

# Boer Preparations for South Africa War

Writing to the Independent under date of Johannesburg on the preparation of the Boers for their war an American resident there says:

"Two weeks ago I wrote that the reply of the Transvaal government meant war. Since then nothing has happened to lessen the probabilities, but on the contrary events seem rushing forward to that awful catastrophe. The Free State raad has met and after protracted secret session has voted 'without one dissentient voice' that come what would they cast in their lot with the South African republic. This action was expected and surprises no one. Four days ago was published in the Government Gazette a statement preparing the public for martial law when it should be proclaimed. This was followed two days after by a proclamation suspending the civil courts and martial law is now expected tomorrow or next day. Today's mail will probably be the last to leave Johannesburg for weeks, perhaps months. All the uitlander newspapers are expected to be suspended and no news except such as has filtered through the government censorship will be allowed to reach the public. We shall be in the position of those who are in the midst of the conflict and know less about it than those at a distance.

"The last week has witnessed a general calling out of the burghers and their departure to the eastern and western frontiers. One cannot withhold a tribute of praise to this people at the way they have sprung to arms and dare to meet in battle array the might of Britain's empire. There has been no inspiring music of life and drum, no stirring addresses. None of these things were needed. When notice was given that arms would be given out all day long the burghers were waiting eager to obtain the coveted 'Mauser.' On Wednesday night last week came the first rain after months without a drop. The Boers have been waiting for this, prolonging negotiations for it, for without water and grass they could not move. Wednesday night came a general downpour and Thursday most active commandeering began. The burghers already had their guns, but a horse and saddle and bridle were as necessary as a gun. Horses, mules, wagons, saddles, harnesses were seized at sight. By law any citizen can be called upon to furnish £37 10s for war purposes. Wherever articles taken were worth more than this a receipt was given for the amount and these receipts may be honored some time—perhaps. I was told the other day by a British subject that he had six horses taken at the time of the Jameson raid. He obtained receipts and still has them. When presented for payment he was told the horses were dead. How could he expect them to pay for dead horses? Some queer things happen during this commandeering. The field cornet has autocratic power and may commandeer whom and where he pleases. Cabs in the streets carrying passengers may be stopped and the horses and harnesses taken and the cabs left. A lady who was driving her carriage in Johannesburg was thus stopped, her pony taken and the carriage left in the streets.

"For months there had been a steady exodus of people from Johannesburg. When two weeks ago nearly all hope of a peaceful settlement was abandoned the exodus increased and from 1,000 to 2,000 people per day have been leaving. But when active commandeering began there was a rush to get away. On Friday the government commandeered the railway, which meant that all trains must give way to government demands for shipping armed burghers, munitions of war, horses, wagons, etc., to the front. All this increased the desire to get away on the part of those who have been waiting till the last moment to leave. At

witnessed at the station as the armed burghers entrained and away to the border. Old and gray-headed men who knew what war was, with solemn though determined faces; young men with hot blood and boisterous, boastful tones; boys of 14 and 16 with guns over their shoulders and bandoliers full of cartridges, and the women, wives with babies in their arms, sisters, daughters, sweethearts, bidding goodby with tear-stained faces, but courage unflinching as they say, 'Boys do your duty.' Well, well, there ought to be some better way out of this tangle than shooting such people as these!

### Buildings Barricaded.

"Johannesburg looks as if it were already in a state of siege. Most of the stores have barricaded their windows with either wood or galvanized iron. Some buildings already fly the national flag of their owners. One enterprising Yankee has barricaded his store and painted in large letters outside 'American property.' Several German flags are flying. All nationalities except British will be allowed to remain without special permits on producing passports proving their nationality. British subjects will be obliged to leave unless they secure special permits to remain. Special police are to be sworn in for the protection of Johannesburg. These will come from the uitlanders, who will be required to take an oath that they will do nothing against the government.

"There are more ways than one of raising a loan in time of war, witness the 'greenbacks' during the American civil war. This government is anxious that the mines should keep at work, so anxious that it has amended the Gold law, providing for confiscation in case a mine closes down unless absolutely compelled to do so. But war times are dangerous times, therefore the government will provide special protection. It is going to take charge of the gold, give a 'receipt' for it, coin enough to pay expenses and return the balance after the war is over! And yet some people say these Boers do not understand finance!"

## Famous Gordon Highlanders

The reports from the seat of war in South Africa show that the Gordon Highlanders, the first battalion of the Seventy-fifth regiment, the men whose dash and bravery have made them conspicuous in many campaigns, have again disregarded danger and added more glory to their brilliant record. In the engagement before Glencoe they advanced with ringing, rous-

like "Bydand!" which his ancestors shouted lustily, but he is still a "Gordon gude" and fights like the early members of the band, who neither gave nor asked for quarter.

It is less than two years since the Gordon Highlanders attracted the attention of the whole reading world by their dash and valor and the story of the storming of Dargal Ridge will never be told without reference to the heroism of the Highlanders. It was in this engagement that, when ordered to the front by General Kempster, Colonel Mathias rapidly formed his men and said: "Men of the Gordon Highlanders! Our general says that position must be taken at all costs. The Gordon Highlanders will take it!"

### Piper Findlater's Heroism.

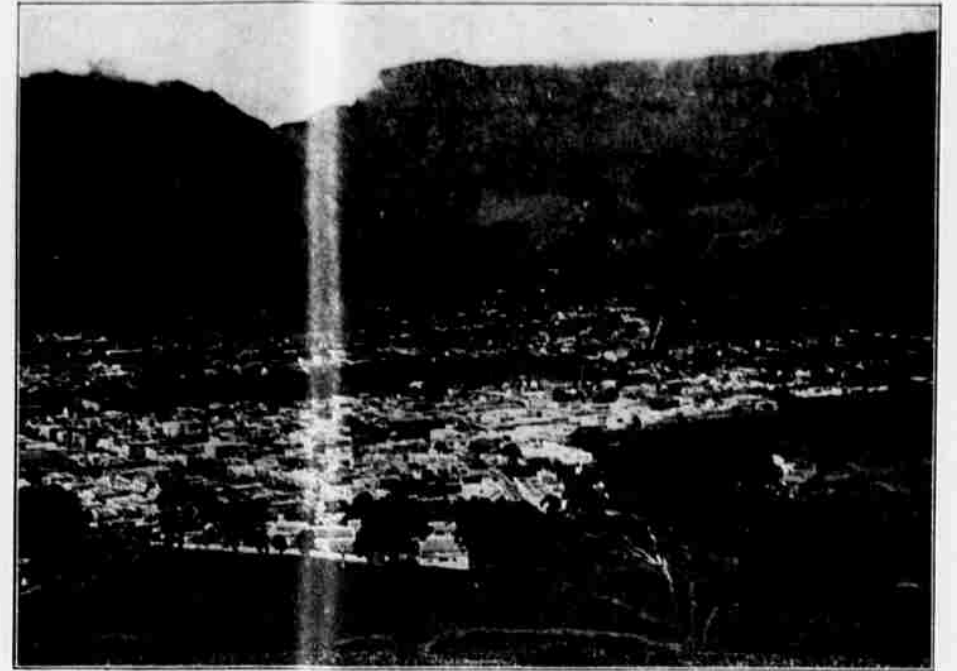
The officers sprang into the open, the pipers struck up "Cock of the North," and with a shout the leading company of the killed men were in the fire zone. Among the first to show the way across the deadly strip of ground which was being churned by the bullets of the enemy was Piper Findlater, animating his comrades with the stirring, familiar strains, and "Cock of the North" could be heard above the rattle of the musketry until a shot through both legs laid him low. Even then the piper would not give up, but propped against a bowlder, he continued to play. At one time it seemed that the Gordon Highlanders would be annihilated, but men sprang into the depleted ranks, and with a cheer the mixed troops, led by the Highlanders, streamed on, and the enemy seeing that their barriers had been swept away left their rock batteries and fled. But it was a bloody victory, and the Gordon Highlanders suffered most.

The origin of the organization has been

wear black cord on the collar of their tunics to this day in memory of that fatal field.

At Quatre Bras the Gordons met their gallant Colonel Cameron, and at Waterloo they were in a great measure responsible for the defeat of the French. Their valor at that time was the subject of many lectures, and the Gordon Highlander was looked upon as a conspicuous hero in that memorable en-

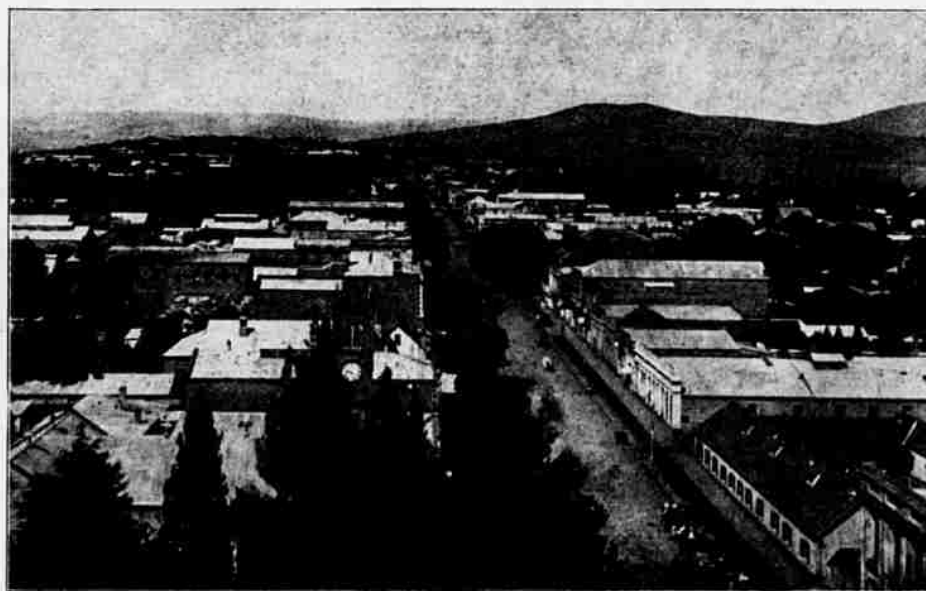
Tel-el-Kebir. They served with brilliancy—particularly at El Teb and Tamai—throughout the Soudan campaign and the Nile expedition of 1884-'85. Moving to Ceylon, the Seventy-fifth were soon again in India. They served with distinction in the Chitral campaign, taking Malakand Pass with a brilliant charge, and proved at Dargal Kotal that a Gordon is as good as a Gordon. The flag of the Gordon Highlanders bears



CAPETOWN AND TABLE MOUNTAIN



DU TOITS PAN ROAD—KIMBERLEY.



PIETERMARITZBURG, NATAL, FROM TOWN TOWER LOOKING WEST.



MARKET SQUARE, JOHANNESBURG.

the same time it has rendered it more difficult to furnish sufficient train accommodation for the waiting crowds. People were glad to take up with any sort of a place in the train that was bearing them away to a more peaceful clime and those who had paid for the soft cushions of a first-class carriage were glad if only they found a hard and grimy seat in a coal truck.

"In the meantime pathetic scenes were

ing cheers and, according to the accounts received from there, "fell like an avalanche against the enemy and swept over the kopjes, bayoneting the broken enemy in all directions."

The name of Gordon has for centuries been associated with gallantry and strife and in the days of the border feuds it was said of them:

The Gordons gude in English blue,  
They dipper their hose and shoon.

The Gordon of today has no battlecry

traced to the duke of Gordon, who, with the assistance of his mother, raised the regiment. This was in 1794. The duchess rode over the lands of her possessions dressed in striking Highland costume, and called upon the young men to enlist. She went to the county fairs and, according to an account of the organization, "she placed a shilling between her lips, inviting the 'gallants' to advance."

A regiment over 1,000 strong paraded at Aberdeen in June, 1794, and when the men passed through London they were inspected by King George. That year the regiment received its colors at Gibraltar. Four years later they helped to quell the rebellion in Ireland, and then they were sent to Holland, where they did effective work. It was there that the Gordons conquered Egmont-op-Zee, and fought and won a battle in which both sides used only the bayonet.

### Sphinx Emblem Won in Egypt.

Their next duty was in Egypt, where, on the bloody field of Mandora, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, they received the sphinx emblem on their standard and the word "Egypt."

They attracted much attention at the funeral of Nelson, after Trafalgar, and they lined the streets of London again at the queen's jubilee.

They were repeatedly praised by Wellington and their colors bear the names of nearly all the peninsular battles. At Corunna six Gordon Highlanders carried Sir John Moore off the field, and the officers of the regiment

counter. The Highlanders were cut down to 200 men by the murderous fire, but they charged in their old style a French column of more than 2,000 men. As they broke into it the Scots Grays, a famous Scottish cavalry regiment, dashed up to their support. The Gordons grasped the manes and stirrups of the charging cavalry and were dragged into the midst of their enemies, shouting the cry, "Scotland forever!" and by this charge the French column was completely broken up and scattered. The brotherly feeling which began on the field of battle at that time still exists between the two organizations, and the Gordons are known in the English army as the "Scots Grays' wives."

After the Peninsula the regiment served in Jamaica, where many officers and men died of yellow fever. They arrived at the front in the Crimea the day after Sebastopol fell, the Russians, the wags said at that time, having heard that the Gordons were coming.

They saw no war service after that until 1878, when they took part in the Afghan war. They lost many men in the battles of Babul and Kandahar, and it was in this campaign that Major—now General Sir George—White, and Captain—now Lieutenant Colonel—"Dick" Conyngham won the Victoria Cross. In 1881 the regiment lost many members on Majuba hill, and after that the Gordons became the first battalion of the Seventy-fifth regiment.

### Record of the Seventy-Fifth.

The Seventy-fifth regiment was raised originally in 1787 as the Seventy-fifth Stirlingshire regiment of Highlanders. The men wore the kilt for twenty years, but, owing to the lack of Scottish recruits, they reverted to the ordinary dress of the infantry of the line. However, they retained evidence of their Scottish origin by wearing a diced glengarry. Distinguishing themselves at Mysore and Seringapatam, the Seventy-fifth began its glorious record. Buffeted about as they were and afterward attached to the Dorsetshire regiment, they served in every part of the empire. In the Indian mutiny three of their members gained the Victoria Cross and before Delhi so great was the slaughter that the Seventy-fifth was led to the assault by a sergeant and a corporal. Taking part in the Relief of Lucknow, they covered themselves with glory before the walls of that beleaguered town and by their gallantry through the mutiny won for their colors "Delhi," "Lucknow" and the Royal Tiger, superscribed "India." In 1881, when the short service system came into vogue, the Seventy-fifth once more donned the kilt and was the first regiment to land in Egypt, taking part in the charge of the Highland brigade at

the following inscriptions: The Sphinx, superscribed "Egypt;" the Royal Tiger, superscribed "India;" "Mysore," "Seringapatam," "Egmont-op-Zee," "Mandora," "Corunna," "Fuentes d'Onor," "Almaraz," "Vittoria," "Pyrenees," "Nive," "Orthes," "Peninsula," "Waterloo," "South Africa 1885;" "Delhi," "Lucknow," "Charasiah," "Kabul, 1879;" "Kandahar, 1880;" "Afghanistan, 1878-'80;" "Egypt, 1882-'84;" "Tel-el-Kebir," "Nile, 1884-'85" and "Chitral."

## First Thanksgiving Proclamation

In the Newberry library, Chicago, there is a copy of the first Thanksgiving proclamation in the United States. There were earlier feasts as well as fasts, in fact, a harvest festival was held the year after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, but this was the first appointed day named as a Thanksgiving day and set aside as such by civil authority. The proclamation is attested by the secretary of the council and bears the seal of the colony.

The Thanksgiving was in honor of the victories of the colonies in the King Philip war. During the struggle with the Indians, fasts had been ordered, but when the tide of war turned, and it approached a successful end, a day of thanksgiving appeared to be more appropriate. The governor and magistrates suggested the day of thanksgiving and won over the opposition of the preachers, who wanted another fast. Petitions were sent in by Increase Mather and others, praying for a fast day, but the council on June 20 appointed June 29, 1676, as a day of thanksgiving.

The proclamation is as follows:  
AT A COUNCIL Held at Charlestown, June the 20th, 1676.

The holy God having by a long and Continued Series of his Afflictive dispensations in and by the present Warr with the Heathen Natives of this Land, written and brought to pass bitter things against his own Covenant people in this wilderness, yet so that we evidently discern that in the midst of his judgements he hath remembered mercy, having remembered his Foot Stool in the day of his sore displeasure against us for our sins with many singular intimations of his Fatherly Compassion, and regard: reserving many of our Towns from Desolation Threatened, and attempted by the Enemy, and giving us especially of late with our Confederates many signal Advantages against them, without such Disadvantage to ourselves as formerly we have been sensible of, if it be of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, It certainly bespeaks our positive Thankfulness, when our Enemies are in any measure disappointed or destroyed: and fearing the Lord should take notice under so many intimations of his returning mercy, we should be found an In-sensible people, as not standing before him with Thanksgiving, as well as lading him with our Complaints in the time of pressing Afflictions:

The COUNCIL have thought meet to appoint and set apart the 29th. day of this Instant June, as a day of Solemn Thanksgiving and praise to God for such his goodness and Favour, many Particulars of which mercy might be Instanced, but we doubt not those who are sensible of Gods Afflictions, have been as diligent to espy him returning to us; and that the Lord may behold us as a People offering praise and thereby glorifying him; The Council doth Commend it to the Respective Ministers, Elders, and people of this Jurisdiction; Solemnly and seriously to keep the same. Beseeching that being persuaded by the mercies of God we may all, even this whole people offer up our Bodies and Souls as a living and Acceptable Service unto God by Jesus Christ.

By the Council, Edward Rawson, Secr.