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**BOER VERSION**

OF THE

**TRANSVAAL WAR**

OR AN

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION**

OF ALL

**DUTCH OFFICIAL TELEGRAMS:**

RECEIVED AT VRYHEID

**DURING BOER WAR**

UP TO THE TIME WHEN

**British Troops Occupied**

**Vryheid.**

(Entered at Stationers' Hall, 1901).

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JOHN BARTER, JNR., 15, Corrance Road, Brixton, S.W.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE contents of this book are a true and authentic translation of all the official Telegrams and Proclamations issued by the late Government of the South African Republic, from October 3rd, 1899, until the occupation of Vryheid by the British, September 19th, 1900.

They form the most interesting record of the War, which has yet appeared, comprising, as they do, the actual reports, sent by the Boer Commandoes in the field to their headquarters at Vryheid, and there issued to the people.

They are especially interesting, as showing the almost perfect system by which the Dutch people were continually deceived and kept in ignorance of the true state of affairs.

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# BOER VERSION

OF THE

# TRANSVAAL WAR

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Translated from the Official Dutch Telegrams.

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## OCTOBER, 1899.

Pretoria, Oct 3rd 1899.—The Free State Commandos occupied Van Reenen's Pass, halfway between Harrismith and Ladysmith.

October 4th.—A meeting was held at Johannesburg by Scandinavians resident there, and a volunteer corps formed in support of the Republic's cause.

Also an Irish, German and Hollander Brigade were formed in the country.

A petition signed by 58 Africander Bond members of the Cape Parliament in support of the South African Republic's independence was handed in to Sir Alfred Milner, High Commissioner, who forwarded the same to the British Government.

October 5th.—The residents of Newcastle, Natal, evacuated the place.

October 6th.—British Subjects resident in the South African Republic were called upon to take the oath of neutrality and provide themselves with a permit to remain in the country.

October 7th.—The German Corps left Pretoria for the seat of war.

Oct. 9th.—The South African Republic's ultimatum was handed in to the British Agent at Pretoria.

Oct. 11th.—The British Government refused to accept the Transvaal ultimatum.

Martial Law proclaimed at Pretoria and Bloemfontein at 4.30 p.m.

This caused intense excitement throughout the country, followed by a general exodus of British residents from the different towns to Natal and the Cape Colony. The trains for the frontiers were packed with refugees. Many women and children had to travel in open trucks.

Large bodies of armed burghers concentrated on the different frontiers. Here they were joined by many foreigners.

Oct. 12th.—General Cronje left for Rooigrond, British Bechuanaland.

The British Agent left Pretoria for Capetown.

Oct. 13th.—Commandant General Joubert's Commandos with Artillery, crossed into Natal *viz* Charlestown without any opposition.

October 14th.—English armoured train captured by a small Boer Commando without any loss at Kraaipan.

A skirmish took place with the English at Ramatlabama whereby they retired. Casualties unknown.

The Melani railway bridge was destroyed by some burghers with dynamite.

The Boer Commandos under General Joubert occupied Charlestown and Newcastle, Natal. Most of the English residents of these towns, fled in haste into Ladysmith, leaving everything behind them.

The Vryheid Commando captured five of the Natal Mounted Police at De Jagersdrift. They were brought into Vryheid and lodged in gaol.

Pretoria, Oct. 16th. — Commandant-General Joubert has left Volksrust for Newcastle. Telegraphist accompanies him to open telegraph office there.

Train goes through again to Newcastle.

Railway Tunnel at Amajuba found safe.

Our Commandos are now lying between Newcastle and Biggarsberg.

Chief Commandant. O.F.S. has news from Van Reenen's Pass that the English troops are two hours' ride from Tintwa's

Pass, strength unknown. Asserts there is a large camp on the Western border.

Concerning indecisive fight north of Mafeking, we are now informed that since Saturday noon, English troops have not returned there.

Rustenburg and Marico burghers have cannonaded Mafeking, but experienced no resistance.

Commandant of Marico has cut off water at Mafeking and again cannonaded Mafeking. The enemy did not return the fire, but raised a white flag. A messenger (Everitt) was sent to the town to hear whether they were surrendering. The enemy detained Everitt and sent back their own messenger, saying that they were keeping Everitt prisoner and asking whether the water for the town was cut off, and whether earthworks had been made; in such case, they should keep Everitt prisoner, and consider it a declaration of war.

Their messenger was then sent back with the request to let Everitt return; this was done. He had seen nothing having been blindfolded.

Freestaters are continuing work of destruction on rail and telegraph lines north of Kimberley.

Chief-Commandant du Plessis on the 15th October had an encounter there with 28 armed men, presumably coming on inspection along the line. They fired first but quickly fled. The burghers shot after them, with result that one of them was wounded and another captured.

The State President of O.F.S. has been informed that English troops are near Vaal River bridge, number still unknown.

*Re* yesterday's information concerning breaking up of railway by Chief-Commandant Wessels, south of Kimberley, it is now announced that a passenger train for Kimberley was first let through unhindered, and then the work of destruction was commenced. Then came an armoured train from Kimberley which opened fire on the burghers. They replied with a storm of Mauser bullets and subsequently with cannon, whereupon the armoured train retired to Kimberley.

Cape Railway Department has broken

up bridge over Norval's Pont and part of line on O.F.S. territory.

Our Consul Pott at Lourenço Marques has received assurance of neutrality from Portuguese Government. The road for provisions, etc., thus remains open.

The Director (of Telegraphs) of Heidelberg says that a balloon passed over Nigel this evening in the direction of Standerton.

Commandant de Beer took Taungs yesterday without any resistance.

Telegraph office is opened at New-castle. The place was forsaken and unprotected. The magistræ and about 100 men, women and children are still present.

Pretoria, Oct. 20th—Intelligence received from Asst.-General Kock, that Fieldcornet Potgieter had a conflict with the enemy yesterday near Waschbank Station, Natal. A passenger train was standing there, from which a fire was immediately directed on the burghers. When the burghers returned it, the train fled to Dundee. A second train approached, which was stopped by the breaking up of the line in front and behind.

About 800 cattle and horses were captured. Also a quantity of provisions and some prisoners. In performing this one of our men was lightly wounded, name not given.

Our Comdt.-General in Natal wires this evening that Comd. Trichardt, who is in the advance guard, had a meeting with about 250 English. They were cut off in a cattle kraal and stable. We fired on them with a cannon. At the third shot a white flag was hoisted. At the time of his despatch Comdt. Trichardt was busy disarming them. There appear to be 243 prisoners. Only one of his men, Fannie Minnaar, was wounded, while of the enemy four were killed, two severely and 6 lightly wounded, and over 20 horses shot.

The captured soldiers assert that their camp was shot to pieces. They themselves were put to flight and lost their way, and thus stumbled on Comdt. Trichardt's force.

About 50 paces from the place where the English were cornered stands the dwelling of Mr. Maritz, who was still staying there with his wife and children. Fortunately none of the occupants have received any injury.

A later wire from Chief Comdt. O.F.S., at Van Reenen's Pass, asserts that in the fight at Bester Station at least 150 Carbineers were opposed to 50 burghers.

The Marico Commando of Comdt. Schoeman has pushed up to Malopo in British territory, thirty-one miles from Mafeking. The telegraph office has been shifted there with it, and the office at Buurmansdrift has thereby become vacant.

To-day, at about midnight, the enemy fired from the "grandstand," on the race-course at Mafeking, on the burghers who guarded the spring. Immediately our burghers returned their fire they fled back to Mafeking.

A later communication from Chief-Comdt. Wessels, O.F.S., about the engagement at Schultznck, asserts that the armoured train was hit by three shots and pierced. The arm of an Artillerist was shot off.

The first intelligence received from our burghers operating in the north states that a patrol of Fieldcornet Briel's came yesterday in collision with the English in Rhodesia. Our patrol was moving as usual along the river, when the enemy on the opposite side fired from out of the rough bush.

Our side lost three horses killed and one wounded. One ox killed at the river-side. By the burghers' fire two of the enemy were killed, and two Kaffirs and one horse wounded.

A fort was built on this spot for the protection of the men.

The patrol of the Headlager also came in conflict with the Kaffir sentries of the enemy, and killed four of them.

It is reported that there are still British subjects in Swazieland, who are spreading all manner of lying reports about the great losses on our side. Swazieland will be cleared of these people, and any found there arrested and put over the border.

The President of the O.F.S. has issued