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COURT OF CLAIMS.

Council Chamber, Whitehall, July 1, 1901.

ALL persons desirous of presenting Petitions or Claims concerning Services to be done or performed by them at the time of the ensuing Coronation, pursuant to His Majesty's Royal Proclamation of the 26th June last, may send the same under cover to the Clerks of the Court of Claims, Privy Council Office, Whitehall.

The Commissioners are required by the Proclamation to exclude from their consideration such claims as may be submitted to them in respect of rights or services connected with the parts of the Ceremonial heretofore performed in Westminster Hall and with the Procession, the Ceremony being confined to Westminster Abbey.

War Office, July 9, 1901.

THE following Despatch has been received from Lord Kitchener, G.C.B., &c., Commander-in-Chief, South Africa:—

From Lord Kitchener to the Secretary of State for War.

Army Head-Quarters, South Africa,
Pretoria, 8th May, 1901.

SIR,
IN continuation of my despatch dated 8th March, 1901, which closed with the failure of De Wet's attempt on Cape Colony, I have the honour to submit an account of the subsequent operations carried out by the troops under my command.

1. Lieutenant-General Lyttelton, who was directing the operations against De Wet, received early information of the retirement of the commandos from Cape Colony, and at once ordered the pursuing columns to cross the Orange River and converge on Philippolis. Brigadier-General Plumer, Colonel Haig, and Lieutenant-Colonel Thorneycroft entered the Orange River Colony at Norval's Pont and operated from the railway between Springfontein and the river; Major-General C. Knox and Colonel Bethune, moving by Orange River Bridge, threatened the retiring enemy from the west.

Brigadier-General Plumer, whose troops had been sent by rail to Springfontein, marched rapidly on Philippolis. He arrived at that town on the evening of the 3rd of March, and learned that on the previous day Hertzog, with 500 men, had left in the direction of Luckhoff, De Wet himself,

with the remainder of his force, having retired northwards towards Fauresmith.

General Plumer marched at dawn on the 4th on the track of De Wet's commando, and, after a slight engagement with the enemy's rear guard, at Zuurfontein, entered Fauresmith on the 5th. Information was there obtained that De Wet was about 24 hours ahead, and had passed through the town, taking the Petrusburg road. Plumer's columns pressed on, passed Petrusburg, and reached the Modder River at Abraham's Kraal Drift on the 7th. It was then apparent that the Boer force had broken up and scattered, and the direction which De Wet himself had taken became a matter of some uncertainty. General Plumer therefore halted on the 8th to replenish his supplies and gain information. On the 9th he resumed his northerly march, and on the 10th captured a despatch rider, from whom it was ascertained that De Wet had crossed the railway on the night of the 8th on his way to Senekal. General Plumer therefore marched into Brandfort, and received instructions to proceed to Winburg.

Colonel Haig's columns from Norval's Pont reached Philippolis on the 4th March. Hearing that General Plumer had followed De Wet, Colonel Haig took up the pursuit of Hertzog's commando and engaged him on the 5th at Grootfontein, 10 miles north-west of Philippolis, driving him westward. The columns then returned to the railway line at Springfontein, to be ready in case it might be necessary to move them north by rail.

Colonel Bethune's Brigade left Orange River Bridge on the 1st March, and two days later attacked and dispersed a body of about 1,000 Boers near Open Baar. The brigade passed Petrusburg on the 6th, and on the 8th reached the Modder River, halting on the line Abraham's Kraal—Roodewal. On this date the Boers attacked an empty convoy returning from Colonel Bethune's column to Bloemfontein. The escort held its own and on being reinforced by a detachment of the Prince of Wales's Light Horse drove off the enemy.

Major-General C. Knox's columns left Orange River Bridge on the 4th March, Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher on the right moving by way of Kalabas Bridge, Lieutenant-Colonel Crewe through Koffyfontein, their lines of advance being generally parallel. The right column crossed the Reit River at Kalabas Bridge on the 6th, captured a Boer laager at Dassieport on the 6th, and reached Bloemfontein on the 10th. The