MOVING UP THROUGH THE RANKS: THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR (1899-1902)

Captain Henry Timson Lukin and his troops were kept busy with the normal patrolling of the borders and attending to grievances of the population in the eastern Cape when it became clear that a war between the Transvaal and Britain was imminent. There are different perspectives as to the reason or reasons for the outbreak of this war and to have some background to these views, well-established writers on the South African war such as Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War*, D. Porch, *Wars of Empire*, L.S. Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, and others should be read. Colonel C.E. Callwell in *Small Wars*, described this war as a small war because the Boer forces were seen as an irregular army or force that took up arms against the regular army of Britain. Callwell also gives many examples from the South African War to explain this theory to the reader. A small war it was, but a very costly small war. The first actions were the sieges of Kimberley and Mafeking by 14 October 1899. The first time that the two opposing forces clashed on the battlefield was on Friday 20 October 1899, close to Dundee.¹

Major General W.P. Symons with his garrison of four thousand and General L. Meyer with three thousand men fought in this first battle of the South African War. The war had started for the greater Transvaal and Free State, but Lukin and the rest of the Cape Colony were not involved at all, because the Cape Government adopted a neutral stance. But there was always the threat that the Cape Colony could be invaded. That was why the Cape Government changed its policy of neutrality and placed the Colonial Corps under the command of General Sir Redvers Buller when he arrived in Cape Town on 31 October 1899.²

First battle for the Colonial Division in the Eastern Cape: Dordrecht

Lukin and his fellow Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR) did not have to wait to long to take part in this war. In November 1899 the Cape Colony was invaded and Lieutenant General Sir William Gatacre was given the task of clearing the Eastern Cape of any Boer forces. Lukin, with six 7-pounder 'screw' guns and a few maxim guns of the CMR Artillery, as well as two companies of mounted infantry, formed part of Gatacre's force. Artillery was a very important aspect of this small

¹ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 1-5, 52-53, 68-70, 90-92, 103; D. Porch, *Wars of Empire*, 32-36; C.E. Callwell, *Small Wars. Their Principles and Practice*, 21-22; L.S. Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol I, 180-334, 341-374.

² Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 107, 117-118, 125-132, 157; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 65-69; Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, 374-380.

war. Callwell remarks that artillery would normally be a great advantage against irregular armies, but because of the Boer's mobility, good marksmanship and even a few artillery pieces of their own, they were the exception. Lukin and his detachments had to rely on all their training and experience to counter or destroy the Boer artillery. Major C.F. Sprenger was in command of this CMR detachment. During November and December of 1899, Sprenger's detachment patrolled the area around Penhoek. Sprenger, with Lukin as his battery commander, was ordered on 8 December 1899 to form part of the advance to Stormberg, but the telegraph was never delivered to them and they were spared the defeat at Stormberg on 10 December 1899.³

Lord Roberts arrived in South Africa in January 1900 and appointed Brigadier General E.Y. Brabant as the Commander of the Colonial Division, which comprised the CMR, Cape Police, Brabant's Horse, Kaffrarian Mounted Rifles, the Queenstown Volunteers and East London Volunteers. The Boer forces respected the Colonial Division, in which Lukin and his artillery troop played a very important role. D.P. Roux from Commandant D. Schoeman's commando said that '[T]his was good marksmen and first class horsemen. ... This was one real sharp regiment, one of the best British regiments they had.'⁴ As the war progressed, this Colonial Division, and later on specifically Lukin and his CMR troop put a lot of pressure on the Boer forces. Perhaps for the simple reason that they were more used to these conditions and way of operating than the regular British soldier was. Most of them were born in South Africa or, like Lukin, came to South Africa as very young men and learned a lot about the African way of war during the different indigenous wars. Brabant confirms this in a statement he makes about the imperial soldier who does not adapt or want to learn from the local population,

This disaster, like so many that I have had knowledge of, was due to want of experience of local conditions, and of the enemy with whom we were fighting. Imperial officers are somewhat apt to believe themselves infallible, and to despise the advice given them by men with local knowledge and experience of native wars, because they are not professional soldiers.⁵

Colonel E.H. Dalgety was the commander of the CMR troop and Lukin the Artillery troop commander.⁶

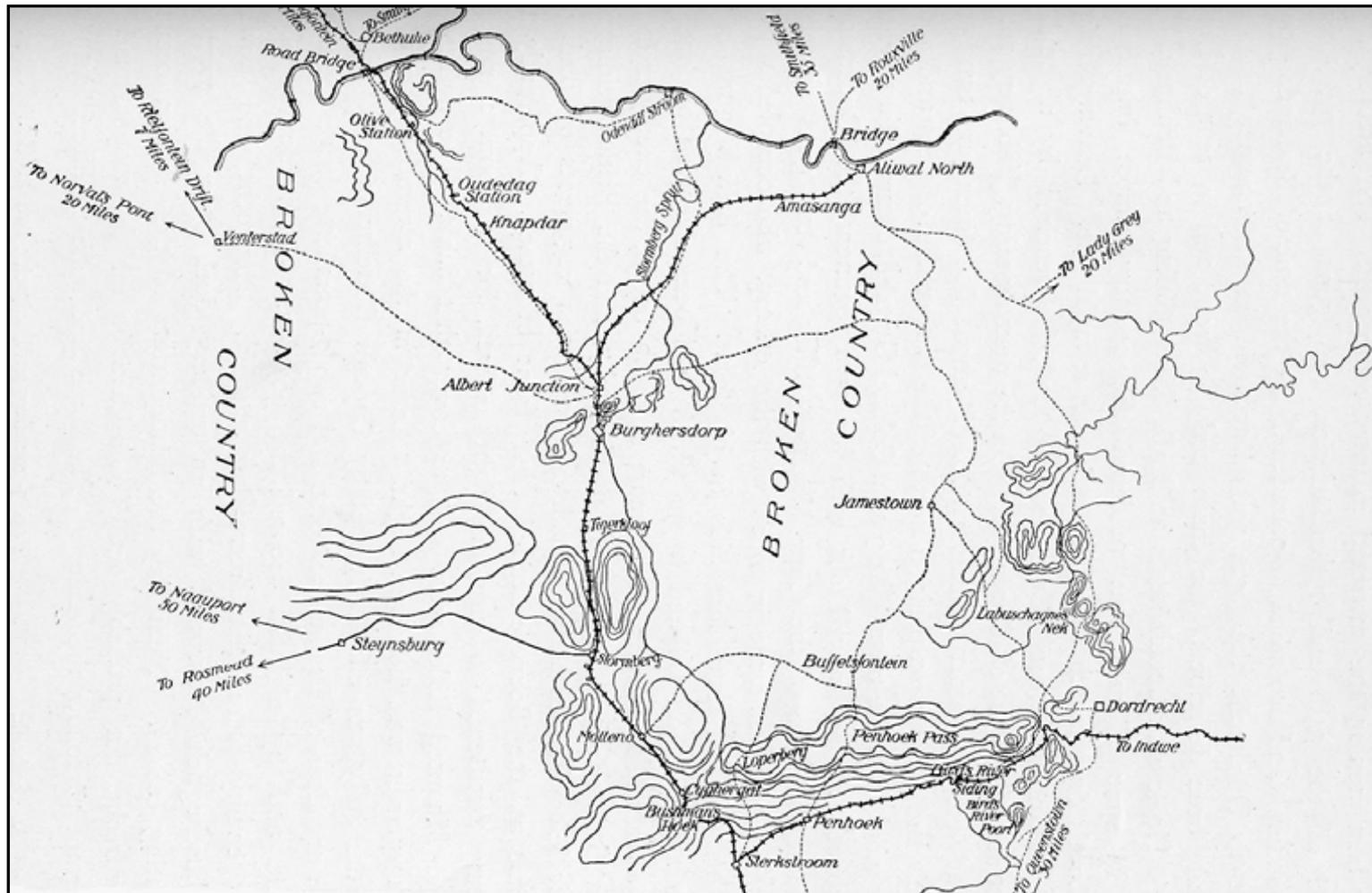
Lukin and his artillery troop's first encounter in the South African War was during a small

³ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid- Afrika, 1899-1902*, 1-5, B. Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 58-66; P.J.Young, *Boot and Saddle: A narrative record of the Cape Regiment, the British Cape Mounted Riflemen, the Frontier Armed Mounted Police, and the Colonial Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 110-113; F.L. Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 46-54; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 71-77; Callwell, *Small Wars*, 429-430.

⁴ Translated from A.V. Oosthuizen, *Rebelle van die Stormberge: Tweede Vryheidsoorlog 1899-1902. 'n Streeksgeskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in die Noordoos-Kaapland*, 91.

⁵ Cape Town Archives (Hereinafter CA), A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, (Unpublished manuscript), Part 2, Chapter 7, 5.

⁶ J. Stirling, *The Colonials in South Africa 1899-1902*, 89-116, 148-150; Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid- Afrika, 1899-1902*, 1-5, Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 58-66; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 110-113; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 46-54; AG 14, Box 3, File 760000923, Anglo- Boer Oorlog 1899-1902, Oorlogs Tellegramme tussen Oorlogsfront en President Kruger, 11 December 1899.



Map 2.1: Operations of General E.Y. Brabant and General Sir William Gatacre.
 (Source: Cunliffe, *The History of the Boer War*, 499)

skirmish against the Boer forces in the Penhoek area in early February 1900. At first Lukin could not deploy his artillery, because the Boer guns were out of range, but as the Boers advanced, Lukin's guns started to engage them. Lukin's guns were very successful in keeping the Boer artillery fire at bay and the Boer forces at a distance until Gatacre was able to send reinforcements from Sterkstroom. Lukin's first real test as artillery commander on the battlefield came when the Colonial Division with some 1 200 men left Penhoek under the command of Brabant on 15 February 1900 to attack the Boers at Dordrecht. Dordrecht changed hands several times between December 1899 and February 1900. The Colonial Division's mission was to recapture the town and drive the Boers out of the Cape Colony. They camped some 12.8 kilometres outside the town that night and prepared for the attack the next day. On 16 February Brabant's force marched to Dordrecht for the attack, but an advance party of Boers on Jakkalskop, a hill outside Dordrecht, stopped them. After a while Colonel H.M. Grenfell was able to close the distance between themselves and the Boers on Jakkalskop and this gave Lukin the opportunity to bring forward a maxim and two 15-pounders to try to drive these Boers from the hills. Brabant describes that Lukin, as artillery commander, had a very good appreciation of the battlefield, because he 'at once opened with shrapnel on the point where the fire [of the enemy on Jakkalskop] had been heaviest ...'⁷ Despite the efforts of Grenfell and Lukin, the Boers on Jakkalskop were able to hold the Colonial Division off for the rest of the day and only retreated that night.⁸

The next morning the Colonial Division marched on to Dordrecht and, as they occupied the town, was greeted by a 9-pounder Krupp gun and Boer rifle fire from the surrounding hills. Their smaller 2.5 inch guns were no match for the 9-pounder and Lukin had to retreat these guns until the 15-pounder guns could be brought into action. Lukin's gun detachment was able to give effective counter fire and disabled the 9-pounder's carriage. The Boers retreated later that afternoon to join the main lager situated in good positions on and around Labuschagne's Nek. Brabant remained at Dordrecht for the rest of the month until, at the end of February, he had a force of almost 3 000 men as well as a well-organized transport and supply service. They were ready to attack the Boers at Labuschagne's Nek.⁹

With information gained by Major C. Maxwell and from a Mr Clark of the town, Brabant could initiate his plan. Lukin, with two 15-pound, four 7-pound and two maxim guns, and Maxwell with 1000 men were ordered to march on the night of 2 March to the eastern ridges and await Brabant's

⁷ CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 4.

⁸ MAD, AG 14, Box 3, File 760000923, Anglo- Boer Oorlog 1899-1902, Oorlogs Tellegramme tussen Oorlogsfront en President Kruger, 17 February 1900; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 4-5; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 66-67; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 112; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 55-56; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 73-74.

⁹ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 66-67; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 112-113; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 56-58; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 74; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 5-6.

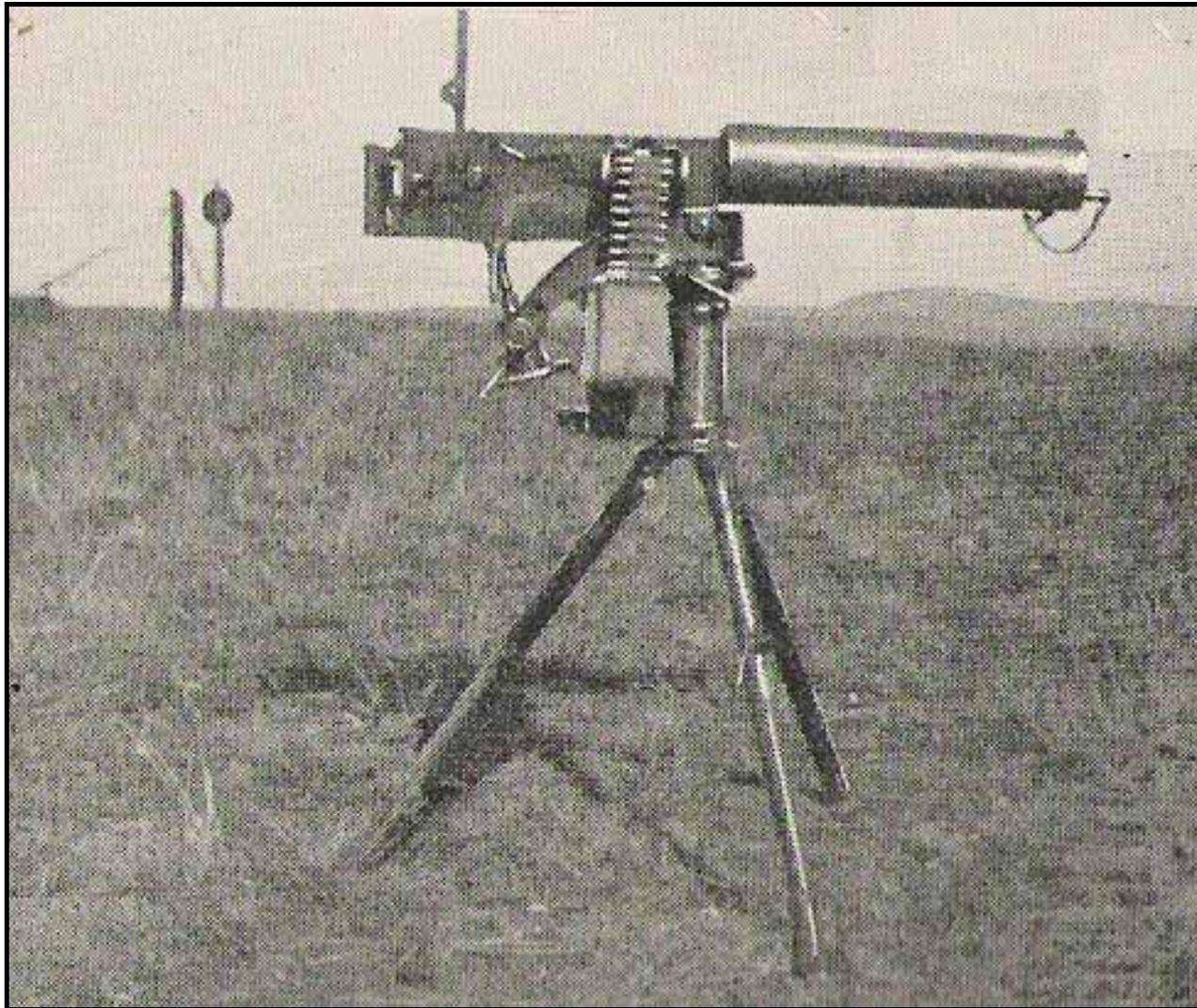


Illustration 2.1: Maxim gun.
(Source: Wilson, *After Pretoria*, 664)

order to attack. Lukin and his men had to carry the guns and maxims up the steep terrain during the night with a detour of some sixteen kilometres. The operation was almost cancelled because Brabant feared the initiative was lost after a drunken officer fired a pistol at one camp. Maxwell, Lukin and the other forces reached their positions without any resistance, because, as expected, the Boer pickets had withdrawn to the main laager for the night.¹⁰

Lukin, Maxwell and the others surprised the Boer pickets when they arrived to take up their positions the next morning. By daybreak the fight for Labuschagne's Nek had started. Lukin and Maxwell had some success, but could not occupy all of the eastern ridges. Brabant attacked the main Boer force using a diversion by the Royal Scots Infantry on the western ridge. By the afternoon Brabant had retreated and this placed more pressure on Maxwell and Lukin's men. At nightfall the Boers retreated to their main laager and Maxwell and Lukin were able to strengthen their positions. Some of the honour for the successes of the day came to Lukin and his men when Brabant said, 'but Maxwell persistently forced them back, and succeeded after great labour in getting two of Lukin's guns dragged up and put into position on the side of the mountain.'¹¹ On the morning of 5 March the fighting continued and was more ferocious than the previous day. Lukin's guns and the rest of Brabant's forces were just too strong and the Boers fled in a northerly direction. The Colonial Division captured many rifles and sixteen of the Boer wagons. More Boers and equipment could have been captured if they had executed a follow-up, but two days of fighting had taken its toll. Casualties in the Colonial Division were fourteen killed, of which seven were of the CMR, and twenty-eight wounded.¹²

Brabant gave his force a day's rest and on 7 March they continued with their mission to drive the Boer forces out of the Cape Colony. By 9 March they had occupied Jamestown without any resistance. They advanced to Aliwal North where the Frere Bridge was of strategic value because it was the gateway between the Cape and Free State. On 11 March Major Henderson and Lukin were sent forward to seize both the town of Aliwal North and the bridge. The Boers had well-developed entrenchments on the northern side of the river. It is said that when Lukin and Henderson's men came into Aliwal North, without any resistance, they gained the initiative by adventurously moving over the bridge and engaging the enemy in their position. Lukin employed his artillery very effectively and caught the Boers by surprise. By this swift action they captured more Boer wagons and it took some time for the Boers to launch a counter attack. Henderson heliographed for reinforcements and some of the CMR and further artillery pieces were sent forward. With these reinforcements, Lukin was able to pressurise the Boer 9-pounder to such an

¹⁰ Oosthuizen, *Rebelle van die Stormberge*, 93; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 67-68; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 113; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 56-57; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 8-9.

¹¹ CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 9-10.

¹² Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 68-69; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 113; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 57; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 74-75; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 9-10.

extent that they had to change its position several times. However, as they began to make good progress, Brabant ordered them to fall back to the southern banks, as the Colonial Division had not yet been cleared to operate outside the borders of the Cape Colony.¹³

Henderson and Lukin's detachments fell back in an organized fashion as the Boer forces attempted to counter attack and cut off a portion of the force, but to no avail. As they fell back another order came, instructing them to hold the northern bank of the Orange River. While Lukin and Henderson secured the northern bank the rest of the force were sent forward and was able to hold off the Boer's attacks. Swift action by Henderson and Lukin's detachments caught the Boers off guard and prevented Commandant Olivier and his men from destroying the Frere Bridge. Mission accomplished, the Boers were no more in the Eastern Cape and Gatacre's right flank was secured.¹⁴

Lukin's artillery operating outside the borders of the Cape Colony

Lukin and his men remained at Aliwal North for the rest of March. During this time the High Commissioner, H.E. Milner, inspected them at a parade and he was particularly impressed by Lukin and his artillery troop, as Brabant stated 'He was particularly struck and amused at the style in which our gun teams galloped by. The mules I may remark were selected in Queenstown by Captain Lukin, and owing to the care taken of them kept in excellent condition through the campaign showing that they were better adapted to the work than the horses.'¹⁵ This was the advantage Lukin and the rest of the Colonial Division had; knowing the conditions and constraints of the area of operations.¹⁶

While Lukin and the rest of the Colonial Division were still stationed at Aliwal North, Roberts and his force entered Bloemfontein on 13 March 1899. It seemed as if the British forces were starting to get the better of the Boer forces. This soon changed when the Boers altered their strategy from one of retreating to one of attacking and harassing the British garrisons and communication lines. Roberts kept his force at Bloemfontein for a further six weeks to reorganize it for its advance to Pretoria. Gatacre was ordered to protect and guard the communication line between Bethulie and Bloemfontein against this new strategy of the Boers.¹⁷ Lukin and his artillery,

¹³ Oosthuizen, *Rebelle van die Stormberge*, 100-101; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 69-70; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 57-58; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 75-76; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 11-12.

¹⁴ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 70-71; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 113; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 12-16.

¹⁵ CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 1, 16.

¹⁶ Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 58-61; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 72-73; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 113-114; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 2, 1.

¹⁷ For the detail of the forces deployment during May 1900 see A.C. Doyle, *The Great Boer War, a two years' record, 1899-1901*, 389-390; Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 58-60.

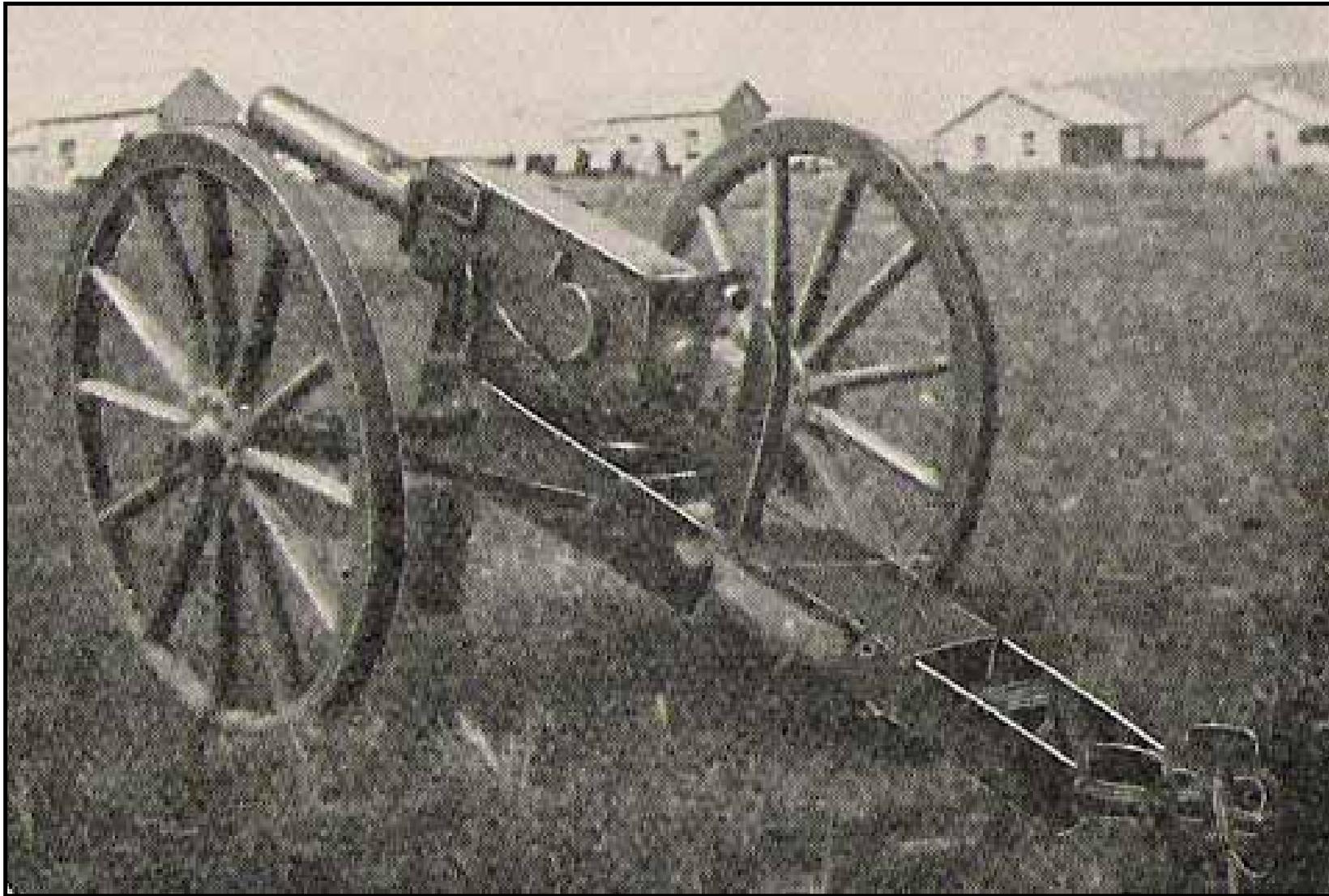


Illustration 2.2: Pom-Pom, 1-pounder gun, used by Boer forces.
(Source: Wilson, *After Pretoria*, 647)

still under the command of Brabant, formed part of the forces of Gatacre who had been ordered to protect the towns of Rouxville, Zastron, and Wepener.¹⁸

Wepener was an important link in the British communication line, because of the Jammersberg bridge over the Caledon river and its close proximity to Basutoland. That was why Lukin, under Dalgety, was tasked to defend it. For the first time the Colonial Division was ordered to operate outside the borders of the Cape Colony when 160 men were sent to Wepener to assist Captain Goddard. They arrived on 24 March, but did not receive a very pleasant welcome from the local inhabitants. These feelings grew more intense as they had to quell outbreaks of violence, confiscate weapons and ammunition from the inhabitants and to advertise the proclamation¹⁹ of Lord Roberts to all in the Wepener district. This was not their only concern, for word had it that a large group of Boer forces were in the vicinity and Goddard called for reinforcements from Brabant. The first reinforcements arrived on 29 March. On 30 March a company of the Royal Scots MI under the command of Captain M. Seel arrived from Smithfield and that same day Maxwell with a few engineers arrived and took over command of the force at Wepener.²⁰

Roberts realised that he had to act quickly after De Wet achieved success at Sannaspos and Mostertshoek, because it would increase the confidence of the Boers and perhaps give the impetus to start a rebellion in the Cape Colony. The Boer strategy had put a lot of pressure on his communication line and he therefore ordered all troops from the small garrisons to withdraw and to strengthen the more important garrisons and those situated near bridges. This cleared the way for more of the Colonial Division and Lukin's artillery to be deployed at Wepener.²¹

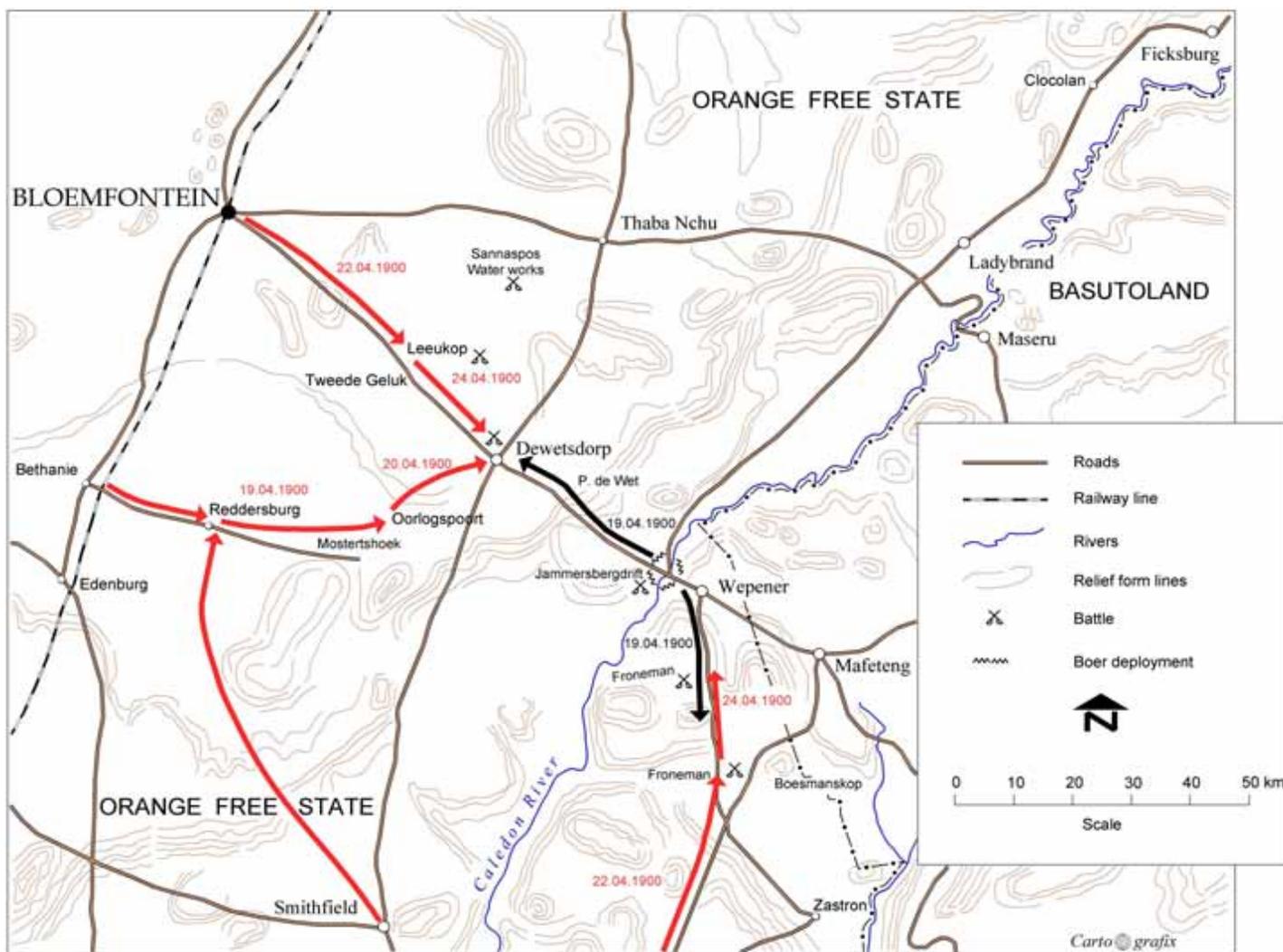
Maxwell evaluated all the possible positions that could be used to defend Wepener. He decided that the best position would be the Jammersberg position 4.8 kilometers north of the town. These small hillocks formed a circle of approximately 11.2 kilometers. There was good cover as well as natural protection created by the hills and river. An area in the centre of these positions was available for keeping the horses and cattle together, but it did not give sufficient protection against indirect fire. The water, in the form of two vleis on the west and north-east sides of the position and the Caledon River, was adequate. To the north they had the protection of the open spaces and the enemy would have to approach them from the high ground and so expose themselves to fire. To the east and south the Caledon River was a very good obstacle and it could be covered by

¹⁸ Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 58-61; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 369-390; C.R. de Wet, *Three Years War: October 1899-June 1902*, 82-86; I.J.C. de Wet, *Met Gen. De Wet op Kommando*, 39-46; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 72-73; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 113-114; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 2, 1.

¹⁹ See Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 369.

²⁰ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 73-74; J.J. Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 65-66; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 56-57; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 574-575; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 390-392.

²¹ Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 23-25, 55; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 574; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 60.



Map 2.2: Area map of the South Eastern Orange Free State. Movements of British and Boer forces during the siege and relief operations at Jammersbergdrift.

effective small weapons fire. There was a good interior line²² of communication and ample gun positions and alternative gun positions. The only concern was the positions at the south-west, because there was no natural obstacle and it was difficult to dig in because of hard soil and rocks.²³

The first of Dalgety's force left Aliwal North on 1 April and was followed by the remainder on 2 April. Dalgety's whole force was in camp, close to Wepener, on 4 April and not a moment too soon. On the morning of 4 April the advance Boer party demanded the surrender of Maxwell's force. He replied that they must rather surrender, because they were in greater danger and he had sent an urgent message to Dalgety to redeploy his forces at Jammersberg Drift as soon as possible. Dalgety left the camp at 8 a.m. on 5 April and after a reconnaissance of the positions showed confidence in Maxwell's defence plan. The force of about 1 900 men were deployed and Lukin advised on the deployment of the guns. Table 1 shows the number of officers and other ranks and table 2 the guns and ammunition available to Dalgety for this operation. Lukin was in command of seven guns and six maxims, whereas the Boers had seven guns and some pom-poms.²⁴ They immediately started to prepare the positions. The Boers were some 24 kilometers north of Wepener. Dalgety consequently sent out parties to Wepener and the surrounding farms to get any supplies, ammunitions or weapons that they could lay their hands on to strengthen his supplies. He deployed his signalers at Mafeteng in Basutoland, some 64 kilometers south-east of their positions, for secure communication. Lukin and the rest of the forces, during the next three days, improved their gun positions, trenches and sconces.²⁵

After his success at Sannaspos and Mostertshoek, De Wet was ordered by President Steyn and the *Krygskommissie* to 'destroy the railway line[s].'²⁶ that could supply Roberts. Capt C. Reichmann, the American attaché accompanying the Boers, wrote that De Wet 'lost sight of his true mission' and that that he was driven by a 'strong desire to capture Colonel Dalgety's force,

²² Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 64; Anglo-Boer War Museum Archives (ABW), OM, 4128/916: Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 162.

²³ L. Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, Vol V, 54-55; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 66-67; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 57-60; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 574-575; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 391-393; B.F.S. Baden-Powell, *War in practice: Some tactical and other lessons of the campaign in South Africa, 1899-1902*, 76-78; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 8.4.1900; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 2, 1.

²⁴ Some of the guns positions and its alternative positions are shown on Map 3 and 4. For more detail on the specific guns of the Colonial Division and the Boers, see Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 76; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 58; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 391-393.

²⁵ H.G. Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 37-38; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 74-77; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 66-67; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 57-59; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 574-575; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 391-393; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 114; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 62-64; ABW, OM, 5786/3, Lt-Col Dalgety's report on Operations at Wepener.

²⁶ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902: Deel V, Die Britse Opmars tot in Pretoria*, 259.

UNITS	OFFICERS	OTHER RANKS	ALL RANKS	GUNS	POM-POMS	MAXIMS
Colonial Division	111	1 787	1 898	7		6
Royal Engineers	1	10				
Royal Scots Mounted Infantry	3	78				
Cape Mounted Riflemen	18	409				
1 st Brabant's Horse	25	320				
2 nd Brabant's Horse	29	430				
Kaffrarian Rifles	23	370				
Driscoll's Scouts	3	53				
Cape Mounted Riflemen Artillery	3	90				
Ambulance Section Colonial Division	6	27				
Boers			±8 000	7	9	

Table 2.1: Colonial Division and Boer forces present during the siege.
 (Source: Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 76; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 66; Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, 274)

Note: Amery suggests a total of 1 850, Tylden gives 1 898 men and Breytenbach gives 1 900.

because the capture of colonial troops would have been particularly gratifying to the Boers.²⁷ The Boers had little compassion for the British forces, but they were even more hostile towards the soldiers of the Colonial Division. De Wet made this clear when he stated that ‘there was not a man amongst us who would have asked better than to make prisoners of the Cape Mounted Rifles and Brabant’s Horse. They were Afrikaners, and as Afrikaners,... they ought,... to have been ashamed to fight against us.’²⁸ This must have contributed to his decision, but De Wet also thought that he could defeat this force just as quickly as he had the forces at Sannaspos and Mostertshoek. By capturing or defeating them he would also hamper the British effort because the Colonial Division was of great tactical and strategical value to the British. They were good, and in some cases even as good as the Boer horsemen and marksmen. To add to this, most of these men knew large parts of the area and terrain in which they were operating. All of this had a negative impact on the Boer operations.²⁹

Several British commanders and soldiers confirmed the value of the troops of the Colonial Division. Lukin and his CMR troops also proved this with their success rate against the Commandos in the Cape Colony later on. Although ignoring his main mission, De Wet did send a force, 500 men, under the command of Commandant C.C. Froneman to delay and harass the garrison at Smithfield. Therefore he did not completely ignore the other options at hand. What De Wet did not know was that the British had another ally that could be called on at any time, in the form of the Basutos who were just as eager to take part in campaigns against the Boers. Because of the relationship between the Basutos and Sir Godfrey Lagden, they were persuaded not to interfere until they were asked to help.³⁰

On 6 April De Wet joined up with General J.B. Wessels close to Dewetsdorp and moved on to Daspoort from where they planned the attack on the Colonial Division. By 9 April there were almost 6 000 men, seven guns and some pom-poms, all made up of the Rouxville, Zastron, Smithfield, Wepener, Windburg, Ladybrand, Heilbron, Kroonstad and Ficksburg commandos. More men arrived between 10 and 11 April which brought the total close to 8 000 soldiers. On 8 April 1900 De Wet and all his commandants left for reconnaissance of the Colonial Division’s positions in order to finalise their planned attack. There is some speculation that the Boer forces were becoming restless because they felt they had waited too long to attack the Colonial Division. After De Wet explained his plans to his commandants, they left on 9 April after 12 p.m. to take up their

²⁷ Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, 260-261.

²⁸ De Wet, *Three Years War*, 83.

²⁹ Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika*, 260-273; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 55-56, 64; de Wet, *Three Years of War*, 103-104; van Everdingen, *De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika*, 120-121; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 54, 60, 62.

³⁰ van Everdingen, *De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika*, 120-121; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 55-56, 64; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 54, 60, 62; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 61.

positions.³¹

The Siege of Jammersbergdrift, 9 April to 25 April 1900

At 4 a.m. on 9 April the garrison stood to arms as usual, but this time not just for the sake of routine as the first Boer shells had fallen to the west of the camp at about 6.30 a.m. The Boers' painstaking reconnaissance paid off because they targeted the CMR positions with most of their guns, and their riflemen approached these positions under cover of darkness. De Wet states that the 'place was so strongly fortified that many valuable lives would have been sacrificed, had I been less cautious than I was' and they had difficulty in approaching because 'of the lack of suitable cover.'³² Lukin's guns were not in close proximity to each other and he had a huge task countering the Boer guns. By 10 a.m. the CMR were under great pressure and there was a shortage of ammunition. Dalgety at once sent reinforcements in the form of Driscoll's Scouts and after that a company of the Royal Scots. More reinforcements were sent in the form of a detachment of Brabant's Horse. All of them had to ride over a large open plain which was swept by the Boer guns and snipers. The result was four killed and 22 wounded. The Colonial Division lost about 21 killed and 75 wounded, 11 from the CMR, but the Boers were not successful. The positions in the south-west were also fiercely contested but again the Boers were unsuccessful. Although the gun and rifle fire slowed down, the snipers continued.³³

Lukin's gun detachment's effective counter bombardment and Dalgety's swift reaction in reinforcing the CMR during the attack can be argued as the reason for the Boers not breaking through. Lukin's guns were able, not only to effectively disable some of the Boer guns for some time, but because of their effective fire kept some of these guns at bay so that they could not move to better firing positions. The Boers did not realise the initial success their guns had had on the Colonial Division positions, because their observation was not very good. The other reasons why they could not take advantage of their unknown success were because of the good counter-bombardment of Lukin's guns and a shortage of ammunition on the Boer side.³⁴

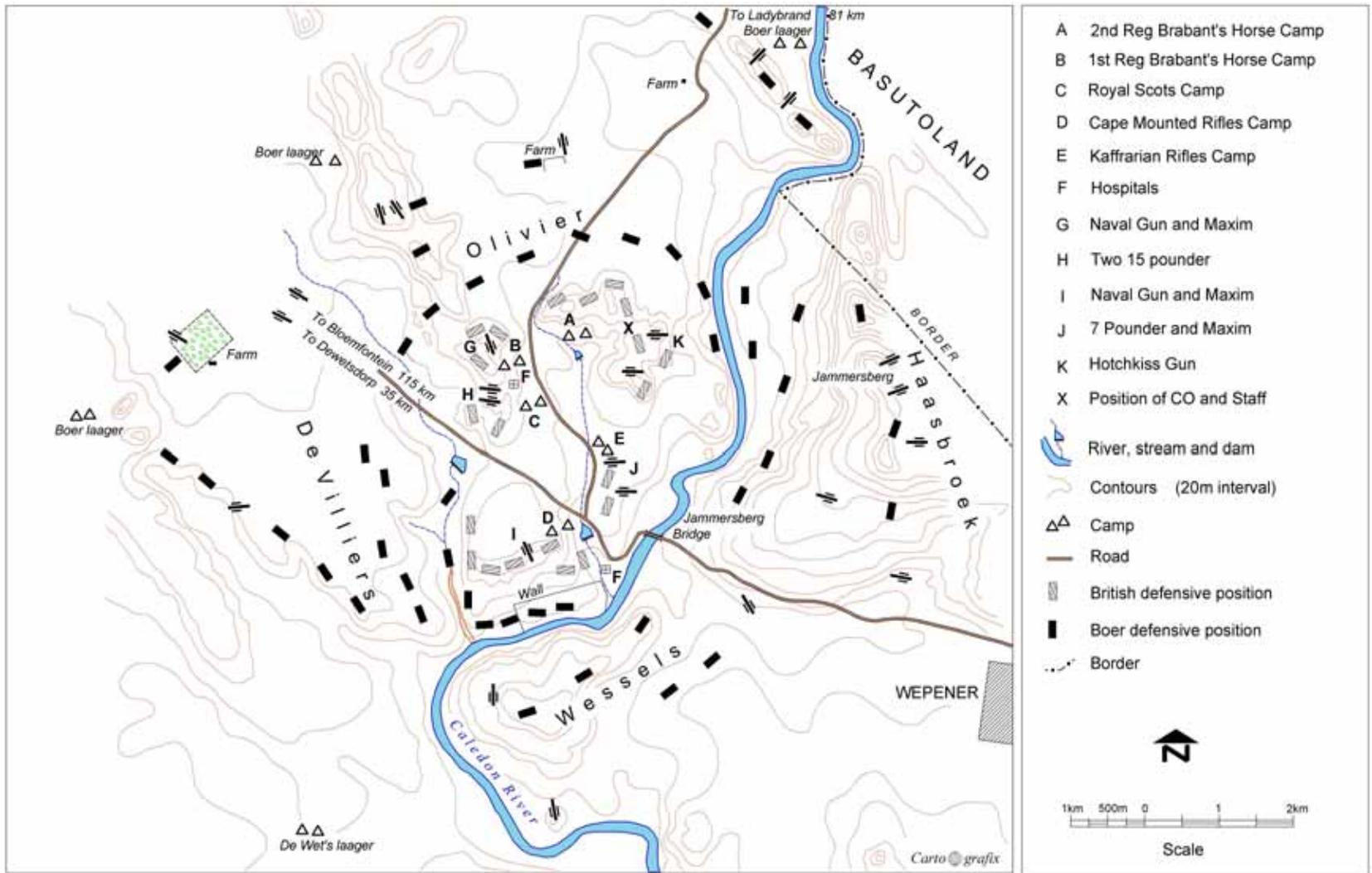
At 8 p.m., under the protection of darkness and with less enemy fire, the Division's soldiers were able to re-organize. Corporal Luke Gormley described the grim conditions Lukin and his fellow soldiers had to endure during the fighting and when night came,

³¹ ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 153, 156-158; De Wet, *Three Years of War*, 103-104; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 69-71; van Everdingen, *De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika*, 119-121; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 10.4.1900.

³² De Wet, *Three Years of War*, 83.

³³ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 77-78; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 9.4.1900; ABW, OM, 5786/3, Lt-Col Dalgety's report on Operations at Wepener, 29.4.1900; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 59-61; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 39-40; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 69-70; CA, A 459, Life of General EY Brabant, Part 4, Chapter 2, 1-2.

³⁴ Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 576; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 156-158; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 61.



Map 2.3: The position of the opposing forces during the Siege of Jammersbergdrift, 9-25 April 1900.

Those who had the misfortune to be wounded had to lie out under the hot sun through the day, with the whizzing of bullets and bursting shells, and without a drop of water till darkness came to put a stop to their agony. As soon as darkness came on, we buried the dead and there was many a sore heart among us as we laid them in their last resting place.³⁵

The darkness enabled Lukin's artillery troop and the other soldiers to repair the damage to their sconces and deepen their trenches, and if possible, even get some sleep. The CMR bettered their sconces by means of boulders and at the same time developed their positions with sandbags, because the terrain was of such a nature that they could not dig their trenches any deeper.³⁶ The Boers also had some preparation to do after the first day of the siege. Because De Wet did not achieve the results he had hoped for, to capture the Colonial Division, and because Lukin's guns had put them under great pressure, he ordered their guns to prepare sconces.³⁷

At dawn on 10 April 1900 the Boer guns and small arms opened fire again, but not as fiercely as the previous day. Lukin's guns were able to lessen the effect of the artillery fire because of effective counter bombardment. The Boers had to re-deploy their guns to ensure that Lukin's guns did not destroy them or put them out of action. And if one reads one of the accounts of Field-Cornet A.L. Thring, it becomes clear that Lukin and his guns were a great problem for the Boer forces,

With trepidation we passed over the ground and looked anxiously and with bated breath through our glasses to see the cannon trained on us and immediately after give out a flash, followed by a roaring 'boom'. Another flash followed; our breathing was once more suspended for the moment but as soon as we beheld the shells ploughing up the ground near our cannon that was firing, we heaved a sigh of relief. There was now some commotion among the CMR; they had perceived our movements; their men rushed energetically to the wheels of their cannon and smartly trained on to our guns, but too late, for our gun just then got behind a projecting shoulder of the hill out of the enemy's view.³⁸

From this, one can derive that all Lukin's strict training and the experience they had gained over the past years, paid off. Lukin and his artillery troop were a big thorn in the flesh of the Boers. Although the gun and small arms fire was not as harsh as the previous morning, it changed later that day.³⁹

Dalgety knew that there was the possibility of a night attack and therefore their pickets were

³⁵ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 9.4.1900.

³⁶ These sandbags were blankets and greatcoats that were converted by filling them with the earth. Knowing how cold it could get at night in the Free State, this showed how desperate these men were for proper protection against the shrapnel of the guns and small fire arms, see Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 576; Churchill, *Ian Hamilton's March*, 50; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 11.4.1900; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 162.

³⁷ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 9.4.1900; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 78; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 70; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 56-59; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 157; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 64-65.

³⁸ ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 157.

³⁹ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 10.4.1900; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 40; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 156-158; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 71; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 61-62.

UNITS	KILLED	WOUNDED
Colonial Division	21	75
Boers	0	07

Table 2.2: Casualties sustained on the night of 9 April and the morning of 10 April 1900.
(Source: Breytenbach, *Die Britse Opmars tot in Pretoria*, 277)

extra cautious. An officer of Brabant's Horse confirmed this when he stated that '[T]owards afternoon they directed all their gun fire to one spot, and blew to bits the sconces of the CMR, thus leaving them almost unprotected, and in the night they attempted to take the positions by assault.'⁴⁰ De Wet ordered commandants Fourie, Nel and Banks to attack the positions at Robertson's Mill and house and Field-Cornets De Vos and Thring to move 'through the *randjies* towards the dam'.⁴¹ They were to move out under the cover of darkness and attack at 9 p.m. The snipers started their fire at the pickets at around 8 p.m. and the attack started at 8.30 p.m., when De Vos and Thring's forces had reached the trenches of the pickets. The surprise was lost and the fighting reached its peak at around 10 p.m. The Boers persisted until 11 p.m. trying to penetrate or break the defensive lines. De Wet was informed that they would not be able to break the line unless they risked losing a great number of men and he instructed them to retreat. Small rifle fire went on until 2 a.m. on 11 April. On the Colonial Divisions side 10 were killed and 50 wounded, whereas the Boers lost four and eight were wounded. This unwillingness of the Boers to risk the lives of too many men, occurred several times and may be one of the reasons why the Boer forces were not able to break the defences at Jammersbergdrift.⁴²

The conditions in the trenches got worse as time went on. Lukin and his men were fortunate to receive one meal in 24 hours and when it was hot, it was a luxury. Luke Gormley explained that the menu, consisted of 'half a pound of flour cooked into a soft dough. This with half a pound of meat from trek oxen'⁴³ and tea or coffee. So we are only getting enough to keep life in us.'⁴⁴ Gormley confirms this stayed the same, 'Our one meal consisted of half a pound of soft doughy bread and a bit of fried beef and cold tea. That's till tomorrow night when, if we are lucky, we will get the same again.'⁴⁵ It did not look good for the Colonial Division but Dalgety knew that if they held out it would assist in Roberts' plan to destroy or neutralise the Boer forces in the Free State.⁴⁶

Sleep was not a priority, any time they could improve their positions they did so. Lukin had to ensure that his men were still sharp and knew exactly where the Boer guns were. He also had to ensure that the ammunition was used sparingly otherwise the Boers would have the advantage. The Boers continued the previous day's tactics by using the guns and snipers to keep the Colonial

⁴⁰ Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 58.

⁴¹ ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 157.

⁴² ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 155, 157-158, 165; ABW, OM, 5786/3, Lt-Col Dalgety's report on Operations at Wepener, 29.4.1900; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 57-60; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 40, f 82; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 10.4.1900.

⁴³ There was only four days of provision and this had to be supplemented with trek oxen and horse meat, for some nutritional substance, see Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 577.

⁴⁴ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 10.4.1900.

⁴⁵ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 18.4.1900.

⁴⁶ Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 62-63; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 80-81; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 394; Van Everdingen, *De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika*, 126; ABW, OM, 5786/3, Lt-Col Dalgety's report on Operations at Wepener, 29.4.1900.

UNITS	KILLED	WOUNDED
Colonial Division	10	50
Boers	04	08

Table 2.3: Casualties sustained on the night of 10 April and the morning of 11 April 1900.
(Source: Breytenbach, *Die Britse Opmars tot in Pretoria*, 280)

Division in their trenches and their heads down. During the course of 11 April some reinforcements arrived for the Boers in the form of the Smithfield Commando, and they were deployed between Wepener and the Caledon River. The Colonial Division also received some form of reinforcement, a message from Lord Kitchener from Aliwal North, expressing his hope that the siege would be ended sooner than was thought.⁴⁷

Three days of no success and De Wet reconsidered. On 12 April he ordered his men to construct trenches, at night, parallel to those of the Colonial Division, and to work slowly towards their positions. Another reconnaissance party was convened and during this De Wet said to Thring that that he must 'keep these things quiet, as one can scarcely trust one's own brother in these times' because he 'already suspected that the Royal Scots and CMR had heard the night before that we intended making the night attack on them and were therefore prepared for us.'⁴⁸ 'These things' he mentions were the new plans and the new gun positions to the west whose aim was to soften the weak point in the Colonial Division and to put more pressure on Lukin's guns.⁴⁹

They had to do something to put more pressure on Lukin's guns. One of the incidents that best describes this contest between Lukin's guns and those of the Boer is in Creswicke. He says that the enemy was busy shelling one of the Lukin's 15-pounders, when a shot knocked off the left sight of Lukin's gun. Lukin, showing his admiration for the shot, jumped on top of the gun and made a complimentary salute to the Boer gunner. Later on, by using the reserve sight on the right side, he fired a shell right into the same gun detachment's gun pit, whereupon the officer in charge, imitating Lukin's example, promptly leapt up and bowed his congratulations. Lukin never refused a challenge and showed that he could match, and in some cases, even do better than his enemy.⁵⁰

Mother Nature began to play her part in this siege, from the night of 11 April until 18 April, it rained, sometimes for the whole day. This bad weather made the task of Lukin and his guns and the other soldiers more difficult. They already had to work sparingly with the ammunition and now they also had to keep the powder dry at all costs. For a second night the Boers tried to break through the Colonial Division's positions, again without success. The Boer trenches got closer and this caused some concern for Dalgety. There was more to be concerned about than this, namely

⁴⁷ Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 40-41; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 158-159; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 11.4.1900; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 60.

⁴⁸ ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 159.

⁴⁹ Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 42; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 159; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 59-60; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 78-79.

⁵⁰ Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 59-60; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 42; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 71; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 78-79.



Illustration 2.3: Captain H.T. Lukin.
(Source: Wilson, *After Pretoria*, 751)

the lack of proper, hot food, ammunition⁵¹ and reserve forces.⁵²

From 13 April until 15 April the Boers commemorated Easter, but there was still the odd gun and sniper fire. On 13 April a *Krijgsraad* was convened and it was decided to send out another reconnaissance party to the top of Jammersberg and on 15 April De Wet received the report from the reconnaissance party. This information was of no great import because on 13 April Roberts instructed the commanders of the relief force of their objectives and on 14 April the first of these relief forces left for Wepener. This operation would have started earlier but was delayed by the rain. His plan was for two columns of almost 35 000 men, one from the south under command of Major General A.F. Hart and one from the north-west under the command of Lieutenant General L. Rundle, to march upon Wepener and relieve the forces.⁵³ The bad weather restricted the Boers attacks as well. De Wet decided to send Froneman on 19 April south towards Aliwal North to delay the forces of Hart and to send General Piet de Wet to the north-west to delay Rundle's relief force at Dewetsdorp. De Wet still seemed confident of destroying or capturing the forces at Jammersberg.⁵⁴

Lukin and the rest of the Colonial Division saw these forces leaving the Boer positions and may well have thought that the fire would diminish. As the forces left on 19 April the guns continued firing from the west. That day some 130 shrapnel shells were directed at the Kaffrarian Rifles. Unfortunately, Lukin could not equal this fire, because of the lack of ammunition and therefore had to reduce the firing rate of the guns. That meant that the artillerymen had to take extra care in aiming and firing these precious commodities. Lukin's experienced artillerymen and commanders were up to the challenge of effectively and efficiently using the ammunition available to them. As Table 4 shows, there was not much artillery ammunition available and because of the distances between the two forces, Lukin and his men had to be extra cautious with the use of the 12- pounder and 15-pounder ammunition. According to Dalgety's report, Lukin could only fire one shot every quarter of an hour compared to the enemy's average of 200 to 300 a day. That same day Rundle was about 27 kilometers away from Dewetsdorp and Brabant, under the command of Hart, was close to Boesmanskop. So the pressure started to build, not only on De Wet's forces at

⁵¹ The restriction on ammunition was a concern for both the Colonial Division and Boer forces, specifically the artillery ammunition, see ABW, OM, 5786/3, Lt-Col Dalgety's report on Operations at Wepener, 29.4.1900; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 14.4.1900.

⁵² Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 62-64; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 60-63; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 42-43; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 12.4.1900-20.1.1900; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 577-578; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 64-65.

⁵³ For detail about the complete plan of Lord Roberts, see Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 69-70; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 68-70; Churchill, *Ian Hamilton's March*, 47-48, 72.

⁵⁴ Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 42-43; ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 12.4.1900; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 61, 64; E.C. Moffet, *With the Eight Division: A Souvenir of the South African Campaign*, 62; Van Everdingen, *De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika*, 126; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 162-163; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 64-66; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 72-73.

UNITS	TYPE OF AMMUNITION	GUNS	START OF SIEGE	END OF SIEGE	TOTAL USED	% USED
Colonial Division	Per Rifle		500	250	250	50
	Per 15-pounder	2 x 15-pounder	850	100	750	88
	Per 12-pounder	2 x 12-pounder	250	50	200	80
	Per 7-Pounder	2 x 7-pounder	250	150	100	40
	Per Hotchkiss	1 Hotchkiss	350	8	342	98
Boers		4X 12-pounder				
		Krupp				
		Amstrong				

Table 2.4: The number of guns and the amount of ammunition available to the besieged Colonials and their expenditure during the course of the siege. Boers number of guns. (Source: Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 76, 81; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 72.)

Jammersberg, but also on the delaying parties of Froneman and De Wet's brother Piet.⁵⁵

The Boers continued closing the distance between themselves and the enemy by means of the trenches they developed. By 20 April they were 146 meters away from the western position of Brabant's Horse and the CMR. While the Boers continued to keep the Colonial Division pinned down in their positions at Jammersberg and tried to slow down the approach of the relief forces, Roberts initiated the second part of his relief plan. This involved Colonel I. Hamilton recapturing the waterworks of Bloemfontein and acting as a cut-off force; Major General J.D.P. French assisting Hamilton, and Major General R. Pole-Carew keeping in contact with Rundle and French. Roberts wanted to relieve the forces at Wepener but at the same time capture or neutralise the Boer forces in the south-eastern Free State.⁵⁶

Lukin and the rest of the force had now been pinned down for 13 days and the siege was starting to take its toll. The sound of the guns of the relief forces arrived not a day too late. The guns were heard distantly from 21 April 1900 onwards. They had to live through seven days of rain, cold food and hardship (specifically the CMR, Kaffrarian Rifles, and the reserve forces) with the knowledge that food and specifically ammunition were very scarce. Lukin and his men had some extra burdens in that they had to keep their ammunition dry and every day get the necessary information regarding the positions of the Boer guns, to neutralise them. From the recollections of Luke Gormley, one can imagine how terrible it was in the trenches,

We have been having a terrible day and night with rain all the time and the trenches are about six inches deep in water. To make matters worse we have to sit in it all day for if we move the Boers have a shot at us. It would not be so bad if you could move about, but we have to remain in a bent up position all day, shivering with the cold. It is now 13 days since we were hemmed in.⁵⁷

The relief force's guns in the distance was worth more than any hot meal or ammunition because they knew that it would only be a few days before they would be relieved. This lifted their spirits after 14 days in the trenches. Howell writes that 'Heavy guns heard all the morning coming from the north-west. Probably Rundle coming to our relief. No sound of Brabant.'⁵⁸ Lukin and his fellow soldiers thought that the first engagements were between Rundle and Piet de Wet, but Brabant and Froneman first made contact at Boesman's Kop.⁵⁹

The forces of Rundle, Hamilton, French, and Pole-Carew proved to be too strong for the

⁵⁵ ABW, OM, 5786/3, Lt-Col Dalgety's report on Operations at Wepener, 29.4.1900. Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 64, 73-74; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 65-66.

⁵⁶ Churchill, *Ian Hamilton's March*, 72-73; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 578, 580.

⁵⁷ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 18.4.1900; ABW, OM, 5786/3, Lt-Col Dalgety's report on Operations at Wepener, 29.4.1900; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 42-43; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 62-63.

⁵⁸ Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 43-45.

Boer forces and De Wet received urgent messages from President Steyn and Loius Botha to evacuate his forces. On 22 April they started to evacuate their wagons and between 23 April and 24 April most of the commandos retreated to Ladybrand. De Wet tried an attack on the CMR trenches one last time on 24 April. The guns fired a heavy barrage on the trenches and this was followed by a charge of a small Boer force. As previously, the soldiers and Lukin's guns were able to withstand this attack. De Wet now knew he would not be able to capture Dalgety's men and started to withdraw his men progressively while they were still in contact with Dalgety's force by means of gun and small arms fire. This allowed them to retreat without heavy casualties, but they did lose some wagons loaded with ammunition and supplies in the flooded river.⁶⁰

The Colonial Division was relieved on 25 April 1900. At the end a total of ± 34 men of the Colonial Division forces were killed and ± 146 wounded and on the Boer side ± 11 were killed and ± 25 wounded. Only 14 cattle were left in the camp and just 15 % of the horses survived the barrage of the Boer guns and the cooking pots. Although the number of wounded seem many, it did not make a big difference to the numbers at the front because most of them were treated by their fellow men in the trenches, or after treatment at the hospital, rejoined their regiments in the trenches. Several men received decorations for the operation, Lukin was one of those who received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO). This Order was issued to commissioned officers in the Army and Navy who had distinguished themselves in service. Of the 111 officers that were involved in the siege, only Lukin, Captain R.C. Grant and Lieutenant J.E.G. Roy received the DSO; Dalgety received the Commander of the Order of the Bath (CB), two other officers were mentioned in dispatches and five Non-Commissioned Officers were recommended for commissions, which they later received.⁶¹

The British forces did not take full advantage of their numbers and the surprise they had. It was initially Roberts' intention just to relieve the forces at Wepener and to ensure that there was no big concentration of Boer forces in that part of the Free State to harrass his communications line

⁵⁹ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 18.4.1900-21.4.1900; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 42-45; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 578; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 71-72; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 65.

⁶⁰ ABW, OM, 5786/1, Diary of Luke Gormley, 23.4.1900-24.4.1900; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 66-67, 78-80; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 165-168; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 45; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 73-74; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 81-83; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 72-73; De Wet, *Three Years War*, 85-86; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 166.

⁶¹ Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 46, f 112; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 82-86; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 73-75; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 63, 72-73; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 577-578; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 66-68, 80-81; ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 168-170; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 46, f 112, f 114; M. Probert, 'The Probert Encyclopaedia- Weapons and Warfare', <http://www.davidpye.com/probert/F3.HTM>, (Accessed 12/10/2004); Anon, 'The Order of Bath', <http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Order%20of%20the%20Bath>, (Accessed 12/10/2004).

UNITS	KILLED	WOUNDED
Colonial Division	33	155
Boers	11	25

Table 2.5: Casualties sustained during the course of the siege, 9 to 25 April 1900.
 (Source: Breytenbach, *Die Britse Opmars tot in Pretoria*, 281)

Note: The numbers for the deceased and wounded are different according to the sources, although they are in some cases very close to each other, see Breytenbach, *Die Britse Opmars tot in Pretoria*, f 51; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Dairy of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 46, f 112; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 82-86; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 73; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, 63; Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria*, 578; Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 68.

while he continued his march to capture Pretoria. However, on 25 April Roberts instructed French to pursue the Boer forces into Thaba’Nchu, although this did not achieve the desired result. Wepener was evacuated but there were still some Colonial Division soldiers stationed at Mafeteng. Roberts was now free again to commence with his march to Pretoria.⁶²

Lukin and the Cape Mounted Riflemen achieving more success

Roberts still had to secure his communication lines and prevent any attempt by the Boers to cross the border to the Cape Colony to start a rebellion there. Rundle was ordered on 4 May to ‘take such measures as you may consider necessary to prevent any large body of enemy being able once more to invade Wepener, or to move towards Smithfield through the Dewetsdorp-Wepener gap.’⁶³ The Colonial Division, with Lukin’s artillery, arrived at Thaba’Nchu on 7 May 1900 and was incorporated into Rundle’s force. On their arrival the Colonial Division had the opportunity to witness a rare event. The regular soldiers of the British always considered the Colonial Division their subordinates and did not think much of them. But that day Rundle and his 8th Division lined the road for the Colonial Division to show their admiration for the excellent work they had done during the siege of Wepener. For the next three months they had the task of keeping the Boers at bay and protecting Roberts’ line of communication.⁶⁴

The Boers continued with their strategy and still achieved successes such as when Piet de Wet captured the 13th Imperial Yeomanry Battalion close to Lindley on 31 May and Christiaan de Wet captured a British convoy with some 56 wagons on 4 June. Roberts was not pleased at all, as one can derive from a telegram, he sent saying that ‘[I]t is absurd our garrisons being shut up and the country being dominated by the few Boers De Wet has with him.’⁶⁵ He initiated several plans to stop this. ‘[A]dequate garrisons for the principal towns and vulnerable positions on the railway’⁶⁶ was first priority. These principal towns were Lindley, Heilbron, Heidelberg and Frankfort. The second plan. involved the capture of 7 000 Boers in the Brandwater Basin, and the use of four flying columns, numbering 33 000 men, one from the Transvaal and the other three under the command of Lieutenant General S.P. Meuthen, Major General R.A.P. Clements, and Major General H.A. MacDonald. Hamilton was placed in overall command of these columns. Major General A. Hunter replaced Hamilton on 23 June. Rundle’s 8th Division, of which the Colonial

⁶² ABW, OM, 4128/916, Diary of Field-Cornet Thring, 168-170; Howell, *Anglo-Boer War Diary of Herbert Gwynne Howell*, 46, f 112, f 114; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 82-86; Oberholster, *Wepener 1869-1969*, 73-75; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol IV, 63, 72-73; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 397; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 115.

⁶³ Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 68.

⁶⁴ Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 67-68; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 83; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 87-88.

⁶⁵ F. Pretorius, *Die eerste dryfjag op Hoofkmdt. C.R. de Wet*, (MA thesis, University of Pretoria, September 1975), 11-12.

⁶⁶ Pretorius, *Die eerste dryfjag op Hoofkmdt. C.R. de Wet*, 15.

Division and Lukin formed part, had originally been tasked to capture the Boer forces in the Free State and therefore formed part of Clements' force to capture these Boers. From the 11th until 25 July the Colonial Division and Lukin's guns operated in the areas in and around Witnek, Rooikrans, Julyskraal, Zoutkop and Commandonek. Hunter started his operations against the Boers in the Brandwater Basin on 11 July and on 29 July Commandant Prinsloo sent out a party to Hunter to ask for four day's truce to negotiate the surrender of the 5 000 Boers, wagons and animals. This marked the end of one of the most successful operations against the Boers. Although a great success, neither the Colonial Division nor Lukin's artillery troop got any rest. Lord Roberts' main objective was still to capture De Wet and Steyn.⁶⁷

Commander of the Cape Mounted Riflemen

On 30 July 1900 Lukin and the Colonial Division were tasked to take part in the drive to capture De Wet and Steyn. They reached Kroonstad on 3 August and were at Winkel's Drift on the Rhenoster River on 6 August. By 8 August they had reached Scandinavia Drift on the Vaal River and were ordered to combine with Methuen's force in the drive on De Wet and Steyn. Only Dalgety and 600 men, a detachment from the CMR and four guns, under the command of Lukin, stayed with Methuen's force and the rest of the Division were detached to Colonel C. Maxwell to start operations in the Ventersdorp and Welverdiend district. The hunt for De Wet was on again. Four columns were under the command of Kitchener, but again the British commanders disappointed.⁶⁸

Kitchener withdrew Methuen's forces from Schoeman's Drift to Scandinavia Drift, resulting in De Wet crossing the Vaal on 9 August without any resistance. Methuen with Dalgety, and Lukin's guns following close behind, seized the opportunity by chasing after De Wet. They left their infantry and mules behind for more mobility and it paid off. On 11 August they came in contact with De Wet's force close to Frederikstad. De Wet wanted to cross the Magaliesberg mountains and the British had to block him. Hamilton's column was tasked to block Olifants and Magato Nek. Hamilton instead decided to deploy his force of 7 600 men at the ridge before the Nek and try to intercept the Boer forces. Expecting De Wet's passage through Olifant's and Magato Nek to be blocked, Methuen, Dalgety and Lukin's forces continued to put pressure on De Wet.⁶⁹

On 12 August they were in contact with De Wet's men again. Lukin's guns were ordered to

⁶⁷ Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 68-70; De Wet, *Three Years War*, 96-111, 126-131; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 87-88; P.J. Delport, *Die Rol van Genl. Martinus Prinsloo gedurende die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, (BA Hons treatise, Universiteit van Oranje Vrystaat, Desember 1972), 143-144; Pretorius, *Die eerste dryfjag op Hoofkmdt. C.R. de Wet*, 15-18; H.W. Kinsey, 'The Brandwater Basin and the Golden Gate surrenders, 1900' in *Military Historical Journal*, 121-126.

⁶⁸ Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 450; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 85-86; Barthorp, *The Anglo-Boer Wars*, 135; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 73; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 116-117.

⁶⁹ Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 450-451; Barthorp, *The Anglo-Boer Wars*, 135; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 73-74; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 91-92.



Illustration 2.4: Prinsloo's surrender at the Brandwater Basin, 29 July 1900.
(Source: Andriessen, *Gedenkboek van den Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika*, 355)

fire on De Wet's rear guard. This artillery attack was very successful, because De Wet, trying to escape it, had to leave behind some sixty British prisoners, supply wagons and one of the guns that was captured at Stormberg. This success was minimised because Hamilton did not block the passes and De Wet escaped and disappeared on the other side of the Magaliesberg mountains. Methuen, Dalgety and Lukin continued their push after De Wet. On 14 August they approached Magao's Nek and Commandant Liebenberg's men attacked them. Lukin and his gun detachment did excellent work here, and with their successful bombardments, were able to drive the Boers out of the Nek and captured another gun. Methuen specially thanked Lukin and his gun detachment for the great work they had done. Still De Wet was on the loose.⁷⁰

Some of the reasons de Wet was able to avoid the traps that were set for him were because the British did not have the same quality of intelligence, specifically scouting, and communication as the Boers had. De Wet and most of his men were able to disappear off the map for a little while. Lukin and the rest of the Colonial Division's soldiers had been conducting operations since early 1900. They all needed some rest and got a little at Zeerust from 22 August. Methuen again took the opportunity to thank the Colonial Division and Lukin for their efforts in these operations. Although promised a long rest period, they were off again on 25 August and joined General Little's 3rd Cavalry Brigade in helping Hart to clear up the Krugersdorp district. For the rest of August until the middle of September Lukin and the Colonial Division operated in the west and southern Transvaal trying to capture the Boer forces in these areas.⁷¹

The Division crossed the Vaal River on 20 September with the objective of capturing Heilbron. They succeeded in this and got information that De Wet was operating in the Free State again. De Wet tried to get more men to join their cause and to continue with the guerilla tactics against the communication lines. Lukin and the rest of the Division were on his trail again and pursued him to Witkopjes close to Reitzburg on 8 October. Arriving at Witkoppies, Lukin and the rest of the Division were given a month of well-deserved rest, because Robertson at this stage thought that the war was all but won. He could not have been more wrong, but at least the Division got their rest. During this time Dalgety decided to retire and there was no question to whom the command of the CMR should go. Lukin was promoted to the local rank of Lieutenant Colonel on 13 October 1900 and put in command of the CMR, which was attached to the Imperial Forces. Lukin was now in command of the unit in which he first got his commissioned rank and the unit that was seen by many as the most prestigious unit in the Cape Colonial Forces. The Division was refitted

⁷⁰ Orpen, *Gunners of the Cape*, 60; Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 450-451; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 86; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 74-75; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 92; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 116-117.

⁷¹ Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 76-78; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 86-87; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 92-94; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 116-117.

at Kroonstad and ready for action on 10 November.⁷²

Lukin, now commander of the CMR, was eager to continue the operations, but this happy period in his life almost turned out to be a dark chapter. He contracted enteric fever while on the way to Lindley. Lindley, in view of its geographical position, was an important town. On no less than seven occasions it changed hands in battle between the Boer and British forces. At this stage it was in the hands of the British forces and Lukin was admitted to the field hospital. During December the Boers occupied Lindley again and Lukin became a prisoner of the Boers. Lukin's wife, Annie Maria (Lily), was informed but after some time she got no further word and decided to travel to Lindley to find out how her husband was. She was armed with a letter from Hunter asking any Boer Commanders to respect the Red Cross flag under which she traveled. She arrived close to the end of his sickness and soon after her arrival the British reoccupied Lindley. Lukin was transferred to the hospital at Claremont to recuperate completely. During his sickness there was some reorganising taking place, including within the Colonial Division.⁷³

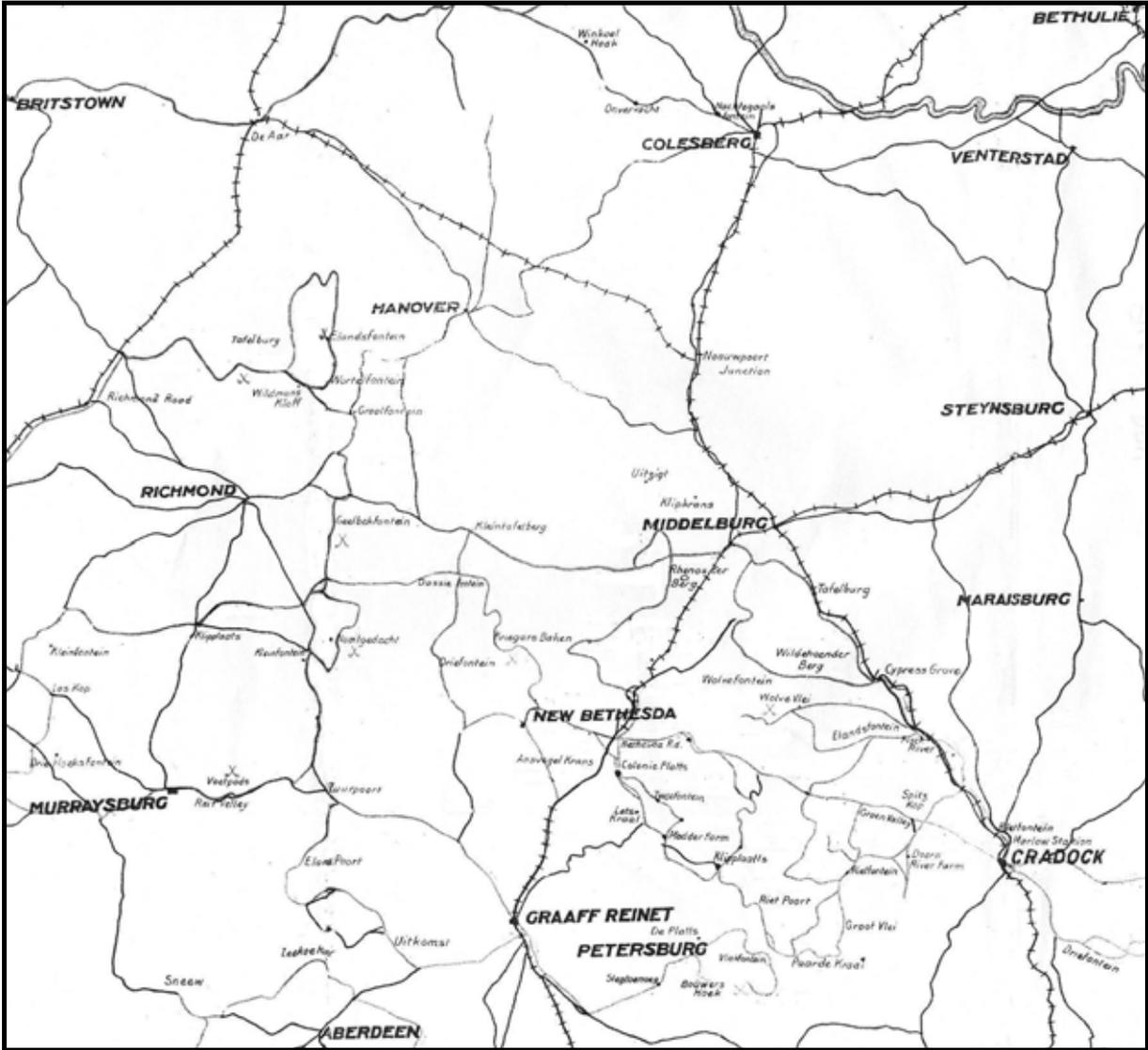
Lukin's successes during the Guerilla phase

Although De Wet had already implemented some facets of guerilla warfare after the fall of Bloemfontein, by fighting in small groups and using the countryside and people to their own advantage, the Boer's guerrilla tactics were used more frequently after Pretoria also fell into British hands. By this time many Boers were in captivity and it was the only way to continue the fight against the British forces. T. Miller Maguire writes in his book, *Guerilla or Partisan Warfare*, that he was quite surprised that there was nothing in the British soldier's curriculum on guerilla warfare prior to 1900. As he correctly states, the British soldiers were involved in more small wars, savage wars, irregular wars or guerilla wars than any other soldier. This may be one of the reasons why it took so long for the British soldiers to achieve success against the Boers after they started to fight a full out guerilla war. Another reason, as Strachan rightly acknowledges in his book *European Armies and the Conduct of War*, is that the Boers were a much more advanced enemy than those the British had encountered in earlier wars. On the other hand, this may be the reason why Lukin and the CMR were so successful in most of the drives against the Boers in these guerilla phases, because they knew both the terrain and the enemy better than the average British soldier.⁷⁴

⁷² Barthorp, *The Anglo-Boer Wars*, 135; Orpen, *Gunners of the Cape*, 60; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 92-95; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 116-117; University of Cape Town Archives (Hereinafter UCT), BC 676 A1.1, Extracts from Army Orders, 28 May 1901; UCT, BC 676 A1.1, G 381, Promotion of Captain H.T. Lukin, Chief of Staff- O.C. Colonial Division, 13 October 1900.

⁷³ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 97-98; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 83; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 88-90.

⁷⁴ J.J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolution War*, 33; J. Ellis, *A Short History of Guerrilla Warfare*, 6-8, T.M. Maguire, *Guerrilla or Partisan Warfare*, 1-2; H. Strachan, *European Armies and the Conduct of War*, 76-77.



Map 2.4: Map of area of operations during Guerrilla phase, 1901.
 (Source: Le Riche, *Memoirs of General Ben Bower*)

Maguire mentions other problems the British soldier had to overcome to ensure success against the guerilla tactics of the Boers, such as night attacks, the climate and horse supplies. Again Lukin and the CMR had the advantage over the British soldiers, because they were trained with and knew the Cape horse, were used to the climate and achieved much success with their night attacks against the Boers. De Wet even states that because of the South African soldiers' knowledge and success in night attacks, the British were able to learn from them and also started to use them very successfully against the Boers.⁷⁵

The British restructured their forces because of the guerilla phase. One of the consequences was the disbanding of the Colonial Division and the division of its forces into two columns. One column was under the command of Colonel R.E. Maxwell and Lukin and the CMR formed part of this column. The other column was made up of the guns of the 17th Battery, one pom-pom, the Kaffrarian Rifles, Queenstown Rifle Volunteers and the Border Horse. During Lukin's illness Captain Steward took over the command of the CMR. Lukin rejoined his men close to Bethulie on 7 February 1901. During January 1901 the Boer commandos had invaded the Cape Colony for the second time. Not long after this De Wet also crossed the Orange River at Sands Drift. Lieutenant General N.G. Lyttelton was tasked, as the commander of some 12 columns, to capture De Wet and the other Boers. The operations started on 27 January and Lyttelton's plan was for De Wet to move south into the Cape Colony and then for the forces of Lieutenant Colonel H. de Beauvoir De Lisle to hold him while the other smaller columns pushed him from behind. During this operation it rained for long periods and at the end of February De Wet and his men were able to get through a drift and escape the British forces. Although not capturing De Wet, they did confiscate all of his guns, some four thousand horses, most of his convoy and some three hundred men. Lukin and the CMR joined Colonel Gorringer's column, which formed part of several other columns, those of Crabbe, Henniker, Scobell, Doran, Kavanagh and others, which had to counter the guerilla tactics of the Boer forces.⁷⁶

From March to the middle of April 1901, Gorringer's column was busy with operations against the Boer commandos in the south-eastern part of the Free State. These columns had to hunt the commandos and to deny them any help from the local population. They had to move all stock and inhabitants out of the area to an assembly place to deny the Boers any support. Some of Lukin's men again operated around Wepener and some were even deployed on Jammersberg for the night of 25 March 1901. On 29 March Lukin and his men escorted 1 100 white and 900 black refugees, and gathered 33 000 sheep, almost 1 000 cattle and some ponies. Lukin and the CMR

⁷⁵ Maguire, *Guerrilla or Partisan Warfare*, 47-59, 73-77, 78-80.

⁷⁶ Dr A. van Dyk (Private) Collection, Transcribed Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards and Graaff-Reinet 1900-1902, 29 January 1901, 6; F.F. Colvin and E.R. Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign, 1899 to 1902*, 190-198; T. Shearing and D Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 51; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 88-92; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 566-584, 635-687.

operated in the Free State for a month and a half and did not have much success, but they were slowly but surely denying the commandos any support or food from the area.⁷⁷

On 17 April 1901 Lukin and the CMR were ordered to return to the Cape Colony and Maxwell and his men held a parade to bid them farewell. Kitchener believed that the war would be over by April, but this was not the case, however, some real progress was being made. Kitchener started to implement the blockhouse system in January 1901, at first just to protect the railway lines, but then he started to develop a network of blockhouses to keep the commandos out of an area. As this network developed, Kitchener implemented a new strategy, this time using these blockhouses and wires to corner the commandos.. It was now becoming winter and the Boers found it more difficult to operate because all the livestock and support from the farms had been removed. The winter also meant less food on the land, and, if there was food available, it was burned or removed by the British. The British also started to better coordinate their operations and the blockhouses and wire were closing down the escape routes. It was during this time that Lukin and the CMR joined Lieutenant Colonel H. Scobell's column in the Cape Colony.⁷⁸

When Lukin and the CMR joined Scobell's column, they were reinforced by the F, G, and I companies of the CMR. Their first mission was to capture Commandant Malan and his men. The CMR operated very successfully in the Cape Colony against the guerillas because they knew the area and had the advantage over their British colleagues, as Captain Stirling in his book *The Colonials in South Africa* explains,

To carry out successfully tasks such as those Sergeant Bettington [CMR] undertook, required a combination of qualities that one would scarcely expect to find in the British regular. To the fearlessness, coolness and physical fitness which the regular generally has, there had to be added a profound knowledge of the Boer and the Black, and of the country they lived in; and above all, the ever-ranging eye,⁷⁹ a product of the veldt, bred or educated up to a distance at which the home-trained vision is useless.⁷⁹

Even Scobell knew the CMR's abilities and was very pleased when Lukin and his force joined his column, he said that 'I need hardly [to] say that my work is not nearly so worrying as it used to be now I have regiments which have only to be told a thing to do it, instead of having to be shown how to do it [and] then one had to see it was done after that.'⁸⁰ On 22 April 1901 the military was in control of the courts and where previously the rebels had received light sentences, they could now get the death sentence if captured. Despite this, the Boers continued with their operations, but the

⁷⁷ Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 198, 202-203; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Rifleman*, 99-100; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 88-89; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 635-637.

⁷⁸ Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 206; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Rifleman*, 100; Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 499, 534-537; Van Dyk Collection, *Diary of Major General H. Scobell*, April 1901, 44; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 118; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 92; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 87.

⁷⁹ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Rifleman*, 113.

⁸⁰ Van Dyk Collection, *Scobell's Diary*, June 15 1900, 51.

British started to gain control over the war.⁸¹

French took over the command on 9 May 1901 and had the same plan as his predecessors: clamp down on any activity in the Cape Colony and drive all the commandos to the North with smaller columns that would move faster and more efficiently against the mobile commandos. Lukin's first encounter with the Boers under French was not so successful. In the first weeks of May, Lukin had sent Captain Carstensen out with a reconnaissance party to search the area around Popkloof, an area close to Middelburg. A Boer force surprised them and by the time Lukin arrived with reinforcements, the Boers were gone and five men were wounded and two pickets taken prisoner. This appears to be the last time that Lukin and his men were defeated by the Boers. On 20 May Scobell and Lukin were able to surprise Malan with a night attack and captured many of his horses and equipment, but no Boers, because 'I [Scobell] hadn't enough men to really harm him, so they got away as usual, but it was very successful as a surprise. Several of his men had to ride away barebacked. My men were so excited they shot very badly.'⁸² Lukin reached another great milestone in his military career when on 1 June 1901 he was appointed as second in command in Scobell's column. Lukin was the appropriate choice because of his knowledge of the terrain, his experience in the Eastern Cape area and the experience he gained by taking part in operations against De Wet and the other Boers. This appointment proved to be of great importance to the column.⁸³

French's plan did not succeed in the beginning for on 2 June Kritzinger and Fouche with some 700 Boers occupied Jamestown, in the Cape Colony, and raided the town. After the failure to capture Kritzinger at Jamestown, French made it a priority for Scobell's column to capture them and 'to co-operate in a push north with, Gorringer, Manro [and] Murray's column.'⁸⁴ Scobell and Lukin achieved some success in the early morning of 6 June. Scobell decided to approach the Boer camp, at Myburg's farm, by night and his aim was to capture the whole of Kritzinger's force. Like the other columns, Scobell and Lukin had put a lot of faith in the local scouts or informants, a certain Hambridge was one, but sometimes even these scouts could not be trusted. During their approach, close to Wildefontein farm, they stumbled on Boer pickets but not the whole of Kritzinger's force. Scobell and Lukin went further forward to do some reconnaissance to determine the exact position of the Boers at the farm. After both of them agreed that they would take the

⁸¹ Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, June 15 1900, 51; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 86-87; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 100-101; Young, *Boot and Saddle*, 118-119; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol V, 312-313; Van Dyk Collection, Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards, 19 April 1901, 22.

⁸² Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 22 May 1901, 50.

⁸³ Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol V, 312-313; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 89; Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 22 May 1901, 50-51; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 102-104; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 92; T. Shearing and D. Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 22.

⁸⁴ Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 15 June 1901, 51.

chance, Lukin left with some 50 men and Scobell sent another 50 to act as a cut-off force. Lukin and his men almost stumbled on them, because there was not much moonlight that night and the area was not well known to them.⁸⁵

Lukin and his men suddenly found themselves within the Boer lager. According to Scobell, he heard Lukin shouting 'Hands up Hands up'⁸⁶ and he hurried with the rest of his force downhill, to find that Lukin and his men had full control. Johnston wrote that Lukin and his orderly were in front of the other men and because of their quick reactions and those of the men who followed him, they were able catch the Boers off guard. They killed four Boers, took 18 prisoner, captured some 160 horses, 97 saddles, close to 12 500 rounds of ammunition, 25 rifles and some other essential equipment that was probably looted at Jamestown. Unfortunately Kritzinger and most of his men escaped and although Scobell set off behind them, he was not able to capture them. This time it was not only Scobell who congratulated Lukin and his men for their success, but also the Governor of the Cape, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, and the Prime Minister directed Colonel P.Homan ffolloit 'to write a warm letter of congratulations to Colonel Lukin conveying my high appreciation of his gallant act, indicating that the regiment still maintains the high position won in past years.'⁸⁷ Even Lord Kitchener sent a telegram of congratulation to Lukin and Scobell and informing Lukin that he had been awarded the DSO. This was later changed to the CMG as Lukin had already received the DSO after the siege of Wepener in April 1900. After all the excitement and success, Scobell and Lukin's force had to continue with their operations.⁸⁸

They set off from Molteno and arrived in Graaff-Reinet on 6 June. They had some time until 24 June to get some rest and reorganize for the next operations. The commandos had started to feel the pressure that was being applied to them. Scheepers, with 100 men, tried to attack Willowmore on 1 June, but did not succeed because of stiff resistance and the good protection of the town. This failure resulted in frustration for the Boers and Scheepers was not able to control his men any longer. Some of them went on a rampage on the night of 14 June 1901 at Murraysburg and assaulted the inhabitants, which had not happened previously. They also burned down houses

⁸⁵ R.J. Constantine, *The Guerrilla War in the Cape Colony during the South African War of 1899-1902: A Case Study of the Republican and Rebel Commando Movement* (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, February 1996), 84-85; Van Dyk Collection, Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards, 19 May 1901, 26; Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 15 June 1901, 51-54; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 217-219; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 16; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 638-639; Amery, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol V, 312-313.

⁸⁶ Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 15 June 1901, 54.

⁸⁷ UCT, BC 676, A 1.2, Letter of congratulations, Col P. Homan ffolliot- Col Lukin, 10 July 1901; UCT, BC 676, A 1.3, Note with regards to C.M.R. worth performed by under Lieutenant Colonel Lukin, Prime Minister Cape Colony- Secretary of Defence, 4 July 1901; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 93-94.

⁸⁸ Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 15 June 1901, 54-57; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 92-94; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 219-222; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 104; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 16.



Illustration 2.5: Lukin's charge during night attack, 15 June 1901.
(Source: Wilson, *After Pretoria*, 725)

and shops. Shearing mentions that Scheepers no longer acted as the commanding officer and gave the officers under him too much freedom. It seemed as if the unity within the commandos had diminished. After reorganization at Graaff-Reinet, Scobell and Lukin set off on 30 June to attempt to catch Kritzinger and his men in the Camdeboo Mountains.⁸⁹

They were out for three days, covered almost 80 kilometers in the rain, but could find no information or sign of Kritzinger and therefore returned to Graaff-Reinet. Scobell was ordered to join French at Middelburg and this gave Lukin the opportunity to arrange some sporting events, of which the gymkhana was the most popular. Many of the town folk also took part in these events. After this short holiday, Lukin, under Scobell's force left Graaff-Reinet at 06.30 a.m. on 10 July 1901. French got the forces of Scobell, C. Crewe, W.P. Wyndham and B.J.C. Doran to work together to catch Scheepers. They managed to close down the area and slowly but surely chased the Boers into a corner. Again the Boers got away because of a fence that could not be clipped quickly enough and the area was too big to be effectively covered by the forces taking part in the operation.⁹⁰

There was some success. Doran ambushed seven Boers one of whom was killed, and Scobell's column 'caught 25 prisoners amongst them Liebenberg, a rather important lieutenant of Scheepers.'⁹¹ French controlled this operation from Spandauskop with a heliograph. French's new tactic of securing an area first and then pursuing the Boers, seemed to get the necessary results. Scheepers fled towards Rooiberg and Scobell and Lukin returned to Graaff-Reinet on 18 July. The 29 prisoners taken were the first to be tried by the military courts and most of them received the death penalty. This resulted in further pressure on the commandos and their supporters in the Cape Colony.⁹²

On 20 July 1900 Scobell and Lukin, with some 54 wagons, left Graaff-Reinet with supplies for Richmond. They were to start new operations against the commandos with the columns of

⁸⁹ Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 91-95; Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 5 July 1901, 57; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 94; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 223-224; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 104-105; Van Dyk Collection, Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards, 30 June- 13 July 1901, 34-36; G. French, *The Life of Field-Marshal Sir John French*, 124-125.

⁹⁰ Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 19 July 1901, 58; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 224-227; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 95-98; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 94; Van Dyk Collection, Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards, 3 July- 13 July 1901, 35-36; French, *The Life of Field-Marshal Sir John French*, 124.

⁹¹ Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 19 July 1901, 58.

⁹² Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 224-228; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 95-102; Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 19 July 1901, 58; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 104-105; Van Dyk Collection, Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards, 10 July- 18 July 1901, 35-37; French, *The Life of Field-Marshal Sir John French*, 124-125; Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, 641; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 89-90.



Illustration 2.6: Commandant Scheepers' escape from Lieutenant Colonel Lukin and Colonel Scobell, July 1901.
(Source: Wilson, *After Pretoria*, 705)

Lund, Wyndham, Doran, and Crewe. As French states in his book, 'some invaluable work was done by that famous South African regular corps, the Cape Mounted Riflemen, under Colonel Lukin, whilst operating with Colonel Scobell's column.'⁹³ Lukin and the CMR proved to be a real thorn in the flesh of the commandos. Lukin with two guns and 100 of his men worked their way towards New Bethesda scouting for Lategan. The Intelligence Officer, Lieutenant Hare-Bowers, discovered Lategan on 21 July at the farm Tweefontein. Knowing that surprise night attacks were normally successful, Lukin started marching towards the farm at 11.00 p.m. with his 100 men and one gun. When they reached the outskirts of Tweefontein at 05:00 a.m., he deployed the gun detachment to a ridge close to the farm and he and the other officers crept closer to the Boer positions. While approaching a sentry was alarmed and this gave away their positions. The Boer's horses got a scare and some of them got away. With the surprise gone, the Boers were able to reorganize and escape. They assembled at another ridge and were able to inflict some losses on the CMR, but as soon as the gun, which came down from the ridge after the Boers fled, gave effective fire on their position, they escaped.⁹⁴

As before, Lukin could not give chase after the Boers, because they had superior numbers on their side. They did, on the other hand, suffer a heavy blow with the loss of 10 men, one of whom was Field-Cornet Luys, 100 horses, saddles, ten weapons, ammunition and other commodities. This surprise attack on Lategan achieved French's desired objective: Lategan fled over the Orange River and his commando broke up. That same evening, after nineteen hours in the saddle, Lukin and his men rejoined Scobell's column close to Driefontein, near Middelburg. Scobell praised Lukin and his men for the work they had done and French expressed his satisfaction in a telegraph describing Lukin's 'brilliant piece of work'⁹⁵ and when he inspected the column on 29 July, again made a very positive speech about the good work the column had done. From 29 July until middle of August, the second coordinated drive against the commandos commenced and more columns, under the command of Atherton, Alexander and Kavanagh, were used to put pressure on the Boers.⁹⁶

French's plan to push the commandos to the North started to pay off. The commandos were

⁹³ French, *The Life of Field-Marshal Sir John French*, 125.

⁹⁴ Constantine, *The Guerrilla War in the Cape Colony during the South African War of 1899-1902*, 86-87; French, *The Life of Field-Marshal Sir John French*, 124-125; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 228-229; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 95-99; Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 19 July 1901, 58; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 94; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 104-105; Van Dyk Collection, *Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards*, 20 July- 21 July 1901, 35-38; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 89-90.

⁹⁵ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 95-96.

⁹⁶ Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 106; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 229; Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol V, 313-315; Constantine, *The Guerrilla War in the Cape Colony during the South African War of 1899-1902*, 86-87; French, *The Life of Field-Marshal Sir John French*, 125.

now out to sabotage all railway lines and raided any useable commodity from towns and farms. Between 5 and 9 August Scobell came in contact with the combined forces of Theron, Lötter and Botha and could not claim any success, on the contrary, they suffered two men lost and a couple wounded. This was because the columns were not able to coordinate their movements to throw a cordon around the Boer forces. By the middle August Kritzinger's commando was driven over the Orange River. Now French and his columns could concentrate on Scheepers, Lötter and a few smaller bands of Boers. Lötter was first on the list and Scobell and Lukin operated from Cradock against his commando. They sent out their scouts to get the necessary information on the commando's positions and movements and during these drives the Boers and British experienced the cold weather of the Karoo region, it was raining and snowing. From the middle of August until 25 August, when they arrived at Cradock, they did not achieve any success. After reorganizing, Scobell's column left Cradock on 27 August to continue the chase after Lötter.⁹⁷

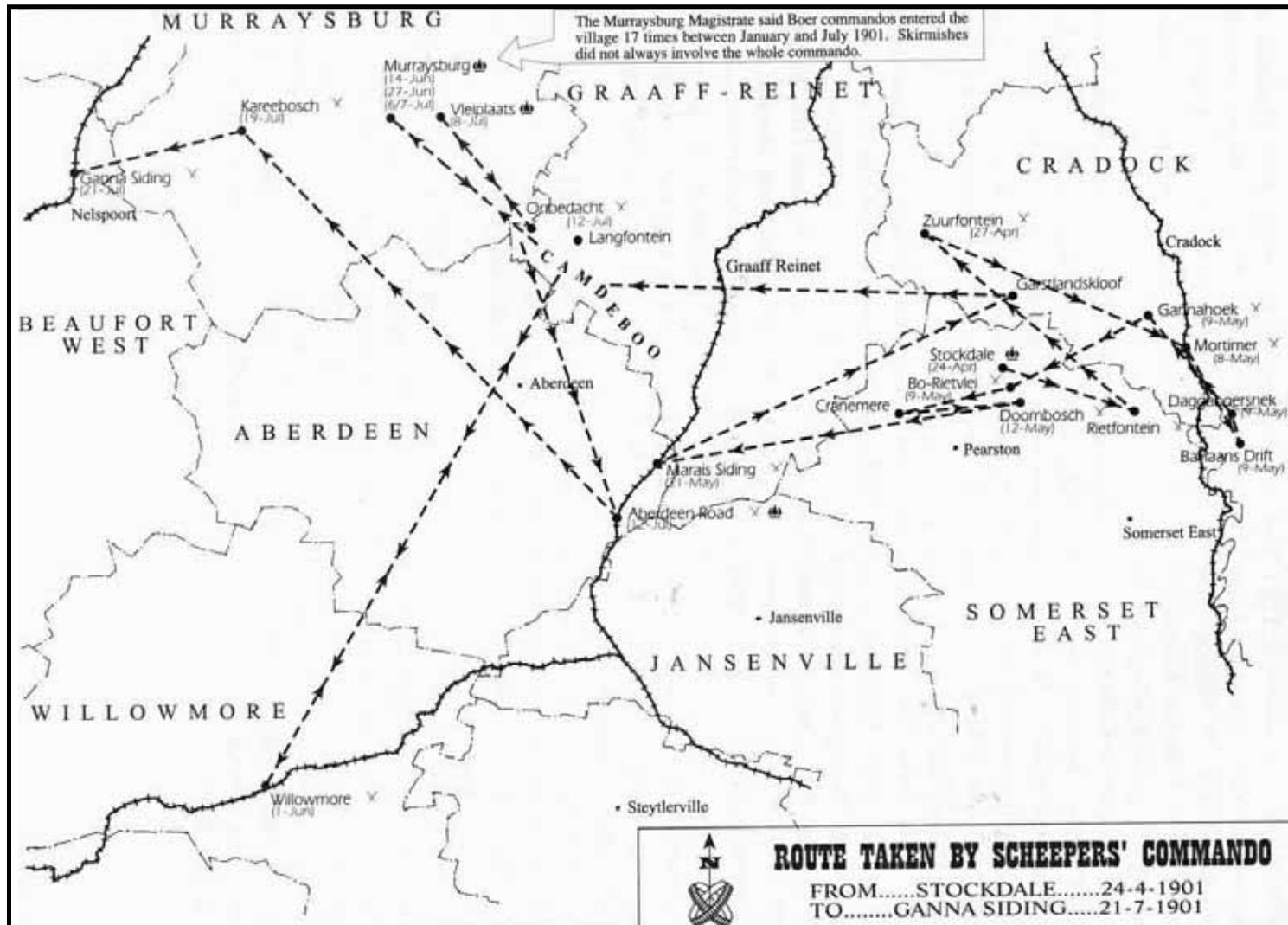
It did not take too long for Scobell and Lukin to capture him. On 31 August Kitchener issued an instruction to all columns that 'The enemy are now so reduced in numbers and dispersed that greater mobility is required to deal with them. Each column should therefore organize within itself well-mounted and lightly-equipped bodies of picked officers and men prepared to go long distances with a minimum transport.'⁹⁸ This was what French had tried to institute previously and was now supported by the higher command. After camping once more in Cradock on 29 August and leaving again on 31 August, Scobell and the other columns were anxiously searching for any information on Lötter. On 2 September 1900 Scobell's black scouts brought some valuable information and they set off hot in pursuit of the Boers. On 3 September Scobell's advance troops were, at one stage 460 to 545 meters behind the last of Lötter' men, but had to stop the pursuit because of enemy fire from a nearby hill. After receiving more information on Lötter's position, Scobell decided to attack early on the morning of 5 September. This was the last chance they would have because they were out of rations.⁹⁹

Scobell's force of 450 men attacked Lötter's position with the CMR heading the attack, A Squadron of the 9th Lancers, covered the left flank and D Squadron were to move around the right flank to the rear. They started their march from Petersburg at 01:00 a.m. on 5 September in the rain and not long after this, were close to Paardefontein, where Lötter and his men were camped. One can conclude that these operations took a lot out of the officers and men, as Lukin remarked

⁹⁷ Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 109-117; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 19, 26-27; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 234-236; Van Dyk Collection, *Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards*, 10 August 1901, 41.

⁹⁸ Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol V, 322-323.

⁹⁹ Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol V, 322-323; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 238-240; Van Dyk Collection, *Scobell's Diary*, 13 September 1901, 59-63; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 26-29.



Map 2.5: Route of Scheepers' Commando, 24/04/1901-21/07/1901.
 (Source: Shearing and Shearing, 'Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave', 28)

in a letter during this operation,

I have seen the men, after dismounting in the pouring rain for ten minutes halt, throw themselves down in spite of mud nearly ankle deep and snatch a few moments sleep, to be roused in a few minutes by the blast of a whistle and the order, 'Look alive and get mounted.' It takes a little vitality to (?be) cheery under such circumstances at about 2:30 a.m. and a very dark night - not having had a decent sleep for a day or two.¹⁰⁰

The Boers were very self-assured and no pickets or sentries had been set which made it even easier for Lukin and the men to get very close to their position. When they were close to the Paardefontein farmhouse Scobell gave the order and Lukin and the CMR charged the farmhouse while the two other squadrons got into position. Scobell, Lukin and their men's determination paid off, they captured Lötter and some 120 of his men. French's plans had started to take shape and this success, as Scobell mentions, 'created rather a stir in the colony.'¹⁰¹ But the jubilation was not to last for long, because on 4 September Smuts and his men crossed the Orange River to increase the guerilla effort in the Cape Colony.¹⁰²

After this success they marched to Graaff-Reinet with their prisoners and were given a well-deserved six days rest. On 14 September the column was in the saddle again and this time were under the command of Lukin as Scobell had taken two weeks' leave. During this period the column did not have much contact with the guerillas, except for the capture of two of Lötter's men, at Henning's farm on 18 September, who later escaped. During these four days they travelled close to 160 kilometers. Their aim was still to put pressure on any Boers in the field. French had, by the middle of September 1901, some 9 000 mounted troops under his command chasing after the guerilla fighters. On 24 September Lukin's column was ordered to cooperate with Gorringer's column, in a drive against Smuts. There were no great successes although one or two Boer scouts were captured as well as some horses. But what was important, was that Gorringer and Lukin did not give Smuts any time to rest, they were pushing him the whole time to make a mistake. Gorringer almost caught Smuts off guard on 30 September, but he again managed to escape. Colonel Scobell, after his promotion, arrived on 5 October and took over the Column from Lukin.¹⁰³

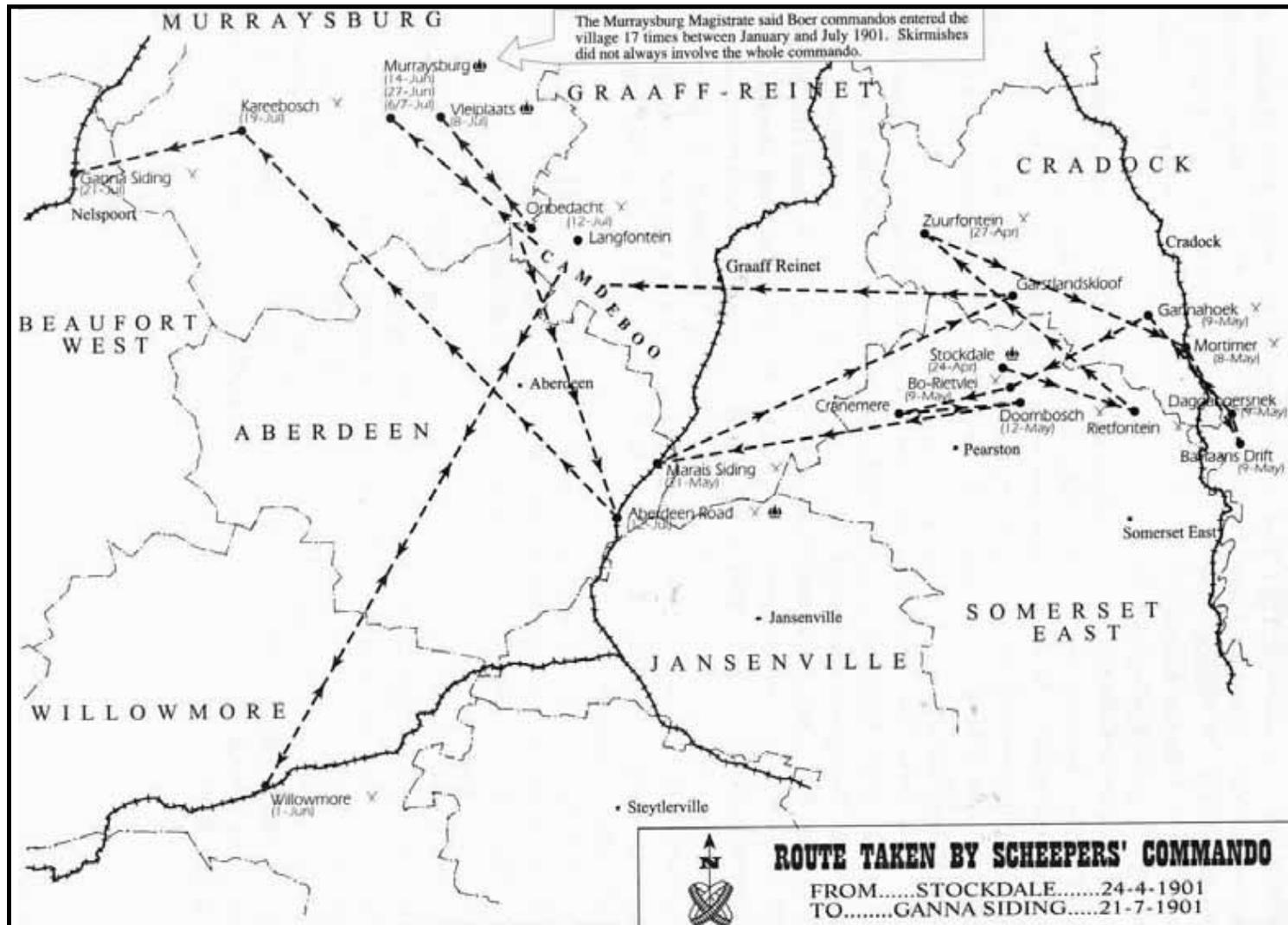
Lukin, who had already acted as commander of Scobell's column and for a long period had held the post of second in command, was again honored. Colonel Gorringer fell sick and on 10

¹⁰⁰ Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 29.

¹⁰¹ Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 13 September 1901, 59.

¹⁰² Van Dyk Collection, Scobell's Diary, 13 September 1901, 59-63; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 29-32, 240-242; Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol V, 320; T. Shearing and D. Shearing, *General Jan Smuts and his long ride*, 31-32, 64; Van Dyk Collection, Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards, 5 September 1901, 45.

¹⁰³ Constantine, *The Guerrilla War in the Cape Colony during the South African War of 1899-1902*, 108; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 244-248; Shearing and Shearing, *General Jan Smuts and his long ride*, 63-76; Van Dyk Collection, Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards, 2 October 1901, 49; P.J. Le Riche, *Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer*, 166-172.



Map 2.5: Route of Scheepers' Commando, 24/04/1901-21/07/1901.
 (Source: Shearing and Shearing, 'Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave', 28)

October 1901 Lukin was appointed as the commander of Gorringer's column. This gave Lukin some freedom, although not much, to operate according to his best knowledge and experience. It seems as if Lukin did have that something extra to achieve success. Commandant B. Bouwer suggests that Lukin may have been largely responsible for the successes of Scobell's column when he remarked, 'The Colonel [Scobell] no longer had Lukin as his 2-i-C, and his ability to grab Boers at the crunch now went into decline.'¹⁰⁴ Bouwer had more compliments for Lukin, stating that if he had his mind set on something, he would do his utmost to get it done, but during these operations he was restricted in some areas. He also remarked that,

Whenever Lukin was after us we knew it without having to be told so; but he had no free hand and was forced to adapt his pace to that of his allies and share in the defense and management of their cumbrous supply columns.¹⁰⁵

The commandos in the Cape Colony experienced some more setbacks, Scheepers was caught on 11 October and Lötter executed on 12 October. To put more pressure on the commandos, Lukin was ordered to capture Commandant J. van Deventer and Scobell's primary task was to track down and capture Smuts.¹⁰⁶

Lukin and his men were transported by rail to Letskraal to give chase to Van Deventer. After a cat and mouse game Lukin got word on Sunday 19 October that Van Deventer's commando was close to Nieu Betesda. Following this up they made contact with Van Deventer's commando and killed one Boer, wounded five and took five prisoners. With the follow up they captured another five. Lukin and the CMR were able to capture more of Smuts' men than any other unit. More congratulations and orders came from French by telegram, 'You have done very well. stop. Finish on after the enemy and drive him West PPPAO. CNWXX. GAYWWTW. stop. If you have captured a Boer ambulance send it to Graaff-Reinet. stop.'¹⁰⁷ Lukin's men had put so much pressure on his commando that Van Deventer ordered them to break up. On 23 October there were still some small skirmishes between Lukin and Van Deventer. The last drive against the commandos by the CMR, under command of Lukin, was in co-operation with Scobell's column.¹⁰⁸

The plan was for Lukin to continue driving Van Deventer west where Scobell would be in

¹⁰⁴ Shearing and Shearing, *General Jan Smuts and his long ride*, 90.

¹⁰⁵ Le Riche, *Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer*, 204.

¹⁰⁶ Shearing and Shearing, *General Jan Smuts and his long ride*, 81, 90, 123; Le Riche, *Memoirs of General Ben Bouwer*, 203-204; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 10 October 1901, 249; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 91-92; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Johannes Lötter and his rebels*, 21-22; 39-41; Shearing and Shearing, *Commandant Gideon Scheepers and the search for his grave*, 138-140; French, *The Life of Field-Marshal Sir John French*, 126.

¹⁰⁷ UCT, BC 676, A1.4, Post Office Telegrams, General French- Colonel Lukin, 22 October 1901.

¹⁰⁸ Shearing and Shearing, *General Jan Smuts and his long ride*, 123-130; W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Volume 1, June 1886- May 1902*, 435; UCT, BC 676, A1.4, Post Office Telegrams, General French- Colonel Lukin, 22 October 1901; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 255; Van Dyk Collection, *Diary of the Second Battalion Coldstream Guards*, 21-23 October 1901, 53.

place to deliver the final blow to this commando. It almost succeeded, but when some of Van Deventer's men came in contact with Scobell's men, he just turned around and took another route. They were very close to Van Deventer's commando the whole time, but never close enough to attack him. French gave the order that Lukin had to 'take orders now directly from Colonel Scobell under whose command you will be till further orders.'¹⁰⁹ On 1 November they were ordered to return to Beaufort West and this was the last operation for Lukin against the Boer commandos in the Cape Colony. This was because Kitchener and the Cape Government had come to an agreement that the Cape Colony must be divided into two districts. District 1, which was made up of most of the eastern part of the Colony was entrusted to Lukin.. His headquarters were at Queenstown and most of the duties involved patrols and the manning of outposts, almost the same tasks they had before the start of the war. As commander of No1 District, Lukin received a letter of commendation in June 1902 written by French expressing his great gratitude for the work he had done. This letter was sent to the Secretary of Defense of the Cape Colony, P. Hormon ffolliott.

Please having me declared, I have to honour to bring to your notice the excellent work done throughout the past year by Colonel Lukin, D.S.O., Commanding the 1st Colonial Division. Firstly in command of his own Corps, forming part of the Column under Colonel Scobell; Secondly in command of the Column [Scobell and Gorringer]; and Thirdly in command of the 1st Colonial Division. In all these several capacities he has rendered me invaluable assistance, and I regard him as an extremely able Officer and most gallant leader of men.¹¹⁰

This commendation, as well as the previous commendations and the good work he had done under other commanders and the successes he had achieved, may have been why the Cape Colony had put so much faith in him and given him the posts of No1 District Commander and the Governor of the Cape Colonial Forces.¹¹¹

Conclusion

Lukin started the South African War as an artillery captain with some experience gathered from the Zulu War, the Basuto War and the Bechuanaland War. But this time their enemies, the Boers, were not savages that were frightened by the artillery or other weapons. They were able to match them, mostly in the first part of the war, with regards to weapons, specifically the guns and maxims, and tactics. Although not fully prepared, Lukin and his men had more advantages in this war than the other British units. They were used to the climate and knew most of the terrain they

¹⁰⁹ UCT, BC 676, A1.5; Telegram from General French 28 October, General French- Colonel Lukin, 28 October [1901].

¹¹⁰ UCT, BC 676, A1.6, Letter of appreciation from Secretary of Defence, P. Hormon ffolliott- Colonel Lukin, 18 June 1902; UCT, BC 676, A1.7, Letter of commendation from General French to the Minister of Defence, General J.D.P. French- P. Hormon ffolliott, 12 June 1902.

¹¹¹ Shearing and Shearing, *General Jan Smuts and his long ride*, 131-133; UCT, BC 676, A1.5; Telegram from General French 28 October, General French- Colonel Lukin, 28 October [1901]; Colvin and Gordon, *Diary of the 9th (Q.R.) Lancers during the South African Campaign*, 254-255; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 98-100; Williams, *Record of the Cape Mounted Riflemen*, 111-113; Coleman, *The Kaffrarian Rifles 1876-1986*, 92.

operated in. They also had the advantage of the knowing how the Cape horses handled, this was very important for any cavalry soldier. From the first time that the CMR and Lukin, first as artillery commander and later as cavalry commander, were in contact with the Boers in February 1899 at Dordrecht until the last drive when he was in command of Gorringer's column, they were committed to reach the objectives that were set for them. The Boers also knew that Lukin and the CMR were of a different character and until the last drive knew that they would not give up until they had reached their objective.

Starting the war as Captain and completing it with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and being in command of Gorringer's Column, Lukin moved through the ranks because his successes were acknowledged by his superiors and they showed confidence in him by giving him more responsibility. This trust in Lukin did not cease after the war. He was appointed as commander of the CMR and No 1 District of the Cape Colony with the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Imperial Army. Apart from this, Lukin also received the D.S.O., the C.M.G., the Queen's medal with four clasps and the King's medal with two clasps. Lukin used every opportunity to learn more and to gain valuable experience for his military career.

D.M. Horner comes to the conclusion in his article 'The Influence of the Boer War on the Australian Commanders during in the First World War', that 75% of the Australian generals that fought in the First World War took part in the South African War and most of these generals were successful. Lukin also falls into this category. It must be noted that there are differences between these two wars, but no one can deny that the experience one gets from fighting in a war, no matter how long or against what enemy, will assist you in future wars. Lukin started as a lieutenant in the CMR and worked himself through the ranks until he was appointed as Commander of the CMR and Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces. During this time Lukin held different posts and was a crucial link in the training of the artillery and signal troops of the CMR. Lukin gained valuable experience and knowledge during this period and this proved to be one of the reasons why he was appointed as Inspector General of the Union Defence Forces. Operating in different theatres in South Africa and even in German South West Africa, working in different circumstances and with different people, Lukin had the experience and knowledge to be appointed the 1st South African Brigade commander. The main reason why Lukin was so successful and appointed to these prominent military positions was because he was able to adjust to any situation and often succeeded in reaching the required objective.¹¹²

¹¹² D.M. Horner, 'The Influence of The Boer War on Australian Commanders in the First World War', in P. Dennis and J. Grey, eds, *The Boer War: Army, Nation and Empire- The 1999 Chief of the Army/Australian War Memorial Military History Conference*, 173-190.

CHAPTER 3

TO A DISTANT CONTINENT (1915-1916)

Lukin was appointed Inspector General of the Permanent Force after the Union Government passed the South African Defence Act (No 13 of 1912) in 1912. He faced the challenge of the integration of the soldiers from all the former Boer republics and British colonies into the new Union Defence Forces (UDF). In May 1914 at the age of 54 and after almost 35 years of active military service and two years in the post of Inspector General, Lukin considered retiring. Lukin agreed to stay on until the age of 58 after the Prime Minister instructed the Under Secretary for Defence, H.R.M. Bourne, to write him a letter¹ convincing him that his services were needed by the Defence Force.²

All Lukin's previous involvements in skirmishes, campaigns and wars were to be tested after this decision to stay on. Lukin would be involved in five different theatres of operations during the First World War. The first was the German South-West Africa (GSWA) campaign and here, and also for the next two campaigns, he was more involved in a manoeuvre type of warfare. This type of warfare was not unfamiliar to him, because of his experience with the Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR). The next area of operations, again in South Africa, was during the 1914 rebellion and the last campaign of this type was the operations against the Senussi in North Africa. The operation in Egypt was slightly different, because Lukin and his forces had to co-operate with forces of other countries. The fourth theatre of operation was the Western Front and here Lukin and his forces had to conduct attrition warfare for the first time. Although unfamiliar to them, they received training in a short period of time and Lukin and his men achieved the training objectives. Lukin's last role in World War One was as commander of the 64th Division in Britain, where he was involved mainly in training, of which he had much experience.

¹ Military Archives Depot: Personnel Archive Repository (hereinafter MAD), P1/568 H.T. Lukin, Archive Number 17879 (hereinafter P1), H.R.M. Bourne-H.T. Lukin, 26 March 1914.

² R.S. Godley, *Khaki and Blue: Thirty-five Year's Service in South Africa*, 106-108, 123-126; D. Yudelman, *The Emergence of Modern South Africa: State, Capital, and the Incorporation of Organized Labour in the South African Gold Fields*, 108-112; B. Spies, 'Unity and Disunity, 1910-1924', in T. Cameron, ed., *A New Illustrated History of South Africa*, 231-236. P.H. Franke, *Pretoria's Praetorians: Civil-military relations in South Africa*, 1-28; R.E. Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood: The Life Story of Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin*, 113-115; W. Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', *Militaria*, 5(3), 1975, 45.

German South-West Africa	Europe
Brigadier General H.T. Lukin	Brigadier General H.T. Lukin
Lieutenant Colonel G.H. Knapp	Lieutenant Colonels: F. Dawson, E. Tanner, E. Thackeray
Major H.H. M. Burne	Majors: J. Baker, R. Pringle, F. Heal, D. McLeod, M. Power, E. Burges, D. Hunt
Captains: J.W.J. Clarke-Kennedy, C. La T. Turner-Jones, M.H. Pike, T. Mostert, B. Runciman, J.J. Kearney	Captains: A. Pepper, M. Lawrie, R. Taylor, A. Wearer, P. Jowett, G. Miller, H. Jenkins, H. Bamford, C. Heenan, H. Creed, W. Gray, W. Hoptroff, A. MacDonald, E. Legge, S. Liebson, E. Vivian, R. Medlicott, J. Jackson, L. Thomlinson, C. Brown, F. Mitchel, E. Grady, T. Ross, G. Marshall, R. Anderson
	Lieutenants: W. McLean, P. Roseby, E. Phillips, E. Davies, T. Priday, W. Dent, J. Hollingsworth, A. Craig, F. English, L. Isaacs, A. Liefeldt, S. Style, C. Reid, C. Nicolson, A. Stuckey, E. Burgess, H. Chapman, A. Harrison, W. Larmuth, C. Parsons, R. Beverley, W. Parkins, W. Hill, L. Greene, F. Davis, C. Letchford, O. Thomas, H. Hirtzel, D. Pirie, J. Baker, H. Elliott, W. Carding, B. Dougherty, A. Paxton, A. Thomson, A. Cameron, C. Guest, H. Newson, W. Charlton, C. McLean, R. Thorburn, A. Brown, G. Smith, A. Young, A. Chase, R. Grierson, A. Taylor, J. Watkins, T. Farrell, J. Fry
	Second Lieutenants: F. Burton, A. Brown, C. Featherstone, P. Furnidge, A. Haarhof, E. Hahn, R. Lyne, W. Tempany, F. Walsh, T. Bru-de-Wold, R. Miller, R. Tatham, E. Tatham, E. Bryant, W. Flemmer, G. Green, A. Knibbs, D. Abel, A. Hanks, D. Jenner, S. Guard, S. Pearson, A. Barton, J. Connock, N. Fenix, A. Wales, C. Dick, F. Somerset, H. Gove, D. Gowie, H. Healey, F. Ritchie, W. Scallan, A. Sharpe, S. Stokes, C. Bell, W. Kirby, E. Dalgety, D. Ross
Reverend N. Alridge	Captains the Reverend Fathers: E. Hill, P.J. Walshe, S. Thompson

Table 3.1: Lukin's Staff during the German South-West Africa Campaign, September 1914-July 1915, and the North Africa and Western Front Campaign, January 1916-November 1916.

(Source: AG 1914-1920, Box 27, File G.16/23/9199 Vol 1, Grant of Commissioned, Rank in UDF during Hostilities; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies: The 1st SA Infantry Brigade in Libya, France and Flanders 1915-1919*, 400-401)

Some setbacks in the early part of World War One

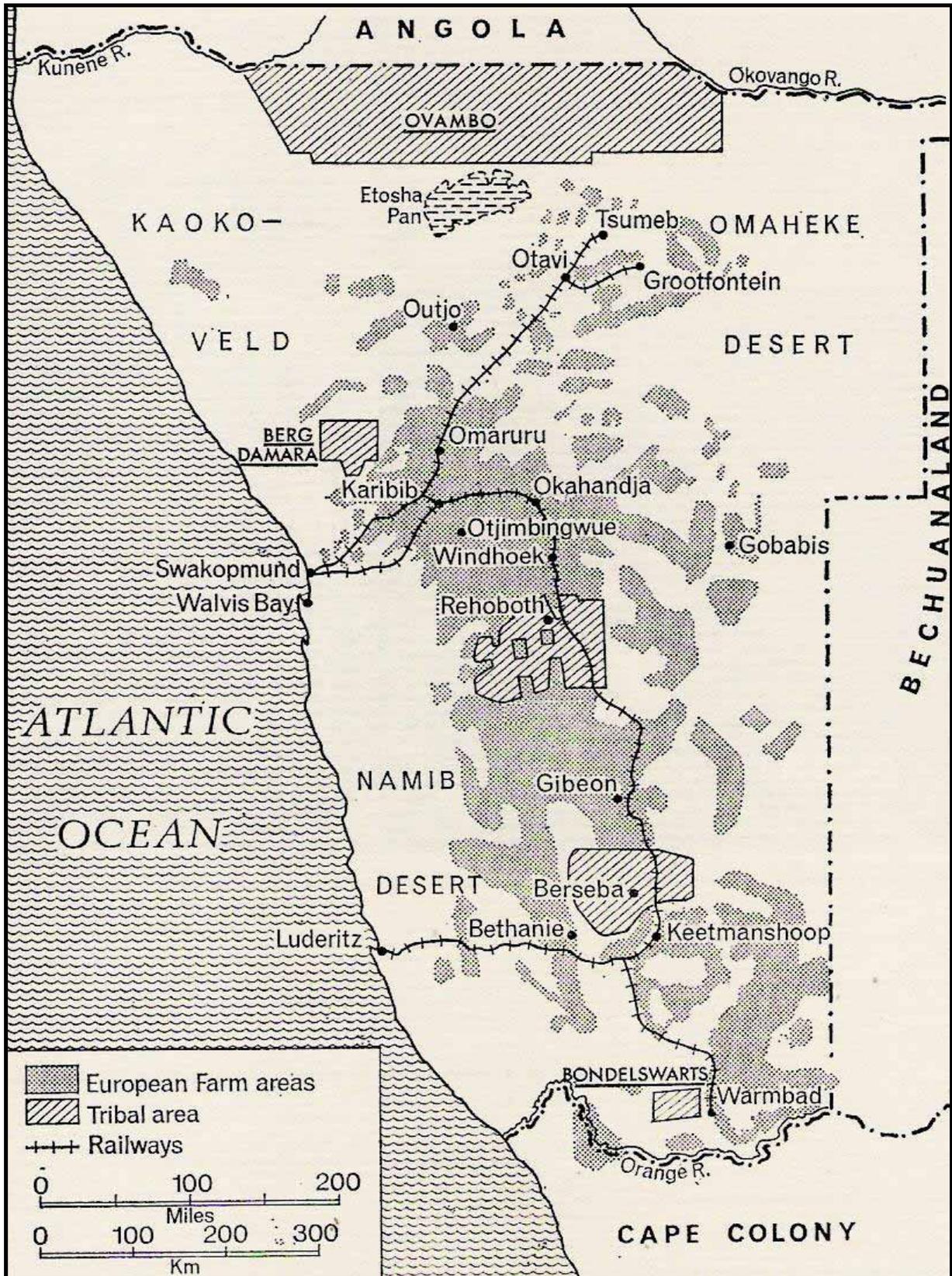
Lukin did not start the war well. The UDF was a mere two years old when the Union Government decided, on 10 September 1914 after heated debate, to offer military assistance to Britain in the war against Germany. A force, with almost no experience of conventional warfare, and with Lukin as commander of one section, had the important task of taking control of the area of GSWA that was occupied by experienced conventional German troops. The inexperience of the soldiers, leaders and the top structures of the UDF, arguably manifested itself during the first few weeks in the field. General L. Botha, the Prime Minister of the Union, was the commander and had the forces of Lukin, who landed at Port Nolloth on 1 September 1914, of Colonel P.S. Beves, who landed at Luderitz Bay on 18 September 1914, and of Colonel Maritz, who were in the vicinity of Upington, under him. There was much criticism of the government because they had sent the UDF to GSWA, and the disaster at Sandfontein exacerbated this negative attitude.³

Lukin was the commander of Lieutenant Colonel R.C. Grant and there are various schools of thought as to who should be blamed for the loss of life and the capture of Grant's detachment at Sandfontein on 26 September 1914. There were good intelligence reports available on 23 and 24 September, but it seemed that the reports did not reach Lukin in time.⁴ But the result of this defeat was even more important because it gave impetus to the 1914 Boer rebellion and, arguably, the later successes the UDF achieved on the battlefields of Africa and Europe. From 15 September, when General C.F. Beyers resigned his position as Commandant General of the Citizen Forces, it seemed that another rebellion was imminent. Following Beyers, other prominent Afrikaner leaders also resigned their posts. For the second time in 1914, the Union Government had to contend with unrest inside its borders, and on this occasion senior Afrikaner leaders were involved.⁵

³ B. Nasson, 'War opinion in South Africa, 1914', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, XXIII, 1995, 248-254; S.B. Spies, 'The Outbreak of the First World War and the Botha Government', *South African Historical Journal*, Vol 1, Nov 1969, 51-52; R. Warwick, *Reconsideration of the Battle of Sandfontein: The First Phase of the German South-West Africa Campaign, August to September 1914*, (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, February 2003); T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 1-5, 52-53; B.J. Liebenberg and S.B. Spies, eds, *South Africa in the 20th Century*, 95, 102; L.S. Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol I, 180-224; Anon, *The Union of South Africa and the Great Trek 1914-1918: Official History*, 9-25; 29-41; W.A. Dorning, 'A concise history of the South African Defence Force, 1912-1987', *Militaria* 17/2, 1987, 2-4.

⁴ MAD, Diverse, Box 1, No 24931 Intelligence Reports (SWA 1914- 1915), Intelligence Summary No 7, 10.00 p.m., 23 September 1914; MAD, Diverse, Box 1, No 24931 Intelligence Reports (SWA 1914- 1915), Intelligence Summary No 8, 10.00 p.m., 24 September 1914.

⁵ South African Military Museum (hereinafter SAMM), A.416, Battle of Sandfontein; MAD, Adjutant General (hereinafter AG) 14, WO1, Box 32, Slag van Sandfontein, 5 December 1963; Warwick, *Reconsideration of the Battle of Sandfontein*; Liebenberg and Spies, eds, *South Africa in the 20th Century*, 107; S.S. Swart, *The Rebels of 1914: Masculinity, Republicanism and the Social Forces that shaped the Boer Rebellion*, (MA thesis, University of Natal, August 1997), 26-37; M. Nathan, *South Africa from Within*, 150-151; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 62-65; P. van der Byl, *From Playgrounds to Battlefields*, 97-125, 112-186; Hancock and van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol III, June 1910-November 1918*, 265-266, 269-293; F.V. Engelenburg, *General Louis Botha*, 301-307.



Map 3.1: German South-West Africa, 1911.
 (Source: Bley, *South-West Africa under German Rule*, xxxi)

The government decided to first quell the rebellion at hand before continuing the campaign in GSWA. Botha, with the help of loyal members of the UDF, Lukin being one, started with operations against these rebels. Although this was a very difficult time, it was also significant in shaping the new Union. The loyal Afrikaners in the UDF were asked to operate with their English colleagues against life-long friends, and sometimes even family. There was still some mistrust between the two different groups and it was not easy to work together, but they were able to work to a common goal; namely the military and political stability of the country. After achieving this stability, they were able to continue their operations against the Germans in GSWA.⁶

The first defeat at Sandfontein and the rebellion helped the UDF to become more cohesive and gain some experience. This was evident in the short period that it took Botha and his forces to capture the German forces. On 9 July 1915 Dr T. Seitz, the German governor, and Colonel V. Franke, the German military commander, surrendered with some 4 740 men and 37 guns to the UDF. With this success under their belt and an early call from the British Government, in April 1915, for more UDF to be supplied for the fight on other fronts in the war theatre, the Union Government approved the establishment of the 1st South African Infantry Brigade (Brigade) with volunteers streaming to Potchefstroom by the middle of July 1915. Colonel Sir C. Crewe, a Unionist MP and former Cape Colony defence minister, was appointed as the Director of Recruiting. He had little difficulty getting enough men to take up the challenge to fight beyond the borders of the Union, because most of them had never travelled outside the Union.⁷

South African forces embarking for operations overseas

Lukin was appointed as Brigade Commander and within a few weeks a whole brigade was enrolled. The Brigade was made up of four regiments; the 1st South African Infantry (SAI) Regiment was recruited mainly from the Cape. The 2nd Regiment consisted of men from Natal, the Orange Free State and more men from the Cape Colony in the form of the Kaffrarian Rifles. The 3rd Regiment was known as the Transvaal Regiment and even included some men from Rhodesia. The 4th Regiment was the South African Scottish. Altogether a total of 160 officers and 5 648 other ranks. Lukin was selected as brigade commander on the basis of his reputation, his extensive and

⁶ Swart, *The Rebels of 1914*: 26-37; Nathan, *South Africa from Within*, 150-151; Van der Byl, *From Playgrounds to Battlefields*, 97-125, 112-186; Hancock and van der Poel, eds, *Selections from the Smuts Papers, Vol III, June 1910-November 1918*, 265-266, 269-293; Engelenburg, *General Louis Botha*, 301-307. For more on the rebellion see G.D. Scholtz, *Die Rebellie, 1914-1915*; S.S. Swart, "Men of Influence"- the ontology of leadership in the 1914 Boer Rebellion', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol 17, No 1, March 2004; T.R.H. Davenport, 'The South African Rebellion, 1914', *The English Historical Review*, LXXVII, No 306, January 1963, 73-94; N.G. Garson, 'The Boer Rebellion of 1914', *History Today*, Vol xii, No 2, February 1962, 132-139.

⁷ Dorning, 'A concise history of the South African Defence Force, 1912-1987', 4; Anon, *The Union of South Africa and the Great Trek 1914-1918*, 99; P.K.A. Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies: The 1st SA Infantry Brigade in Libya, France and Flanders 1915-1919*, 5-16; J. Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 13-16; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 124-127.

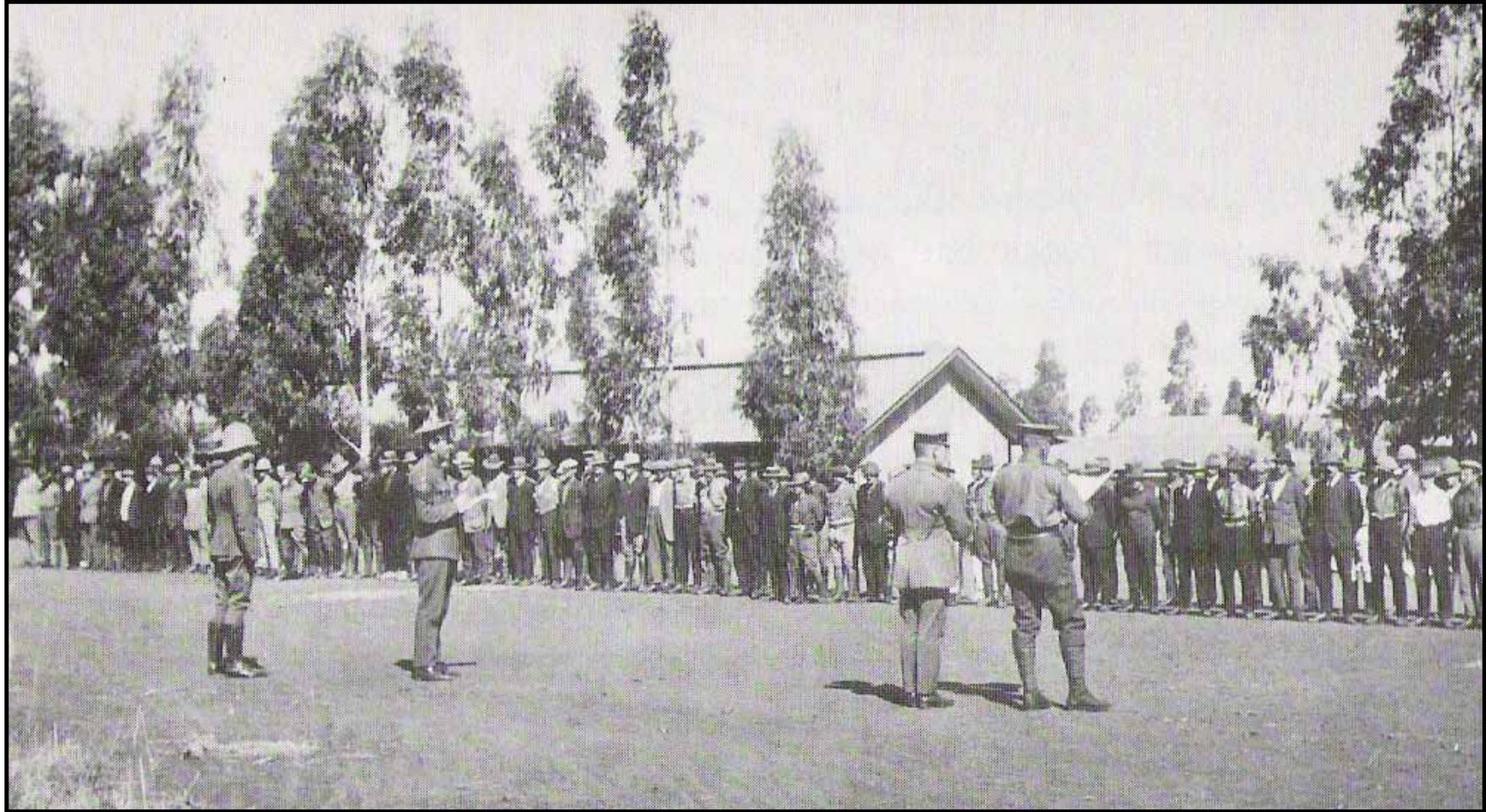


Illustration 3.1: Recruits assembled at Potchefstroom, August 1915.
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 8)

varied experience, and the fact that he would 'fit' the British organisational and command structures better than his competent Afrikaner counterparts.⁸ The Brigade was earmarked to operate in Europe and would therefore mostly be under British command. His enduring ambition to become an Imperial soldier was finally realised. He was appointed to an imperial commission as colonel and temporary brigadier general on 11 August 1915.⁹ In the little time available before their departure for Britain, Lukin and his appointed staff tried to prepare the Brigade for what they would experience in these other theatres of war. Table 2 shows the staff Lukin had during the GSWA and North Africa and European campaigns. Of interest is the fact that none of the staff that served under him in the North African and European campaigns formed part of his staff during the GSWA campaign. He therefore could not be accused of being a 'jobber'¹⁰ as the Earl of Selborne accused General L. Botha.¹¹

The first of the men embarked on 26 August 1915¹² on the *Dunvegan Castle*, while the rest of the Brigade followed, Lukin and his staff sailing on the *Balmoral Castle*.¹³ Lukin, believing that the time that was available for the preparation of this force at Potchefstroom was insufficient, wasted no time while his brigade was on the high seas. Preparation continued at a time when the men would otherwise have been lethargic. Lance Corporal G.W. Warwick gives us some insight into the routine on the ship *Balmoral Castle*,

Each company paraded on its allotted deck. We paraded for lectures on discipline, on musketry, for medical inspections, for life-belt drill, and there was even pay parade. There were sports and concerts. And, if later, the Brigade became the first-class fighting machine that it undoubtedly was, the reason was that everyone responded heartily to the call for discipline.¹⁴

⁸ Several of Lukin's Afrikaans peers battled with the English language and would have had difficulty serving in what was in many ways a 'foreign' environment.

⁹ MAD, Secretary of Defence, Group 2 (hereinafter DC), Box 4, File 123/49, Major General H.T. Lukin, General Order 819: Officers Seconded for Duty with the South African Overseas Expeditionary Forces.

¹⁰ D. G. Boyce, ed, *The Crisis of British Power: The Imperial and Naval Papers of the Second Earl of Selborne, 1895-1910*, Lord Selborne to Lady Selborne, 23 August 1908, 379.

¹¹ G. Genis, *Recruitment for 1 South African Infantry Brigade for Europe during the First World War* (MA thesis, University of South Africa, February 2000), 28-65; MAD, 1st South African Infantry Brigade (hereinafter Brigade), Box 41, File 273/2, Moves, 9 December 1915; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 5-19, 35; MAD, World War I Diary (hereinafter WWI DA), Box 4, HQ Brigade, September-December 1915.

¹² MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, September to December 1915; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, September-December 1915.

¹³ E. Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood (with the 3rd South African Infantry): Together with some experiences as Prisoner of War in Germany*, 9-11, 21; G.W. Warwick, *We Band of Brothers: Reminiscences from the 1st S.A. Infantry Brigade in the 1914-18 War*, 15-18; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 11-22; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 124-128.

¹⁴ Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 21.



Illustration 3.2: Brigadier General H.T. Lukin on the *Balmoral Castle*, 26 September 1915.
(Sources: SANL, Special Collections, Cape Times Daily, 8 October 1915)

The hard training and discipline to which Warwick testifies paid off during the Senussi Campaign, the Battle of Delville Wood and the other operations on the Western Front.¹⁵

The *Balmoral Castle* arrived at Plymouth on 13 October 1915¹⁶ and the Brigade underwent training at Borden in Hampshire. Here they continued their preparation for deployment in Flanders¹⁷ where they would be attached to the 16th Division. While busy with this training and preparation, they were inspected by General Sir A. Hunter, the Officer Commanding of Aldershot who was responsible for the training of the new volunteers. The senior officers of the Brigade even went to the Western front from 21 November for three days of reconnaissance and to acquaint themselves with the situation there. Everything was in place for them to leave for Europe. Lukin was trusted with extra responsibility because his name was published in an order dated 1 December 1915, stating that he would be the first officer to take over command of the 16th Division if the divisional commander was killed in action. On 2 December 1915 Queen Mary, wife of the British monarch, accompanied by Princess Mary and Prince Albert, also inspected the brigade. King George could not make this inspection but Lukin read a message from the King to the men, in an attempt to boost morale.¹⁸

The Brigade's deployment in North Africa

The Brigade's first mission was not to be Flanders, but Egypt. The Suez Canal was in danger of a Turkish invasion and it was believed that most Egyptians were pro-German or pro-Turk. Of more concern was that the Senussi, to the west of the canal, were Turkish allies. On 25 December 1915 the first battle between the British and the Senussi occurred, but the British were not able to capitalise on the situation and most of the Senussi escaped. To assist them in the drive against the Senussi, the British asked for reinforcements and Lukin's brigade was diverted to North Africa on the *H.M.T. Corsican*, *R.M.T. Saxonia* and *H.M.T. Oriana* on 29 and 30 December 1915.¹⁹ The Brigade arrived in Alexandria in mid-January 1916 and went into camp at Mex, some eight kilometres away, where they prepared for the campaign. They took in new equipment and horses,

¹⁵ MAD, World War I Diverse (hereinafter WWI Diverse), Box 25, Buckingham Palace, 2 December 1915; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 11-17, 20; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 128; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, September to December 1915; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 20-21; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 27-34; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 21- 25.

¹⁶ MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, September to December 1915; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary September-December 1915.

¹⁷ MAD, Brigade, Box 40, Vol 55, Tpt, POW, CM, File C.R.A.C. 21/7443(M), 22 November 1915.

¹⁸ MAD, Brigade, Box 43, History, 1 December 1915; MAD, WWI Diverse, Box 25, Buckingham Palace, 2 December 1915; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 11-17, 20; Liebenberg and Spies, eds, *South Africa in the 20th Century*, 110; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 21-23, Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 128; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, September-December 1915; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 21-22; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 35-42.

¹⁹ MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, 7 December 1915; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary 29-30 December 1915.

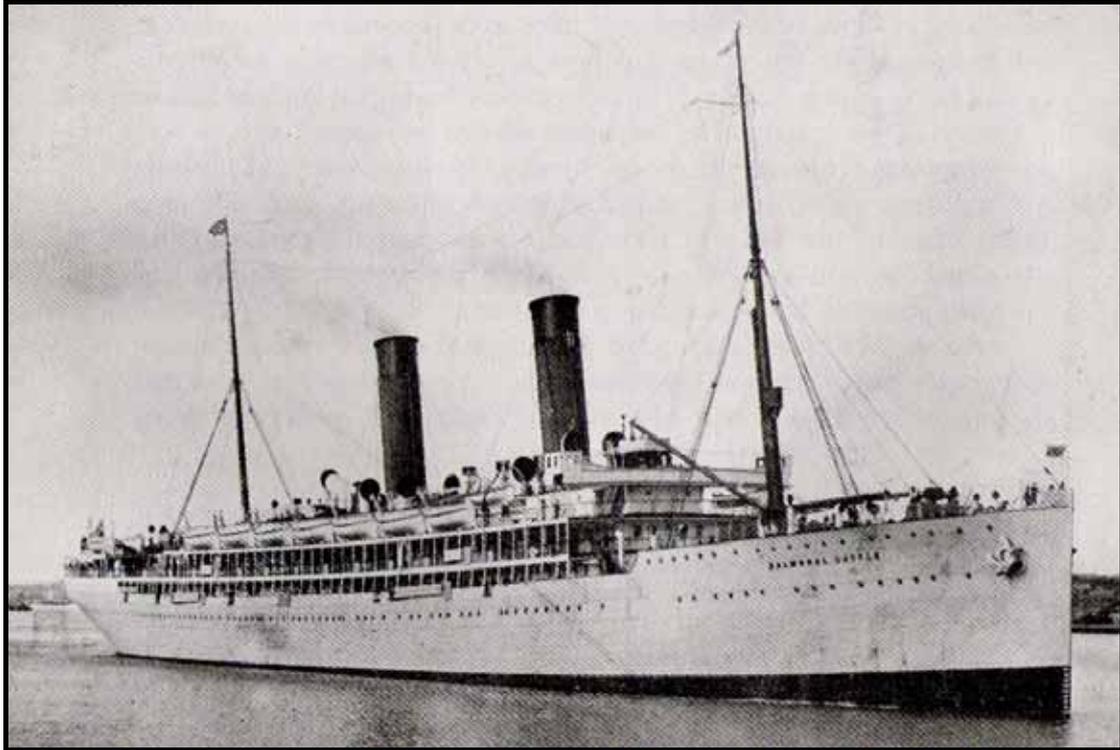


Illustration 3.3: The *Balmoral Castle*
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 28)

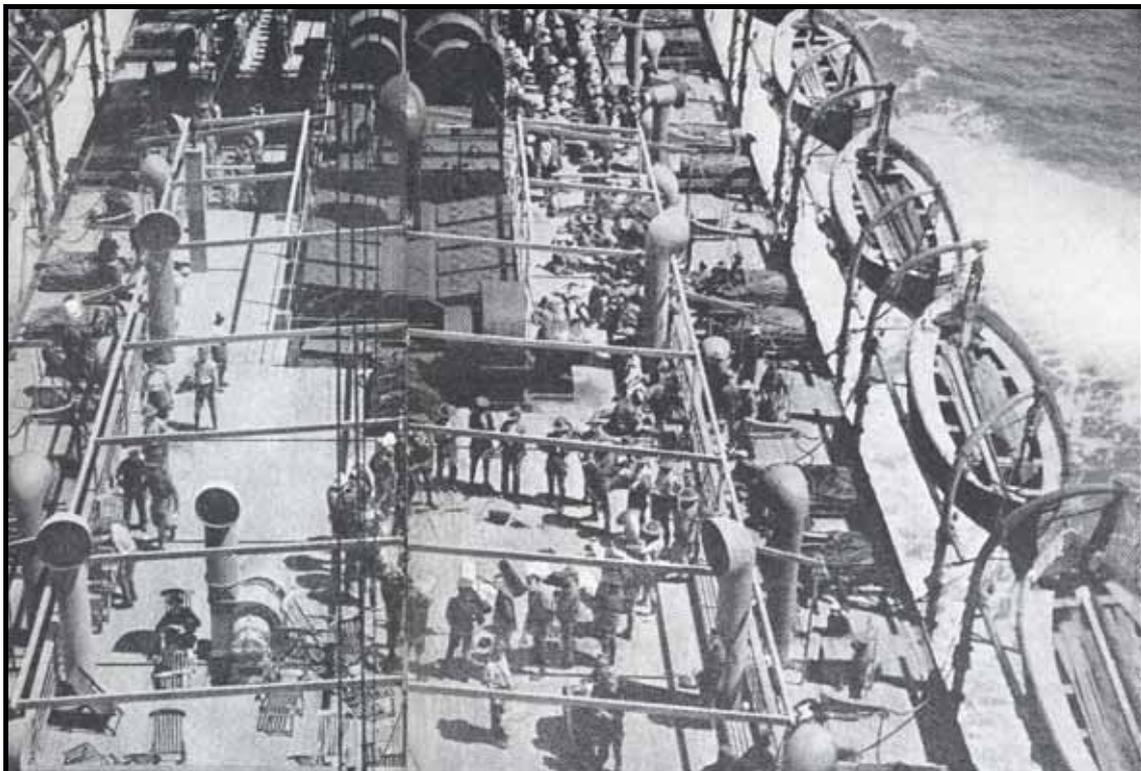


Illustration 3.4: Men busy with training during voyage to Great Britain.
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 32-33)

camels and donkeys, to assist them in the planned operations. They were also tasked to guard the canal between the camp and Alexandria, this included the pump station close to their camp. Lieutenant General Sir John Maxwell, the commander of the Allied forces in Egypt, inspected them on January 18 and remarked that 'The South African Brigade is evidently fit to take its place alongside the best troops in the army.'²⁰ It was not long before the Brigade was able to prove Maxwell's statement correct.²¹

The Brigade were still organising when the command came for a regiment to be sent to Mersa Matruh to take part in an operation against the Senussi in that area, under the command of Major General Wallace. Within less than 10 days two companies of the 2nd Regiment took part in their first operations overseas. They did not disappoint. They formed part of the main attack in the Battle of Halazin on 23 January 1916, and were able to break through the Senussi line resulting in them fleeing. Of the men killed in the battle, eight out of the 21 were South African and of the wounded, 105 of the 291 were South Africans. The South Africans received several compliments on their action, including one from Maxwell in a dispatch on 1 March in which he stated that they had shown 'invincible dash and resolution in their attack'.²² This success arguably gave the other South Africans in the Brigade some encouragement for their further operations.²³

From 19 January until 19 February 1916 the Brigade moved in small vessels, which could only carry one company at a time, to Mersa Matruh and awaited further instructions for the operations to be carried out against the remainder of the Senussi. While the Brigade was deployed at Mersa Matruh they were kept busy with route marches and aspects of desert warfare. Lance Corporal E. Solomon, of the 3rd Regiment wrote that, 'With camel transport a new method of rolling our blanket kit was introduced, and it was at a trial packing of eight animals that our Colonel [Lieutenant Colonel E.F. Thackeray] waxed a wroth at the lack of smoothness in the proceedings. "If there is so much chaos with eight animals, what will there be with five hundred?"'²⁴ It appears as if the training and exercises helped, because when they deployed later, there were no major problems.²⁵

²⁰ Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 27; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 58.

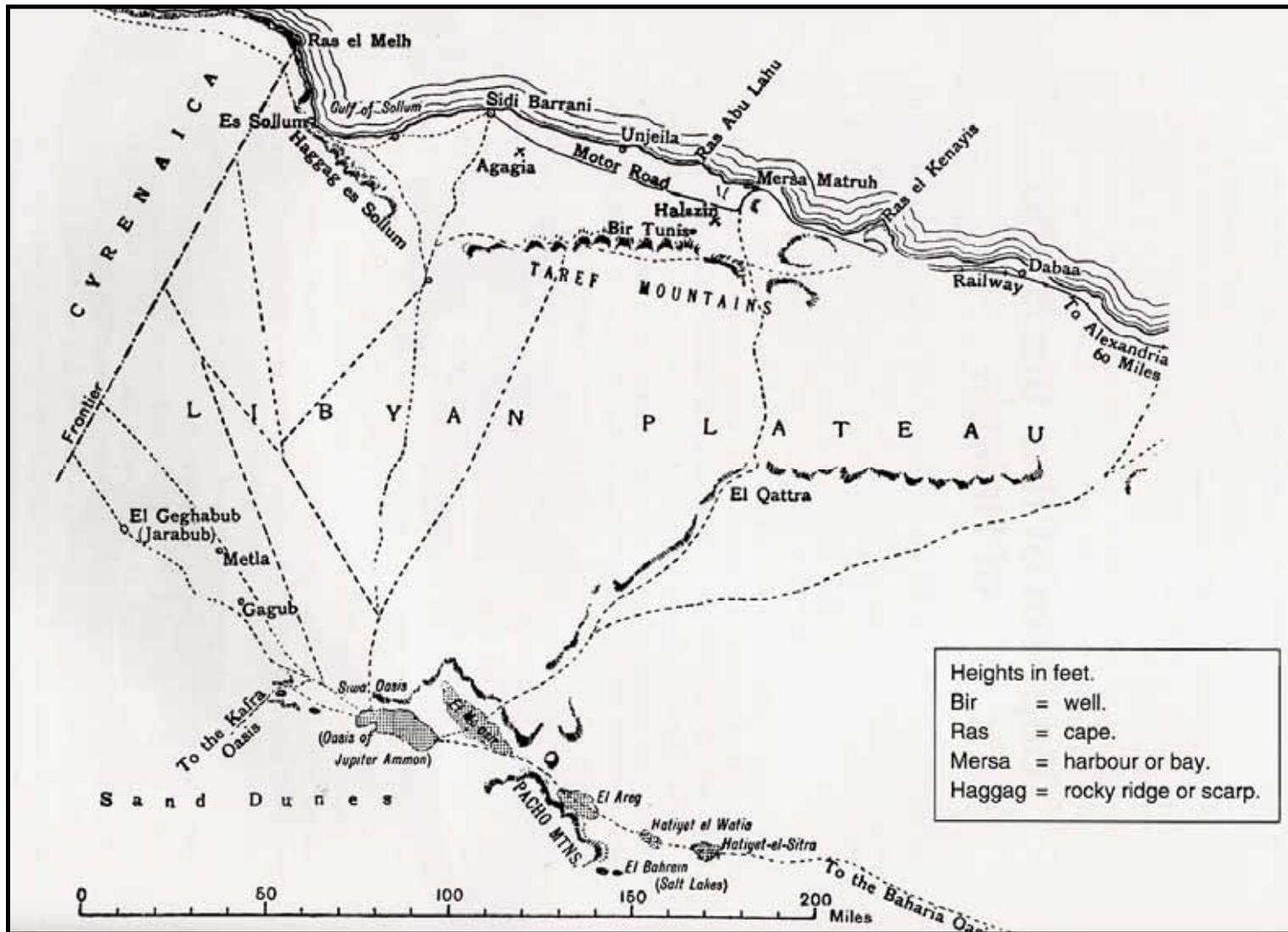
²¹ N. Orpen, *The Cape Town Highlanders 1885-1970*, 83-83; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 23-27; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 43-58; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary, 28 December 1915-21 January 1916; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, 7 December 1915-18 January 1916.

²² Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 58.

²³ Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 25-30; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 20-21; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 128-133; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 43-58; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, 23-29 January 1916.

²⁴ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 31.

²⁵ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 31-32; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, Brigade, 29 January 1916-27 February 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary 29 January-27 February 1916.



Map 3.2: Operations on the Western Frontier of Egypt, 1916.
 (Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 52)

On 6 February 1916 Lukin assumed the command of the Western Frontier Force. This force was very quickly assembled on 11 December 1915 and consisted of units that were already stationed in Egypt but did not form part of the forces that protected the Suez Canal. Major General W.E. Pyton took over the command of the Western Frontier Force on 9 February 1916. On 20 February 1916 Lukin and the Brigade moved out to the Brigade's designated place for the planned operation against the Senussi. The Brigade was reinforced for this operation by the Dorset Yeomanry, Royal Bucks Hussars, Notts Artillery, the Duke of Westminster and his armoured cars, and an aeroplane, which was flown by none other than the young Lieutenant P. van Ryneveld, who would later become the Chief of the General Staff of the UDF in World War II and played a major role in the establishment of the air force in the UDF. All Lukin's experience during the South African War and the war in GSWA paid off. This was the second desert war in which he was commanding troops. He was able to move his troops effectively over long distances within a short period of time without being detected by the Senussi. Solomon explains that they rested 10 minutes for every 60 minutes of marching and expected to take a long rest at midday, but

the General (dust begrimed like the rest), marching at the head of the main column, as he sometimes did to rest his horse, had other plans, so we continued until about 1:30 p.m. and then halted near some wells for the rest of the day and the night.²⁶

They marched on until they reached Wadi Maktil, the place from where their operations would commence.²⁷

With all the forces being in place and the battle plan ready, Pyton ordered the start of the operation on 25 February 1916. By achieving an element of surprise and acting very quickly, Lukin was able to catch the Senussi unaware and unprepared. This led to the capture of Gaagar Pasha, the Chief of the Senussi forces, two officers, other prisoners, stores and ammunition on 26 February 1916. Solomon later wrote that,

[I]t transpired later that the captured Turkish General had informed General Lukin, that there had been opposed to us 1,800 men including 900 regular troops, two big guns, and three machine guns; that he never dreamt of our infantry advancing in the face of their fire, and when they did, his men lost heart and retired.²⁸

These were the first results of the hard work and extra time Lukin and his staff had put in to prepare the Brigade for their mission overseas. It also shows the Brigade's determination to succeed in their first operations and the mutual trust the soldiers and their seniors had in each other when they went into battle.²⁹

²⁶ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 32.

²⁷ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 32- 34; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, Brigade, 6 February-25 February 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary 6 -25 February 1916; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 59- 62; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 30-32.

²⁸ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 37.

²⁹ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 31-32; MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, Brigade, 29 January 1916-27 February 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary 29 January-27 February 1916; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 59- 67.



Illustration 3.5: Water being issued to the camel drivers.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR761005056, Shelf Number 761005056)

This was, however, not the end of the Senussi resistance, and the Brigade had to endure long marches and a lack of water, while they took part in the operation to clear Sollum of Senussi forces. Although marching under these difficult conditions, the men of the brigade still found the time to challenge each other. Private G. Lawrence of the 1st Regiment wrote, 'At one time the 4th would gradually draw ahead and then the 1st, not to be beaten, would catch up and pass the 4th who in turn would take up the challenge. A see-saw process of marching competing columns in perfect step and long loping strides took place.'³⁰ He also mentions that later on they heard that the 'Turkish General was entranced by the sight and said he had never in his life seen such marching and such strapping soldiers.'³¹ On 15 March 1916, the Brigade reached Sollum and by 17 March 1916 the Allied forces were able to break Senussi resistance to such an extent that they no longer posed any major threat. The Brigade stayed until April and shipped out on the *Megantic*, *Oriana*, *Scotian* and *Tintoretto* to Marseilles on 12 and 13 April 1916. Lukin received the Companionship of the Bath (C.B.) from George V for his services in Egypt and the Khedive of Egypt, Sultan Husayn Kamil (1853-1917) who instituted the Order of the Nile on 15 April 1915, appointed him to the Order of the Nile and gave him an Arab charger as a personal gift.³²

The Brigade to the Western Front

Lukin and his men arrived at Marseilles on 19 April 1916 and were attached to the 9th Scottish Division under the command of Major General W.T. Furse. According to Solomon they 'felt considerably flattered at having been selected for inclusion in that Division which had earned such an excellent reputation in the field.'³³ They did not expect a very friendly welcome, because they were colonial troops and seen as intruders and Solomon explained that one can expect these troops would have 'felt sore at the introduction of any but troops from their own country.'³⁴ But due to the 'high state of efficiency and discipline'³⁵ that was credited to Lukin, the 'brigade soon became well-known throughout the British front, and in trenches and billets their conduct and bearing were equal to any famous line regiments.'³⁶ On their voyage the Brigade had received

³⁰ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 73.

³¹ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 73.

³² MAD, WWI DA, Box 4, HQ Brigade, 27 February-13 April 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 60, Staff Captain Pepper, Field message book, Feb 1916; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 31-42; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 31-42; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 37-55; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 133-139; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 71-81; Christopher Buyers, 'Egypt, Orders and Decorations', <http://www.4dw.net/royalark/Egypt/orders.htm>, December 2003, (Accessed: 14/07/05); Anon, 'Husayn Kamil' http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/encyclopedia/h/hu/husayn_kamil.htm, (Accessed: 14/07/05).

³³ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 44.

³⁴ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 44.

³⁵ I. Uys, *Rollcall: The Delville Wood Story*, 13.

³⁶ Uys, *Rollcall*, 14.



Illustration 3.6: The Senussi Campaign. Brigadier General H.T. Lukin.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR761003865, Shelf Number 761003865)

instructions on the use of the gas helmet and from the time they arrived on the Western Front, they were, as steadily as the time permitted, introduced to this new type of warfare.³⁷

Most of the brigade left Marseilles by train for Bailleul and only arrived there on 23 April 1916. Most of the 4th Regiment and some men of the 1st Regiment were quarantined at Marseilles for some three weeks because they had contracted measles on the ships from Alexandria. This group met up with the rest of the Brigade at Pont De Nieppe on May 11th. More training for trench warfare took place at the Pont De Nieppe, Le Bizet, Bailleul, Noot Boom, Strazeele, Steenbecque and Morbecque training areas. Although the Brigade was deployed in the trenches at the war front from the beginning of May, they kept up with a programme to prepare them for the Somme offensive. The initial plan was for a simultaneous combined attack by the French, with 40 divisions on a front of 15.6 kilometres from Lasigny to Somme, and the British, who would attack a 23 kilometre line from Somme to Hébuterne with 25 divisions. Part of this plan was for the artillery to start their barrage on 24 June and the infantry assault to start on 27 June. It was thought that this attack would break the strong point of the German defence and the Allies would be able to roll up the German front from Bapaume-Miraumont north to Arras with the help of the other forces also attacking this front. As could later be seen, much of this plan relied on perceptions and not on the actual situation on the battlefield at that specific time. It would carry on for almost four months with casualties of half a million men. Sir Douglas Haig, then the Chief of Staff in India (1909-1911) called this type of warfare the 'wearing-out fight of varying duration'³⁸ or the war of attrition as the Somme offence was generally known.³⁹

This training programme, as seen in Table 3.2, involved bayonet and trench fighting, arms and close order drill, bombing, wiring and musketry and physical training. Solomon provides some insight into a novice's experience of trench warfare,

[t]wo or three days after arrival, a fresh sensation was provided for us. It had been arranged that parties should be sent to the trenches for instruction in spells of forty-eight hours until the majority, if not all, had acquired some knowledge of the conditions obtaining, and the methods adopted there.⁴⁰

This was a whole new way of fighting and as Terrain rightfully remarks, 'caught by a hiatus in the mobile arm: horsed cavalry had become obsolete and the blitzkrieg tank not yet been developed.'⁴¹, so they had to protect themselves by means of trenches. The officers and non-

³⁷ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 42-52; Uys, *Rollcall*, 13-21; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 81-112; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary, 12 April-1 July 1916.

³⁸ J. Terraine, *White Heat: The New Warfare 1914-18*, 92.

³⁹ J.H. Johnson, *Stalemate! The Great Trench Warfare Battles of 1915-1917*, 57-60; Terraine, *White Heat*, 203-212; B. Shepperd, *A War of Nerves: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Twentieth Century*, 40-41; B.H. Liddel Hart, *History of the First World War*, 231-242; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary, 20 April-13 June 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 30, Divisional Operational Order, 23 May 1916; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 53-54.

⁴⁰ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 45.

⁴¹ Terraine, *White Heat*, 93.



Illustration 3.7: Senussi prisoners with a Turkish officer amongst them.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR761005055, Shelf Number761005055)

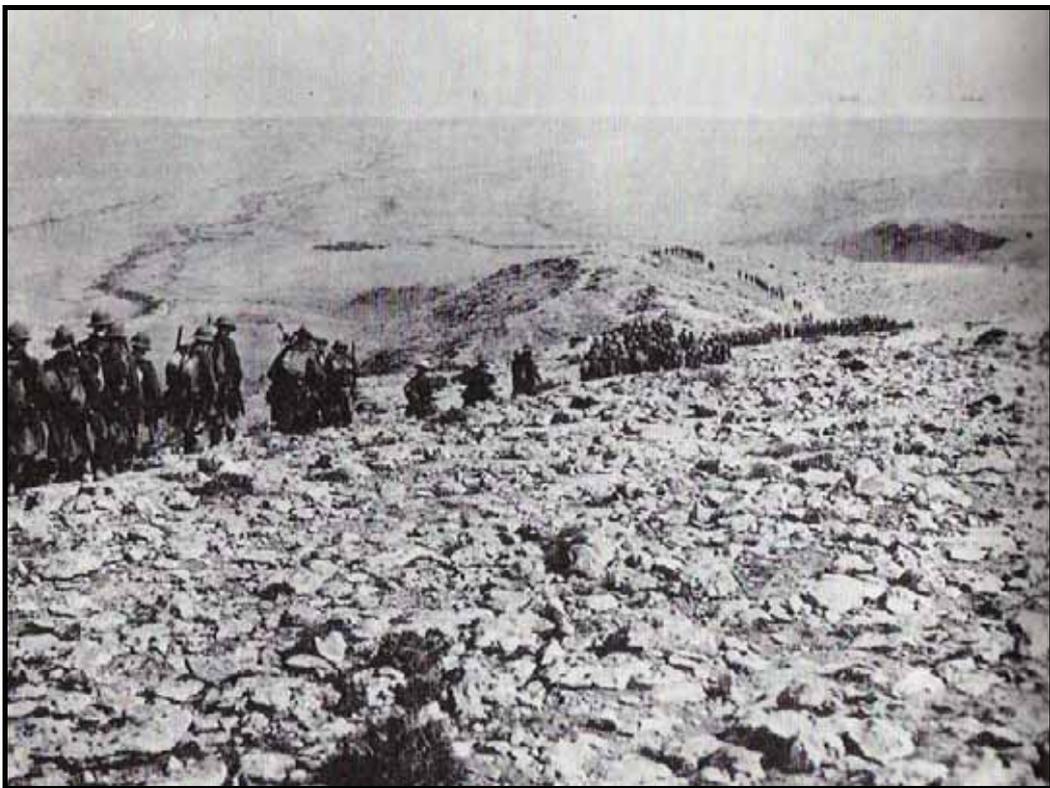


Illustration 3.8: 1st and 4th South African Infantry Regiments
down the Medean Pass to 'Thirsty Hill'.
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 76)

commissioned officers (NCO) were closely involved in this training and had further training in map reading. Lukin and senior staff members were with the men in the trenches every day, if they were not attending conferences or orders at the Divisional headquarters. While the Brigade was busy with this training they encountered a rifle grenade battle. It did not take very long after they were deployed to the front line before they encountered some bombardment of the trenches in their immediate vicinity. They even had a gas alarm on 17 May 1916, which transpired to be false.⁴²

By 2 June 1916 the Brigade were relieved of their duties in the trenches and were on their way to the Steenbecque area, close to Aire 'to be trained as a mobile sneak column for the coming offensive on the Somme'.⁴³ From 3 June until 13 June 1916, the Brigade continued with training and preparations for the Somme offensive, each Battalion in its own area. Some of the tasks involved were the digging and improvement of trenches, moving ammunition to the front, laying 193 kilometres of water pipes, helping with the construction of new railways and roads and constructing long dugouts for telephone lines, some as deep as 1.8 meters to protect them from the artillery barrages. Solomon's regiment camped close to Pipemont and he explains that 'several of our NCOs had been sent to Nieppe for a course of instruction in such matters as bombing, bayonet fighting, gas attacks and others.'⁴⁴ Training was over and everyone was set for the offensive. There was some spare time at hand as they were still busy with the preparations for the Somme offensive, so Lukin was given a few days leave from 13 to 16 June 1916 to visit Annie Maria (Lily) who had fallen sick. While Lukin was in London the 9th Division was ordered to move to the Somme on 14 June 1916. Lukin joined the Brigade again at Saisseval.⁴⁵

The Somme Offensive

From 16 June until the beginning of the Somme offensive, the Brigade was deployed between Suzanne and Carnoy. If the Brigade was not convinced of the great nature of the upcoming offensive, they very quickly found out while deployed in this area. Solomon describes,

We were at the junction of the French and the British lines, and the mass of the artillery and ammunition concentrated at the various points was an eye opener to us. On the way to our work we passed countless batteries nestling securely in their specially constructed positions, while in deep

⁴² Uys, *Rollcall*, 14-17; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 45-53; Orpen, *The Cape Town Highlanders*, 84-85; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 55-63; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 140-141; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary, 12 April-17 May 1916.

⁴³ Uys, *Rollcall*, 16; MAD, Brigade, Box 30, Brigade Operational Orders No 33, 1 June 1916.

⁴⁴ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 54.

⁴⁵ Johnson, *Stalemate!*, 60-63; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 43-48; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 82-103; Orpen, *The Cape Town Highlanders*, 84-85; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 53-54; Uys, *Rollcall*, 13-20; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 63-68; MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Diary, 20 April-13 June 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 30, Divisional Operational Order, 23 May 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 30, Brigade Training Scheme for 11th instant, 10 June 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 30, Brigade Operational Orders No 36, 13 June 1916.

PROGRAMME OF BATTALION TRAINING 6th, 7th and 8th June				
Company	Bayonet and Trench Fighting (Attack)	Arms and Close Order Drill	Bombing, Wiring and Musketry	Bombing and Trench Fighting (Attack)
A	7 a.m. to 9 a.m.	10 a.m. to 11 a.m.	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	11 a.m. to 12 noon
B	9 a.m. to 11 a.m.	2 p.m. to 3 p.m.	11 a.m. to 12 noon	(6.50 a.m. to 7.30 a.m.) (3 p.m. to 4 p.m.)
C	(11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.) (6.30 a.m. to 7 a.m.)	(3 p.m. to 4 p.m.) (7 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.)	10 a.m. to 11 a.m.	2 p.m. to 3 p.m.
D	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	11 a.m. to 12 noon	(6.30 a.m. to 7.30 a.m.) (9 a.m. to 10 a.m.)	10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Companies will devote time to the various exercises as follows:

- 2 hours trench fighting and attack
- 1 hour arms and close order drill
- 1 “ bayonet fighting
- 1 “ musketry
- 1 “ wiring
- 1 “ bombing.

N.B. Owing to facilities being limited it is impossible to put the whole battalion through one form of training at a time. On the 9th the Battalion will practice the attack as a whole.

Training Area. Bayonet fighting ground in ERNY ST. JULIEN and adjoining fields.

Lewis gunners and Signalers will be trained as specialists.

Table 3.2: 1st South African Infantry Brigade Programme for Battalion Training.
(Source: MAD, Brigade, Box 3, War Dairy, Annexure XV, 5-8 June 1916)

valleys nearer the lines, and on the roads and heights overlooking them, guns of every calibre stood almost wheel to wheel.⁴⁶

The construction of railway lines for this offensive, namely 88 kilometres, exceeded the construction of lines for the previous offensives. As the war progressed, the construction of the lines increased, during the offensive of the Arras in April 1917 104 kilometres were laid, and during the offensive on Messines in June 1917, 144 kilometres. The guns Solomon mentions, some 1 500, were used to open the Somme campaign with a barrage on the targets of the battlefield from 24 June 1916. This artillery fire was very effective as one can depict from what Sergeant L.L. Arrons mentions he heard from a German prisoner of war,

I spoke to some officers, and they could not realise what had happened. ... For four days they had neither water nor food, so splendid was our artillery fire.⁴⁷

Yet it was not as effective as the Allies had hoped. The attack was initially planned to start on 27 June and it only started on July 1st, and the artillery fire could not be kept up at the rate initially planned. The other problem was that although the Germans were pinned down in their trenches, these trenches were very well prepared and when the Allies attacked, they just got out of their fox holes, got their machines guns in place and gave great resistance. Throughout the preparations Lukin and his staff were continually either among the troops that were training or preparing for battle or at order groups at the Command Cadre. On 1 July 1916 the Somme offensive began with the 9th Division, of which the Brigade formed part, in reserve at Grovetown Valley.⁴⁸

At 6.20 p.m. on 2 July 1916 Operational Order no 41 was issued to the Brigade which gave them the task of moving forward to Billon Valley, Trigger Wood and Copse Valley to relieve the 27th Brigade who had, in turn, to advance to the front line. At 8.30 p.m. the Brigade moved closer to the front line to take over the positions of the 27th Brigade. Lukin and his Brigade Major, Major J. Mitchell Baker, were already to be seen amongst the troops in the trenches. Sheffield stated in *Leadership in the Trenches* that soldiers of other ranks believed that the generals and staff officers of the British Expeditionary Force 'were remote from the front-line troops, callous, and incompetent.'⁴⁹ It must be said that the staff officer's duties are different to those of the junior officer's, who was among the men in the trenches. Sheffield furthermore remarks that 'from the perspective of the front-line soldier, good generals and staff officers exhibited "man mastership"

⁴⁶ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 55.

⁴⁷ Anon, *The Story of Delville Wood: Told in letters from the Front*, 18.

⁴⁸ A.M. Heniker, *History of the Great War: Transportation on the Western Front 1914-1918*, 118-120; Johnson, *Stalemate!*, 60-63; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 54-56; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 47-51; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 104-111; Uys, *Rollcall*, 17- 21; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 66-69; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 141-142; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 16 June 1916-1 July 1916; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports of movements and actions of units of the Brigade during the operations between 1st and 20th July, 1916 (hereinafter Reports), Operations Order No 40, 1 July 1916.



Illustration 3.9: Trench system near Arras, which illustrates the front, support and reserve trench systems. British trench system at bottom.
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 93)

(i.e. man-management) skills. Those who visited units in the trenches during dangerous periods or after a unit had returned from battle were “amply rewarded by increased confidence on [the part] of the regimental officers and men.”⁵⁰ Lukin was so rewarded. True to form, Lukin ensured that he visited the troops in the trenches as much as possible and had first hand information of what was going on at the front line. John Buchan, who later wrote the official history of the Brigade and served on the headquarters staff of the British Army in France (1916-1917) and as the Director of Information under the Prime Minister, Lloyd George (1917-1918), explains Lukin’s action as follows: ‘Lukin began those faithful pilgrimages along the front-line trenches which from the first marked him out among brigade commanders.’⁵¹ Dinter in *Hero or Coward*, also mentions that ‘his mere physical presence helps particularly when he appears calm and full of confidence. He must be with his subordinates, bear the pressures and lead by example.’⁵² On 4 July 1916 the orders came through for the Brigade to move to the front line to relieve the 21st and 89th Brigades. They executed this relief with speed and efficiency and by 3.15 p.m. on 5 July 1916 the Brigade was in position.⁵³

The 1st regiment held Briqueterie and Chimney Trenches, North and Train Allies, and portions of the Glatz Redoubt, the 2nd was part of the Divisional Reserve at Talus Boise. The 3rd was in support just north of Maricourt and the 4th held Dublin Trench from Dublin Redoubt, Glatz Redoubt south-west of its junction with Dublin Trench, Glatz Alley and Casement Trench. From 5 July 1916 the Brigade was either involved in relieving forces on the front line or themselves involved in fighting the enemy. This scale of trench warfare was totally new and the impact of the guns and other weapons adversely affected some of the soldiers in these trenches. Because it was such a new phenomenon, many officers and doctors ignored the symptoms of shell shock and wrote it off as mental illness. After intense studies and research it became clear that over this period many soldiers contracted shell shock and were not correctly treated for it. There must have been a great number of the Brigade in Delville Wood who contracted shell shock during the intense bombardment, but most of them had to go on with the fight and those who did end up in a hospital, were at this stage wrongly diagnosed. The 2nd and 4th were the first regiments to take part in the fighting of the Somme offensive. Alpha (A) and Charlie (C) companies and the Headquarters (HQ) Company of the 2nd were ordered to relieve the 27th Brigade on 8 July at the eastern part of

⁴⁹ G.D. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches: Officer-Man Relations, Moral and Discipline in the British Army in the Era of the First World War*, 97.

⁵⁰ Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches*, 98.

⁵¹ Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 53.

⁵² E. Dinter, *Hero or Coward: Pressures Facing the Soldier in the Battle*, 55.

⁵³ Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 51-53; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 112-113; Uys, *Rollcall*, 22-27; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 56-58; Warwick, *We Band of Brothers*, 69-70; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 142; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 1-4 July 1916; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, Operations Order No 41, 2 July 1916; Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches*, 95-99.

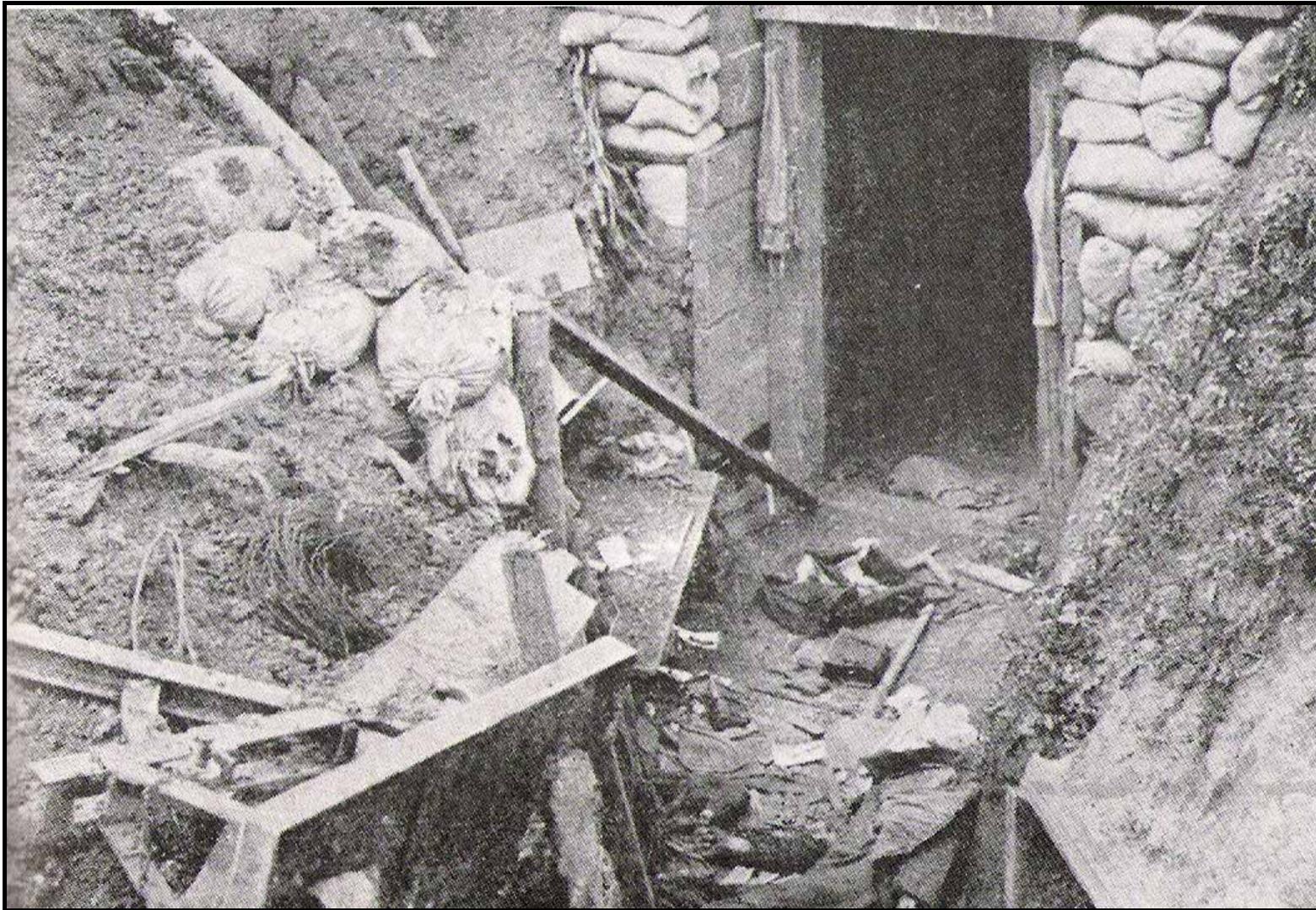


Illustration 3.10: Example of a well-constructed German bunker in their trench system.
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 109)

Bernafay Wood. That same day A Company of the 4th reinforced the 16th Manchesters at Trônes Wood. The 4th was ordered to support the 90th Infantry Brigade with their assault at Trônes Wood and did so splendidly on the night of 9/10 July and on 10 July. By the night of 10/11 July they were relieved and took up their positions with the rest of the Brigade at Talus Boise. The Brigade was tasked on 13 July 1916 to form part of the reserve for the 9th Division for the operations on the second line of the Germans.⁵⁴

The Battle of Delville Wood

It did not take very long for Lukin's Brigade to get involved in the operations at Longueval. At 1.00 p.m. on 14 July 1916, Lukin was ordered that 'as soon as Longueval is in our hands you will capture and consolidate the outer edge of the whole of Delville Wood.'⁵⁵ Lukin did his appreciation for the attack and was ordered to report to Furse, the Divisional Commander for further instructions. The initial attack was cancelled and while he and the other brigade commanders were in conference with Furse, Lukin ordered Lieutenant Roseby, the Brigade Intelligence Officer, and a couple of men from the 2nd and 3rd to go forward and do a proper reconnaissance of the positions at Longueval. Lukin wanted to know for himself what the situation at the front was if he and his men had to take part in any attacks. From the feedback it was clear that if the Brigade were to form up on the line to the west of Longueval, the left of the Brigade would be exposed to very heavy machine gun fire. Another important observation was that if the northern part of Longueval was not in the hands of the Allies, the Brigade would suffer heavy casualties. Although this additional information was relayed to Furse, Lukin was still ordered 'that the attack on Delville Wood should take place at 5.00 a.m.'⁵⁶ and that 'the wood must be taken at all costs.'⁵⁷

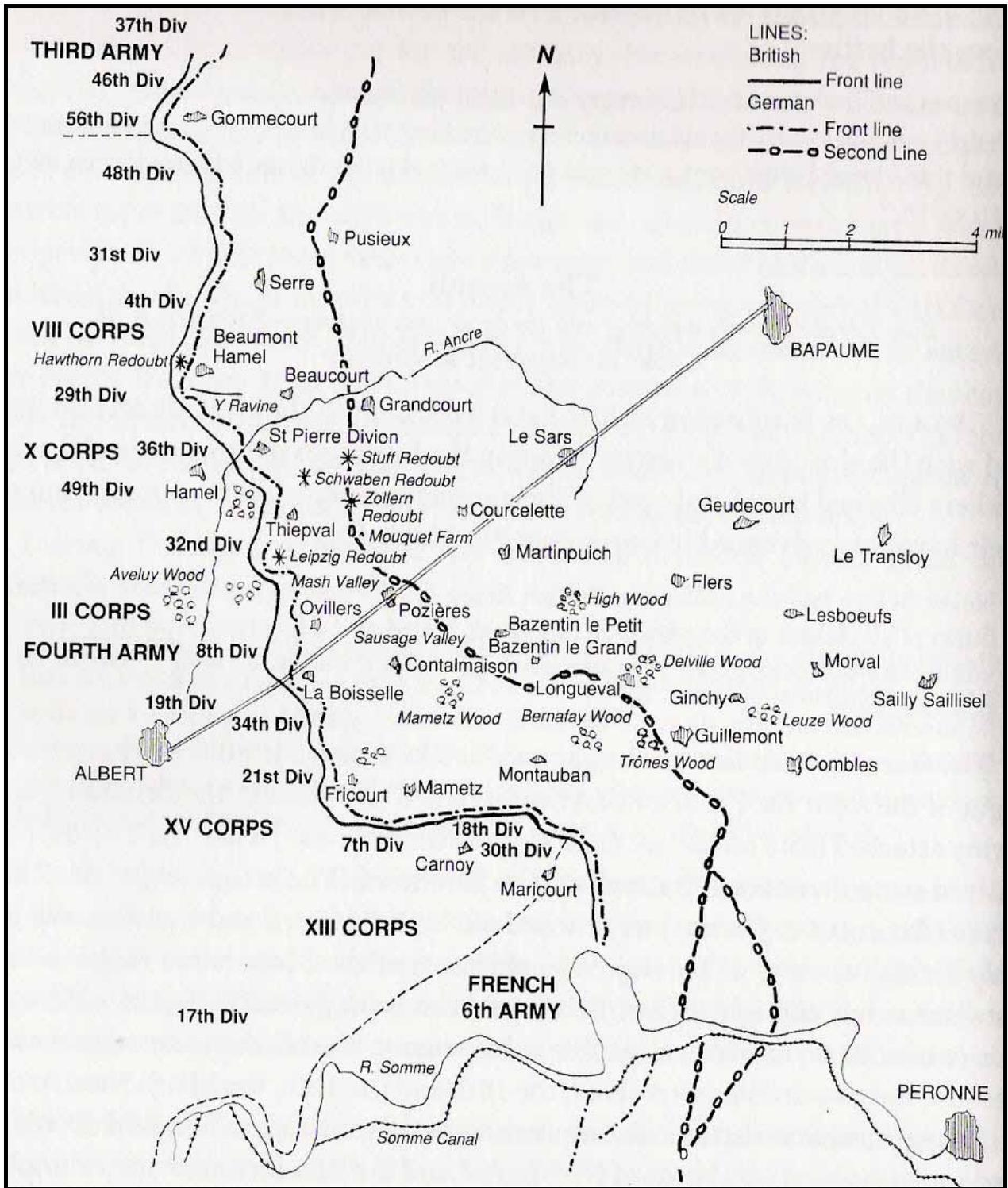
Lukin instructed his battalion commanders about the new time arrangements and confirmed that even if the 26th and 27th Brigades were not successful in capturing the northern part of Longueval, they still had to attack Delville Wood at 5.00 a.m.. Even knowing the risks of this plan, Lukin and his commanders knew that they had to keep to these orders to ensure that the battle plan succeeded. As late as 12.55 a.m. on 15 July 1916, new orders for the start of the operations were received and Lukin instructed his commanders to move immediately to ensure that they

⁵⁴ Shepperd, *A War of Nerves*, 1-3, 33-51; F. Reid, "'Playing the Game to the Army": The Royal Army Medical Corps, Shell Shock and the Great War', *War and Society*, Vol 23, No 1, May 2005; Terraine, *White Heat*, 142-150; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 5-13 July 1916; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 52-55; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 113-120; Uys, *Rollcall*, 27-33; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 53-59; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 142-144.

⁵⁵ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 14 July 1916.

⁵⁶ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 14 July 1916.

⁵⁷ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 14 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 14 July 1916; Uys, *Rollcall*, 34-38; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 57-59; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 121-126; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 145-146.



Map 3.3: The Somme, 1 July 1916.
 (Source: Johnson, *Stalemate!*, 64)

would be in position to start the attack at dawn as instructed. He also instructed his commanders that if the enemy was still in possession of Longueval, they should attack the Woods from a south-westerly direction. By 2.30 a.m. on 15 July the 2nd, 3rd and 4th regiments, with Lieutenant Colonel W. Tanner as the commander, were clear of Montauban and on their way to their forming-up areas. The 3rd was the first to enter Delville Wood at the south-west corner at 6.00 a.m. This was the start of six days of hard fighting, many were killed but in the end their goal was achieved.⁵⁸

The South African's principal problem was not so much the rifle, sniper or machine gun fire, but the German artillery. What exacerbated the Brigade's vulnerability was that they occupied positions previously held by the Germans, so the German artillery had the exact co-ordinates and were able to accurately fire on these positions. Another major setback was the hard surface which, firstly, made it very difficult for the Brigade to dig in properly and, secondly, suited the artillery fire because on harder surfaces the shrapnel would be directed over a wider front than usual. Solomon's description of his first sight of Delville Wood is very pleasant,

Delville Wood covered a large area; its trees, closely set, towered to a great height, where the leafy branches intermingled and formed a screen so thick that, in parts the view of the sky was almost obscured. Here and there was a clearing, here and there a narrow road, here and there a footpath; but for the most part nothing but trees and thick undergrowth.⁵⁹

While they advanced through this quiet landscape, a rocket was fired and after a few minutes the soldiers of the 3rd knew the purpose of it, the German artillery had started to fire on their positions. This would be the start of a long artillery duel at the end of which there would be a bare piece of earth where there once was a wood.⁶⁰

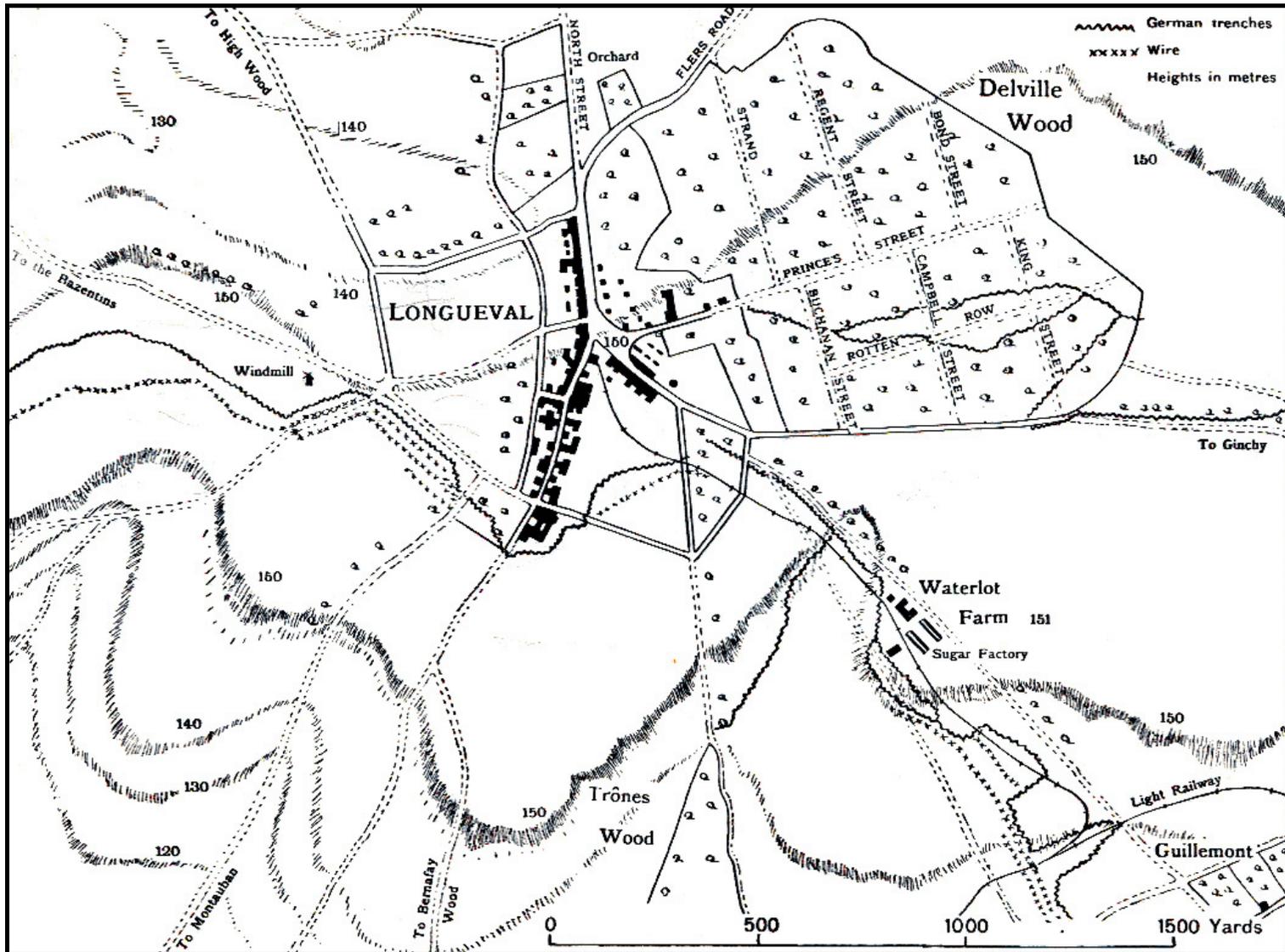
Lukin knew what he had in the Brigade and trusted his commanders and soldiers. This trust is evidenced by Tanner's acknowledgement that Lukin decentralised the command and had given him a lot of freedom during this operation. This was a very bold step from Lukin, specifically during the First World War. To do this he had to have confidence in his commanders and had to trust them to make decisions. Tanner specifically mentioned that at the beginning of the attack 'I was instructed by General Lukin to ascertain the position of affairs in Longueval and to base the plan of attack upon the result of this reconnaissance.'⁶¹ The first part of the attack went very smoothly, taking into consideration that Tanner reported at 2.41 p.m. that his troops were in control of most of the wood except for the strong positions to the north-west and the northern orchards. This was not

⁵⁸ MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 15 July 1916, 3-4; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 14-15 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 14-15 July 1916; Uys, *Rollcall*, 38-39; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 59-60; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 126; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 59-60; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 146-148.

⁵⁹ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 61.

⁶⁰ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 61-62; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 126-127; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 60-61; Uys, *Rollcall*, 40-44, 53-54.

⁶¹ Uys, *Rollcall*, 45-46.



Map 3.4: Longueval and Delville Wood, 1916.
 (Source: Uys, *Rollcall*, 39)

all, they were also able to capture three officers and 130 other ranks and a machine gun. It seemed all too easy, because Lukin and his staff thought that the Germans would have better defended the woods.⁶²

Lukin's initial plan was to take control of Delville Wood and then steadily withdraw most of the troops with just some of them guarding the boundaries with machine guns. The 2nd and 3rd regiments would take part in this operation with the 4th in support. But nothing came of this, because less than half an hour after Tanner had secured the Woods, the Germans launched their counter attack from the northern end and by 6.30 p.m. more German soldiers were rallied at the northern and north-eastern part of the woods. Tanner requested reinforcements because of the many casualties and Lukin despatched a company of the 4th. The Brigade did well to withstand this counter attack from the Germans. After they had repelled this counter attack, reorganisation was needed and Lukin took the opportunity to again send Roseby forward to the positions to get more detailed information so that he would be able to make appreciations of possible scenarios. Knowing the danger the men were in because of the pre-registered targets and his experience as artillery commander, Lukin ordered his commanders to ensure they dug themselves in because 'despite the fatigue of the men this necessary work should be undertaken without fail, as it is probable they will be exposed to heavy shell fire tomorrow.'⁶³ This shell fire did not wait till the next day, that same night the German artillery were pounding the Brigade.⁶⁴

The digging proved difficult because of the hard soil and tree roots. However, as Solomon explains, other factors compounded the difficulties presented by terrain and vegetation:

Instead of constructing a continuous trench, each man dug a hole for himself sufficiently deep to afford him, when sitting, some protection from flying shrapnel... . We could not help exposing ourselves from time to time; the physical strain of digging and scraping in a prostrate position was so great that moments of relaxation had to be taken, also later when as the holes increased in depth, we worked in crouched positions.⁶⁵

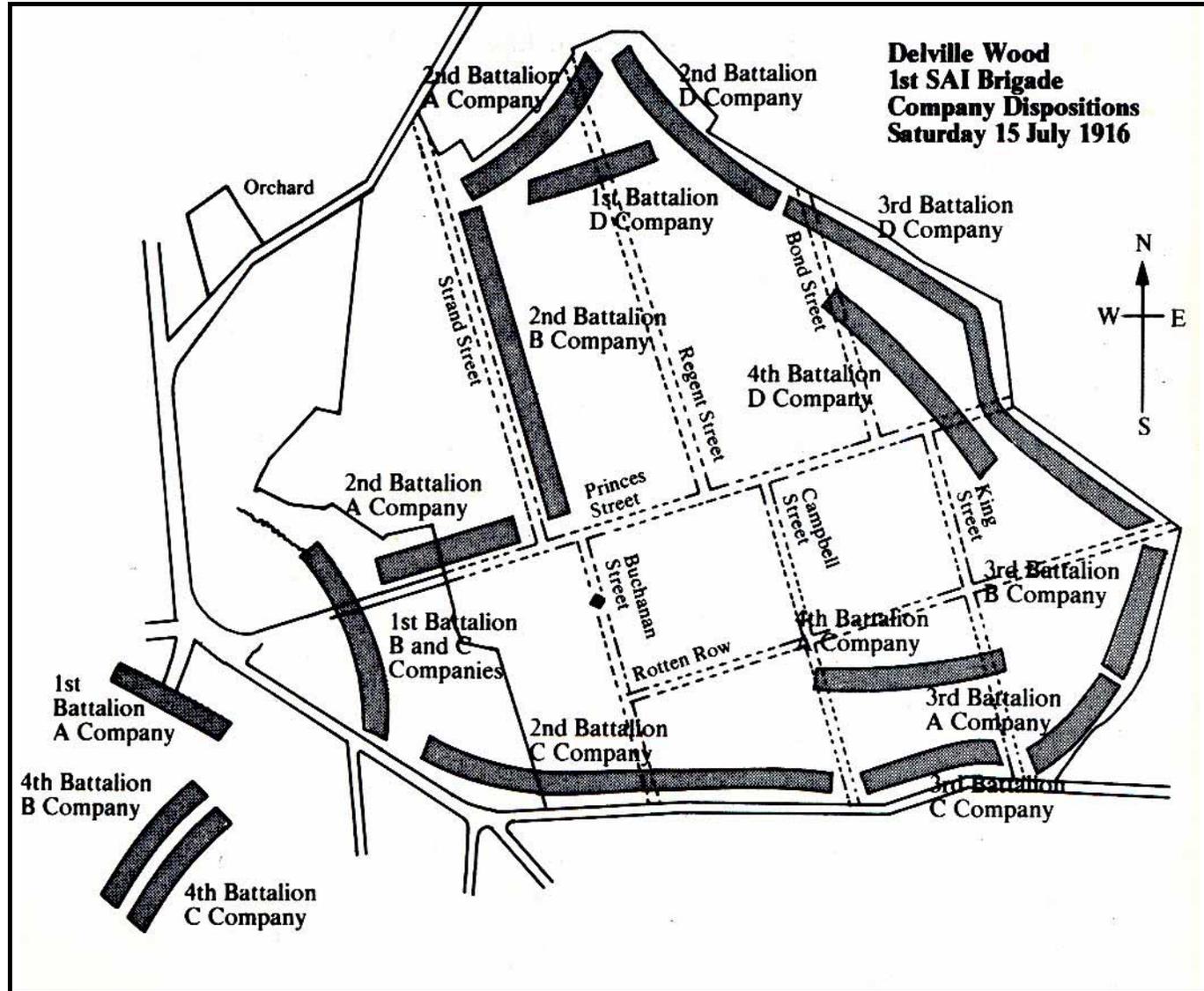
That night the Brigade knew that the Germans had no shortage of artillery ammunition. Buchan states that the artillery fire was at a rate of 400 shells a minute for most of the time. What was even more alarming was the fact that the Germans made use of lachrymatory shells, which they first used in June 1915, and there were indications that poisonous shells were also fired. One soldier explains the effect of shells bursting close to them, 'The pain was awful. One can hardly breathe, and there is a terrible burning in the nose, throat and lungs. The idea is to interfere with one's

⁶² Uys, *Rollcall*, 45-69; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 61-62; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 126-127; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 61-62; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, SA Inf Bde HQ, July 1916, Reports, 15 July 1916; MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 15 July 1916, 3-4.

⁶³ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 15 July 1916.

⁶⁴ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 15 July 1916; Uys, *Rollcall*, 48-70; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 62-64; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 126-128; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 62-63.

⁶⁵ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 63.



Map 3.5: Positions of Companies, 15 July 1916.
(Source: Uys, *Rollcall*, 52)

shooting, since one cannot see the sights on the rifle in front of one's face.⁶⁶ The men did dig in as well as they possibly could, but the artillery kept them busy.⁶⁷

This fire was so effective that the picture Solomon described earlier, radically changed,

As the bombardment increased the ground behind and before us became littered with shell holes. Bushes and small trees were torn up. Large trees uprooted. Many a grand monarch of wood, lifted from its roots and projected forward, was seen to crash through the branches of other trees and settle down full length to earth.⁶⁸

As the battle continued the bombardments increased and A.H. Betteridge explained what the area looked like by 16 July 1916,

Within twenty four hours all of the hundreds of trees in the wood were reduced to a tangle of greenery and stumps. Not one tree was intact. The whole area was a shambles. Under this unbelievable rain of shells we had to clear paths and small communication trenches of rubble to bring up ammunition and what replacements we could find for the casualties.⁶⁹

The losses were severe and Lukin had to send another company of the 1st forward to the 2nd to strengthen their positions. By 2.35 a.m. on 16 July Lukin received orders from Furse that the weak point, the Northern sector of Longueval, must be closed down at all costs. After achieving this they must move westwards to join up with the 27th Infantry Brigade at North Street and so drive the enemy further north of Longueval.⁷⁰

The attack started at 10.00 a.m., but did not achieve the desired goal because the enemy held up the 11th Royal Scots and the two companies of the 1st. That meant they had to retreat to their original positions and contend with constant fire from the enemy. While they were in the trenches, Lukin met with Dawson, Officer Commanding of the 1st, in Longueval and Dawson asked if it was possible that his men could be relieved, because they had endured much during the last couple of days. Lukin noticed the fatigue and strain on his soldiers' faces. But he could only repeat the Divisional Commander's orders; the wood must be kept at all cost. At this stage, there were no other reinforcements or relieving parties available. It was decided that evening that a second attempt at the north-west corner would be made. At 10.30 a.m. orders were given for the soldiers

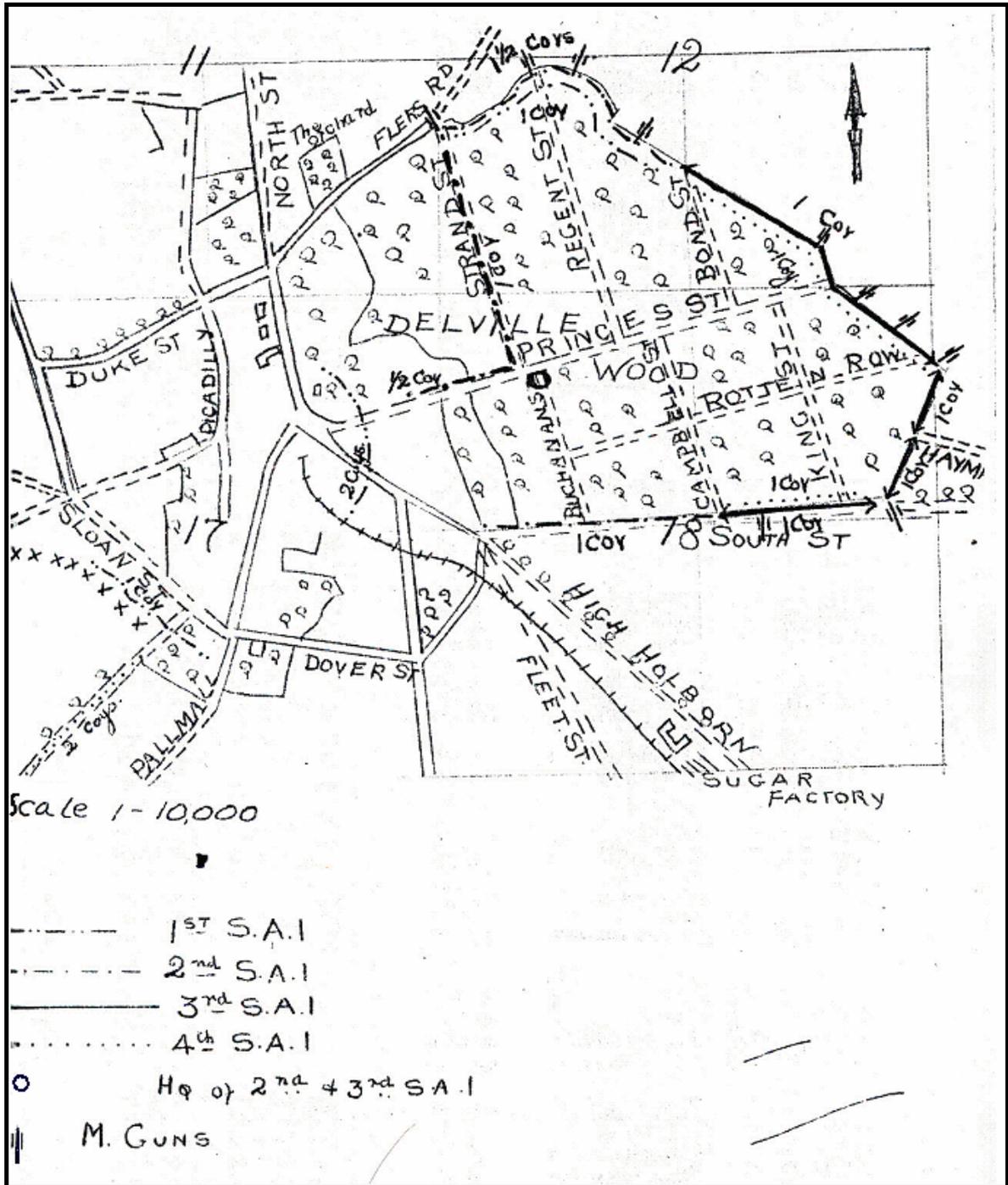
⁶⁶ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 128.

⁶⁷ Terraine, *White Heat*, 160; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 64-65; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 127-129; Uys, *Rollcall*, 47-70; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 63-65; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports 15 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 15 July 1916; MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 15 July 1916, 4.

⁶⁸ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 65.

⁶⁹ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 129.

⁷⁰ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade, July 1916, Reports, 16 July 1916; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 64-66; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 128-131; Uys, *Rollcall*, 47-71; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 65-66; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 147-148; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 16 July 1916.



Map 3.6: Hand sketch of positions of Companies, 14 July 1916.
 (Source: MAD, Brigade, Box42, Operational Order no 28)

to withdraw so that the area could be bombarded to weaken the enemy positions for the next attack on 17 July 1916.⁷¹

It became extremely difficult for the supply parties to get to the front to give the troops their rations and ammunition. Sergeant Louis Aarons was part of a supply party and clearly indicates how difficult it really was,

Heavy shelling. Again tried to get through last night, but it was impossible to move for a few hours. Simply one barrage of shells. ... Eventually succeeded and worked through the night, although roads are impassable. ... Our boys are still fighting intensely – gaining ground, losing ground, but always getting the best of the fight.⁷²

That night it was not only the Allied forces that bombarded their designated targets, the Germans continued to concentrate the artillery fire on the Brigade. Lance Corporal A. Mandy describes it by saying ‘That night we dug in even deeper and were shelled unceasingly. The foliage of the trees disappeared rapidly and by the morning of the third day (17 July 1916) only bare stumps remained of what had been a dense plantation.’⁷³ As if the artillery and sniper fire were not enough, it started to rain that Sunday and this put even more strain on the men, because most of them, officers included, did not have blankets or coats to protect them against the cold. Solomon describes their situation very clearly, ‘Then it rained, and the shelter holes receiving and retaining the water and consequently mud, rendered sleep in the orthodox position out of the question.’⁷⁴ The second attack at dawn on 17 July 1916 again failed and the men retreated back to their positions for a second time. But worse was still to come.⁷⁵

On the morning of 17 July 1916, Lukin visited his commanders in Delville Wood to discuss the situation. His commanders stated that the men were reaching a point of fatigue that could mean that more men and indeed the ground already occupied, could be lost. Lukin noted in his reports that ‘I was impressed with the signs of strain and fatigue visible on the faces of the officers and men, and fully appreciated what both Colonels Tanner and Thackeray stated. That the strain and fatigue were seriously telling on their men.’⁷⁶ Lukin’s visits did not go unnoticed, as Arrons stated, ‘General Lukin is a great gentlemen and a great soldier. One could see him continuously to

⁷¹ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 16 July 1916; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 66-67; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 127-131; Uys, *Rollcall*, 70-78; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 65-67; Orpen, *The Cape Town Highlanders*, 85-86; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 148-149; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 16 July 1916; MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 16 July 1916, 5A-5B.

⁷² Uys, *Rollcall*, 74.

⁷³ Uys, *Rollcall*, 77.

⁷⁴ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 65.

⁷⁵ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 65-67; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 67-68; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 130-131; Uys, *Rollcall*, 70-78; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 148; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 16-17 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 16-17 July 1916; MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 17 July 1916, 6.

⁷⁶ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade, July 1916, Reports, 17 July 1916.



Illustration 3.11: Men in trenches at Delville Wood after the battle.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SND850011977, Shelf Number 581000276)

and from the firing line, always bucking us up and talking to the wounded.⁷⁷ This is confirmed by Digby when he stated that 'Brig-Gen "Tim" Lukin was amongst the shells near the front line on numerous occasions, seeing at first hand what his men were up against, giving new heart to all those who saw him.'⁷⁸ Another brigade officer wrote,

The men loved Tim. At all hours of the day and night he would visit them in the front line and talk to them and ascertain exactly how they fared. His escapes from death bordered on the miraculous, and officers and men tell how, on many occasions, he dropped into their trenches when least expected from the most open places. During the severest part of the battle of Delville Wood, when communications were cut and little news was coming through, he went into the battle line and discussed the operations with his battalion commanders.⁷⁹

On his return to his HQ, he received a message to contact Furse who emphasised that the objective of the Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Sir Walter Congreve, was for them to hold the Wood at all cost. Lukin confirmed this, but at the same time told Furse that he should convey the situation of his men at the Wood to Congreve. But there was still no relief in sight for the Brigade.⁸⁰

With numerous counter attacks from the Germans during the day, Lukin sent Roseby forward to get new information. While busy with his reconnaissance, he was fatally wounded and at 7.00 p.m. Tanner was also wounded and Thackeray took over command of the forces in Delville Wood. Meanwhile, the German artillery still pounded the South Africans. Then at 7.30 p.m. orders were received from Furse that the Brigade must occupy a 'trench dug by the Germans which runs parallel to and 183 meters distant from the S.E. edge of Delville Wood.'⁸¹ Lukin, conscious of the state of his men and after consultation with Thackeray, concluded that it would not be possible to occupy the trench because it would be suicidal and the attack was called off.⁸²

On the night of 17 July 1916 the German artillery fire increased and if this were not enough, their own artillery fell short, which meant more pressure on the men at the front. Captain Richard Medlicott's message read, 'Will you please get our artillery to lengthen range. Firing from south-west. They are breaching our front line and causing considerable casualties.'⁸³ Even after they got the message, they still fired on their own front and Lieutenant Owen Thomas gave them new

⁷⁷ Anon, *The Story of Delville Wood*, 21.

⁷⁸ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 131.

⁷⁹ Uys, *Rollcall*, 78-79.

⁸⁰ Uys, *Rollcall*, 78-79; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 131; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 68; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 148-149; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 17 July 1916; Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 17 July 1916; Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 17 July 1916, 6.

⁸¹ MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade, July 1916, Reports, 17 July 1916.

⁸² Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 67-68; Uys, *Rollcall*, 84; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 131; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 68-69; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade, July 1916, Reports, 17 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 17 July 1916; MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 17 July 1916, 6-7, 25.

⁸³ Uys, *Rollcall*, 85.



Illustration 3.12: A Corner of Delville Wood, September 1916.
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 136)

ranges to ensure that this did not continue. And just to test the Brigade more, it continued raining. Solomon wrote,

The rain came down in torrents and the expected relief did not materialise. Our boots, strong as they were, could not withstand the pressure of the water and mud; waterproof sheets protected only our shoulders, and the other part of our bodies received the rain and became soaked through. Shells from our own artillery began to fall amongst us. One gun, it appeared, had been misdirected, and hasty and frequent messages had to be sent by runners to the artillery officer concerned before it lifted, but not before it had killed several of our men.⁸⁴

At 10.30 p.m. Lukin again received orders that his men must attack the trench 218 meters away from the south-east edge of the wood. The 3rd Division had been successful in occupying Longueval, and would support them with machine gun fire. This attack would start 3.45 a.m. and Lukin had sent more reinforcements forward.⁸⁵

On the morning of 18 July at 3.45 a.m. the 3rd Division was in position and was able to give support to the Brigade. Major Edward Burges of the 1st Battalion of Delta Company reached the north-west corner of the wood without much resistance and linked up with the 76th Brigade and together they continued with the assault. The reason why they were able to occupy so much ground was because the Germans had withdrawn their men for the biggest artillery bombardment yet. At 8.00 a.m. this huge barrage started. According to German regimental histories, some 116 field guns, about 70 medium and heavy guns and an unconfirmed number of howitzers concentrated their fire on Delville Wood for some seven hours. It is estimated that 200 000 shells fell at a rate of 400 a minute in an area of less than a square mile. Solomon again gives a very real picture of this event,

For at an early hour on that morning the German gunners, seeming to open the very floodgates of their resources, launched upon us an attack that reached a pitch of violence and intensity the like of which we had never before experienced. The air was filled with the shrieks of shells that rained upon us unceasingly; the atmosphere seemed to be rent asunder by the endless succession of terrific explosions; sand and stone hurtled up by the force of storm showered over us clattering on to our steel helmets; the earth shook, trees crashed over; and men waiting for the storm to abate, helpless under its fury, saw or experienced death dealt out with a lavish hand. But the storm did not abate; was not to abate for many hours.⁸⁶

And everyone knew that after this bombardment, the German infantry would start their attacks.⁸⁷

The situation did not get much better for the Brigade. The 76th Brigade fell back and opened the north-west part of the wood again for the Germans to attack. At 9.00 a.m. Lukin quickly ordered

⁸⁴ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 67-68.

⁸⁵ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 68; Uys, *Rollcall*, 86-88; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 131-132; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 68-70; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 17-18 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 17 July 1916.

⁸⁶ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 68.

⁸⁷ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 68; Uys, *Rollcall*, 88-91; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 132; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 70; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 149; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 18 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 18 July 1916; MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 18 July 1916, 25-26.

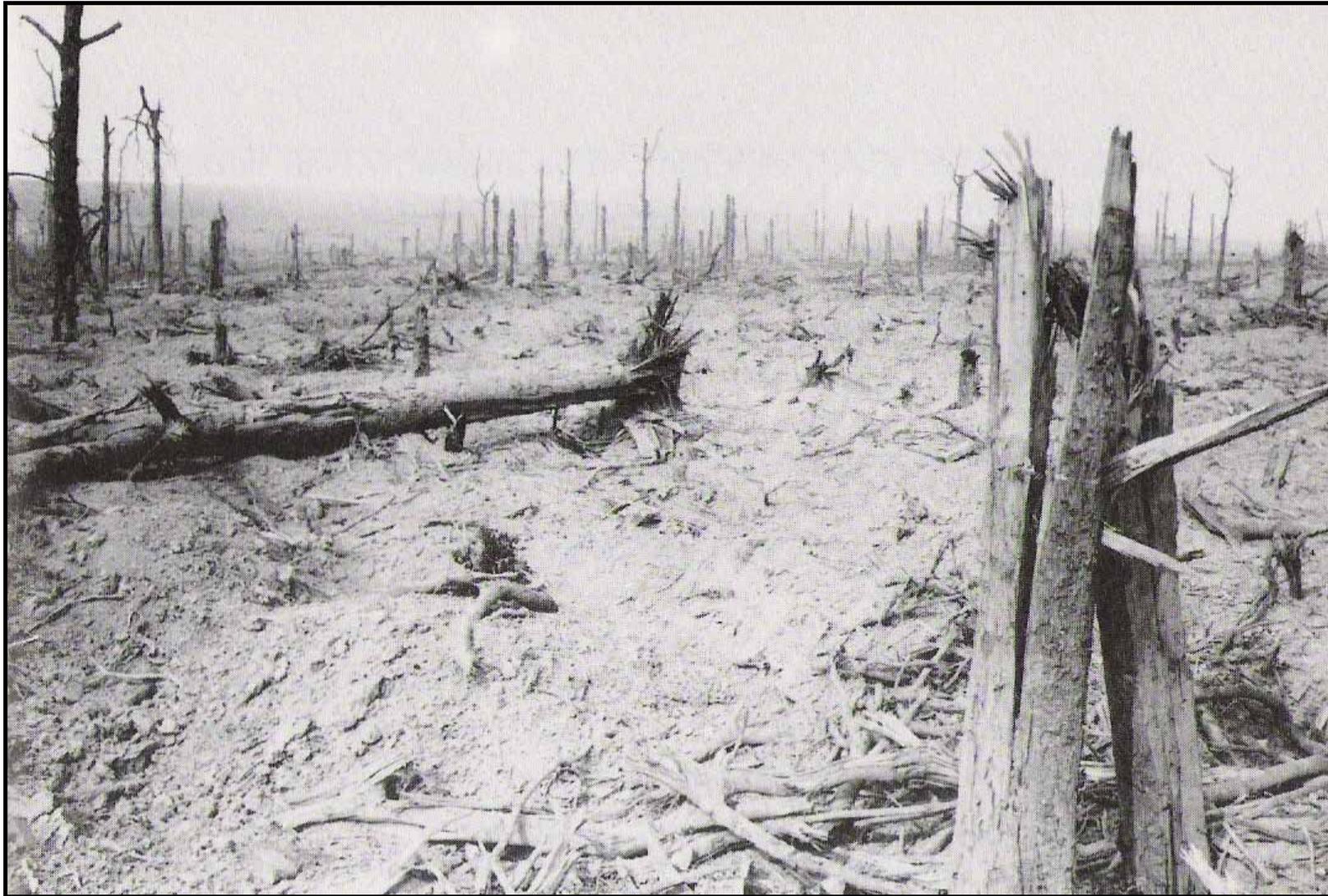


Illustration 3.13: Delville Wood, September 1916.
(Source: Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 137)

one officer and 50 other ranks from the 1st to assist Major Burges. With the front opened to the Germans and after the successful artillery barrage, Lukin had to send even more men forward to hold on to the positions. At 2.30 p.m. Dawson was ordered to take all the men under his command and strengthen the Brigades front and to take over the command of the forces in Delville Wood. He and 150 men went forward to assist the rest of the South Africans against a major German attack. At the same time a light trench mortar battery with three officers and 75 other ranks, were placed under Lieutenant Edward Phillips' command and he reported to Dawson. By this time the German artillery fire had almost ceased and all knew that the big challenge was on its way. Dawson, with full authority from Lukin, made his appreciations of the situation and ordered 100 men under Phillips to join Thackeray.⁸⁸

The Germans brought a new division, the 8th, forward to the front and they made repeated attacks on the Brigade. By 6.50 p.m. Lukin received some good news from his higher headquarters; the 26th Brigade was ordered to relieve the Brigade at the front. But with the numerous attacks from the Germans, only two companies of the 1st and 4th were relieved that night. Another front opened up for the Germans when a company of the Camerons withdrew from Thackeray's left flank. The night of 18 July 1916 Thackeray and his men had to contend with attacks from three sides, and were successful in denying the Germans success, but at the cost of many more men that they could not really spare. Thackeray's men were not the only group that was not relieved the night of 18 July 1916. Medlicott, part of Bravo Company, the Transvaal Wits Rifles, of the 3rd with his men were at the south-east corner of Delville Wood. Solomon was part of this group. The artillery barrage, small arms and sniper fire continued throughout the day of 19 July and by 1.15 p.m. Thackeray sent an urgent message to Lukin which he ended with, 'Will you manage his [Capt Stephen Liebson's] relief together with ours as soon as possible... So far the SAI have held on but I feel the strain is becoming too much...'.⁸⁹ There was an attempt by the Norfolks, Berkshires and the Royal Welsh Fusiliers to relieve Thackeray and his men, but they were repulsed with effective sniper fire.⁹⁰

The situation became increasingly dangerous for these two groups. Solomon explains these last moments,

Some men from "C" Company ran up: "The Germans are in the wood behind us; millions of them," they said. And there they were sure enough, absolutely barring our way to the rear had we received orders to retire. We did not however received such orders, and at that stage it would have been too

⁸⁸ Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 70-71; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 68-69; Uys, *Rollcall*, 88-98; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 132-133; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 18 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 18 July 1916; MAD, Diverse, Box 13, Somme 1916, 18 July 1916, 26-27.

⁸⁹ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 134.

⁹⁰ Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 72; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 69; Uys, *Rollcall*, 98-102; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 134-135; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 18-19 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 18-19 July 1916.

late to carry them out had they been issued; so we devoted our attention to the enemy in the wood, keeping an eye on the other direction as well. ... There was no chance of relief, and we were hopelessly outnumbered and surrounded. No useful purpose could have been served, nothing gained, by further opposition. ... Based on those considerations, towards the evening [19 July 1916] the order to cease fire was issued. And that was the end.⁹¹

The promised relief was too late for Medlocit's men and Lukin knew that Thackeray's situation was becoming progressively more dangerous. Lukin's concern for his men was known by all around him. On the morning of 19 July 1916 Major Donald Hunt, the acting Officer Commanding of 4th, returned to the Brigade HQ position where he found Lukin sitting on a tree stump and Lukin asked him, 'You know Thackeray is still in there, in the Wood. Are you and your men ready to go in and get Thackeray out?'⁹² Hunt said yes, although he knew he and his men were also close to useless. Lukin asked him his strength and when Hunt replied they were 45 men, Lukin said that it would be of no use for them to go in and help with Thackeray's retreat.⁹³

Lukin and the Brigade had to rely on the Division or Corps Commanders to provide forces for the relief of Thackeray. The artillery bombardment, small arms and snipers fire continued throughout 20 July and by 1.00 p.m. Lukin received a last desperate message from Thackeray,

Urgent. My men are on their last legs. I cannot keep some of them awake. They drop with their rifles in hand asleep in spite of heavy shelling... Food and water has not reached us for two days- though we have managed on rations of those killed... but must have water. Please relieve these men today without fail as I fear they have come to the end of their endurance.⁹⁴

At 4.15 p.m. Brigadier General G.W. Higginson Officer Commanding of the 53rd Brigade sent a message that the 'Suffolks and 6 R[oyal] Berks have been ordered to relieve you and to get in touch with you.'⁹⁵ And this time the relieving forces were able to take over from Thackeray and his men. After six days and five nights of fighting, very little sleep, not many rations or much water and very little protection, Thackeray, two officers and 120 men spent the night at Talus Boise and joined the rest of the Brigade at Happy Valley on 21 July 1916.⁹⁶

The Brigade honoured

Of the 3 153 soldiers that had entered Delville Wood on 15 July 1916, only some 750 men of all ranks were present at Happy Valley. Many were still being treated for their wounds and other injuries and Lukin also did not escape the battle unscathed. As stated, the Germans fired

⁹¹ Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 69-70.

⁹² Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 135.

⁹³ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 134-135; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 72; Solomon, *Potchefstroom to Delville Wood*, 69-70; Uys, *Rollcall*, 101-104; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 19 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 19 July 1916.

⁹⁴ Uys, *Rollcall*, 113-114; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 136.

⁹⁵ Uys, *Rollcall*, 115.

⁹⁶ Uys, *Rollcall*, 112-117; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 134-138; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 72-73; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 20 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 19 July 1916.



Illustration 3.14: Memorial service for South African soldiers held at Delville Wood, 22 July 1916.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SND840012950, Shelf Number 841001257)

poisonous artillery shells and Lukin may have been a victim of this. Just after the parade on 22 July, the doctor insisted that he be admitted, but it did not keep him away from the Brigade very long. It was said that this gas may have been a significant contributing factor to his death some nine years later.⁹⁷

Lukin insisted on having a church parade on 22 July to thank his soldiers personally for what they had done the past six days. One of the soldiers, F. Addison, recalled that 'General Lukin had a parade but it was obvious he had lost his brigade, and when he took the salute he uncovered his head and tears were running down his cheeks. He could not have paid the Brigade a higher compliment.'⁹⁸ They were not only soldiers to Lukin, to him they were part of his life and this is evident when he later remarks that 'I know the fathers and mothers of those lads. They're not just common fodder to me.'⁹⁹ At another time he remarked that,

In my opinion no praise is too high for my men. A dashing charge over "no man's land" into the enemy's trenches when the blood was up is a much easier task than hanging on to an exposed salient.... I reported that my men were exhausted from want of sleep and heavy casualties, but we were told to hang on.... Anyhow I hope the people of the Empire will realise what a magnificent stand the South Africans made. It was a soldier's, not a General's, battle, as nearly every engagement in this war is.¹⁰⁰

In a letter written on 25 July 1916 Lukin writes to Stanford that 'I am sad and proud- sad to lose so many gallant comrades... Our men did good work, their bull dog courage was worthy of all praises.'¹⁰¹ And the people of Union and the Empire did not disappoint him or his men in their praises after the battle for Delville Wood.¹⁰²

Messages of congratulations and sympathy came from all over the Union and Britain. These included telegrams and letters of congratulations from General Botha, the Minister of Defence, the Mayors of several cities and towns, Standard Bank of South Africa, Lord Selborne, Lord Buxton, High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, the Hon W.P. Schreiner, the 27th Infantry Brigade and many more. In all of these messages they concurred that they were very proud of what the Brigade had achieved at Delville Wood and wished them luck for future operations. The

⁹⁷ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 149-150; Uys, *Rollcall*, 117-120; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 145-148; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 73-74; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 21-22 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 21-22 July 1916.

⁹⁸ Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 147.

⁹⁹ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 150.

¹⁰⁰ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 151.

¹⁰¹ University of Cape Town (hereinafter UCT), BC 293, B 122.2, Lukin-Stanford, 25 July 1916.

¹⁰² Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 150-153; Uys, *Rollcall*, 117-120; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 145-148; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 73-75; MAD, WWI DA, Box 5, Brigade HQ, July 1916, Reports, 22 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 42, War diary, 22 July 1916; UCT, BC 293, B 122.2, Lukin-Stanford, 25 July 1916.



Illustration 3.15: Brigadier General H.T. Lukin handing over medals after battle.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR771001375, Shelf Number 771001375)

courage and honour that the Brigade had shown at Delville Wood was, and in some cases still is, an inspiration for, not only the military environment, but also for the communities of South Africa.¹⁰³

Conclusion

The UDF began the First World War with the GSWA campaign, while still very inexperienced. This lack of experience from the top down, resulted in the loss of Lukin's men at Sandfontein. The UDF, however, drew on this experience after they resumed the GSWA campaign in early 1915. An even greater challenge was faced by the UDF when they were tasked to operate in overseas theatres of war. They faced many challenges and they succeeded in most.

Lukin, although an English-speaking General, was given the command of the Brigade and very soon they sailed for Britain to take part in operations with the other Allied forces. Lukin kept to his winning formula of discipline and training while the Brigade was busy with training in South Africa, on the voyage to Britain, during their training in Britain and throughout the period they were deployed in North Africa and Western Europe. From their first encounters in North Africa until the end of the First World War, Lukin and the Brigade achieved success in most of the operations they took part in and started to build up a good reputation amongst the other forces. After the six days and five nights of fighting at Delville Wood the Brigade had an even better reputation amongst the Allied and enemy forces.

Lukin and his fellow officers were always in the thick of things and on several occasions one reads that the soldiers were even more determined than them to achieve success. What made this even more significant was that for a second time, the first being against the 1914 Afrikaner rebellions, it was Afrikaner and Englishmen that fought side by side and achieved success. The politicians and the South African community have used Delville Wood several times to commemorate the commitment and honour of South Africans in difficult situations.

¹⁰³ MAD, Brigade, Box 9, Brigade Orders from 2 May to 31 Dec 1916, Routine Order No 100, 29 July 1916; MAD, Brigade, Box 9, Brigade Orders from 2 May to 31 Dec 1916, Routine Order No 106, 6 August 1916; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 152-154.



Illustration 3.16: Commemoration cross of Brigade.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR781002915, Shelf Number 781002915)



Illustration 3.17: Cross at Delville wood
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR781002496, Shelf Number 781002496)

CHAPTER 4

MEMORIES, MEMORIALS AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Major General Sir Henry and Lady Lukin arrived back in South Africa in April 1920, expecting a subdued welcome by some of their closest friends. But this was not the case. The Mayor of Cape Town had organised a large luncheon to welcome them back. This was attended by several distinguished guests including the Premier, General Smuts, and most of fashionable of Cape Town. Smuts proposed a toast and said that Lukin's work had reflected

the greatest glory and honour on South Africa, and if their name stood high in the world one of the men whom they had to honour for that was their guest that day.¹

Lukin, on the other hand, simply praised the men who had served under him,

Many of my comrades will never return. They fell on the field of honour, and they lie there filling soldiers' graves. May their bright example of courage, devotion and loyalty be an inspiration to the future generations of South Africa.²

and asked that the people of the Union of South Africa to embrace the example they had set.³

Every society or community creates its own heroes. Thomas Carlyle lamented that 'the hero from old has had cramp himself into strange shapes: the world knows not well at any time what to do with them.'⁴ Heroes are necessary for a nation to have an image of itself. Some heroes such as the former president, Nelson Mandela, are seen as heroes throughout the world. Heroes are a product of their time and most are honoured for a certain period of the history of one country only. After that, new heroes are created in their place. Lukin and the rest of the 1st South Africa Infantry Brigade (Brigade) served that purpose in South Africa after their fight at Delville Wood. They are still exploited in different ways to serve socio-political aims in the contemporary milieu. The historiography on them thus constantly changes to suit those who wish to use it.⁵

¹ R.E. Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood: The Life Story of Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin*, 201.

² Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 201-202.

³ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 201-202; W. Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 82; J. Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', *Militaria*, 5(3), 1975, 49-50.

⁴ T. Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-worship, and Heroic in History*, 133.

⁵ E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, eds, *Invention of Tradition*, 1; J.L. Keene, 'Minister Ngubane pays homage to South African dead of the Great War in France', <http://www.mil.za/Museums/DelvilleWood/Memorial.htm>, (Accessed: 14/04/04); E. Tshivhidzo, 'SA remembers Delville Wood', http://www.southafrica.info/what_happening/news/delville-wood.htm, (Accessed: 14/04/04); B. Nasson, 'Delville Wood and South African Great War Commemoration', *The English Historical Review*, CXIX, 480; Feb 2004, 57-61; R. Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin (1860-1925): A New Examination of an almost forgotten South African Military Legacy', *Unpublished Paper presented at the Siege Warfare Workshop, University of Stellenbosch, Faculty of Military Science, Saldanha*, September 2003, 1-7.

The memory of Delville Wood has served different purposes for different people over a long period of time and Laurika Rauch, well-known South African musician, even used Delville Wood for the lyrics of her song *Hot Gates*.⁶ Each country has its own identity and challenges, but South Africa, then and now, was and is arguably more complex socio-politically than most other countries that took part in this war. The reasons are related to race, class and ethnicity. All these factors played an important role in the support or non-support of the war effort by South Africa for Britain and post-war sentiment in South Africa.⁷

One can categorise the memory of Delville Wood into six groups. First, the Afrikaner community that took part in and supported the war and consisted mostly of the pro Anglo-Afrikaner society. Most of these men looked forward to real war in Europe. The second group was the English community that supported and took part in the war. These were the soldiers who considered themselves still part of the Empire and saw it as a call to take up arms and fight with Britain and her allies. The third category was the black groups who supported and took part in the war and consisted mostly of the intellectuals and labour force. They supported this call because they thought that if they joined the Allies in the war effort, and the Allies won, these Allies would put pressure on the South African government to change their policy of segregation.⁸

The fourth group was the Afrikaner community that did not take part in, and would not support the war effort. This group consisted mostly of the Nationalists under the leadership of Hertzog with the policy of 'South Africa first'. The majority of them still resented the British for what they had done in the past and could not see themselves joining the English and fighting against the people who had supported the old Boer Republics during the first and second South African Wars. The fifth group was the English community that opposed the war effort and here a large part of the English-speaking labour force played a role. The differences between this group of the labour force and those of the third group eventually led to the splitting up and weakening of the South African Labour Party in 1915. Lastly were the ethnic groups that were against or neutral to the war and who were mostly from the isolated rural communities.⁹

⁶ L. Rauch, 'Hot Gates', http://www.laurikarauch.co.za/laurika_docs/HotGatesUitleg.doc, (Accessed: 09/09/05)

⁷ N.G. Garson, 'South Africa and World War I', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol VIII, No 1, October 1979, 71-72; B. Nasson, 'War Opinion in South Africa, 1914', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol XXIII, No 2, May 1995, 248-250; G. Genis, *Recruitment for 1 South African Infantry Brigade for Europe during the First World War* (MA thesis, University of South Africa, February 2000), 5-13.

⁸ Nasson, 'War Opinion in South Africa, 1914', 248-276; Garson, 'South Africa and World War I', 68-84; B. Nasson, 'A Great Divide: Popular Response to the Great War in South Africa', *War & Society*, Vol XII, No 1, 1994, 74-64; Genis, *Recruitment for 1 South African Infantry Brigade for Europe during the First World War*, 7-8, 28, 160.

⁹ Genis, *Recruitment for 1 South African Infantry Brigade for Europe during the First World War*, 5-6; S.B. Spies, 'The Outbreak of the First World War and the Botha Government', *South African Historical Journal*, Vol I, Nov 1969, 47-53; Nasson, 'A Great Divide', 74-64; D. Tickin, 'The War Issue and the Collapse of the South African Labour Party, 1914-1915', *South African Historical Journal*, Vol I, Nov 1969, 59-73; Nasson, 'War Opinion in South Africa, 1914', 248-276; Garson, 'South Africa and World War I', 68-84.

A large portion of the Afrikaner community could not identify with the building of a Delville Wood mythology and the commemorations that took place from 1917. This, however, changed because the government of Botha and most of those that followed, used Delville Wood to try and unite the white community of South Africa. The English community still identify with Delville Wood, because many of their family members took part in the battle and lost their lives. With regards to the ethnic groups, specifically the black and coloured communities of South Africa, there were many who also took part in the war effort and supported it. Nasson, however, rightly notes that most of them did not identify with Delville Wood, but rather with the sinking of the troopship *Mendi* in February 1917 when 600 members of the South African Native Labour Contingent lost their lives.¹⁰

In 2004 Major General D. Mofekeng, the Chief of Defence Corporate Communication of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), attended a commemoration of the Battle of Delville Wood in France and said that 'In this tenth year of our democracy and freedom, it is fitting that we remember and acknowledge the contribution and sacrifices made by thousands of black and white South Africans in the cause of world freedom many years ago.'¹¹ Most war veterans actively took part in Delville Wood commemoration days and many members of the public joined in at these celebrations. There were also those veterans like Joe Samuels¹² who did not want to take part in these events or even think about them because of the memories of horror and sadness they brought back. In the immediate aftermath of the battle, South African leaders used the encounter to encourage rapprochement between the two main political rivals, the English and Afrikaner, in order to build a united South Africa. Soldiers more than often related to this sentiment. P.W. Hunter of the Imperial Light Horse said that 'we lost our identity as ILH [Imperial Light Horse] men and were simply of the 3rd South African Infantry and proud of it.'¹³ Lambert rightfully states that the government partially succeeded in combining soldiers from different regiments into new regiments to enforce the new South Africanism and a new South African military tradition.¹⁴

¹⁰ J. Lambert, 'Britishness, South Africanism and the 1st World War', in P. Buckner and R.D. Francis, eds, *Rediscovering the British World*, 295-299; Nasson, 'A Great Deicide: Popular Response to the Great War in South Africa', 47-61; Nasson, 'War Opinion in South Africa, 1914', 248-250, 259-272; For more detail on the sinking of the *Mendi*, see A. Grundlingh, *Fighting Their Own War: South African Blacks and the First World War*; N. Clothier, *Black Valour: The South African Native Labour Contingent, 1916-1918, and the sinking of the Mendi*.

¹¹ E. Tshivhidzo, 'SA remembers Delville Wood', http://www.southafrica.info/what_happening/news/delville-wood.htm, (Accessed: 14/04/04)

¹² Bill Nasson wrote article on the interview he had with Joe Samuels that was at that time one of the few surviving First World War One veterans and maybe the only survivor of the Brigade at that time, for more detail see B. Nasson, 'A Springbok on the Somme: Joe Samuels, A South African Veteran of the Great War', *Oral History: Journal of the Oral History Society*, Autumn, 1997, 31-38.

¹³ Lambert, 'Britishness, South Africanism and the 1st World War', 291-292.

¹⁴ Lambert, 'Britishness, South Africanism and the 1st World War', 292, 299-300; Nasson, 'War Opinion in South Africa, 1914', 248-250, 259-272; Nasson, 'A Springbok on the Somme', 31-38; P.K.A. Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies. The 1st SA Infantry Brigade in Libya, France and Flanders 1915-1919*, 11; Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin', 1-5.

Even the press joined in to spread this message of 'brotherhood.' The *Cape Argus*, *South African News*, *De Graaff-Reinetter* and the *Midland News*, claimed that 'here on the Somme battlefields, Briton and Boer have stood shoulder to shoulder after the Boer War, and these races had died together in Delville Wood'¹⁵ and 'our sons have died in France not as Dutchman or English but as South Africans.'¹⁶ It was thus used as an instrument of nation building. There were very few Afrikaners, some ten percent, in Lukin's Brigade at the beginning of the war and it is estimated that by the end of the war 30% of the Brigade were Afrikaans speaking.¹⁷

One of the main reasons why there were more English-speaking soldiers than Afrikaners, may be that the English-speaking citizens in South Africa, some of whom became soldiers, still identified themselves primarily or secondarily with Britain. Another reason was that the Afrikaner soldiers were more accustomed to, and comfortable with mounted infantry type operations and not the infantry operations that they were destined for. But, as many of the newspaper reports and personal feedback show, these English-speaking citizens started to show pride in being South Africans and not Englishmen. Although fewer Afrikaners than English were in the Brigade, the politicians still used this Brigade's romantic past as an example of how the people of South Africa could work together. What was more important for the government of Botha, and later on also of Hertzog, was to get the different groups, the Afrikaners of the former Boer republics, the Cape Afrikaners, the migrant Britons, the English-speaking Natalian and English-speaking people from the Cape to move closer to a common South Africanism and not to enforce their perceptions and beliefs onto the other groups.¹⁸

More significantly, although Lukin and his military career and successes were well known within the military environment, this battle made him more noticeable and honoured by the greater South African public. Everyone reading the newspapers, be it Afrikaans or English, knew of the excellent work Lukin and his men did in Egypt and Western Europe. They were able to follow almost every move of the Brigade during their operations overseas.¹⁹

End of a military career

For the whole of 1917 Lukin's Division took part in the operations at Arras, Passchendaele and Cambrai. Although not always successful, their efforts were highly appreciated by their

¹⁵ Nasson, 'Delville Wood and South African Great War Commemoration', 63.

¹⁶ Nasson, 'Delville Wood and South African Great War Commemoration', 63.

¹⁷ Nasson, 'A Springbok on the Somme', 36-38; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 11; Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin', 1-6; Genis, *Recruitment for 1 South African Infantry Brigade for Europe during the First World War*, 22-23.

¹⁸ Genis, *Recruitment for 1 South African Infantry Brigade for Europe during the First World War*, 22; Lambert, 'Britishness, South Africanism and the 1st World War', 285-290; Digby, *Pyramids and Poppies*, 11; Nasson, 'A Springbok on the Somme', 36-38; Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin', 1-6.

¹⁹ *Cape Times*, Wednesday, 27 September 1916, 7; *Cape Times*, Monday, 18 September 1916, 4; Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin', 7; *De Burger*, Saterdag, 4 Desember 1915, 5; *De Burger*, Dinsdag, 18 Julie 1916, 5.



Illustration 4.1: Major General Sir H.T. Lukin.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR791000467, Shelf Number 791000467)

commanders, including Lieutenant General Sir John Maxwell. This is evident from a letter Maxwell wrote to Lukin on 28 October 1917 stating his gratitude for the service his Division had rendered him as XVIII Corps commander,

The 9th Division was removed from this Corps so suddenly and I have been so knocked out by a cold (now cured) that I could not get an opportunity of calling upon your Brigade commanders and personally thanking them, and their officers and men, for the good work put in during their stay in the Corps. I should therefor be gratified if you would give them the assurance of my hearty appreciation and if you would take an opportunity to tell them that our failure to capture the objectives in the attack of 12th mist was in no way due to the 9th Division. Indeed on that date your Division played a splendid part and in spite of our failure carried on the attack in the most gallant way possible. They went when they were told to go and they could not have done more. I am extremely sad that such a splendid Division should no longer be in this Corps.²⁰

While busy with these operations Lukin got the news that his wife's health had deteriorated. Despite her illness, Lukin decided he could not ignore the responsibility he had to himself and to his subordinates and continued with his command. Towards the end of 1917, while still serving on the Western Front, Lukin was appointed as a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB). This was not only a great honour for Lukin, who at a young age struggled to get a commission into the Imperial Forces, but also the Union to have one of its officers honoured in this way.²¹

Lukin decided to take leave to visit Lily, but before he left he and representatives of all ranks of the Brigade came together on 17 February 1918 for a memorial service on the outskirts of Delville Wood. This was a time for sorrow but also of happiness and pride for those who had survived. A letter written on 14 February 1918 from Sir Douglas Haig gives an explanation of why these survivors and the people of South Africa could be proud of what they had achieved at Delville Wood.

Dear General Lukin,- I send these few lines to greet you and all South Africans who meet together on Sunday next in honour of those brave men who at the call of justice and humanity came from a distant continent to fight and die for the principles they hold sacred. ... The task of those who fell in Delville Wood, and by their gallant death made desolation glorious, has not yet completed; but I feel confident that those who remain will see to it that their blood shall not have been shed in vain.²²

Lukin arrived in England and found that Lily's health had further deteriorated, so he requested a tour of duty in England.²³

Lukin's request was approved and many brother commanders and peers wrote²⁴ ruining loss of such an able commander at the front, but at the same time wished him good luck with the new

²⁰ University of Cape Town (hereinafter UCT), BC 676, A 1.14, Maxwell-Lukin, 28 October 1917.

²¹ Military Archives Depot (hereinafter MAD), 1 South African Infantry Brigade (hereinafter Brigade), Box 42, Brigade Diary 1917; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 189-192.

²² Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 188-189.

²³ MAD, Brigade, Box 42, Brigade Diary 1917; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 104-164; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 157-189; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 76-82; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 48-49.

²⁴ UCT, BC 676, A 1.20, Haig-Secretary War Office, 20 March 1918; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 189-192.

challenges. Haig wrote a letter to the Secretary of State recommending his transfer to England and expressed his appreciation for services Lukin had rendered,

In continuation of my letter recommending Temporary Major-General Sir H.T. Lukin, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., for command of a Division in England I wish to place on record my high appreciation of his distinguished services and his great ability as a leader. ...Coming to France in May, 1916, his skilful command of the South African Brigade soon induced me to select him for command of the 9th Division. This Division he has commanded with skill and ability in many hard-fought fights, and I have looked on him as one of the most reliable Divisional Commanders in France.²⁵

Lukin assumed the command of the 64th Division at Norwich. He writes that he again had the responsibility of training some 30 000 men and that it 'is strenuous'.²⁶ He remarks that although strenuous, one 'can't compare [it] with the strain of Commanding a fighting Division on the Western Front.'²⁷ With extra time and less strain he was able to give more attention to Lily during her illness.²⁸

Although in England, Lukin tried to maintain contact with the Brigade while they continued to fight on the Western Front. The Brigade, still under the command of the 9th Division, was tasked to help execute the battle of Amiens in March 1918. For a second time the Brigade was almost wiped out, from a total of 500 men that went into the battle, only 100, several of whom were wounded, survived the attack of 23 March 1918. Major General H.H. Tudor, who succeeded Lukin as commander of the 9th Division, wrote a letter to him to explain and give condolences,

My dear General,- It is with the greatest sorrow that I have to tell you that the S.A. Brigade was practically annihilated near Bouchasvenes. ... It is such a loss, they were fine men. ...I think everyone should know how magnificent they fought.²⁹

Lukin did not take this news very well and was not only sad for the men who lost their lives in the battle, but also for those people that were left behind at home in South Africa. It was not long after this message of great loss to the Brigade that Lukin decided to retire.³⁰

Lukin kept the his promise he had made in 1914, and asked for retirement when the First World War ended and he had reached the age of 58. Before his retirement Lukin was awarded the Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur, by the French government. This was just a gesture to show how grateful the French were for the role he had played in achieving victory over the Germans. Lukin and his wife planned to stay on in Britain and Europe until November 1919, specifically for her to recuperate completely from her illness. Their stay prolonged and they only sailed for South

²⁵ UCT, BC 676, A 1.20, Haig-Secretary War Office, 20 March 1918; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 189-190.

²⁶ UCT, BC 293, B 122.6, Lukin-Stanford, 21 September 1918.

²⁷ UCT, BC 293, B 122.6, Lukin-Stanford, 21 September 1918.

²⁸ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 157-199; Buchan, *The History of the South African Forces in France*, 78-156; UCT, BC 676, A1.20, 'Letter of appreciation and recommendation for Lukin', Field Marshal D. Haig (Commanding in Chief British Armies in France)-Secretary War Office, 20 March 1918.

²⁹ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 196.

³⁰ MAD, Brigade, Box 42, Brigade Diary 1917; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 192-197.



Illustration 4.2: Lukin residence in Kenilworth.

Africa on the *Balmoral Castle* on 26 March 1920³¹ and arrived in Cape Town on 12 April 1920. On their arrival Sir and Lady Lukin were welcomed as honoured guests at Cape Town and attended several receptions.³²

Return to South Africa

As soon as he arrived there were suggestions that he should stand for a candidate for the East London district, but he declined. Although lost to politics, Lukin was very involved in attending and addressing public meetings and other gatherings, such as the unveiling of monuments. Lukin's message was one of courage, devotion and loyalty to the community and he could inspire and rally the serving and non-serving military members in the community to be committed to these goals and values. Most of the people who attended these ceremonies or gatherings knew who Lukin was and admired him and the men who were willing to fight under the flag of the Union in the First World War.³³

Lukin only had a few years in South Africa and in these almost five years, he chaired a Commission of Enquiry,³⁴ was very active in the planning of the Delville Wood Memorial³⁵ in France, and was a member of several leagues, associations, and societies. He still found time to try and serve the soldiers that had been under his command. One such way was to write letters of recommendations for these men. H.E. Turnley was one of these members, he had been part of the headquarters of the 2nd Regiment, and he mentions in his letter to Colonel W. Stanford, that 'I am enclosing in this a letter of Introduction from my old General.'³⁶ These recommendations were very important for returning soldiers because the government was hard pressed to accommodate returning soldiers as well as the people in South Africa who had been affected by the 1912 drought and its economic consequences. In May 1921 a conference was held after demands by several veterans' organisations and some 130 resolutions were passed. Pension issues and land resettlement took up much of the discussion. This conference brought the problems of the returning soldiers to the forefront, but the veterans' organisations, in which Lukin played an

³¹ MAD, World War I Diverse (hereinafter WWI Diverse), Box 3, *South African Infantry Brigade*, Orders and papers on operations, October 1916.

³² UCT, BC 676, A 1.26, Schneider-Lukin, 15 November 1918; UCT, BC 293, B 122.10, Lukin-Stanford, 11 June 1919; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 204-215; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 82; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson', 49-50.

³³ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 200-215; CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/168, Lukin attending public meeting, 15 July 1920; CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/168, Lukin attending Delville Wood Commemoration service, 16 July 1920; CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/243, ZE/2/70, Unveiling of War Memorial at King Williams Town, 22 August 1922.

³⁴ MAD, Secretary of Defence, Group 2 (hereinafter DC), Box 551, Commission of Enquiry, Defence Department, 1925; MAD, DC, Box 551, File DC 55212, Commission of Enquiry Defence Department, 1925; UCT, BC 676, A1.34, 'Letter of appreciation for proper report of the Commission of Enquiry', F.H. Creswell-Lukin, 16 February 1925.

³⁵ MAD, DC, Box 394, File 41422, Vol I-III, Delville Wood Committee; CA, Vol 17, JP 764, South African National (Delville Wood) Committee Final Report; CA, 3/CT, 4/4/1/12, HM77/4, Delville Wood Committee.

³⁶ UCT, BC 293, B122.9, Turnley-Stanford, 3 March 1920.



Illustration 4.3: Earl Haig, General Smuts and Major General Lukin, 1921.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR700019939, Shelf Number 700019939)

important role, still had to look after and support these soldiers. Lukin became a public figure, the people wanted to meet, speak and see the general who had commanded their men to such great heights overseas. He was on many a list to attend or to appear as guest speaker at functions.³⁷

One of these functions was a banquet that was held at the Carlton Hotel in Johannesburg. Close to 250 men who had previously served under him came together to honour him. Lukin was most delighted to have all these men around him and they certainly made him feel welcomed with trumpeters sounding the Cape Mounted Riflemen's (CMR) regimental call, to announce dinner. Even the pipers of the Transvaal Scottish added colour and music to the occasion. These men wanted to show Lukin their appreciation for what Lukin had done for them as commander. At most of the places he appeared, he received the same gratitude from the soldiers he had commanded as well as the public. These events were mostly in the English communities, but both the Afrikaner and English communities attended the unveiling of the memorials as well as the Delville Wood commemoration.³⁸

A very clear illustration of what Lukin really meant to his subordinates, Afrikaans and English, is a poem that was dedicated to him in April 1921. The poem reads,

TIM!

Otherwise known as General sir Henry Timson Lukin, K.C.B, etc
(Being the sentiments of Andries v.d. Westhuizen of the Backveld)

There's a little grey-haired man,
Which is Tim,
Who's the pride of all his clan,
Fighting Tim!
Twenty years or so ago,
Oupa was his fighting foe,
Now he wants the world to know
He loves Tim.

So I joined the S.A.B.,
Under Tim;
And I journeyed oversea
To join him;
And I went with him through HELL,
Egypt, Flanders, France as well-
Till I stopped a chunk of shell-
Lost a limb.

³⁷ K. Fedorowich, *Unfit for Heroes: Reconstruction and Soldier Settlement in the Empire between the Wars*, 122-127; UCT, BC 676, B 3.1, Speech made by Lukin when unveiling Memorial Buttress at St John's College; UCT, BC 676, B 3.2, Speech made by Lukin when unveiling a memorial to the fallen in Mosselbay; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 204-215; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*, 82.

³⁸ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 204-205; CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/168, Lukin attending public meeting, 15 July 1920; CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/168, Lukin attending Delville Wood Commemoration service, 16 July 1920; CA, 3/GR, 4/1/1/22, Delville Wood Service at War memorial in Afrikaans and English, 20 July 1941.



Illustration 4.4: Delville Wood Commemoration held at Union buildings, Pretoria c. 1960.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR771000186, Shelf Number 771000186)



Illustration 4.5: Major Geneneral Pepani plants a South African flag on one of the graves at Arques la Battaille, 2004.
(Source: <http://www.mil.za/Museums/DelvilleWood/Memorial.htm>)

Though my ancestors are Dutch,
 Unlike Tim,
 And though all I've won's a crutch
 Under him,
 I'd go through it all again-
 Thunder, lightning, snow and rain,
 Shell-fire, hell-fire, wounds and pain-
 With old Tim.

They have made a K.C.B.
 Out of Tim,
 Which was only fair, you see,
 Unto him,
 Who was ne'er a carpet knight,
 But was always in the fight,
 Battling for the truth and right,
 Doughty Tim!

Now he'll get a well-earned rest,
 Will old Tim,
 For he gave us of his best-
 Warrior Tim!
 'Neath old Table Mountain's slope
 He will sit and muse-not MOPE!
 Living many years, let's hope-
 Long life, Tim!

J.D.R. (of Pretoria).³⁹

And this was not the only poem dedicated to Lukin, there were at least four more.⁴⁰ It has already been mentioned that only a small part of the Brigade was made up of Afrikaner soldiers, yet this poem and newspaper articles show clearly that something happened to these soldiers during their operations overseas: a male-bonding frequently occurred which served to transcend ethnic and language differences. This was where Lukin and many of his senior staff played a role, it was one brigade or one regiment, it did not matter where you came from or who you were. This was the same message that the government of South Africa wanted to bring to the rest of the people of the Union: to unite to achieve a better future together. And if one read the newspaper articles about the Delville Wood commemorations, it seems if they had started to achieve this goal. In the Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Boerenuus* (The Farmers' News), such a positive article was written on 19 July 1922, and some of it read,

The war had seen Dutch and British fight shoulder to shoulder, both sacrificed and died.⁴¹

The people who took part in later commemorations had this same attitude.⁴²

³⁹ MAD, P1/568 H.T. Lukin, Archive Number 17879 (hereinafter P1), Record of Service of the late Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Delville Wood and Cemetery, TIM!, 18 April 1921.

⁴⁰ CA, BC 676, Major General Sir H.T. Lukin Papers, B51-B52.

⁴¹ Translated newspaper article from, *Die Boerenuus*, Woensdag, 19 Julie 1922, 2.

⁴² *Die Boerenuus*, Woensdag, Julie 19, 1922, 2; *Die Burger*, Maandag 19 Julie 1926, 8; CA, A1349, Memorial Service of Anniversary of Delville Wood, Oudsthoorn, 14 July 1929; CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/168, Lukin attending Delville Wood Commemoration service, 16 July 1920.

Lukin was approached by the South African Labour Party, who at this stage had formed a pact with the National Party, to stand for parliament. This may have been because they saw his popularity at the gatherings or functions and knew how the old serving military men and even some sectors of the public respected him. Lukin would have been an asset to the government because he definitely would have gained them more votes. He again declined, saying that 'he was not keen on entering Parliament.' Furthermore, he went on

I hate the idea of going round touting for votes, and, further, a man of the sixty years of age is rather old to take up politics seriously. The sessions are long and somewhat trying. I appreciate immensely after forty years of discipline life the feeling of freedom which one could not enjoy as a paid member of Parliament.⁴³

Maybe he should have taken up this challenge, because although he was not a member of Parliament, his schedule was very busy.⁴⁴

Although retired from the military, Lukin still tried to keep close ties. He was President of the British Empire Service League in South Africa, he also joined the Executive of the Governor-General's Fund, and was asked by the Minister of Defence to help the Defence Council if necessary. This changed in 1924 when Lukin was appointed to the Defence Council in the place of Hugh Wyndham, who had resigned. Although this was an appointment into the new government, Colonel F.H. Creswell, the newly appointed Defence Minister, explained that because Lukin was seen as a South African hero, he would be 'as welcomed by the new Government as the old.'⁴⁵ This was not all that he kept himself busy with, his involvements in the non-military environment also grew as time progressed. These included being a member of the Settler's Committee, a member of the Council of the Diocesan College, Vice President of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, President of the Boxing Association, a Steward of the South African Turf Club and he still found to take an interests in other sporting and charitable organisations.⁴⁶

Many towns approached Lukin to unveil their war memorials, and he tried his utmost to attend as many as possible. On some of these occasions Lukin proclaimed the message of remembering the past and working together towards a brighter future. He expanded on this at the unveiling of a war memorial at Mossel Bay.

Monuments may not be necessary for this generation; we can never forget what our lads endured. They have been erected in order that the future generations may know that the men of South Africa responded in their thousands to the call to serve the Empire to which they were so proud to belong. We must preserve the traditions of unselfish sacrifice keen and strong. ... Is there a South African who does not thrill with pride when he remembers the splendid record achieved by South Africans on every

⁴³ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 204-205.

⁴⁴ Tickin, 'The War Issue and the Collapse of the South African Labour Party, 1914-1915', 72-73; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 205.

⁴⁵ UCT, BC 676, A 1.32, Creswell-Lukin, 1 July 1924.

⁴⁶ UCT, BC 676, A 1.32, Creswell-Lukin, 1 July 1924; UCT, BC 676, A 1.33, Carter-Lukin, 11 October 1924.

front?...May the fine example of the brave men whose memory this monument commemorates be an inspiration of devotion to duty to future generations of South Africa.⁴⁷

Lukin never hesitated to give all the glory and honour to the men who fought under him rather than indulge in self-aggrandisement. This put Lukin in a different category from the other generals of the time. This was one of the characteristics that many a superior, colleague and subordinate pointed out if asked what they had to say about Lukin.⁴⁸

The battle of Delville Wood was just too important to be forgotten or just commemorated every year. The erection of a Delville Wood Memorial was the brainchild of Percy Fitzpatrick in late 1918. After negotiations with Colonel Geoffrey Herbert, who acted as a estate agent, Fitzpatrick acquired a piece of Delville Wood from Vicomte Daurer for £1 000. Fitzpatrick then told the Pretoria government that he would donate this land to the Union as a gift. Smuts acted quickly because the government's drive to unite the British and Afrikaner would definitely have a major setback if it was known that Delville Wood was bought and donated by an Englishmen who did not have a good track record regarding British and Afrikaner relationships. Herbert was reprimanded for his action and ordered to withdraw the deal with Fitzpatrick. The government did eventually buy the ground, but for £1 000 more and a further £10 000 for the 'war damage to the heritage of France.'⁴⁹ Although Fitzpatrick was robbed of his initial intent, Smuts appointed him as Chairman of the Delville Wood Memorial Committee in July 1921.⁵⁰

Lukin, now in South Africa, and one of the major role players in the battle for Delville Wood, was appointed as the Deputy Chairman. Many other prominent figures formed part of this committee, including General J.C. Smuts, Brigadier General W.E. Tanner, Colonel H. Mentz, and Colonel D. Reitz.⁵¹ Mr Herbert Baker was appointed as the architect for the memorial in France. To assist the committee in South Africa, a similar committee was established in Britain under the chairmanship of Sir Edgar Walton and other prominent figures including the Prince of Wales, Lloyd George, and Douglas Haig.⁵² They tried to acquire as much support and funding as possible to erect the memorial in France and even proposed that a ladies committee be established and that Princess Christian chair it.⁵³

⁴⁷ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 206-208.

⁴⁸ CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/168, Visit to King William's Town in July 1916; CA, 3/KWT, 4/1/243, ZE/2/70, Unveiling of War Memorial at King William's Town, 25 August 1922; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 206-211.

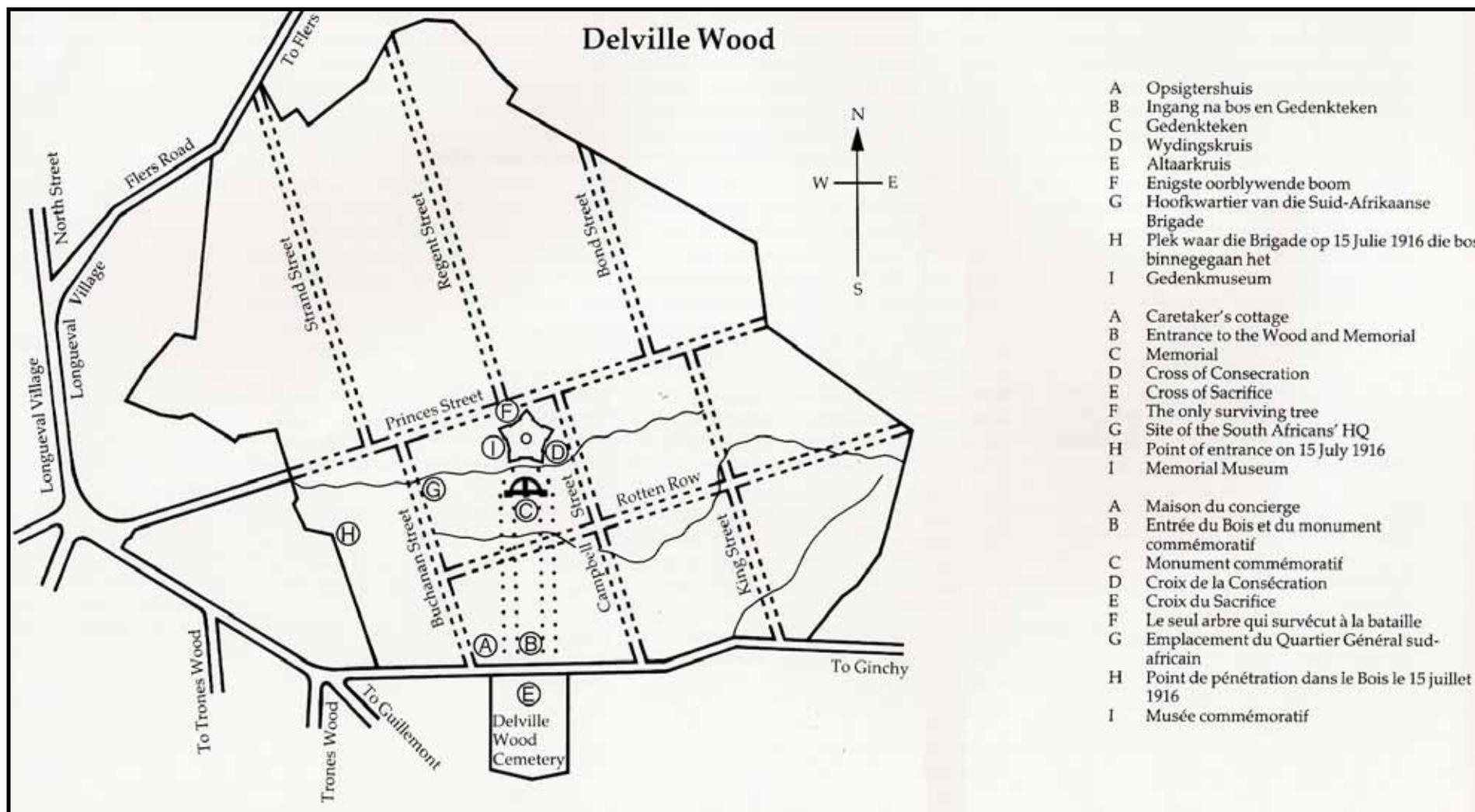
⁴⁹ *Cape Times*, 14 March 1920.

⁵⁰ Nasson, 'Delville Wood and South African Great War Commemoration', 65-67.

⁵¹ This committee consisted out of Afrikaans and English speaking members, for the complete list of the members that formed part of this committee, see MAD, DC, Box 394, Delville Wood Committee.

⁵² MAD, DC, Box 394, Delville Wood Committee, 101/41422, 20 October 1921.

⁵³ MAD, DC, Box 394, Delville Wood Committee, 101/41422, 20 October 1921; Nasson, 'Delville Wood and South African Great War Commemoration', 67-69.



Map 4.1: Delville Wood with Memorial, 1986.
 (Source: Uys, *Rollcall*, 147)

Baker's first budget for this project was approximately £20 000. By June 1922 all had agreed on a final plan and the price tag for the memorial in France alone came to between £20 000 and £25 000. Lukin was in constant correspondence with Lieutenant Colonel E. Christian, who was appointed as the secretary of the committee, and other members of the committee or people that could assist in achieving their goals. In this correspondence it is clear that the other members of the committee always took Lukin's proposals very seriously and normally went along with them.⁵⁴

Lukin saw how everything was starting to fall into place, but by 1925 also knew that he would not have the privilege of being part of the group of people who would attend the unveiling of the memorial in France. Although his health had deteriorated since 1924, Lukin, for the last time, made himself available to the Union Defence Forces (UDF). This time not to lead men into battle, but to chair a Defence Commission of Enquiry that was instituted on 28 October 1924. There were serious allegations that discrimination took place regarding military efficiency, promotions, acceptance of Cadets, and as this enquiry continued, the list of problems grew. Lukin and his fellow members of the Defence Commission of Enquiry, took down the statements of 147 witnesses in 33 sittings.⁵⁵

Reading the report of the Commission of Enquiry, it becomes clear that there were several issues of concern in the UDF. One of these was the relationship between Afrikaner and English-speaking soldiers in the UDF. The English-speaking soldiers felt that they were discriminated against and that the Afrikaner soldiers had more opportunities for promotion and also got the important posts in the UDF. This must have been of great concern to the government as they had tried to do everything in their power to reconcile the Afrikaner and English in the new UDF. This may be the reason why they chose Lukin to head this commission. Firstly, because he was seen as the person who had played a major role in enabling these groups to work together during the major part of the war and because he was seen by many as a respected member that would do his utmost to get to the bottom of the problem and make the proper proposals to ensure better administration in the UDF. It would appear that Lukin and the members of the Commission did a good job, if one takes into consideration that most of the proposals made by the Commission, were implemented. Creswell also thanked Lukin for the sterling work that he had done, despite his health.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ MAD, DC, Box 394, File 41422; MAD, DC, Box 394, File 124/41422, Christian-Lukin, 4 Jan 1921; MAD, DC, Box 394, File 83/41422, Fitzpatrick-Christian, 3 Sep 1921; MAD, DC, Box 394, File 41422, Administrator of the Transvaal-Christian, 23 Nov 1921; CA, Vol 17, JP 764, South African National (Delville Wood) Committee Final Report.

⁵⁵ UG 20-25, Report of the Defence Commission of Enquiry, 1925; MAD, DC, Box 551, Commission of Enquiry, Defence Department, 1925; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 216-221.

⁵⁶ UG 20-25, Report of the Defence Commission of Enquiry, 1925; MAD, DC, Box 551, Commission of Enquiry, Defence Department, 1925; MAD, DC, Box 551, File DC 55212, Commission of Enquiry Defence Department, 1925; UCT, BC 676, A1.34, 'Letter of appreciation for proper report of the Commission of Enquiry', F.H. Creswell-Lukin, 16 February 1925.

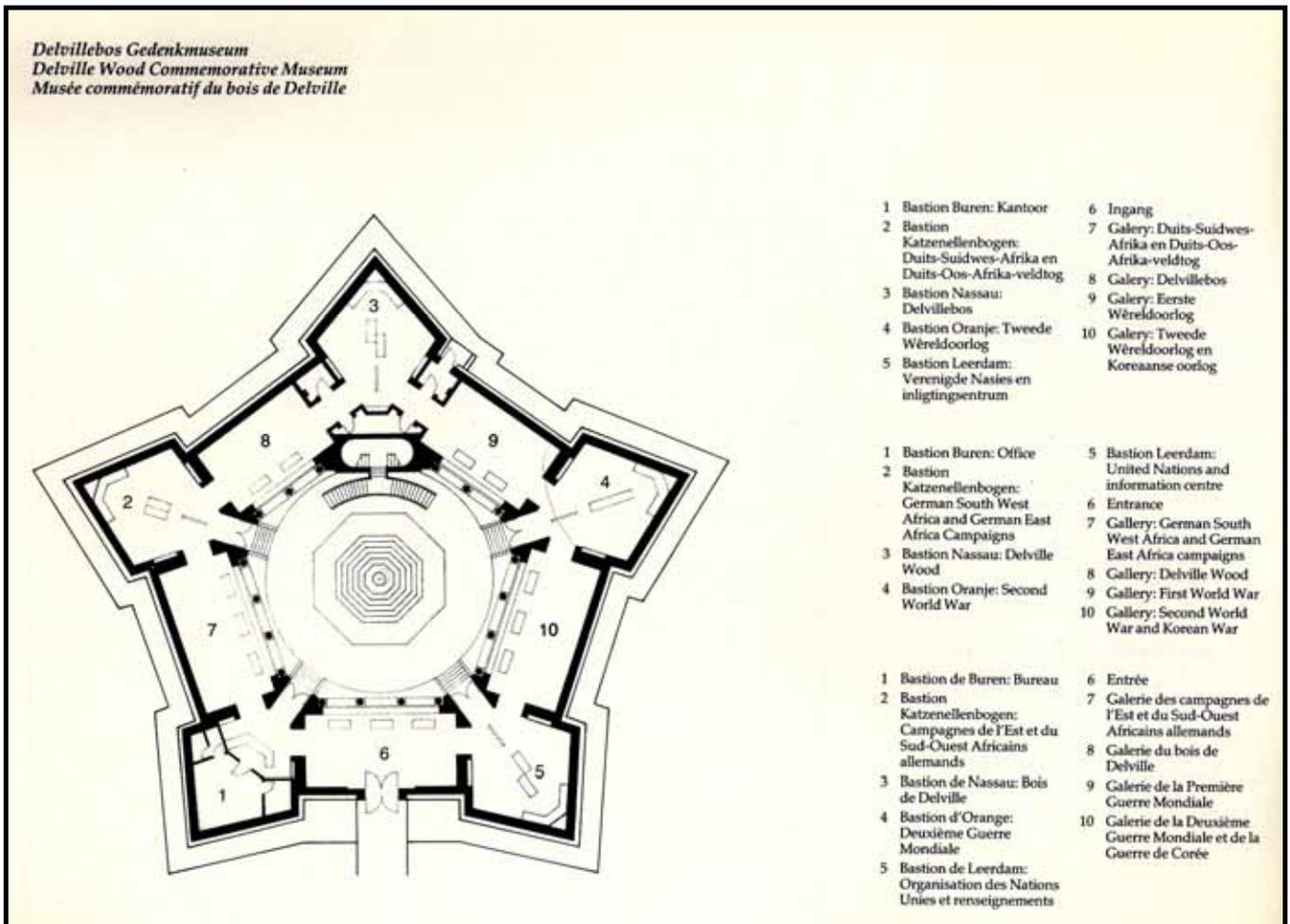


Illustration 4.6: Structural plan of the Delville Wood Commemorative Museum, 1986.
 (Source: Anon, *Delville Wood Commemorative Museum*, 6)

In 1925 Lukin's health deteriorated rapidly. Illness confined him to his house; although at times he was able still to take short drives in his Chrysler. Although not in good health, he still persisted in helping ex-servicemen in need through the offices of the British Empire Service League and the Brigade Association. The Chair of the Service League, a Captain Jordan, wrote,

Even in these last few months of failing health his interest never flagged, and repeatedly he would come to my office to discuss some ex-service problem that had cropped up. To protest against this continued exertion on his part was useless. Invariable the reply was the same- that he wanted to keep going till the end.⁵⁷

Capt Pentz, the honorary secretary of the Brigade Association shares the same recollections of Lukin at this time,

Up to the last his sole concern was for the welfare of his old comrades. Only a week before his death he said to me 'One of the things I have prized most has been my personal intimacy with my men. It made me very proud when a General of the Scottish Brigade said to me: "Lukin, you seem to know every soul under your command as if he were a personal friend." Tell the boys I did not forget up to the last the debt I owe them for their loyal support to me always.'⁵⁸

Pentz also mentions a time during the war in France when Lukin showed this compassion for his men, 'I recall an occasion when he met us as we were coming out of action along miles of duck board. As the head of the column saw him, they were going to get off the boards when the General jumped into the mud waist-high with the smiling remark "You stick to the boards. I have a change of clothes, which is more than you fellows have."⁵⁹ Lieutenant Colonel W.D. Croft recalled this incident and in the *Rand Daily Mail*, noted that

In the early stages of the night march (in the third battle of Ypres) we met with the divisional Commander, who, like all the division commanders of the 9th Division, spent most time near the front lines. He was on his way back, and this good old regimental officer insisted on getting off the track and up to his knees in the mud while the men went by, saying, 'I have a comfortable dug-out to go back to' when we offered to make way for him.⁶⁰

This was perhaps what made Lukin different from the other commanders.⁶¹

It was not only his fellow soldiers who honoured Lukin. The Prince of Wales visited South Africa in 1925 and had some gallant words. When opening the British Empire Service League congress in Bloemfontein he spoke of Lukin as 'that great soldier, and since the war that great friend of soldiers.'⁶² The Prince signed a telegram to Lukin saying that 'In the midst of our joy in our Prince's presence among us, we remember with deep sorrow your absence here to-day.'⁶³ Although the Prince did not see him at the formal occasions, he made the effort to visit Lukin at his

⁵⁷ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 216-217.

⁵⁸ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 217.

⁵⁹ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 218.

⁶⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Thursday, December 17, 1925, 8.

⁶¹ Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin, 8-10; *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Thursday, December 17, 1925, 8; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 216-218.

⁶² Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 218.

⁶³ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 219.

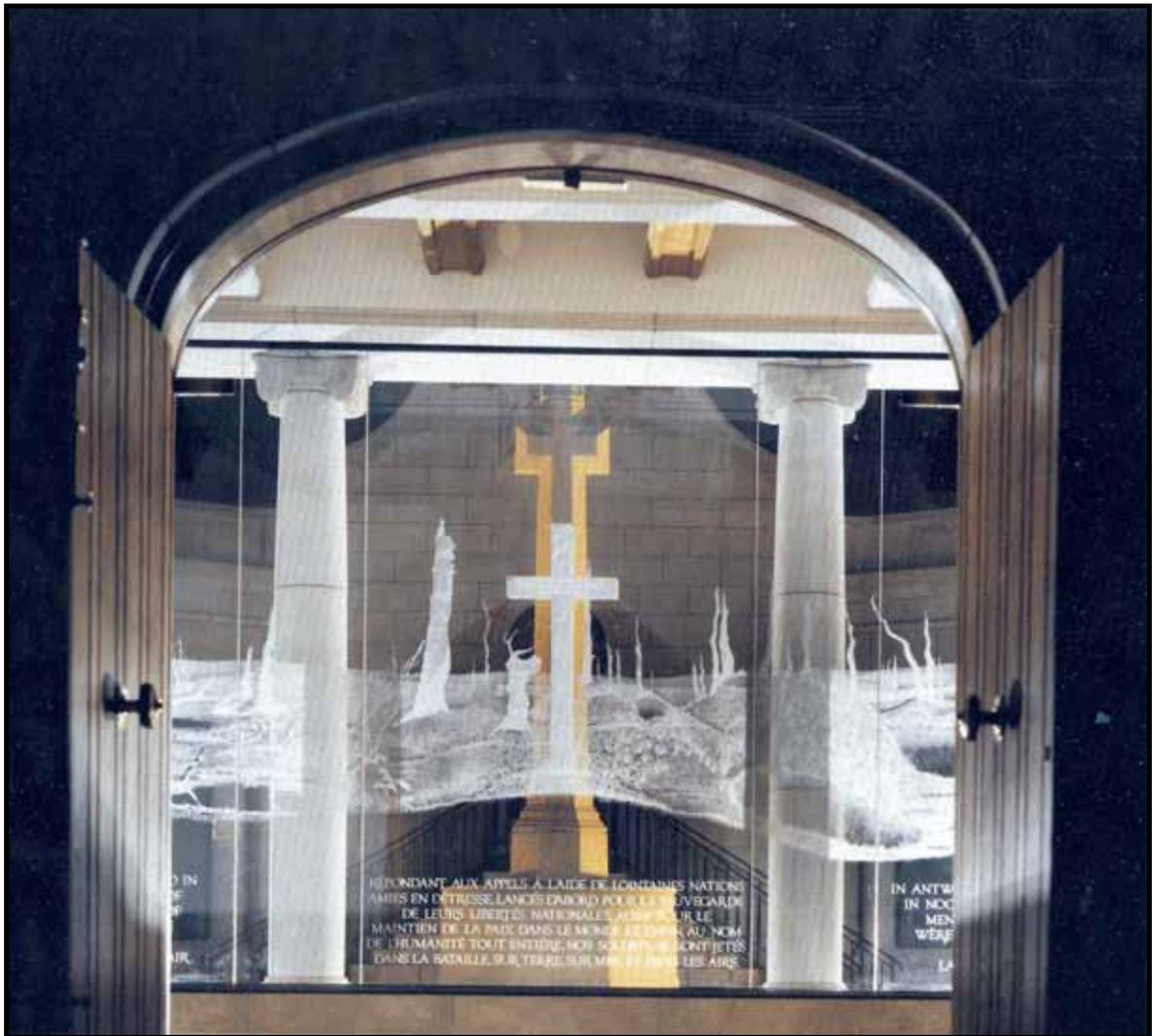


Illustration 4.7: Entrance to the Delville Wood Commemorative Museum, 1986.
(Source: Anon, *Delville Wood Commemorative Museum*, 8)

house just before he left for Britain again. Lukin knew that his time was getting short and on the Monday, 13 December 1925, he called for Brigadier General W.E.C. Tanner, the commander of the troops in Cape Town, to discuss his funeral arrangements. Lukin gave clear orders about what should happen and who must form part of the procession. Lukin passed away on Tuesday 15 December 1925.⁶⁴

Memories

Judging from the condolences sent in from all over the world, Lukin certainly made an impression. One of the first messages Lily received was from the Prince of Wales, who telegraphed: 'Please accept my very sincere sympathy in your irreparable loss. South Africa has lost a true friend who will be sadly missed.'⁶⁵ The Governor General's telegraph read, 'The princess and I are so distressed to hear of the death of your distinguished husband, who was admired and trusted by all South Africans. Please accept our deepest sympathy in your loss.'⁶⁶ Creswell, the Minister of Defence, wrote, 'Please accept the Government's deepest sympathy in your great loss. South Africa has lost a good and faithful servant, whose single-hearted devotion to the welfare and good name of the military forces made him honoured by all and beloved by all who had the privilege of his friendship.'⁶⁷ And there were many more.⁶⁸

All the major newspapers, even the *Burger*, had a column dedicated to Lukin and they tried to give a short description of his life achievements. The *Rand Daily Mail* had a headline that read 'Great Soldier's Career, Loved By His Men, Doings In The Great War.'⁶⁹ In this article they wrote that the 'Johannesburg Broadcasting Station last night announced the death of General Lukin. After making the announcement, the stations orchestra played a funeral march. This was followed by a one-minute silence, after which the station resumed with its normal programme.'⁷⁰ Smuts, in the same issue of the *Rand Daily Mail*, praised Lukin in the following terms:

South Africa has lost one of the men who had served her best in the field and in many other ways. He was an able commander on whom one could always place implicit reliance, and the reputation which he had build up in the South-West campaign and in previous wars was very much enhanced on the Western Front. Although he was a strict disciplinarian and executed a high standard of smartness from his men, he knew how to attach them personally to him, and I should say few commanders have been loved so by their men. I saw that on the Western front and I saw it on the occasions of the annual reunions of the South African Brigade Associations, when the appearance of Lukin was always the signal for an affectionate outburst from his old comrades. His passing away is a great loss to South Africa, for although no longer in service, his ripe experience and well-informed judgement, as well as his keen interest in the building-up of a sound military system for this country, were never more

⁶⁴ *Cape Argus*, Wednesday, 16 December 1925, 8-10; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 220-222.

⁶⁵ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 224.

⁶⁶ *Cape Argus*, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11.

⁶⁷ *Cape Argus*, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11.

⁶⁸ *Cape Argus*, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 224-232.

⁶⁹ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Thursday, 16 December 1925, 10.

⁷⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Thursday, 16 December 1925, 10.



Illustration 4.8: Major General Sir H.T. Lukin's funeral procession to Plumstead cemetery, December 1925.
(Source: *Cape Times*, 18 December 1925, 11)

needed than they are today, Personally, I worked with him for many years, and I always had a high regard and esteem for him. The country moans for a great loss,⁷¹

Lieutenant Colonel J. Mitchell-Baker, who had been Lukin's brigade-major also praised Lukin.

Sir Henry Lukin was a splendid General, a magnificent man to fight under and difficult to beat in the field, as all those who served under him in his Brigade know. He was greatly loved by all, and will be very sorely missed by his old comrades, who fully expected him to live for many years. As Dominion President of the British League, it will be impossible to replace him, for there is not another soldier alive to-day in South Africa who is so widely known and respected by the rank and file, and no one who to-day commands the love and respect of so many of the rank and file as General Lukin did.⁷²

Lukin received much praise from senior statesmen and soldiers throughout his career, and this was no different at his funeral and thereafter.⁷³

In the *Rand Daily Mail* one headline read 'Faithful And True, Fine Tribute To A Great Soldier, Sir Henry Lukin Laid To Rest.'⁷⁴ The column's introduction read, 'Perhaps the largest public funeral ever held in Capetown was that of Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin late this afternoon at Plumstead.'⁷⁵ It took some organising to have everything in place for the funeral, although Lukin had clearly informed Tanner of what he wanted. The funeral took place on Thursday, 17 December 1925. Attending the funeral were the Administrator, Sir Federic de Waal, the mayors of Cape Town and Wynberg, the Chief Justice and other judges, members of the House of Assembly and the Senate, two ex-ministers, F.S. Malan and Henry Burton. Also present were Sir Thomas Smart and Sir Lionel Phillips, and most distinguished businessmen. Joining them to pay their last respect were men, women and children of the area.⁷⁶

Troops from all the military formations were lined up next to the road as the gun carriage moved through the streets to the cemetery. The pall-bearers, Brigadier General W.E.C. Tanner (South African Staff Corps), Colonel F.G. Harvey (South African Staff Corps), Lieutenant Colonel B.C. Judd (South African Peninsula Garrison Artillery), Lieutenant Colonel W.M. Steward (South African Mounted Riflemen), Lieutenant Colonel L. Saunders (South African Medical Corps), Major M.S. Powers (1st South African Field Ambulance), Captain R.D. Pilkington-Jones (Cape Field Artillery), and Captain H. Pentz (1st South African Infantry), walked beside the carriage. As the carriage moved through the streets, thousands of people paid their last respects to the general and although some of them were probably there just because of the spectacular procession. As the

⁷¹ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Thursday, 16 December 1925, 10.

⁷² MAD, P1, 18/339, Newspaper articles on Lukin's death, 18 December 1925.

⁷³ *Die Burger*, Donderdag, 17 Desember 1925; MAD, P1, 18/339, Newspaper articles on Lukin's death, 18 December 1925; *Cape Argus*, Wednesday, December 16, 1925, 8-10; *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Thursday, 17 December 1925, 8, 10; *Eastern Province Herald*, Port Elizabeth, Cape of Good Hope, Thursday, 17 December 1925, 9.

⁷⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11.

⁷⁵ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11.

⁷⁶ *Cape Argus*, Friday, 18 December 1925; *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 222-223.

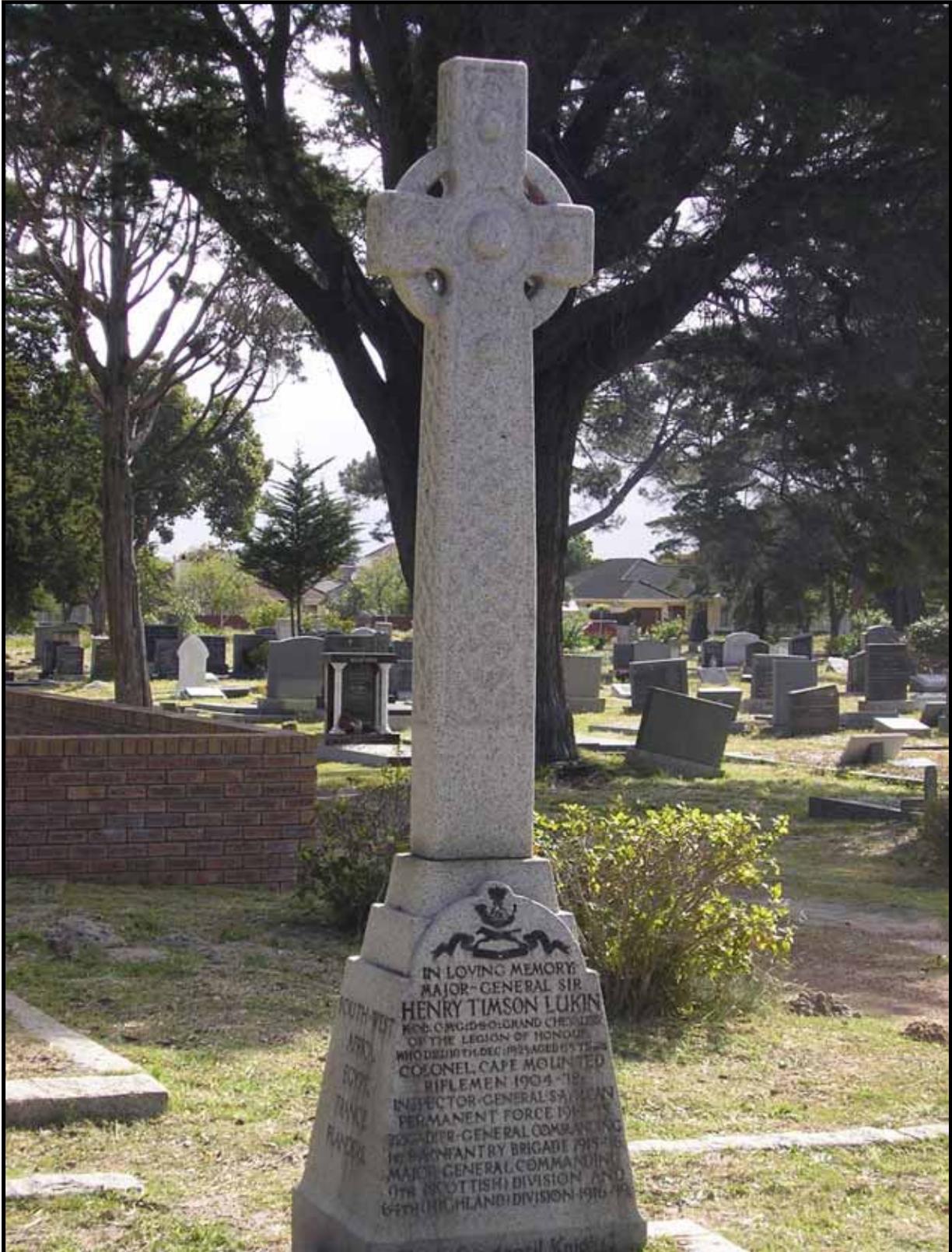


Illustration 4.9: Gravestone of Major General Sir H.T. Lukin, Plumstead cemetery.

coffin was lowered into the grave and the thirteen-gun salute sounded its last respects, Bishop Gaul said,

Our words should be brief and simple when our hearts are filled with tears. Faithful and true always to his home and his comrades, and every comrade was his friend; ever faithful to the land of his adoption and to his king and country. He was one who never turned his back, but marched breast forward, never doubted that clouds would break. Let us hope that his life may be an inspiration to us to do our duty and live as good a life as he lived.⁷⁷

Plumstead cemetery was Lukin's last resting place. But for years to come he would still be remembered by all his comrades and the people of South Africa.⁷⁸

On the next Sunday, 20 December, there were memorial services held all over the country and most of these were well attended. Lily received many letters expressing gratitude and respect for Lukin. Sir W. Campbell, the Dominion Chairman of the British Empire Service League, expressed his sympathy

to the members of the B.E.S.L. [British Empire Service League] [!] sympathise with them in the loss of their president. General Lukin was a true friend of every ex-serviceman, and I know so well all that he has done for those in South Africa.⁷⁹

The clergyman who had served as chaplain in Lukin's brigade noted

He had the gift of making one want to give him the best service one could ... one of my most valued possessions now is a Chalice and Paten he gave me for ministering the Holy Communion when he learned that my own set had been stolen.⁸⁰

Lily received many more such letters and appreciations throughout the years.⁸¹

Collyer, his brother-in-law, wrote a piece explaining what he and fellow soldiers thought of him. He mentions that Lukin would be very impatient when staff made suggestions, but if these suggestions were noteworthy, they would later see them implemented. When Lukin was unnecessarily rude or unjust to a subordinate, he would later call that person to his office or quarters and apologise. According to many of his fellow soldiers, Lukin never failed to take responsibility when he was in command. At the same time he would always defend his subordinates if he knew they had done the right thing. Another characteristic of Lukin was that he always looked out for his staff and soldiers. Even after he retired, he still wrote letters of recommendations or reports for people who had served under him when they applied for new work.⁸²

⁷⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11.

⁷⁸ *Rand Daily Mail*, Johannesburg, Friday, 18 December 1925, 11; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 221-223.

⁷⁹ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 224.

⁸⁰ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 226.

⁸¹ UCT, BC 676, A2.1, Crewe-Lukin, 16 December 1925; UCT, BC 676, A2.3, Meriman-Lukin, 18 December 1925; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 224-226

⁸² CA, Library, Pamphlet, Vol 17, JP764, Testimonial by Major General J.J. Collyer; UCT, BC 293, B122.9, Turnley-Stanford, 3 March 1920.

It seemed that there was always one piece missing from the Lukins' life, children. But throughout his career and specifically at the end of his life, it was noticeable that he and Lily always had a special place for children. It is mentioned in several places that the Lukin's treated Lily's nephews and nieces as their own, and they even opened their hearts to unknown children. Such an incident was very well described by the wife of one of the officers who was taken prisoner during the German South-West African (GSWA) campaign in 1914. She later wrote to Lily,

I always think his wonderful thought was so well shown at Christmas, 1914. When we wives and children in King William's Town were thinking the usual gifts for the children would have to be foregone, there came a cheque from General Lukin (for all the kiddies whose fathers are prisoners of war). To me it was one of the most wonderful acts of kind thought when we in turn thought of all he was doing and going through at that time.⁸³

Even in his final thoughts while drawing up his will, he did not leave out the children. A part of his will reads,

I wish my Executors hereinafter named to apply a sufficient sum of money, not exceeding in all the sum of One Thousand Pounds (£ 1000) Sterling, for the endowment of one (1) A Bed in the King William's Town Hospital to be known as "The Lily Lukin Bed".⁸⁴

In his will Lukin also asked for a bursary for students to be made available for a period of three years at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, in King William's Town.⁸⁵

The question may be asked why the soldiers and some sections of the population were so excited when in the company of Lukin and after his death still had a lot of good to say about him. What made him any different from the other officers who fought overseas? On the soldiers' side it is very easy to explain. If one looks at all the previous references and stories of his superiors, colleagues and subordinates, one gets a clear picture of what these men thought of him. Most of them respected Lukin, not for the rank or his appointment, because he was 'ne'er a carpet knight'⁸⁶, as one of his subordinates described him. Already as signal and artillery troop commander in the CMR, Lukin did not leave the work for his subordinates, he took an active part in everything that they were ordered to do. Why was he so driven to be a good soldier and commander? Probably because he wanted to be a soldier from a very young age. And when he got the opportunity to enlist into the military, he took full advantage of it.⁸⁷

It is also true that in his early military career Lukin was not generally well known, the main reason for this may be because Lukin was part of the CMR which formed part of the Colonial Division within the British military forces during the South African War. Although Lukin and the

⁸³ Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*, 226.

⁸⁴ CA, MOOC, 6/9/2903, H.T. Lukin Estate Papers.

⁸⁵ CA, MOOC, 6/9/2903, H.T. Lukin Estate Papers.

⁸⁶ MAD, P1, Delville Wood and Cemetery, TIM!, 18 April 1921.

⁸⁷ MAD, P1, Delville Wood and Cemetery, TIM!, 18 April 1921; Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson'.



Illustration 4.10: Delville Wood inauguration with Lady Lukin in procession, 1926.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR700004591, Shelf Number 700004591)



Illustration 4.11: Delville Wood Monument, 1926.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR761000073, Shelf Number 761000073)

CMR played a vital role in specific regions during this war, especially during the last phase when the commandos were chased throughout the Cape Colony, the British commanders such as General J.D.P. French, and Colonel (later Major general Sir Henry) Scobell were more prominent. Most of the textbooks on this war discuss these officers, probably because they were British officers and not a colonial officer like Lukin. Also the GSWA campaign did not start off well for Lukin and his men, because of the Sandfontein disaster. This changed from the moment they set foot on North African soil, in Egypt. Here Lukin and his men of the Brigade began to be noticed by the people back home, and also by the other Allied countries, because of the successes they achieved.⁸⁸

Many people who did not know that Lukin was the first Inspector General and commander of the Permanent Forces of the UDF from 1910 onward, definitely would have taken notice of Lukin and the men of the Brigade in July 1916. They were the new heroes of South Africa because of what they achieved at Delville Wood. This battle was effectively used by the politicians for some years, to unite the British and Afrikaner societies in the new Union and later on to install some pride in the nation because of what these men had achieved in France. Even today still there are Delville Wood commemorations, although not on such large scale as during in the 1920's and 1930's.⁸⁹

These are probably the reasons why some of Lukin's colleagues and soldiers felt the urge to do something extra for their great general and friend. A further motivation may have been part of a speech that Lukin made when he unveiled one of many monuments after his return to South Africa, when he said,

These memorials are for our children. With this object in view, I suggest that from time to time you bring your children here and tell them what this monument perpetuates. Describe to them the hardships, the dangers of the African campaigns, picture to them the cold, the mud, the horrors of the trenches, the terrible realities of the great battle.⁹⁰

A General Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Tanner and the members including Hertzog, Smuts, and Creswell. The committee raised funds to the amount of £10 000 for what they named the Lukin Memorial Scholarship. Sons of soldiers who had fought in the World War were entitled to apply to this for a scholarship to any university in the Union.⁹¹ According to Mr Johan

⁸⁸ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*; L.S. Amery, ed, *The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, Vol I; R. Warwick, *Reconsideration of the Battle of Sandfontein: The First Phase of the German South-West Africa Campaign, August to September 1914*, (MA thesis, University of Cape Town, February 2003); Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson'.

⁸⁹ Keene, 'Minister Ngubane pays homage to South African dead of the Great War in France', <http://www.mil.za/Museums/DelvilleWood/Memorial.htm>, (Accessed: 14/04/04); Tshivhidzo, 'SA remembers Delville Wood', http://www.southafrica.info/what_happening/news/delville-wood.htm, (Accessed: 14/04/04); Johnston, *From Ulundi to Delville Wood*; Steenkamp, *The Soldiers*; Brink, 'Genl Maj Sir Henry Timson'.

⁹⁰ *Cape Argus*, Wednesday, 16 December 1925, 10.

⁹¹ Anon, Lukin Bursary, <http://www.mycareer.co.za/bursaries/view/608/48/1/>, (Accessed 09/09/05).



Illustration 4.12: Delville Wood Memorial, 1926.
(Source: MAD, Document Number SAR700019937, Shelf Number 700019937)

Fourie, the Secretary of the Chief of the SANDF Trust, there was R34 259.93 available on the last statements they received on 31 October 2004. Since Mr Fourie took over the responsibilities as the secretary of the fund, in 2001, no bursaries have been awarded because they want the trust to grow and use only the interest they receive to provide a future student a bursary from the trust. A further £5 000 was raised by the committee for a statue and some smaller medallions and plaques. At first there was great debate as to where this statue should be situated, one of the suggestions being at the parliament buildings. Finally it was decided to erect this statue in the Cape Town Gardens and this now forms part of the two World War memorials.⁹²

This statue was cast at the Vignali foundry in Pretoria and it is believed that a head and shoulders cast of Lukin that was done by Anton van Wouw (1862-1945) was used as the preparatory study for the statue. The unveiling of the statue took place on 4 March 1932 and this occasion was also used to give respect to Lukin and the men of the Brigade. All three of the Cape Town newspapers, the *Cape Argus*, *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* covered the unveiling. The two English newspapers in more detail than *Die Burger*. The unveiling did not come at a very good time, because it was a period of economic recession. Lukin, although not alive anymore, was once again used as a neutralising factor at a time when there was much debate about the poor white, mostly Afrikaner, question. The unveiling was attended by members of the different political parties including D.F. Malan, E.G. Jansen, General Smuts, Denys Reitz, Patrick Duncan, General J.B.M. Hertzog and Colonel F.C. Creswell. Also present were the Mayor of Cape Town, Mr H.J.C. Stephen, members of the Brigade, other military members and members of the public. The message at the ceremony was that all must work together, as the Brigade did, to achieve their goals.⁹³

The original head and shoulders cast of Lukin is in the possession of the University of Pretoria and they had two bronze replicas made, one that stands in the Military Archives Depot in Pretoria and the other in the Delville Wood Museum. Because Lukin was an Anglican, the Van Wouw cast was used to make other replicas that were erected in Anglican churches, these being St Andrew's Cathedral in Bloemfontein, St George's Cathedral in Cape Town and the St Mary's Church in Port Elizabeth. The CMR also wanted to pay their respects to Lukin, as he was their Commander for a long period. They funded several bronze plaques in the form of medallions. A head and shoulder bas-relief made by William George Bevington in 1931 was erected in front of

⁹² R.R. Langham Carter, 'Memorials to General Lukin', *Military History Journal*, Vol 7, no 5, 1988, 198; Telephone conversation Maj E.W. Nortier-Mr J. Fourie (Secretary of the Chief of the SANDF Trust), 06 June 2005; Telephone conversation Maj E.W. Nortier-Mr J. Fourie (Secretary of the Chief of the SANDF Trust), 08 September 2005.

⁹³ Anon, 'Delville Wood Erinnerungs Garten', <http://www.wanderlust.co.za/preview.asp?book=KSZF&page=2>, (Accessed: 09/09/05); Langham Carter, 'Memorials to General Lukin', 198; *Die Burger*, 4 March 1932, 3; *Cape Argus*, 4 March 1932, 10; *Cape Times*, 4 March 1932, 10; Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin', 3-7; CA, JP 764, Vol 17, South African National (Delville Wood) Committee Final Report, Programme of the unveiling of the Statue in the Gardens, 3 March 1932.



Illustration 4.13: Memorial plaque for Major General H.T. Lukin, Port Elizabeth. (Source: MAD, Document Number SAR700000863, Shelf Number 700000863)

the town hall in King William's Town and later re-erected on the corner of Alexander and Auliff Roads. Other Lukin memorials can be found in the foyer of the Durban Drill Hall, in the Holy Trinity Church in King Williams Town, the St Alban's church in Pretoria and St John's Cathedral in Umtata. One will find a marble inscription plaque in the Pietermaritzburg City Hall, a memorial column at the corner of Dutoitspan road and Spencer lane in Kimberley and a brass plaque on the north wall of the Holy Trinity Church in Kokstad. There are also three streets named after Lukin in the city of East London, the town of Witbank and the Saldanha Military Area.⁹⁴

Not much has been written about Lukin and the biography published in 1926 is not seen as a good academic piece, and is said by many to be a hagiography. The author could not exploit all the information as much of it only became available later. The committee established after his death ensured that those people who did not know Lukin after the battle of Delville Wood, would be informed by means of the statue in the Gardens and the sculptures, plaques, medallions, and streets named after him. Today very few people know who Lukin was and what he and the Brigade achieved in the First World War. One reason may be that the focus of the South African history has changed and that more emphasis is put on history that involved a larger part of the population of South Africa. But history and what was achieved cannot just be put aside. The SANDF still see the Delville Wood memorial and the history as important.⁹⁵

The battle of Delville Wood is still commemorated every year, but not in the same manner as it was done just after the war and the years that immediately followed. In contrast, countries like Australia and New Zealand still commemorate Galipoli (February 1915-January 1916) and the Canadians commemorate the battle of Vimy Ridge (9-12 April 1917) each year and many people still flock to these services. The Australians still honour their great general, General Sir J. Monash (1865-1931) today by having his face printed on their \$100 bill, furthermore in 1985 the Monash University was named after him as well as the Monash Medical Centre, the City of Monash and the Monash freeway. Nasson, during his speech as the second Turner lecturer at the *War and Society* conference held at the South African Military Academy from 12-14 September 2001, rightly stated that the South African population finds it more and more difficult to remember or honour our great generals, he says that '...the generals as generals have simply faded away in public

⁹⁴ Langham Carter, 'Memorials to General Lukin', 198; CA, JP764, Vol 17, Library, Pamphlet, Bisset-Langham-Carter, 30 June 1987; Intengu communications, 'Buffalo City', <http://www.bccollege.co.za/contact.html>, (Accessed 013/07/05); Anon, 'The SAA Golf Directory', <http://www.saagolfdirectory.co.za/golfacom/golmpuma.htm>, (Accessed 013/07/05).

⁹⁵ Warwick, 'Major-General Sir Henry Timson Lukin', 3; Keene, 'Minister Ngubane pays homage to South African dead of the Great War in France', <http://www.mil.za/Museums/DelvilleWood/Memorial.htm>, (Accessed: 14/04/04); Tshivhidzo, 'SA remembers Delville Wood', http://www.southafrica.info/what_happening/news/delville-wood.htm, (Accessed: 14/04/04); Langham Carter, 'Memorials to General Lukin', 198.



Illustration 4.14: Memorial plaque for Major General Sir H.T. Lukin, Pretoria.

consciousness.⁹⁶ It is important to remember those great men who gave our people their identity and brought us recognition from all over the world.⁹⁷

Conclusion

There is always the question of what a person has left behind by which others might remember him. Lukin certainly followed his dream of being a soldier to the end. A good soldier is also known by the decorations he was awarded during his career, and even in this category, Lukin was outstanding compared to other officers in South Africa and those who fought during World War One. Lukin had many challenges in his career, first when he got his commission as a mounted infantry soldier, and fought in two indigenous wars. Then he had to improve the fighting capability and effectiveness not only of the CMR artillery, but also that of the signal section.

Lukin quickly moved through the ranks and before the end of the South African War he had not only been appointed as the new commander of the CMR, but had also built up quite a reputation for successful mobile operations against the Commandos in the Cape Colony. After the South African War he was entrusted with the dual responsibility of commander of the CMR and Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Force. Lukin instilled pride and discipline as commander and tried to emphasise that proper training was of great importance for the force. During this period he took the opportunity to publish a training manual after he was asked by his juniors to do so. In this manual, *Savage Warfare*, Lukin was able to share some of the experience and knowledge gained while operating in the Eastern Cape. With his experience and reputation, Lukin was appointed as Inspector General of the Permanent Force of the UDF.

This put Lukin in a difficult situation as he not only had to contend with all the challenges of a new structure but he also had to deal with the Afrikaans and British feelings within the structure. To make matters worse, this new structure had to contend with industrial unrests and the 1914 rebellion. Lukin's experience and trustworthiness brought him to the forefront when Botha and Smuts had to choose a commander to handle the demobilising operations during the GSWA campaign. These same qualities were probably why Lukin was chosen as the commander of the

⁹⁶ B. Nasson, 'Battling for History: The Impact of War upon Modern South Africa', *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal for Military Studies*, Vol 31, no 1, 2003, 114.

⁹⁷ Anon, From Flanders fields to a Selborne garden, <http://www.go.co.za/2002/11/07/news/POPPIES.HTM>, (Accessed 09/09/05); Keene, 'Minister Ngubane pays homage to South African dead of the Great War in France', <http://www.mil.za/Museums/DelvilleWood/Memorial.htm>, (Accessed: 14/04/04); Tshivhidzo, 'SA remembers Delville Wood', http://www.southafrica.info/what_happening/news/delville-wood.htm, (Accessed: 14/04/04); T. Cook, 'The Battle of Vimy Ridge, 9- 12 April 1917', http://www.civilization.ca/cwm/vimy/index_e.html, (Accessed: 03/05/05); Gary Gaves, 'Indepth: Vimy Ridge Remembered, Shock and Awe, 1917', <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/vimy>, (Accessed: 03/05/05); Anon, 'General Sir John Monash, 27 June 1865- 8 October 1931', <http://www.unsw.adfa.edu.au/~rmallett/Generals/monash.html>, (Accessed: 03/05/05); Anon, 'John Monash', http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Monash, (Accessed: 03/05/05).



Illustration 4.15: Statue of Major General Sir H.T. Lukin, Cape Town Gardens.

Brigade that had to travel overseas and represent the South African nation during the First World War.

The experience he acquired in the indigenous wars, the South African War and the GSWA campaign must have played a very big role in the success he and his forces achieved in the North African campaign against the Senussi. This was the first opportunity the South African forces had to show what they were capable of on the battlefield. And because of their determination and success, they built a reputation as a first class fighting force. Lukin and his forces continued to uphold this reputation until the end of the war. What was of more significance was that what Lukin and the rest of the Brigade achieved at Delville Wood was used by the government and prominent leaders in the community to build a new South Africanism and a new South African military custom. Lukin is perhaps today not such a well known hero as he was after the war, but he may still be presented as one of the great generals of South Africa.

CONCLUSION

The generals were blamed for the costly failures of the First World War. Military commanders on all sides were criticised, and quite severely, for the apparent waste of human life in a succession of offensives that gained little, while they were very safe back at their HQ's enjoying the best life could offer. Delville Wood was seen as an example of this by many South Africans. Maud Wyndham, the wife of South Africa's shadow defence minister, went a step further and blamed the Allied generals for these military 'muddles' and accused many of them of being incompetent and lacking in the mental ability needed to effect a breakthrough on the Western Front. She was even more critical towards the political leaders who she accused of not supporting the generals at the front with a workable and realistic grand strategy to win the war. 'Providence', she lamented, 'has not given us a Chatham and a Marlborough to guide us thro' this period.'¹

Yet some generals exited the war with a reputation enhanced rather than tarnished. Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin falls into this category. He not only achieved personal success, but also success as a commander in the field with the 1st South African Infantry Brigade (Brigade). He and the Brigade took it even a step further by being a key element in the forging of the new military structure of the Union Defence Forces (UDF) and of the new South Africanism in South Africa.

It is tempting for a historian to evaluate his or her subject's life in teleological terms, or by present-day concerns. However, it is perhaps necessary to appraise it rather by the standards of both contemporaneous society and the subject's own ambitions. Simply put: Henry Timson Lukin wanted to be a soldier and he became a soldier. What makes a good soldier? Who determines who is a good soldier? There are many theories and perspectives, for example those presented by G.D. Sheffield in *Leadership in the Trenches* or T. Carlyle in *On Heroes, Hero-worship, and Heroic in History*, but there are perhaps two vital elements that determine whether a soldier or leader may be considered good or bad. Firstly, the success he achieved during his military career and secondly, what his seniors, peers, and subordinates thought of him. Lukin served in different theatres of operations on two continents and in four countries, and filled many posts.

Throughout his career he, as commander, failed in one operation only, at Sandfontein. And for that operation, as discussed in Chapter 1, there are differing opinions as to who was really to blame for the defeat. As the theatre commander of the force that failed at Sandfontein, he insisted on a proper investigation, but this was never done. Such long-term success seems exceptional. He

¹ Maud Wyndham, 8 December 1915, as quoted by I. Van der Waag, 'Smuts' Generals: An intimate portrait of the South African High Command, 1912-1948', *Unpublished paper presented at the 4th War and Society Conference - Strategy, Generalship and Command in Southern Africa: past, present, future*. University Of Stellenbosch, Faculty of Military Science, Saldanha, September 2003.

started his career in 1881 and within 19 years (1900) he was appointed to the command of the Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR). In 1901 he was appointed as the Commandant-General of the Cape Colonial Forces and, in 1912, as Inspector General of the Permanent Force of UDF, a post he held until 1917, although deployed in German South-West Africa (GSWA), North Africa and Europe for much of that time. Thirty-five years after he received his commission, Lukin was in command of a British Division and was knighted shortly afterwards. For a man who struggled to get into the army, he performed exceptionally well, having held the most senior posts in the military of the Cape Colony and after 1910 in South Africa's UDF.

Lukin's political masters and military seniors clearly had confidence in him. He received numerous honours and compliments throughout his military career, even from opponents in the field. General Ben Bouver and Gaagar Pasha showed respect when they talked of how Lukin and his men operated against them. The best examples of how Lukin was respected as a military leader come from what his men said of him during these campaigns. Commanders of this period were seldom involved in war itself and were rarely seen at the battlefield. Lukin, however, made sure that he knew what was happening on the ground and was often seen by his subordinates marching through the desert or in the trenches. This raised morale, giving South African soldiers that extra determination to succeed in what was asked of them.

Lukin did not enjoy the luxury of being brought up by both parents, because his mother died when he was very young. But he was brought up in a very religious house with strict values. His younger sister, Nellie, was the cornerstone of the household and they helped each other through their school careers. Although not very academic, he was like most youngsters of his class - very active in sport. After school he saw only one avenue for himself, to become a soldier, but he failed the entrance examinations to Sandhurst. Very disappointed, but not discouraged, Lukin continued to prepare himself for a military career by enrolling at the military riding school in Knightsbridge and for a Junior Volunteer Officer's course in infantry drill at the Chelsea barracks (see Chapter 1). This determination to reach a goal was a trademark of his life and he continued to enrich himself with courses that would make him a better soldier.

As with many other young British men, the challenges and adventures offered by Imperial expansion appealed to Lukin and, when war in South Africa seemed imminent, he sailed for Durban. Still not a soldier, he worked as road foreman, a job that produced an opportunity to join Chelmsford's force in the war against Cetewayo. A cousin's intervention got him a commission in Bengough's Horse. Lukin's determination in completing the military riding course and the Junior Volunteer Officer's course paid off because he had to help with the training of Bengough's Horse before they set off to fight Cetewayo. Bengough gave personal acknowledgement of Lukin's courage and performance. Lukin acquitted himself well during the battle and was wounded in the leg. Lukin left for England to recuperate and, armed with a very good recommendation from

Bengough and the Commandant-General of the Colonial Forces of the Cape, again applied for a commission in the Imperial Army, again without any success, as discussed in Chapter 1.

Although wanting to serve in the Imperial Army, Lukin was commissioned in 1881 into the CMR and soon after saw service again in the Basuto War. The following 18 years were very crucial to Lukin's career. During this period he fought in two campaigns, the Basuto and Bechuanaland campaigns. He mastered mobile operations during his deployment in the Umtata, Eliot, and Barkly East and Dordrecht districts, and this served him and the rest of the CMR well during their operations against the Commandos. He and his men also learned how to operate in the field and to use the field and environment to their own advantage. Another achievement was his appointment as the CMR artillery commander and, later, also as the signal troop commander. Lukin met his wife, Annie Maria (Lily), while stationed at Alice with the CMR and they made a great team throughout his career. Two years after marrying Lily, Lukin had the opportunity to attend an artillery and signaller course in Britain. By now Lukin had experience as the commander of a small fighting troop, as an adjutant of a unit, and as troop commander of the artillery and signal troop of the CMR. This provided a good foundation on which to build his military career and, as argued in Chapter 2 and 3, may be one of the reasons why he found it so easy to adjust to different force sizes and compositions, command structures and terrain.

Lukin achieved his ambition. He was a soldier who utilised every opportunity to improve his skills as well as those of his comrades and subordinates. Lukin was soon promoted to captain and, knowing the importance of instruction, wrote a handbook on machine-gun fire and the use of the maxim gun. This manual must have proved of some worth to the soldiers who fought in the wars to come, not so much for the South African War, but definitely in the First World War. The machine gun and maxim played a very important and devastating role during the fight for Delville Wood and the other major battles in which Lukin and the rest of the Brigade were involved.

Later, as Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces, he produced *Savage Warfare - Hints on Tactics to be adopted and Precautions to be taken*, which was based on a lecture he had presented. In this book he distinguishes between enemies that are well armed and those that are not well armed, and explains the use of shock tactics to overcome their deficiency. Lukin gives and discusses hints and tactics on how to operate against these enemies, and some of the topics he touches on are pursuits, retirements, ambushes and safety during night and bush fighting. Of interest is that most of the hints and tactics Lukin wrote about were very effectively used by the South African Defence Force (SADF) during the operations they were involved in, in the 1980s and 1990s. These operations involved small fighting parties that had to operate against small groups that were normally not very well armed and used their knowledge of the terrain and people to their benefit. Also of present-day relevance is that the type of war that the United States of America and British military forces are fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq are operations against small indigenous

groups, similar to those described by Lukin. From the start, Lukin saw training and discipline as key elements to any soldier and he kept these as a keystone throughout his military career.

As commander of the artillery troop, Lukin showed his worth during the first part of the South African War. On many occasions Lukin and his troop provided assistance and support against the Boer attacks or operations against the Boers. Although only a troop commander of the artillery Lukin's abilities were identified and during the latter part of the war Lukin was promoted and given the responsibility of commander of the CMR. Already having experience as a commander of small CMR parties that operated in the eastern Cape Colony, Lukin's experience proved of value to the commanders of the forces to which he was attached. Significantly, on several occasions it is mentioned that the Boer commandos were very careful when they knew Lukin and his CMR were in the vicinity. Lukin adjusted to the area and situation and therefore made night movements and night attacks more prominent during the operations under Colonel Scobell and also when he took over the command of Colonel Gorringer's column. As shown in Chapter 2, Lukin's ally was not only the experience and knowledge he gained, but also the sound relationships he built with his officers and other ranks.

As commander of the CMR, Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces and as Inspector General of the Permanent Force, Lukin ensured that his men received the best training and that his staff were equipped to train and lead troops in any situation. Lukin wanted the cadet system to continue, because he knew that the sooner you instil military discipline and culture in a young man, the better soldier he would make. As Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces and as Inspector General of the South African Permanent Force, Lukin travelled as much as his schedule permitted, and so ensured that training schedules within various units were completed and that all the planned exercises were executed as planned.

Significantly, Lukin was an English-speaking general who had fought against the Boers during the South African War, but on five occasions the government of the Union of South Africa relied on Lukin to act as a neutralising factor between the Boer and English staff and soldiers in the military. The first occasion was when he was appointed as the Inspector General of the Permanent Force of the UDF in 1912. On a second occasion he commanded one of the forces that took part in the neutralisation of the 1914 rebellion. Next, Lukin was entrusted to take command of the force in GSWA which had to complete the demobilising of the defeated German forces. Fourthly, Lukin was appointed as the commander of the Brigade that was deployed for overseas operations. The last time was when Lukin was asked to head a Defence Commission of Enquiry in 1924 where serious allegations were made that discrimination took place regarding military efficiency, promotions and acceptance of cadets, between Afrikaner and British soldiers in the UDF.

Arguably, the most significant role Lukin and his men played in bringing the Afrikaner and English-speaking South Africans closer together was their fight at Delville Wood. Lukin and his

Brigade may be seen as one of the most important driving forces that guided the people of South Africa, during this period mainly the white community of South Africa, to work towards the new South Africanism. This fight and the determination displayed was used to show how the Afrikaner and English-speakers could work together to reach a common goal. Lukin and the rest of the Brigade were seen as heroes then and even some years after that. Even today the battle of Delville Wood is commemorated, although perhaps not in the same fashion as 50 years ago. And this heroism is what brought most of the people of South Africa together after 1990 and specifically after the first democratic elections of 1994. Nelson Mandela was, and still is today, almost every person in South Africa's hero. Lukin and the Brigade had to lose men to bring this message home, whereas in our time the transition took place in a peaceful manner, because of the positive way in which most of the leaders of the political groups worked together to achieve unity.

Lukin continued to serve his fellow soldiers after his retirement. On many occasions he wrote recommendations for soldiers who had fought under him and he also helped old soldiers with welfare problems. Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin was the kind of leader soldiers would follow. He was not only experienced in the way of warfare, but he also knew his staff and soldiers, often personally, and appreciated their role in the achievement of success on and off the battlefield. Lukin definitely complies with the qualities defined by Vandiver for 'superior battle commanders'. He definitely showed 'physical courage' and 'a touch of fatalism that lends deliberateness to their [his] deeds', if one evaluates the campaigns and operations he was involved in. Some of the characteristics that were always present and were validated by many of his staff and soldiers were his 'firmness', 'sense of purpose' and decision making that put them at ease and created a sense of 'optimism' in taking on any challenge. Vandiver states that these 'great captains' are not always the bravest, but from all the references of the soldiers on the battlefield, one can easily say that Lukin was one of these brave 'great captains.' 'Character, that elusive mark of honour,' is the last part of this definition. It is the quality of this character 'that seems to shift the few from the rest. Character is often revealed in war reminiscences. The good ones show their strength of will, their devotion to victory, their dedication to the right course; bad ones reveal weakness through convenient memories and quick resort to blame.'² Lukin showed such character.

² F.E. Vandiver, 'Biography as an Agent of Humanism', in J.F. Veninga, ed, *The Biographer's Gift: Life Histories and Humanism*, 14-15.

Chronology of Lukin's Life

1860	May 24	Born Edith Villas, Fulham, London
1867		Death of mother
1879	January	Sailed for Durban
1879		Commissioned in 77 th Regiment of Major H.M. Bengough
1881	March 23	Commissioned in Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR)
1881		Participating in Basutoland campaign
1891		Married Lily Quinn
1893		Attended gunnery and signal course at Woolwich and Shoeburyness, Britain
1894		Promoted to Captain
1897		Participated in the Bechuanaland campaign
1899- 1902		Deployed with the Colonial Division in the Cape Colony and Orange Free State
1900	October 13	Appointed as Commander of the CMR with rank of Lieutenant Colonel
1901	June 1	Appointed as Second-in-Command of Colonel H. Scobell's column
1901	October 10	Appointed as Commander of Gorringer's column
1901	December	Appointed as commander of No1 Area, Queenstown

1901		Appointed as Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces with the rank of Colonel
1903		Death of sister
1904		Death of father
1910		Escort commander for first opening of Union Parliament
1911		Commander of South African detachment to attend King George V's coronation
1912	July 1	Appointed as Inspector General of the Permanent Forces of the Union Defence Forces with the rank of Brigadier General
1914	1914	Appointed as commander of A-force for occupation of German South-West Africa
1914	December 24	The Battle of Sanfontein, German South-West Africa
1914	November-December	Operations against the 1914 rebels
1915	July	Commander of the demobilising force in German South-West Africa
1915	August 11	Appointed as Officer Commanding, the 1 st South African Infantry Brigade
1915	September	Sailed for Britain
1915	December	Sailed for Egypt to take part in the campaign against the Senussi
1916	February 6-9	Acting commander of the Western Frontier Force in Egypt

1916	February 26	Operations against the Senussi commenced
1916	April	Sailed for Marseilles
1916	July 14	Battle of Delville Wood commenced
1916	November 30	Appointed as Officer Commanding, the 9 th Scottish Division with the rank of Major General
1917		Appointed as a Knight Commander of the Order of Bath (KCB)
1918	March	Appointed as Officer Commanding of the 64 th Division in Britain
1918		Retirement
1920	March 26	Sailed for Cape Town
1921	July	Appointed as Deputy Chair of the Delville Wood Memorial Committee
1924		Appointed as member of the Defence Council, South Africa
1924	October 28	Appointed as president of a Defence Commission of Enquiry
1925	December 15	Death

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