

## VICTORIANS IN ACTION.

### TWO DEATHS.

#### MAJOR EDDY A VICTIM.

#### WOUNDED AND PRISONERS.

Yesterday the Defence department received a cable message from the Agent-General saying that he regretted to report that "ddy" (?) and "Roberts" of the first Victorian contingent had been killed; that Lieutenant A. J. N. Tromearne, of Creswick, and Private W. Gambia, of Pinegrove, near Rochester, had been wounded; while Captain T. M. McInerney had also been wounded and had been taken a prisoner. It is assumed, and there can be little reason to doubt, that it is Major George A. Eddy, who was in command of the contingent, who is referred to in the message as one of those killed. There are two "Roberts" with the first contingent—Lieutenant J. C. Roberts, aged 27 years, of Murchison, and Private Richard Roberts, of Swan Hill—but the Defence authorities conclude that, as other officers have been wounded, it is Lieutenant Roberts who has fallen a victim to the Boer bullets. Later in the day the Premier received, through His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, a cable message from the High Commissioner of South Africa stating that Private William John Barrows, of Canary Island, who was a member of the first contingent, had been severely





wounded and taken prisoner by the Boers on the 10th inst., and that Private Alfred Ernest Gifford, of Sale, another member of the contingent, had also been taken a prisoner, after being slightly wounded.

The Premier and Minister of Defence were both grieved at the intelligence contained in the cable messages, and to set all doubts at rest as to the identity of those who met their deaths while facing the enemy, it was asked that the cable message should be repeated, and the initial of "Roberts" obtained.

In the meantime Major-General Downes, military commandant, was asked to undertake the painful duty of breaking the sad news to Mrs. Eddy, who resides at Victoria Barracks, St. Kilda road, as it was felt that the first name in the cable message must refer to Major Eddy. A telegram was also sent to the Church of England clergyman at Murchison, informing him that it was feared Lieutenant J. C. Roberts, of that town, had been killed, and requesting him to see the mother of the unfortunate officer, and prepare her for the worst. A telegram was also sent to Mr. John Tremearne, M.R.C.S., Creswick, the father of Lieutenant Tremearne, stating that his son had been wounded; and the relatives of Privates Burrows and Vintoff were communicated with, telling them that the men were wounded, and in the hands of the Boers. Mr. Edward Gamble, of Pinegrove, near Rochester, was also notified that his relative had been wounded.

Major George Albert Eddy, the senior officer of the contingent, who commanded the infantry unit, was a man of 39, whom in point of physique nature intended for a crack regiment, where build and stature were demanded. He was born in Castlemaine, being the son of old settlers there. He took to school teaching for a living, and for 29 years held appointments in different parts of the colony as a state school teacher. Soldiering soon became a hobby with him, and he joined the Third Battalion of militia at Ballarat in July, 1885. He was made captain in 1887, and in 1890 he succeeded in gaining a position on the permanent staff of the Victorian Rangers. He attained his present rank as major in 1897, becoming second in command to Colonel Otter. While in England in 1898-9 he had the advantage of being attached to the Devonshire Regiment during the autumn manoeuvres. At Hythe he took an extra in musketry, and at the Chatham School of Military Engineering he gained his certificate in that branch of practical soldiering. He was a very popular officer with the Rangers, and also with the first contingent, which he commanded.

Lieutenant James Charles Roberts was a son of Mr. J. H. Roberts, of Rushworth. He was educated at Carlton College, and afterwards went to Ormond, where he finished an engineering course in 1895. He joined the University corps of officers in 1894, getting his commission in the Mounted Rifles in 1898. After finishing his engineering course he went on to the land for three years, but recently he re-entered the University as a medical student.

#### PROVISION FOR THE FAMILY.

Major Eddy leaves a widow and family, and the Government will shortly consider what monetary grant should be made to them, as it was decided not to insure the lives of the officers or men, but to make

them, as it was decided not to insure the lives of the officers or men, but to make provision out of the consolidated revenue for their dependents. Last month the Premier received a cable message saying that the Imperial Government allowed the widow of a major killed in action a pension of £140 a year, and about £20 for each child. In addition to that there was a gratuity given equal to the officer's pay for one year, and if there were children a further gratuity of one-third of a year's pay. There will also be payable out of the Patriotic Fund a pension of £46 for a major's widow and £14 for each child.

#### CASTLEMAINE, Friday.

The news of Major Eddy's death in South Africa caused a great feeling of sorrow here, as he was a native of this district. He was born at Chewton, and was about 40 years of age. He was a pupil teacher in the state school here in his young days, and on obtaining his first-class certificate he was transferred to Beaufort as head teacher. While in Castlemaine he was a member of the volunteer force, and took a great interest in military matters. While at Beaufort he was captain of the Ballarat battalion of militia, and was promoted to the position of adjutant of the Victorian Rangers. Owing to the Government which was then in power not recognising his claim to a pension on leaving the school, he resigned his adjutantship, and remained in his position as schoolmaster. The Government having reconsidered the matter, he sent in his resignation to the Education department, and accepted the position on the permanent military staff as adjutant. He was appointed major about two years ago, and went to England to undergo a course of military instruction. He had only returned to the colony a few months ago, and was appointed to take the command of the first contingent.

Lieut. Colonel Templeton, an old neighbour and friend of Major Eddy's, to-day expressed sincere regret at the major's death, and spoke highly of his soldierly and social qualities. The colonel said, "He was a strict disciplinarian, but always thoughtful for and good to his men. He was a man that would always take with the men and they to him. There were few better or braver men in South Africa than Major Eddy."

#### SYMPATHY IN THE COUNTRY.

##### BEAUFORT, Friday.

Deep regret was felt at the receipt of

the sad news that Major Eddy had been killed in South Africa. Major Eddy resided at Beaufort for some years during the time he was the head teacher of the Main Lead state school. The flag at the shire-hall was half-masted to-day.

##### EUROA, Friday.

Extreme regret was expressed here this afternoon when news came to hand of the reported death of Major Eddy.

##### MURCHISON, Friday.

The cable message received by the Minister of Defence has caused quite a gloom over the town and district, as it is greatly feared the Roberts killed is Lieutenant Roberts, a highly esteemed officer and a well-known resident of this district. Great sympathy is felt for his widowed mother,

well-known resident of this district. Great sympathy is felt for his widowed mother, as although there is a Private Roberts in the contingent, and also a Lieutenant Roberts in the New Zealand contingent, the suspense is extremely trying to her.

#### SWAN HILL, Friday.

The report of the Victorian losses at the Modder River was received here with deep regret. Private Roberts, about whose fate there is some uncertainty, was a member of the Rechabite Lodge, and was well known and highly esteemed throughout this district.

#### PYRAMID HILL, Friday.

Very deep regret was felt by residents here on reception of the news to-night of the wounding and capture of Private Burrows, and the wounding of Private Gamble.

Both were residents of the district, and both were highly esteemed. There is much anxiety for further and more definite news.

### NOTES ON THE CABLES.

By CITIZENSHIP.

At last we have the satisfactory information that Kimberley has been relieved. Owing to the absence of intervening cables there are no means of knowing what has occurred since Tuesday night, when the 6th Division under Kelly-Kenny had taken up a favourable position on the Modder River east of Magersfontein. There are two probabilities. One is that the Boers have been defeated at Magersfontein, and forced to retreat. The second is that by a forced march from the Modder River position gained by General Kelly-Kenny and by General French, Kimberley has been reached. In either case the predicament of the Boers must be serious. General Cronje is supposed to have 20,000 men under his command, and if Lord Roberts, as now appears to be the case, surrounds the Boers there is a possibility of surrender being forced upon the enemy. Cut off from their supplies, they would soon be compelled to sue for terms. It is, however, idle to attempt any prediction with the scanty information available. The important point is that Lord Roberts has gained a great success, and that Kimberley is free from the Boer investment. There now remains Baden-Powell's gallant force at Mafeking, to whom Lord Roberts only a few days ago promised speedy relief.

Lord Roberts has not lost much time in getting to work. In fact, the rapidity with which the advance has been carried out is in very direct contrast to the previous operations in Cape Colony. There is, of course, this to be said in explanation of the long delay that has taken place since Magersfontein, that a sufficient weight of guns and men for offensive purposes have only recently been available. The troops are now said to number 45,000, including no fewer than three cavalry brigades. In addition to the cavalry regiments transferred from Colonsberg, there was already at the Modder a strong brigade of cavalry under the command of Major-General Babington, and there must now be some 6,000 sabres under General French's orders, not including irregular cavalry. General French's force was further increased by several units of

regular cavalry. The force was further increased by several units of colonial mounted infantry, and the great use to which the mounted men have been put is further proof of the error made by the home authorities in originally deciding in favour of Australian infantry as against the offers that were made to them of mounted men.

Hostilities opened on Sunday with a sharp and decisive movement into the Free State, resulting in the occupation of Ramah. The strategical value of the movement is that a strong position has been established in the enemy's country, on the flank of an important line of communication. On Monday the cavalry did splendid service. Not only did French's cavalry screen the advance, but they acted independently, and carried out the preliminaries of an important attack. The duties of cavalry will probably be found to be as brilliant as ever on the field of battle, and if the three brigades now at Lord Roberts's disposal had formed part of the original column for the relief of Kimberley a different complexion might have been put on the present state of affairs.

It may seem somewhat curious that a point so far south as Debet's Drift was chosen to cross the Riet River. Had an attempt been made nearer to Modder River the possibility of a stern opposition would have been considerable, whereas by moving southwards the enemy could bring but feeble resistance to bear in the time they had at their disposal. A day later and the Modder River was also successfully forced at several points.

No mention is made of General Hector Macdonald's brigade, except that the Gordon Highlanders acted with the advance force. Probably the attack upon Koodoesberg was but a feint to deceive the enemy, and whilst the Boers were obliged to divert a strong body of troops to the west to oppose Macdonald's advance, their eastern positions must have suffered in consequence. The enemy appears to have been entirely nonplussed by the rapidity of Lord Roberts's movements. Threatened on a number of points, it must have been impossible for the Boers to discover where the attack would be driven home. This would probably account for the feeble resistance that has been offered so far to the British advance.

### WAR STAMPS.

#### THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S AWARDS.

The Postmaster-General recently authorised the Government printer to call for designs for special war stamps, which he desired to issue, in order to augment the Empire Patriotic or Bushmen's Corps Funds.

Mr. Watt proposes to issue 20,000 twopenny stamps, to be sold at 2/, and 40,000 one penny stamps, to be disposed of at 1/ each, and prizes of £5/5/ for the best competitive design for either denomination, and £2 2/ for the second best, were offered. The Government printer, in response to his advertisement, received 120 designs, which were submitted to the Postmaster-General, who adjudicated upon their merits yesterday. Mr. Watt has awarded the first prize for the twopenny stamp to "Arms et fide," whose design bears evidence of an expert hand in its workmanship, and has the merit of simplicity. It depicts a picket on foot, and armed scouts scanning the horizon of the open veldt in the Transvaal, whilst in the distance are the faint outlines of the hills which the British have had to scale. The central figures are clad in the uniform of the Victorian contingents. The first prize for penny stamps goes to "Victoria Cross," whose motto devotes the design. At the top of it is the word, "Victoria," and in a scroll centre

notes the design. At the top of it is the word, "Victoria," and in a scroll centre is a Victoria Cross, with the ends of a sabre and rifle projecting in the spaces between the four divisions of the Maltese cross. On the face of the cross are the words, "Africa, for valour, 1900." The design, entitled "Deo et Regina," which carries off the second prize for twopenny stamps, shows on the left-hand side the head of Her Majesty the Queen, with a background of national flags, and on the right is a spirited little sketch of Mounted Rifemen in action, while surrounding it are the words, "Victorian troops' first appearance on the battlefield, Boer war, 1900." The second prize in the penny division falls to "Carnlough," who devotes the central portion of his design, in horseshoe shape, to a file of mounted infantry at attention on an open plain, fringed with cone-shaped hills. On either side of the horseshoe are the figures of Australian soldiers. Special care will be taken by the Government printer when engraving the stamps, and the colour in which they are to be printed will be decided at a later date. Orders for them will be taken at the General Post-office, or through country offices from to-morrow, and, as it is anticipated that the whole of the stamps will be sold, the net amount for the Patriotic Funds should approximate £3,600.

#### TELEGRAPH OPERATORS FOR RHODESIA.

Mr. Outtrim, deputy postmaster-general, received a communication from the postal authorities of Cape Colony, through the New South Wales department, yesterday, asking if the Victorian department could spare six more telegraph operators for service in Rhodesia. The conditions of employment will be exactly the same as those under which 20 operators from this colony, South Australia, and Queensland sail for Cape Colony by the Australasian on Monday, though stress is laid upon the fact that the cost of living is higher in Rhodesia than at the Cape. Mr. Outtrim is able to meet the request, and, indeed, could spare more of the senior messengers, if a larger number were asked for.

#### LETTERS FROM THE FRONT.

Lieutenant S. T. Staughton writes:—  
"Enslin, Jan. 18.

"Since we have been up here I think we have learnt a good deal in regards to scouting and outposts.

Major Cameron, of the Tasmanians, is a very strict disciplinarian and a thorough gentleman. He has seen a lot of service with the 9th Lancers. Our horses are improving a little this last week, but we have only about 90 now fit for duty, as the rest were all knocked up with the hard work we had the first month we were here, and have not yet recovered. The vet. from the staff was down here two or three days ago, and ordered them all to have as much rest as possible; so if they leave us alone and don't send us out on any false alarms we will get some of them right again.

The Queenslanders lost 50 horses over that Sunnyside business, and most of them died from fatigue, only eight or ten getting shot.

"I have a very poor idea of the country. It is something after the style of Riverina, very coarse grass, with various kinds of bush, very like the plains up there, with the kopjes rising all over the place, from 100ft. to 300ft. high, covered in rocks and very steep. The country is very understocked, and the horses are a very weedy set, usually about 14.2 high, and very sluggish. The cattle are a mixed lot, nearly all black, with a hump on the back of the neck, and very much after the style of the

all black, with a hump on the back of the neck, and very much after the style of the Holsteins. On the farms themselves, which run from 1,000 to 25,000 acres, there are no improvements, with the exception of perhaps one or two wells (you can nearly always get water anywhere about 30ft.) and a couple of dams, filled up with silt. The houses are built of bricks, mud dried in the sun, flat roofs, and no verandahs. The soil is very light and sandy, and the dust storms are very bad; all the troops say they are much worse than in Egypt, where a lot of them have just come from. There is no shade whatever within miles of the camp, no native trees, and all the little bushes have been cut down for firewood.

"Jan. 20.  
"We have just received orders to march on some expedition, and carry four days' rations for men and horses. We don't know what it is, but we hope we will see something at last."

Private S. E. Gizzard writes:—

"Enslin, Jan. 12.

"We were out the other day with the 9th and 12th Lancers, 13th Hussars, and Yorkshire M.I., and six guns, for a reconnaissance near Jacobedal. There is a place called Karel Laagte, where the Boer patrols meet, and we were sent out to try and capture them if possible. We joined the other troops at Honsynest Kloof, and had a very narrow escape from being shot by the Queenslanders, as they mistook us for Boers, owing to our slouch hats. They had trained their guns on us and were about to fire when they discovered their error.

"General Babington gave us great praise the other day when we were out with his squadron at Karel Laagte. We played the Tasmanians football a few days ago, and beat them by 5 points; it was very hot, and the dust was flying in clouds. I have felt the 'pangs of hunger' often since I came out here, and would like to have the run of our pantry at home for half an hour. I would not turn up my nose at anything after the dry bread and tinned meat menu we are accustomed to out here. We have church service with the Gordons every Sunday, as they have a chaplain with them. It is astonishing how the Boers get their big guns up and down the kopjes, and how they get about the country so well."

#### APROPOS OF THE WAR.

Lord Lamington, Governor of Queensland, speaking in London on January 8, said he might dwell on the wealth, the resources, and the possibilities of Queensland, but he preferred at the moment to dwell on the loyalty of the Queenslanders. (Cheers.) Wherever he went in the colony—in the cities or in the back-blocks—he was always sure of a warm reception as the representative of the Queen. It was with great pride that he had read of the practical form which this loyalty had now taken, and of Queenslanders fighting shoulder to shoulder with, and displaying the same gallantry as, the soldiers of the British Army in South Africa. (Cheers.) Two Queensland officers had already specially distinguished themselves, and as honorary colonel of the Queensland Mounted Infantry he had telegraphed his congratulations to Colonel Ricardo on the prowess recently displayed by the troops.

#### COLONEL BURNS'S LANCERS.

#### DEPARTURE FOR THE FRONT.

SYDNEY, Friday.

A detachment of 40 Lancers, under the command of Captain C. E. Nicholson,

A detachment of 40 Lancers, under the command of Captain C. E. Nicholson, whose services at the front were recently accepted by the Government, embarked on the steamer Australasian to-day. They left the Victoria Barracks shortly after 8 o'clock this morning on their horses, and although there was no military or civil demonstration, their progress along the streets aroused considerable enthusiasm. The horses were all got on board safely. The military commandant (Major-General French), the Premier, the Minister of Justice, and Colonel Burns visited the transport during the day, and the usual speeches were made. A great crowd gathered in the vicinity of the wharf as the time of departure drew nigh, and when the steamer did move away the enthusiasm displayed

left the departing soldiers no cause of regret in that respect.

#### QUEENSLAND CONTINGENTS.

BRISBANE, Friday.

Fifty applications were received to-day from applicants to join the proposed fourth contingent. There are now over 450 men in the camp, and all the available space is now occupied. The men not included in the third contingent have been tested in shooting, with satisfactory results. The men of the third contingent were exercised in mounted drill in fighting formation to-day. There are 300 horses in the lines.

#### COMFORTS FOR THE SOLDIERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS.

Sir,—I beg to thank you for your kindness in inserting my letter of the 14th inst. inviting the attendance of the ladies of Hawthorn and surrounding districts at a meeting to be held on the 15th.

I am pleased to state there was a large gathering of ladies, who entered most heartily into the undertaking to supply comforts to our soldiers now on service in South Africa. They arranged to hold their first working meeting at 2 o'clock on Monday, February 19, at my residence, and invite any other ladies, who were unable to be present at the preliminary meeting, to join them there, and they will also be pleased to receive additional donations, either monetary or material, whilst others can only lend a helping hand.

All particulars and patterns of work required can now be procured at the following address.—Yours, &c.,

ALICE I. DALTON.

Thurnham, 15 Power-street north, Hawthorn, Feb. 16.

#### HANDKERCHIEFS FOR THE TROOPS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS.

Sir,—Could I suggest in connection with the sending of white handkerchiefs, which many of us are at present busy with, to South Africa, to include some coloured ones. We read recently that the wounded soldiers greatly prized a clean white handkerchief, but how about those poor fellows who, though as yet unscathed, are undergoing many hardships in their campaigning.

We all know that amongst such large bodies of men a great number would be glad of one, but what use would a white one be to a soldier in a country like that, with little or no opportunity to wash it, even in bush fashion. A coloured one could go a few weeks without the tub on a pinch, and even then would be again serviceable after a rinse, but a white one!

I make the suggestion to others, as I am including some with the white ones.—Yours, &c.,

Mrs. PETER WOODS.

Essendon, Feb. 16.

#### AID TO THE SICK AND WOUNDED.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS.

Sir,—A desire has been expressed by many of the ladies of Melbourne to assist our soldiers who are so bravely fighting in South Africa for Queen and country by making garments and articles of comfort, more especially for those who are sick and wounded. The Mayor has kindly consented to give the use of a room at the Town-hall, where a "sewing bee" may be held, and with willing hands a great deal of work can be got through in a very short time. A preliminary meeting will be held at the Town-hall on Wednesday, the 21st inst., at half-past 3 p.m., and we cordially invite all ladies who are willing to assist in this good work to be present on that occasion, when full arrangements can be made. No special invitations will be sent out, so we trust that everyone will come forward on this general intimation. Any ladies who cannot attend at such a "sewing bee" may be willing to make suitable garments in their own homes, or send donations or materials. All will be gladly received at the Town-hall. We would also appeal to the wholesale and retail firms connected with the drapery trade to send to us, at the Town-hall, suitable materials, such as unbleached calico for bandages, and flannel, turkey twill, khakoe-coloured wool for knitting, and haberdashery.

—We

are, Sir, yours, &c.,

MARY M'EACHARN,

Mayoress of Melbourne.

HELEN M. DOWNES.

Feb. 16.