

A SCOTS 'SALVATIONIST' PERSPECTIVE OF THE SIEGE OF MAFEKING: THE DIARY OF THOMAS A. YOUNG

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It is one thing to sit at home, and read and write about war, and the gallant warriors; but it is quite another thing to be here in this hospital and see the result of war and "gallant deeds"

Thomas A. Young, 14th April, 1900.

The hamlet of "Youngsbury" lies some 55 kilometres to the south-west of Lichtenburg, and consists of little more than a mill, store and petrol station. Here, for almost thirty years (1929 to 1958), Thomas A. Young - after whom this rural hub was named - was storekeeper.

Thomas Young was born in Kirkcudbright in Scotland (16 April 1876 - 25 March 1964). His father apparently threw Thomas and his four male siblings out of the house when Thomas was just thirteen years old.¹ We know little of the intervening years before Thomas Young left for South Africa in 1897 - except that he became an ardent devotee of the Salvation Army, and was to remain a deeply religious man the rest of his life. The diary was written for his sister Polly who remained behind in Scotland. Another brother, James (Jim) Young came out to South Africa with Thomas Young - and in later years was a chief magistrate in Johannesburg.

The "Youngsbury" diary is of intense interest for a variety of reasons. Firstly, it provides a glimpse of the manner in which a deeply religious and largely pacifist Scotsman was able to rationalize his fighting and killing for an Imperial cause. Thomas Young felt "quite safe and justified in taking up arms to defend those who cannot defend themselves" - there is no doubt that he was referring to white women and children as being in need of defence.

In those two years since arriving in South Africa, Thomas Young completely absorbed the prevailing white Imperial/colonial ethos - that shaping myth so replete with ambiguities. This was the late Victorian age of Darwin, Malthus, Ricardo and a predominantly *laissez-faire* approach to the poverty of others. In the light of the appalling treatment of the industrial poor in Britain, it should come as no surprise that black people were considered

¹ Conversation with Charles Mathews and his wife - of the farm Vaalplaas. The Mathews knew Thomas A. Young and retain a copy of his diary. I am indebted to them for their kindness and hospitality and for placing the diary at my disposal.

social inferiors in every sense. Like many Victorians, however, whilst Thomas Young assumed the prejudices of the prevailing social consensus, he did so not to justify cruelty, exploitation or inhumanity, but rather to inculcate the duties of an enlightened humanitarianism.²

The "Youngsbury" diary contains many other ambiguities which emerged as a result of the inter-familial and essentially 'civil war' dimensions of the Second Anglo-Boer War. In this diary can be found Afrikaner killing Afrikaner - a Boer woman was shot dead in the woman's laager, whilst her father was outside fighting with the Boer forces.³

Also in the diary are numerous instances of English-speakers/colonials fighting for the Boer cause - a rarely discussed but nevertheless important aspect of the war. A Mrs Webster in Mafeking had brothers outside the town fighting with the Boer forces.⁴ A colonial family, the Dalys, also had a son fighting with the Boers surrounding the town.⁵ The irony of this situation, as far as Thomas Young was concerned, was soon to emerge when he himself married a colonial, Eliza Maud Mathews, who although English-speaking, was interned for her commitment to the Boer cause.

Eliza Mathews was placed under house arrest in Mafeking along with her mother and sister because of their opposition to the Imperial cause. Most of the Mathews men were away on commando fighting for the Boers. Eliza's cousin, Edith Maud Mathews, was a nurse in Lichtenburg and was mentioned in despatches by Lord Kitchener for her bravery in ministering to British troops whilst under fire - surely one of the few occasions when the enemy was mentioned in despatches?⁶

The "Youngsbury" diary is also of importance for the perspective it provides of the ordinary soldier, as opposed to those privy to the 'imperii arcane' - those imperial secrets shared by Baden-Powell and his coterie - and seen in the diaries of the influential men - numbers of which were typed by Solomon Plaatjie. Time and again, Young complains that they "can get no news whatsoever" and that the public is kept in the dark and are victims of the tyranny of rumour.⁷ Thomas Young, however, like most of the garrison, was completely

² See Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Victorian Minds* (1968).

³ See entry for 91st day of the Siege.

⁴ See entry for 205nd day of the Siege.

⁵ See entry for 202nd day of the Siege.

⁶ John Bottomley and Jan Schutte, "The death of Trooper Alexander Aberline, F Squadron, N.S.W. Imperial Bushmen at Lichtenburg 1900." Paper presented at Anglo-Boer War Conference in Bloemfontein, October 1999.

⁷ See, for example, entries for 100th and 201st day of the Siege

committed to his Imperial duty and Baden-Powell's setpiece, and at no time entertains any disloyal thoughts.

Thomas Young nearly died of typhoid fever - and reported that numbers of soldiers in the Cape Police trenches had come down with the disease. At the same time, his brother Jim also contracted the 'fever' and wrote that natives around the Malopo were 'dying like flies' of the disease.⁸ Yet, there is almost no mention of illness in the official reports. This lacunae might have been due to the fact, that life-threatening illnesses were so common during the Anglo-Boer War and the Siege, that their existence was not seen as worth mentioning.

The psychological effects of life-threatening diseases and shorter life expectancy on those involved in the Imperial project is obviously important to an understanding of this remote age. One would expect, for instance, that cultural hegemony, the discursive regime, and the formation of hostile racial and ethnic prejudices would all be influenced by the fear of illness and death. Two decades ago, M. Swanson wrote her much quoted work on the effects of Bubonic plague and the 'sanitation syndrome' on urban native policy.⁹ More recently, J.M. Coetzee wrote about the effects of idleness and 'strange customs' on the formation of racial stereotypes and an anti-Boer frontier tradition.¹⁰ The "Youngsbury" diary suggests that empathy with this aspect of Imperialism will convey compassion and a greater understanding of the mind of Imperialism.

Finally, the formerly controversial issue of black participation in the Siege. Whilst Young does not appear to have been aware of what was taking place in the Brickfields where black troops were constantly engaged in fighting, he does note that black troops frequently distinguished themselves in action, especially on the 62nd day of the Siege.

After the war, Thomas Young worked for the Toledo Steel Company in Johannesburg and was manager of Brown Raynors in Vryburg for many years. In 1929, however, Thomas Young came to an arrangement with John Alfred Mathews of the farm Vaalplaas, whereby Charles took over the management of the farm shop. There were no children from his marriage to Eliza Maud Mathews.

⁸ See entries from 195th day of the Siege. For Jim see entry 202nd day of the Siege.

⁹ M. Swanson, "The sanitation syndrome: Bubonic plague and urban Native policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909, *Journal of African History*, 18, 3 (1977), pp. 387-410. See also Michel Foucault, *Madness and civilization* (trans. Richard Howard) (1967).

¹⁰ J.M. Coetzee, "Idleness in South Africa", in Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (eds), *The violence of repression* (1989).

THE DIARY

My Dear Sally

FIRST DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, October 12th, 1899.

I will endeavour to write a few lines every day, and get them off at the first opportunity. War at last has really begun. This morning's train had to return on account of the line being torn up by the Boers between here and Vryburg. There is great alarm in town to-day, as an attack from the enemy is expected to-night or early in the morning: the Boers are bound to make a desperate effort to raid and take Mafeking. Every one in town has been served with a rifle and ammunition.

All women and children who wished to go, left by a special train for Cape Town which the Government is running free. Also provision is made for the welfare of the women and children, on reaching Cape Town. The remaining women and children have to-day all gone into laager, which is situated just outside of the town in as safe a place as possible. No men are allowed to leave the town. The enemy crossed the border yesterday, and are gradually surrounding the town.

General parade of the Town Guards in the Market Square this evening, at 6 p.m., when the Commanding Officer, Colonel Baden-Powell, spoke a few words of cheer and counsel. We are always to hold ourselves in readiness; and on the alarm being given, are each to go to our appointed posts surrounding the town, which is the last line of defence.

I feel quite safe and justified in taking up arms to defend those who cannot defend themselves. Our Salvation Army Officers, two London Lassies got away by yesterday's train, although much against their wills. But we strongly advised them to go, as this war might last sometime, and it is best for all women and children to be away. There are a good few who would not leave, and some, I suppose, could not go. Of course, they will be confined to the laager while it lasts.

May the Lord preserve me during the night. I fear no evil, and I am safe in His keeping.

SECOND DAY OF THE SIEGE. Friday, October 13th.

Nothing unusual happened during the night, I slept well, having a very peaceful conscience, and was in the shop as usual at 6.30 a.m. The alarm was given at 7 a.m. the red flag was hoisted; and we immediately closed up the shop. Everybody else did the same. The market also was quickly dismissed. We got our arms, and were soon at our posts like old soldiers!

The armoured train (which by the way was built here) is an ordinary truck, plated with two rails, one on each side of a sleeper and firmly bolted together. This armour is raised about six feet from the bottom of the truck. The trucks (three in number) are manned with about twenty men per truck, and have on board a Maxim and other quick firing guns. The engine is also covered in completely with armour.

The train went out South where the enemy was sighted, and came on them as they were in the act of pulling up the line, twelve miles from Mafeking, Our people were fired on and returned the fire. We from our fort, which is on the south of the town, could see

the shots fired and distinctly hear the reports.

During this time another thing happened. Two trucks of dynamite (20 tons) for Bulawayo were standing in the station yard, and the authorities on hearing of it, ordered that it be sent out of town. It was pushed out in front on an engine, so that if it was in danger of being fired on, the trucks could be uncoupled and left. The driver saw the danger, gave the trucks a good push, and returned with the engine. The trucks went running into the midst of the Boers, who, thinking it was some new armoured train, fired on it, causing a mighty explosion. The trucks were then about eight miles North of Mafeking. The shock was terrible. All the buildings in the town were shaken, and we saw a big volume of black smoke rise up in the distance. Many of the Boers must have been killed.

We are without communication North or South. The train for Bulawayo got clear away yesterday - a friend of mine, a Salvationist, was the engine driver - but the wires were cut later in the day, and the line torn up. I would like to see your London Dailies, which will be full of yesterday's stopping the train, cutting the wires etc, etc, etc! And as they will not be able to get full particulars, our position will be made twenty times worse than it really is.

I hope you are not over anxious about Jim and myself. All was quiet about mid-day, and nothing serious happened during the remainder of the day. Martial Law was read at the Court House, which makes everybody as a soldier, and closes all places of business.

Jim came in from Mabula on the 9th, and is in the Bechuanaland Rifles; He closed up the Store, and left it after sending the valuable stuff here. I have just found out this afternoon that the wagon came in this morning. As soon as Jim heard that there was fighting, he moved out, taking the stuff and leaving it at a store keepers on the road, twenty-five miles away. Being so close to Mafeking, it is likely that the store will be looted. It is not probable that we shall see our goods again.

The Station Master (Quinlan) was arrested to-day, charged with (I believe) being a spy. He is an Irishman and, I understand, not much in love with the English. He had previously refused to take up arms. It is stated that he is to be tried by Court Martial to-morrow. If the charge is proved, the penalty is death. I think that is all to-day's news. May I be spared to write to-morrow's. I have to go on Sentry duty to-night, in lovely moonlight.

THIRD DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, October 14th.

To-day will be remembered, as long as history lasts, as the day on which the first battle was fought at Mafeking. I slept well during the night and was up at dawn. Firing commenced about eight miles north at 5.50 a.m., in which the armoured train and a troop of sixty men of the Protectorate Regiment took part - The battle lasted about two to three hours, when our people succeeded in repelling the enemy, and thereby making their attack: a perfect failure. The troops and armoured train returned about 1 a.m. Two men killed and twelve wounded. The ambulance brigade went to the field as soon as the firing ceased. To the shame of the Dutchmen, be it said, they actually opened fire on the Red Cross.

I was on the station to see them return in a great state of excitement. To-night the wounded are reported to be progressing favourably. The enemy's losses are not known, but believed to be very heavy. The Maxim from the train did terrible slaughter. I learned

this from the man who was working it, a B.S.A.P. man from Pitsani. Several of our horses were killed.

We are still without communication North or South. I saw Jim this evening. He volunteered to ride a dispatch through to Vryburg in 36 hours. Colonel Baden-Powell thanked him, but said he did not require it just then.

The correspondent for the "Cape Times" left this evening with the news. I have been on sentry duty all day with a break of a few hours in the afternoon. Another attack is expected early in the morning. I go on again in the evening. Fearfully hot all day. It is expected that troops are on their way from Cape Town or Kimberley. Of course, they will have to repair the line and fight their way up, which may take some time, for we are unable to do anything from this end to help. We are really in a stage of Siege, and have enough to do to hold our own. How long it will last nobody knows. Before I forget, thanks very much for the photo (our group), which I got from Jim when he came in. I consider it is an excellent picture.

FOURTH DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, October 15th.

Nothing unusual happened during the night. I slept at the fort. A lovely moonlight night, but a bit chilly. Everybody called to arms at 3.30 a.m., as that is the time when the Boer likes to fight. Off duty 8 a.m. No fighting during the day. The Boers don't fight on Sunday. Hot and dusty.

The Boer Commandant Cronjé sent in to-day to apologise for their conduct yesterday, of fire on the Red Cross. His excuse was that it was that it was some young men who did not know better. He also warned us that if we did not surrender within 24 hours they would start shelling the town. Of course, the Colonel gave them to understand that he had no intention of putting up the white flag, so we may expect shelling tomorrow. We had our fort improved, a pit having been dug and covered in to give us shelter from the shell fire.

Nothing else happened during the day, except that a few spies were made prisoners. I feel quite safe and prepared to take all that comes, as from God for my good and His glory. I would like to see this morning's London dailies, and all they have to say about us. We expect they are also fighting in Natal, but of course have no means of knowing. We are still cut off from the outside world. Women and children are still confined to laager.

FIFTH DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, October 16th.

I slept a little during the night. To arms at 3.30 a.m. I heard heavy firing between 5.20 a.m. and 6 a.m. I distinctly heard 27 shots. No information as to what or where it really was, but conclude it must have been an attack on our relief troops. It might have been fifteen or twenty miles away.

Off duty at 7 a.m. Got breakfast, and was just lying down for a few hours sleep when the alarm was given. Shelling began from two 7 pounders situated about three miles north of the town. The hospital and convent were the first buildings to be struck. We all went to our forts. I managed to lie down in a nearby narrow trench (or ditch), with my face to the ground; about the safest place one could get.

The firing started at 9.30 a.m. and was kept up for four hours. Shells were whizzing and bursting in all directions, and I assure you that it was an experience I will never forget; the whiz of a shell over your head is a sound long to be remembered. It was awfully hot, and you can understand how I felt lying in the full rays of the sun for nearly four hours, not knowing if I was to be spared to tell the ghastly tale. But I did not fear, for God has made me ready to die.

All was quiet again about 1 p.m. Only a few buildings were slightly damaged, as the firing was badly directed. All was quiet till about 8.30 p.m. when another alarm was given; but nothing serious happened, and only a few shots were heard out East, I was on sentry duty till 1 a.m. A bright moonlight night.

SIXTH DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, October 17th.

To arms as usual at 3.30 a.m. An attack was expected at day break, but all was quiet and nothing happened. Very quiet all day. The enemy is moving round South towards the railway line. It is very probable that there are enemy troops advancing near and we will want, if possible, to stop them. It is stated that in Saturday's engagement there were 5 Boers killed and 70 wounded. It is estimated that the number of Boers now surrounding us is about 8,000.

It seems very cruel that we, a little town of 2,000 inhabitants present garrison of white people is only about 1,000 should be surrounded and bombarded in this manner. The state of the women and children during the shelling yesterday was fearful. Besides, we are quite innocent, as we have nothing to do with a matter between the Imperial Government and the Transvaal. We belong to the Cape Colony.

The object of the Dutch attacking Mafeking is to loot the place, and get all the cattle and stores they can. At least, that is my opinion. No doubt they are lifting all the cattle they can for miles around. I quite expect they will visit the Malopo and Mabula and Mosita, for there is any amount of cattle all down the river and at Mosita.

Quinlan is to be Court Martialed to-night. I have not yet heard the result, for I go on sentry duty at 9 p.m. I have not seen Jim since Saturday. He did not go to Vryburg as expected.

SEVENTH DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, October 18th.

To arms at 3.30 a.m. Got a few hours sleep during the night. Native Scouts and two Cape Police were fired on during the night. A Policeman and two Natives were wounded. The enemy have cut off our water supply and taken possession of the springs; so our people are busy to-day opening up old wells. Of course, there is a little water in the river, and there is no fear of a water famine. Nothing else to report during the day.

EIGHT DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, October 19th.

To arms as usual at 3.30 a.m. Very quiet all day. I have to take my turn on sentry, which is two hours on and four hours off, both day and night. The enemy is lying in two parties, placed North and South, a few miles out. Jim was here this morning and is well. Heavy rain at night. The Boers cut off our water, but God sends us rain the first for about three weeks.

NINTH DAY OF THE SIEGE. Friday, October 20th.

The alarm sounded at 9 a.m. An attack was made and heavy firing continued for about an hour. No one was hurt on our side. It is reported that three of the enemy were killed. About fifty head of the town cattle were lifted just outside the town. Nice and cool after last night's rain. We are still without communication North or South. It is very difficult to say how long this state will continue. No word of the relief force which is supposed to be on the way!

TENTH DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, October 21st.

The alarm sounded at 11.30 a.m. An attack was made from the North. None of our men was hurt, but I understand several Boers were killed or wounded. Of course, it is always difficult to know the enemies casualties, particularly with the Boers. The exact numbers will never be known. I saw Jim this morning. He, with others, were fired on by the enemy while out scouting, but they did not get hurt. He brought in five natives have come through from Kimberley. They tell me that Vryburg is in the hands of the Dutch, and that the Colony Dutch have joined the Transvaal; I don't see how we can be out of this in less than two or three weeks. We have food enough to last for at least six months, and the Colonel is confident that we can hold our own easily.

I keep well in body, and feel perfectly resigned to the will of God, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love Him. I slept at the fort, and have got used to and rather enjoy it. Feel more sorry for the poor fellows who have never had anything but a feather bed to sleep on!

11th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, October 22nd.

Sunday again! With the exception of a few shots fired during the morning, all was quiet throughout the day. We were again warned by Cronjé that if we did not surrender we would be shelled again. So more is expected to-morrow. We are again improving our fort. Heavy rain during the afternoon.

SPECIAL NOTE. Written on Tuesday, November 28th.

The foregoing notes were written daily, but as it began to get very busy, I have only just been able to keep my diary posted up. As it is a bit quiet again, I will give you it day by day as I have it. Everybody is getting very tired of it all. This is the 48th day of the Siege. So far we have not much to complain of. We, the Town Guards, get two Restaurant Meals per day, and are getting an allowance of 2/6d. per day. I continue to keep well.

The past few days have been fearfully hot. We get news in occasionally, but how far distant the end is we know no more now than we did seven weeks ago. But I will come to this later on. Now go back to:-

12th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, October 23rd.

To arms at 3.30 p.m. Firing began at 7.30 a.m. out N.E. most of which was from our men. No one hurt on our side. The alarm was given at 4:00 p.m., when the enemy started shelling from the South, most of the shells falling close to our fort, as we are

situated on that side of the town.

We all got under cover. Another man and myself had previously dug a trench and covered it in, which provided excellent shelter. Before we could get into it, several shells fell very near, four falling within 100 yards of us. The pieces were flying all around us, but luckily no one was hurt. The shelling continued for about an hour, and no damage was done whatever. Small arms fire in different directions continued, more or less, all day. Cloudy day, but nice and cool.

13th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, October 24th.

I slept well at the fort during the night, not having to do any sentry duty. Firing began out North at 10 a.m. from a 7 pounder. There was also very heavy small arms fire which lasted about two hours. All quiet at 12 noon. Fire opened again at 1.30 p.m. from a 94 pounder - which we call "Big Ben" - situated on the S.E. of the town, at a distance of four miles. We had got somewhat used to the little 7 and 9 lb. shells, but the first shell from this one startled everybody.

I was just returning to go on sentry duty, when I saw the smoke on the distant veldt. I drew someone's attention to it saying: "The Boers are making some more coffee!" when suddenly we heard almost in unison, the report, the whiz of the shell over our heads and the sudden explosion. I afterwards discovered that the shell travels a mile in five seconds, which is close to the speed of sound. So from the time you see the smoke, till you hear the report, is about twenty seconds, the shell travelling almost as quickly as the report.

The concussion is great and the explosion is terrible. Several fell without bursting, so I was able to see one for myself. It weighs 94 lbs., including the 5 lbs. of explosive it contains. It is 18 inches long, and 6 inches in diameter, with a bluntly tapered point. There are two kinds; one the percussion type, which explodes on striking the ground, is made of cast iron, 1½ inches thick, the pieces of which fly as far as 1,000 yards, and will go through a brick wall; and the other, the shrapnel type, which is more dangerous, has quite a thin shell and is loaded with cast iron and lead bullets, bursting by a time fuse in the air, the nearest explosion to us was about 200 yards away.

A 7 pound gun was also firing, as well as a lot of rifles. All was quiet again at sundown. Several buildings were damaged, one man and a native wounded. Rain came at night.

14th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, October 24th.

Shelling began at 6.30 a.m. from "Big Ben". Also 7, 9 and 12 pound guns were in action. I immediately took shelter down by the river, which is very low and somewhat safe. All was quiet again after three hours till noon, when very heavy firing again opened from rifles and guns. I returned to the fort and lay down to await events. The roar of the guns, and the volleys from the rifles was deafening. It gave me a severe headache. All of "Big Ben's" shells passed over our heads. The torrential fire was kept up till 4.30 p.m. An occasional rifle shot, and one shell from "Ben" after dark, ended the days firing.

In all there were 347 shells fired, and remarkable to say, only one native wounded. Truly God's protecting hand is upon us. The casualties of the enemy's side is not known but believed to be great.

A dispatch came in to-day from Kuruman with the news that Colonel Plumer, with three armoured trains and a force of some 300 men, are on their way down from Bulawayo, and were at Crocodile Pools, eighty miles north of here, on the 23rd. News came in a few days later that he had returned, as he was unable, with so few men, to fight his way through the enemy, who had torn up the line all the way down.

Another remarkable thing happened in connection with to-day's shelling, which was nothing less than a miracle. One of the 94 lb. shells went into the engine shed at the station, which at the time was full of women and children. It fell in their midst and failed to burst, mystically saving from death many innocent ones. Heavy rain fell at night.

15th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, October 26th.

Fire opened at 5.30 a.m. Raining. Attacks were made on all sides by the enemy. Fire was kept up, on and off, all day. Heavy rain at night, when an attack was expected. Two Cape Police and four Native Scouts were fired on during the evening. We all turned out, but it all became quiet in a very short time. Nothing else happened during the night.

This is the 15th day since the Siege began. I have not had my clothes off or been in a bed since the 12th, that being the last night I had in my own room. We are still cut off from the outside world, and how long for it is difficult to say. The Colonel issued a letter to the Town Guards expressing himself as being highly pleased with the manner we stood the heavy shell fire of yesterday. The women and children were terrified, poor innocent souls.

16th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, October 27th.

Wet dull morning. Up as usual at 3.30 a.m. Shells at intervals, all day long, I wrote a letter to Cape Town which goes out by dispatch rider to-night. It may never get there. The rider may be captured by the enemy.

17th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, October 28th.

Called to arms twice during the night. Heavy firing going on, which proved to be our people attacking the enemy's trenches with the bayonet. Terrible slaughter; horrible details. A young man I knew in Cape Town, who is now in the Protectorate Regiment, was one of the sixty who made the attack. They crept up under the fire of the Cape Police Maxim, and then made a rush towards the enemy's trenches. The Boers were so surprised that they fairly lost their heads, shooting a lot of their own men. Our men ran them down right and left, and immediately returned. They were only in the trenches a few minutes. Seven of our men were killed and six wounded. The attack was led by Captain FitzClarence. I wrote home to-day, and the letter leaves by dispatch to-night. Fairly quiet for the remainder of the day.

18th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, October 29th.

Lovely morning. Nothing happened during the night. A few shots fired before 5 a.m. I saw Jim in the morning. He is well. Town Volunteer Band playing on the market Square in the evening, a bit of a skirmish at 8.30 p.m.

19th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, October 30th.

Fire opened at 5 a.m. from "Ben", kept up at the rate of one shell per hour, all day long. Continual rifle fire. Very hot.

20th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, October 31st.

A severe attack was made to-day, all around us. Fire opened at 4.45 a.m. by storming Cannon Kopje, one of our forts situated on the east of the town, about 3,000 yards distance. It is manned by the B.S.A. Police with a good supply of guns. Heavy shelling was kept up for about four hours. We could see the battle very plainly. The enemy tried to rush the fort from two sides under their shell fire, but were driven back by the Maxim and our guns from the town. At 10 a.m. they had all cleared away. Four of our men were killed in the Fort, and six wounded. A sad day's work. The enemy's losses are not known, but we saw three wagons moving about, picking up the dead and wounded.

News in to-day of our victory at Dundee and the capture of eight guns. The Salvation Army Barracks had a shell into it this morning, it went in through the roof and totally wrecked the whole place.

21st DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, November 1st.

Heavy rain during the night. Damp cold morning. "Ben" began at 7 a.m. putting two shells within twenty yards of our fort. At the same time twelve 1 lb. shells from a quick firing gun fell amongst us. Bullets flying in all directions! Fortunately no one was hit. Skirmishing kept up all day, with a few shells at regular intervals. Very hot. Three weeks ago to-day, the last train left for the south.

22nd DAY OF THE SIEGE. Thursday, November 2nd.

Fire opened from "Ben" at 5.20 a.m. on Cannon Kopje. A continual shower of bullets into the town from the enemy, who have taken up their positions in trenches about 2,000 yards away. A few more shells from "Ben" the evening. Very hot all day. E.G. Parslow, correspondent for the "Daily Chronicle", was shot by Lieut. Murchison at night.

23rd DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, November 3rd.

Heavy firing up the river at sunrise. Our people tried to prevent the enemy getting into their trenches, and were so far successful as to keep about half of them out. "Ben" chimed in at intervals all morning. Windy and dusty day. Skirmishing all night. Captain Goodyear, who was in charge of the natives who were doing a lot of fighting this morning, was wounded on his return this evening.

24th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, November 4th.

Fire began from "Ben" which continued more frequent than usual all day. The enemy still firing into the town. Very warm.

About 7.30 p.m. an explosion occurred which proved to be an unsuccessful attempt of the enemy's to destroy the station and as much of the town as possible. It appears they had loaded a bogey with dynamite, attached a time fuse to it, and gave it a push off from about two miles north of the station. The bogey went well down the incline, but they did

not know that it had to get up another just as steep, and down a second incline before reaching Mafeking station! So of course it stopped going up the incline. The fuse got to the dynamite and up it went. It is a mercy that it did not reach the station, or it would have done great damage. No word of any relief. I was on sentry duty during the night.

25th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, November 5th.

Very quiet all day. No firing, except a few rifle shots early in the morning, when some of our men were out to see the cause of last night's explosion. I again wrote home, and the letter goes out by dispatch rider to-night. The 5th November was kept up by some of our men by making large fires on house tops.

26th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, November 6th.

One shell from "Ben" and some rifle fire at daybreak. Very quiet the remainder of the day.

I saw Jim in the afternoon. He is leaving to-night for Kanya, some 65 miles north. He is appointed by the Colonel to arrange for getting dispatches, letters, and telegrams through to the coast via Bulawayo. He takes with him some letters and dispatches, two horses, and a native. Major Lord Edward Cecil lent him his revolver, a beautiful silver plated one. Jim will be staying at Kanya till the railway is open, and will be sending a native in here every day for letters, dispatches, telegrams etc. Then he will get them sent on to the nearest railway station and thereby get them to Bulawayo. It is rather an important billet, but he is well suited for it and no doubt will do it well.

I heard the following Sunday that he got out of Mafeking safely, and his horse died as soon as he reached Kanya. But he had travelled with a spare horse, the pick of the Protectorate Regiment. Two years ago I sailed from Southampton. Little did I think then that in two years, I would be in Besieged Mafeking.

27th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, November 7th.

An attack was made by our people on the enemy's trenches. Ten of our men were wounded and a large number of the enemy killed. "Ben" with three other guns are now situated on the east of the town, about 2½ to 3 miles distant. Heavy shelling went on all day. Most of the enemy are shifting laager to that quarter. Our Fort is now plainly seen by the enemy. They fired several shells but could not hit it, the nearest coming within 30 yards. None of our men was hurt.

28th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, November 8th.

Heavy shelling at sunrise, the shells again coming very close to us. Very hot all day. No word of the relief. To-day is the 28th day of the Siege. Up to the present our total loss has been nineteen men. A sad month's work when you think of it. So far we at our fort have never fired a shot, and not at all likely to, as I am very confident the enemy will never get as far as us.

As I have said before, we the Town Guards are the last line of defence. How long it is going to last nobody knows. So far there is little difference as regards foodstuffs. We get two meals a day. Things have gone up a little in price, such as tinned meat, to 1/6d.

per lb.; eggs 3/- per dozen; butter 3/- per lb.; and bread 6d. per lb.

29th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, November 9th.

To arms at 1.15 a.m. Sharp firing up the river, which lasted only a few minutes. It came on again at 3.15 a.m. Heavy shell and rifle fire continued till 7 a.m. Very quiet all day till 3.30 p.m., when shelling was resumed till sun-down.

30th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, November 10th.

Heavy shell fire began at daybreak, lasting till 6 a.m. A few shells fired at intervals all day, as well as a continual shower of bullets from the enemy. It is very unpleasant for one, when walking about the town, to feel that you are fired at every time you come within sight of the enemy. Buildings, iron roofs and windows are peppered all over the town. Warm day, some rain at night.

To-day's paper (Mafeking Mail) informs us that it is probable we will get relief in about a fortnight's time. Women and children in the laager are to-day put on rations. This is the 30th day of the Siege.

31st DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, November 11th.

A few shells fired before breakfast. One or two more came over during the morning. Very quiet all day. Only one small shell fired in the evening. Very warm all day followed by a lovely moonlight night.

I keep well. Truly we have got a lot to be thankful for. Considering the number of shells that have been fired into the town during the last four weeks, no one as yet has been killed, and only two or three have been wounded. Unconverted people admit that God has protected us. Yet how slow People are to give God thanks for his Goodness.

It is announced that there is to be a great cricket match on the market square tomorrow, Sunday. Oh, what ingratitude! Instead of opening their Churches and having a thanksgiving service, the day at rest is to be spent in self gratification. We salvationists will meet to praise and thank God for his love and goodness to the people of Mafeking. Jesus is precious to me at this time. I have his peace within my heart.

32nd DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, November 12th.

Quiet morning. Met for prayer at 7 a.m. Quiet all day. Met again prayer at 2 p.m. Everybody seems to think that we will have relief North and South in a very few days. There was a move in the enemy's camp yesterday. Warm day.

33rd DAY OF SIEGE Monday, November 13th.

A little firing at dawn. Three or four shells came over during the morning. Was in the shop for a few hours this morning. My first visit since the Siege began. Quiet all day, till evening, when we had a few more shells, some arriving after dark. They usually give us one after dark. They sight the gun before sundown and generally fire it sometime during the early part of the night.

News to hand to-day that Capt. Llewlyn, with several armoured trains, is again on his way down from Bulawayo. He has been reinforced, has had several successful

engagements, and is expected here in a few days. It is wonderful the exciting effect news like this has on people.

34th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, November 14th.

Sharp rifle and shell fire at sunrise (4 a.m.) Shells pouring in all day. More rifle fire in the town than yesterday. Heavy rain, beginning at 5 p.m. and continuing most of the night.

35th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, November 15th.

Wet cold morning. Small arms fire only at dawn. News in from Cape Town and Kimberley, providing details of the fight the latter garrison had on the 24th of last month. We are also informed that the Boers had sent false telegrams all over Europe stating they had taken Mafeking. I hope you were not over anxious about us on getting that news. It is further stated that the people in London were greatly elated on the truth being made known. The object of the Boers was no doubt to encourage the Colony Dutch to rise and assist them.

Heavy rain all morning. A little shelling in the evening. A terrible thunder storm last night. Slept indoors, the first time for nearly four weeks.

36th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, November 16th.

To arms at 3.30 a.m. Heavy rain all morning. Shell and rifle fire all day. The expected relief has not yet arrived. No more news of them. How long we may be in this situation it is hard to say. We may be here for another month. I do not complain, but take all as from God, for my good and His Glory.

37th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, November 17th.

A shell from "Ben" at dawn, followed by shell and rifle fire all morning. A dry clear morning leading to rain at mid-day. Heavy shelling at 1.30 p.m. Rapid firing from all four guns lasting about an hour. Rain in the afternoon and evening.

38th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, November 18th.

On sentry duty at 2.30 a.m. Shelling as usual at day-break. Sharp skirmish out South at 3 p.m. lasting about an hour. There was heavy firing. The Enemy's laager out South moved to-day. Why, we don't know. Heavy rifle and Maxim firing again at 7.30 p.m. for about 30 minutes; and again at 9.30 p.m.

39th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, November 19th.

Met for prayers at 7 a.m. Three Cape Police fired on when out scouting at 8.30 p.m. One shell in the native's Stadt about the same time. General inspection of Town Guards by the Major at 9.30 a.m. Very quiet the remainder of the day.

40th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, November 20th.

"Ben" began at sunrise. Heavy shell and rifle fire into the town. All through the morning an effort was made by the Boers to lift some of our cattle that were out East of the

town. At 3 p.m. they opened fire with a 7 lb. gun, thinking to drive the cattle out, but our people succeeded in getting them in under their heavy shelling. A warm day.

Congratulations to hand from the inhabitants of Bulawayo on the gallant defence of the Mafeking garrison. Also news from Kimberley.

"Ben" broke the record to-day by firing 43 shells! Most remarkable to say, the damage done was one house hit, doing about £20 worth of damage. If you reckon that each shell costs them (with the power [sic] to fire) £20, which I understand is a low estimate, the cost of doing the damage does far exceed the damage done. They say they will make it cost the British Government a nice big sum for destroyed properties, but it is going to cost the foolish Dutchmen far more to do the damage.

A new Commander has come to the enemy's camp. Cronjé has gone to assist in Natal. That accounts for so much firing to-day. Moonlight night. No news from Jim.

41st DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, November 21st.

One shell from "Ben" at the usual time. They then took her to pieces to clean her, and it was 5 p.m. before we heard from her again. Our people are always on the look out, and can see every movement of the enemy. She is watched all day, and when they are going to fire her, a bell is rung in town. That warning gives people time to get under cover. Very hot all day. This the 41st day of the Siege. No definite word of relief. I keep well.

42nd DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, November 22nd.

Shelling again as usual at dawn. It continued till 9-30 a.m. Resumed again at 4.30 p.m. till sundown. Rifle fire into the town all day. This has been the hottest day we have had since besieged.

The Siege prices of food stuffs as fixed by the Colonel are as follows:-

Mealies and Kaffir Corn	40/- per bag (200 lbs.)
Boer Meal or Wheat Meal, sifted	50/- per bag (200 lbs.)
Flour per bag (200 lbs.)	60/-
Fresh meat	1/- to 1/6d. per lb.
Tinned meat	1/6d. per lb.
Butter, tinned	3/- per lb.
Cheese	3/- per lb.

But so far there is no distress. We get all we require in the way of food. I hope we will never be Worse Off.

43rd DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, November 23rd.

"Ben" began at sunrise. Fairly quiet all day. One shell from "Ben" as usual after dark. This morning, at breakfast, a bullet came through the iron wall at the end of the restaurant, and struck a sugar basin on one of the tables, passing on over another table where our men were sitting, to fly out of the door! Some of our men at the table on which stood the basin were cut with flying pieces of glass. That is the third bullet that has entered the restaurant within the last few days.

A woman two doors away from where I am writing this, was putting her baby to

sleep. A bullet entered the window and door, and fell on the bed beside the child. That may give you some idea of how the bullets are flying about,

I had a letter from Jim from Kanya dated the 19th. He is well. He tells me of his horse having died. The only news he gives is, that he thinks communication with Mafeking and the North (Bulawayo) will be opened in a fortnight.

44th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, November 24th.

Three shells from "Ben" at daybreak, followed by a few more during the day, and one after dark. With all this shelling one would think that there would be nothing of Mafeking left. But really one would be surprised to see the small amount of damage done. A few houses are certainly destroyed, and a few more battered with splinters. But there is not the damage done one would think, with all their shelling.

The Boers were kind enough to send us in to-day, the news of the death of the Marchioness of Salisbury on the 20th.

Nice rain during the evening. Two years ago to-day I first set eyes and feet on the shores of sunny Africa.

45th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, November 25th.

Nice rain during the night. Three or four shells from "Ben" at the usual time. Nice cool day. Shelling all day from "Ben" and a 12½ pounder, as well as a continual hail of bullets. One Cape Policeman seriously wounded thereby. But it is really remarkable how few people have been hit, considering the thousands of bullets that have been fired.

Our fort is in direct line of their fire, and it does not do for us to expose ourselves. As sure as we do, so sure are we fired at. It is astonishing how one gets used to the whiz of a bullet!

46th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday November 26th.

Lovely morning, which I spent down at the river under the shade of the fig and peach trees, with my Bible and book. Met for prayer in the afternoon. Great open air concert at the railway camp, in which the Gospel took a very prominent part. Also football and cricket matches. The Wesleyan minister took part in the football match. Very hot all day.

47th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, November 27th.

Shelling again at dawn. Less rifle fire all day. Our people have taken up a position within range of the enemy, and have managed to silence them. Two natives wounded by shell splinters after dark. Nice day.

48th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, November 28th.

Used three from "Ben" to bid us good morning! Very quiet and little firing all day. A few more from "Ben" towards the evening. One went into the Market House in the Square as I was writing here. No one hurt, although the Square was full of people at the time, playing football.

A railway man was struck by a bullet about 6 p.m. right through the head, from side to side behind the forehead. He said "Oh! my God", and fell down stiff. Moffat - a foreman and a Salvationist - picked him up and, with another, took him to the hospital. He was conscious from half a minute after he was hit, and is expected to recover.

49th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, November 29th.

"Ben" quiet till 9.30 a.m. I was on sentry duty from 1.30 a.m. till day break. Our people are doing all the firing this morning. They have got within range of "Ben" and are keeping her quiet. Very heavy thunderstorm in the evening and night.

50th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, November 30th.

Heavy firing from our people early this morning up the river. Shelling from the North with a new gun, and a 5 pounder. Also shelling from "Ben", and heavy rifle fire all day. A warm skirmish took place just before sundown. Rain during the afternoon.

51st DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, December 1st.

Shelling from "Ben" and from the 5 pounder and 1 lb. Maxim all day. Several shells aimed at our fort fell very near, but no one was injured.

52nd DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, December 2nd.

Only a few shells from "Ben", and a little rifle firing throughout the day. Very hot.

53rd DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, December 3rd.

Quiet day as usual. News in from North and South. A letter from Jim, dated Nov. 29th. The only news he gives is that the Boers had been down the Malopo River, 3 weeks ago, and had looted the store at Pitsani, and taken all his things which were left there with the storekeeper. Their action had caused the natives to rise against them. I also hear that the Store at Mabula is emptied, and I suppose our stock left there is also gone. Of course, the Government will compensate for loss of all properties.

54th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, December 4th.

This is the 54th day of the Siege. Three weeks to-day is Christmas and it looks very much as if we are to spend the Christmas of 1899 in the trenches. A few shells from "Ben" and the 5 pounder came over during the day. The news that came in yesterday informs us that Kimberley was relieved, and that a flying Column is proceeding to the relief of Mafeking.

55th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, December 5th.

Shelling from "Ben", the 5 pounder, and 1 lb. Maxim. Two natives and one white man were killed. Very heavy rain during the afternoon. Trenches all flooded and streets like flowing streams. Eight inches of rain fell inside two hours.

A letter came in to-day, inside a 5 pound shell, addressed to Colonel Baden Powell, in which the writer asked the Colonel not to let his men drink all the whiskey as they wanted some when they came in! There was also a message to Mrs. Dunkley, one of our

women in the Laager here. The shell was empty and was picked up whole as intended by the writer of the message.

56th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, December 6th.

Firing all day from "Ben", 5, 7 and 1 pound Maxim, several of the latter aimed at our fort. A rather sad accident occurred this afternoon at 4.30 p.m. Mr Gerreaus, a blacksmith, was emptying a 97 pound shell, which had fallen without exploding, and through some carelessness (or want of knowledge on his part) it exploded, injuring him. A workman Green, and a man Smith, were passing the door at the time. I was there and saw them carried away to the hospital. Mr Smith was horribly wounded and died the same evening. Mr Green has had his foot taken off, and Mr Gerreaus is badly wounded in the head and arm. Mr Smith is the first civilian and town guardsman to be killed. A native was also badly wounded during the day by "Ben".

57th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, December 7th.

"Ben" began at 5.20 a.m. wounding a native by her first shot. He died before the day was out. Lady Sarah Wilson, wife of Capt. Wilson, one of our staff here, came in this morning from the Boer laager, where she was prisoner for some few days. Previous to her capture, she was staying with Mrs. F. Keeley, at Mosita. She was exchanged for a Dutch prisoner we had here.

Three guns shelling all afternoon. One shell from "Ben" went into the shop of B.O. Lennon & Co., Chemists, in the Market Square, which is only four doors from our Store. I was in my room which is adjoining the shop at the time. I rushed out to see the damage done, and the first thing I saw was a poor Kaffir who had been hit. He was lying in the pathway, a sight horrible to look at. He was literally blown to pieces. One of his hands was picked up in the yard behind.

The front of the shop was completely destroyed, and while the crowd was looking at the damage done, the bell rang, and people had just time to get under cover when a second shell fell in the same place. I never saw two put in the same place before like that. A splint from the second one flew 50 yards through the door of a public house bar, and killed a man of the Protectorate Regiment who was drinking at the counter.

Shelling continued some time after dark. Up to the present our loss has been twenty-five white men. The exact number of natives I do not know, but it is considerably more than twenty-five. The number of deaths in the women's laager, of women and children, is twenty. One woman and two or three children were killed by the enemy's fire.

58th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, December 8th.

"Ben" rather quiet all day. Plenty of 1 pound Maxim and rifle fire. The general opinion is that the Flying Column will be here by Monday. Needless to say everybody is longing for them to come. Two Protectorate Regiment were killed today by shells. Rain during the afternoon.

59th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, December 9th.

Damp morning. Was on sentry duty from 1.30 a.m. Fairly quiet during the morning.

"Ben, 1 Pound Maxim, and rifle fire during the afternoon. One native wounded.

61th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, December 10th.

This is the 61st day of the siege, and during that time I have not slept in a bed, nor had my clothes off to sleep. "Ben" put six shells into the town before 7 a.m. Raining all morning. Shelling resumed at 4 p.m. till sundown.

62nd DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, December 12th.

The Boers tried to steal some of the native's cattle out South about 5 a.m. This was the cause of a sharp skirmish in which the natives distinguished themselves.

A Kaffir wedding took place at the Church of England which I attended this morning. Rather a rarity [sic] during a siege.

The letter which the Colonel sent to the Boers yesterday, and published in to-day's paper, is as follows:-

The Colonel addressing the Boers now lying under arms near Mafeking, endeavoured to make clear to them the true facts of the war, reminding them they had been misled and kept in the dark by the State newspapers and leading men who had given them to understand that some other power would intervene on their behalf against the English and thereby enable them to defeat the British forces and take possession of the whole of South Africa." The Colonel went on to say that that was not so. That no other European power was in sympathy enough with them to assist them in any way; that up to the present, all the battles they had fought were merely against the British Advance Column. But troops had now arrived by thousands from India, Australia, Canada and England. Now that the main Column was in the country, British forces would, in a few weeks, be ready to march right into the Transvaal and take possession of it.

Now he wished to make an offer to them. He wished them still to have a chance of retaining their lands and properties, so those who would surrender before the 14th, could go to their families and homes, and on the arrival of the British troops hand over their rifles and 150 rounds of ammunition, and be free men. This offer did not apply to Officers of S.A.R. Nor to Colony farmers who were rebels, and would be treated as such, having all their lands and properties confiscated.

63rd DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, December 13th.

Quiet all morning. Fire opened from "Ben" at 4 p.m. on the Native Location, and the 1 pound Maxim concentrated on the town. I picked up one later which fell in the next yard to here. The powder had exploded, but did not burst the shell. It blew the cap off and came out as a charge would from the barrel of a gun, penetrating a nine inch brick wall. The shell lay about 2 feet on the other side, and I found the cap on this side. The shell was quite hot when I picked it up. I will send it to you, so you can see it.

I got a business pass to-day to allow me off duty during the day. Will be in the shop a few hours every day, shelling permitting.

64th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, December 14th.

Quiet all day like yesterday till 4 p.m. when "Ben" opened fire in the Location, killing

3 native women. The 1 pound Maxim played heavily on the town. Continual rifle fire on the town all day.

65th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, December 15th.

To-day just the same as yesterday; quiet all day till 4 p.m. when they began shelling the Location. One shell landed in the town. The 1 pound Maxim was busy as usual, together with the 5 Pounder which is continually storming the Protectorate Regiments' trenches at the west of the town.

66th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, December 16th.

Firing began at 2.40 a.m. from "Ben", the 7 pounder, and the 1 pound Maxim. Very heavy firing. Our people returned the fire with two and seven pounders, Maxims and small arms. It appears that the Colonel got to know that the enemy intended making a desperate attack, so he got our men and guns into position during the night, and surprised the Boers not a little by opening the ball long before the appointed time. The firing lasted till about 7 a.m. Our people did excellent shooting and succeeded in driving the sharp shooters out of their trenches.

Our people again opened fire on them at 12 noon, and kept it up for over an hour. Two natives were wounded by bullets while walking about the town, and a Sergeant of the Protectorate Regiment, while sitting on the hospital veranda, was also struck by a bullet which caused his death. A particularly sad event because he was just recovering from a bullet wound received sometime previously.

68th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, December 18th.

"Ben" quiet all day did not fire a single shot. The 5 pounder was shelling all day, accompanied by a continual hail of bullets into the town from the enemy.

69th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, December 19th.

On sentry duty from 1.30 a.m. Firing began from our people at 4 a.m., who were in the same position as on Saturday morning. Heavy firing from "Ben". The one pound Maxim was making plenty of noise, and the firing lasted two hours. Fairly quiet for the remainder of the day.

I was in the shop for sometime during the morning. Our shop, up to the present, has scarcely been touched shells. The first damage done to it was a splint from "Ben's" shell on Saturday morning, which merely damaged the corner slightly. Two bullets have been through the shutters and window, and several more are sticking in the door. The reason we have escaped so lightly is because the owner of the property is a Dutchman, who is now outside the town fighting against us. So it is not likely, if they can possibly help it, that there will be many shells put into it.

A few more shells from "Ben" during the evening. It is remarkable the number of shells that have been put into this little place. The official report is that up to last Saturday, "Ben" had fired 900 shells. It is stated she cannot fire more than a thousand, for by that time the inside of the barrel will be worn out. Out of that 900, I should say fully 100 have not burst.

The market value of an unexploded shell is now £3. 10.0d., much lower than it was. The owner of the first shell picked up was offered £10. 10.0d. for it, but he refused to sell. A small piece was then readily sold for several shillings, but now one does not take the trouble to pick up the pieces! There are now no less than 36 tons of "Ben's" shells in the town; that is 900 at 90 lbs, each. With the explosive the shell weighs 97 lbs.

Other shells are being bought and sold at the following prices:-

9 pounders 15/- to 20/-

7 pounders 10/- to 15/-

7 pounders 15/- to 20/-

(Jamesons')

5 pounders 15/- to 20/-

1 pound Maxim 15/- to 20/- & 25/- to 30/-

There are several kinds of 1 pound shells. I have two of those and one is very rare. Julius Weil offers me 30/- for it, and is very anxious to buy. But I am not going to sell it at any price. Bullets are also very plentiful, Mausers & Lee Metfords are (as the "Mafeking Mail" puts it) a ticky (3d.) a gross, and Martini Henry's at 1/- a cwt.

70th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, December 20th.

To-day completes the 10th week of the siege. During that time we have slept at our forts in our clothes. It will be a treat to get into a bed, with my clothes off, and have a peaceful night, with no fear of being called up at any hour, to stand to arms. No news about relief. No news has come in for more than a fortnight. "Ben" began at 5 p.m. and continued till dark at 6.30 p.m. A sharp skirmish took place up the river at 8 p.m. Heavy firing went on for about fifteen minutes.

71st DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, December 21st.

Very quiet all day till about 5 p.m. when "Ben", and the 1 pound Maxim played on the town till dark. Some more rifle firing occurred up the river after dark.

72nd DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, December 22nd.

Quiet all day. Was in the shop all morning. A Cape Policeman wounded this morning. "Ben" was shelling from 4 p.m. till dark. Very heavy rifle fire up the river, which lasted fully thirty minutes, and proved to be from both sides.

73rd DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, December 23rd.

Our gun was firing at early morn. Fairly quiet till 4 p.m. when "Ben", and the 1 pound Maxim, began on Cannon Kopje and the Town. Some more rifle fire after dark, the same as last night. Two natives wounded during the day with splints and shell.

74th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, December 24th.

Under the conditions to-day is recognised as Christmas day of 1899. Lady Sarah Wilson and Julius Weil gave the children a "treat", the former giving each child a present, and the latter providing them with tea. A man died in hospital this morning from a wound.

75th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, December 25th.

Christmas Day 1899. I trust I will never have to spend another in a Siege. The Boers were quiet throughout the day. Christmas day is not looked upon by them as a holiday. They are like the Scotch, they think more of New Year's Day. A heavy wind storm and rain early this morning; hailstones as large as peas were falling fast.

76th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, December 26th.

Boxing Day 1899. Another day that will be remembered as long as history lasts. This date will figure on many a tombstone. Truly it has been a sad day. Our losses have been 3 Officers and 15 men killed, 2 Officers and 24 men wounded, seven of the wounded dying within 24 hours of the fight.

The battle was brought about in this way: An attack was made by our people at Game Tree, with a view to breaking the enemy's line around line of communication with the North by rail. Game Tree is about 2,300 yards north of our cemetery.

The Protectorate Regiment, consisting of squadrons C & D, were detailed to carry out the attack under Captains Vernon and Fitzclarence, respectively, assisted by the Armoured Train with Maxim, 1 pound Hotchkiss and 20 men, under Capt. Williams, B.S.A.P. On the right flank were the Bechuanaland Rifles (or Town Volunteers) under Capt. Cowan (an Ayr man); on the left wing were our guns, 3 and 7 pounders, and one Cavalry Maxim supported by three troops of the Protectorate Regiment, under Major Panzera. The whole of the left wing was under Colonel Hore, Prot. Reg. and the right wing under Major Godley.

The firing began at 4.15 a.m. from our Artillery, which was kept up some time. Then the guns ceased fire, and the attack was made, our men getting right up to the ditch of the fort. It was then found that the fort was far stronger than had been thought, and inaccessible. Our men tried to scale the ramparts, but were shot down in the attempt. The sight of the wounded was awful. Dum dum and explosive bullets were used by the enemy, and these make ghastly wounds.

I am acquainted with a young man by the name of King, from N.S. Wales. He was one of C. Squadron, and when within 50 yards of the fort, he got a Mauser bullet right through the knee. He fell, and then managed to creep away 50 yards where he lay till the Red Cross came to the field. Two Dutchmen then came to him and took away his rifle, bandolier and water bottle. He says they treated him very kindly, gave him water, and carried him over to our Ambulance Wagon. Two of our men were made prisoners.

An act of gallant conduct was brought to the Colonel's notice, as performed by Sergeant Moffat (an Edinburgh man, and a Salvationist) of the Railway Division, who went out from the Armoured train during the retreat and brought in Sergt. Martineau, of the Protectorate Regiment, who was badly wounded. This rescue journey was made over a distance of 600 yards, under very heavy fire.

It was a very mournful scene at the Cemetery at sundown, watching the burying of twenty-two men who were killed in to-day's fight. The services were conducted by the Rev. W.F. Weekes, C. of E. and Father Ogel, R.C., all the Officers being present. It is stated by the enemy's Doctor that their losses are 10 killed and 20 wounded.

We are put on rations to-day, which consist of:-

1½ lb. fresh or 1 lb. tinned Meat.
1 lb. Bread,
1/3 ounce of Coffee.
½ oz. Tea.
2 ozs. Sugar.
2 ozs. Peas or Rice.

We are also allowed 2 lbs. wood per man for cooking. Wood is very scarce in town. Vegetables are very dear. Potatoes are being retailed at 4d. per lb. Other vegetables are likewise dear.

Rice	-	9d per lb.
Oatmeal	-	1/- per lb.
Milk	-	1/3d per tin.
Sugar	-	8d per lb.

Flour and meals you cannot buy at all, as all of it has been commandeered.

77th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, December 27th.

Fairly quiet all day. Only a few shells from "Ben" and the 1 pound Maxim. Was up at the hospital to see my friend King. He is getting on well but will have a stiff knee for the remainder of his life.

78th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday December 28th.

Heavy firing up the river at 1.30 a.m. lasting fully 45 minutes. It proved to be from both sides. Wet all morning, and heavy rain during the afternoon. A few shells from "Ben" and the 1 pound Maxim towards evening. One of the former went into our shop damaging about £100 worth of stock. Word came in to-day of the relief for Mafeking. They are advancing rapidly and supposed to have reached Vryburg. Expected here in about ten days.

79th DAY of SIEGE. Friday, December 29th.

Very wet during the night. Sleeping out is far from being pleasant on such nights. I, and my blankets, became thoroughly wet. Went on sentry duty at 1.30 p. m. A bright morning at sunrise. "Ben" and 1 pound Maxim, shelling Cannon Kopje and the Location, during the morning. In the afternoon assisted by the 7 pounder, the 5 pounder opened fire on the west side of the town. Heavy rain during the afternoon.

80th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday. December 30th.

A chilly morning. "Ben" began very early on the town, killing a native with the first shell. Our guns were busy returning the fire, which continued till about 10.30 a.m. The 5 pounder at Game Tree, as busy on the Stadt, and our guns at that side of the town.

We have had an addition to our Artillery in the form of an old gun which, for 18 years, has belonged to these Kaffirs, and of late has been doing service as a gate post, or something of the kind. Our people had it brought up, cleaned, and fixed on a pair of old wagon wheels. Solid balls were also cast for it, (which, by the way is the first casting done in Mafeking) and she fired her first four shots this afternoon at Game Tree. The ball is

31½ inches in diameter, and weighs 7 pounds.

81st DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, December 31st.

The last day of 1899; and here I am spending it in the Siege of Mafeking! Very quiet all day. Sports etc. going on, but such things I take no interest in, especially in times like these, and on a Sunday. I was at the service of the Church of England at 7.30 p.m. the last of the year.

82nd DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, January 1st 1900.

To-day is the 82nd day of the Siege. It is rumoured that troops are close by and will be here in a few days. Heavy Firing, beginning with rifle volleys, at 7 a.m. "Ben", 1 pound Maxim, 12 and 7 pounders then began shelling the town. This continued rapidly for two hours, our people returning the fire with a 7 pound gun. Shelling continued throughout the day. "Ben" firing. Also 7 and 12 pounders. 45 shells were delivered. Casualties were: One man and four natives killed. Three mules killed and eight different buildings struck by shells from "Ben", our shop being one of that number, The man killed was a Scotsman, by the name of Slater. He was at our Fort, but being a carpenter, he was doing some work for the Government. He was working in the shop when the shell hit the building, killing him and a native. Two of our men were working in the shop with him, and when the bell rang to warn people that the gun was about to be fired, they rushed out of the shop in to their shell proof trench, calling him to come. Again when outside they called him to come, but he refused. The next instant he was killed!

Another of our men at the Fort this morning had a bullet through the rim of his hat 2 inches from his forehead. A narrow and providential escape.

83rd DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, January 2nd.

Shelling began from the 12 pounder at 5.30 a.m. "Ben" and 1 pound Maxim very busy all day, at intervals. One native woman was killed in the Stadt by a 12 pound shell. Rifles very quiet all day long. News in from the south, but nothing very good. I firmly believe we will not be at peace for another two months.

84th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, January 3rd.

Firing began early from "Ben" and the 12 pounder. The latter fired in the direction of the laager for two hours, killing a girl of 15 years, and wounding another girl and boy inside the laager.

At 4 p.m. shelling was again resumed, our people having placed two 7 pounders and "Little Ben" within range of "Ben". Shelling was kept up with great rapidity from these guns, the Nordenfeldt and Maxim, for 2½ hours. We had a splendid view of the whole thing, our 7 pounders doing some capital shooting. "Ben" in return tried hard to hit our guns, but could not. She made horrible shooting.

85th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, January 4th.

To-day begins the 12th week of the Siege. Very quiet all day. Scarcely a shot heard, only the occasional crack of a Mauser. It is stated we did some damage yesterday,

and the Boers are now burying their dead. Two from "Ben" in the afternoon aimed at the Nordenfeldt Gun. Our people then opened fire on them, and kept it up till dark.

86th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, January 5th.

A nice shower of rain this morning. Everything remarkably quiet. It was believed that "Ben" was somewhat disabled, but it could not have been much as she fired two shells on the town at 5 p.m. Our guns were again storming the enemy's fort in the evening.

87th DAY OF SIEGE Saturday, January 6th.

One shell from "Ben" on the town at 10 a.m. The one pound Maxim was also pounding away. Rifle fire into the town to-day. Two more shells from "Ben" in the afternoon. A one pound Maxim and a nine pound Krupps were also firing very heavily. Very hot all day.

89th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, January 8th.

I was on sentry duty from 1.30 a.m. Very wet all night, which makes out-door sleeping very unpleasant. Three shells from "Ben" during the morning. Also shelling from 5 pounder and 1 pound Maxim. A good bit of rifle firing into the town. Three Cape Policemen wounded by a 5 pound shell, one very seriously. Several more shells from "Ben" came over during the day.

90th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, January 9th.

Rain began early this morning and continued till about 4 p.m. Shelling very quiet; only a few 1 pound Maxims during the afternoon.

An accident occurred at 6 p.m. A man, Graham, was very foolishly tampering with a 94 pound shell. He was unloading it, when it exploded, wounding him and 3 boys. Unloading shells, since the last accident, had been strictly forbidden, and only last week this same man was brought up for doing it. He was warned and fined, yet he persisted in doing it again. What will men not do to get money?

One of our men died in the hospital at 6 p.m. from dysentery. I visited him several times while he was there. He is a Scotsman, Miel by name, and comes from Stromness, Orkney Island. He gave me his uncle's address there, a Dr. Garston, and asked me to write to him. Two 5 pound shells at 8 p.m, while I was on sentry duty, finished another day's shelling. Moonlight, but cloudy.

91st DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, January 10th.

"Ben", 5 pound and 1 pound Maxim, put over several shells during the day. To-day our bread rations are reduced to 3/4 lb. per man. We still have enough, and I trust we may never be worse off. I was at the hospital this afternoon, and saw Graham. He is still unconscious and an awful sight. You would think it impossible for him to be still living. He has got his left arm off below the elbow. His right arm is broken and his hand smashed. He has lost three of his toes and part of his right foot. A piece of shell through the calf of his left leg; a piece through the thigh of the right; a piece in his stomach; and a piece through the left arm above the elbow. Several bruises on the chest. His face is badly

burned and his jawbone broken. And last, but not worst, he is blind, his eyes being badly burned. It is pitiful to see him.

A woman was shot dead by a bullet in town while sitting at her own table with her husband at dinner. She was struck in the head, and died instantly. Strange to say, her father (a Dutchman) is in the Boer camp fighting against us. One native was also killed, and another wounded, by bullets.

We buried Miel at sundown. Most of our Fort attended. The service was conducted by the Rev. W.R. Weekes, Church of England. It was the first time I had been in the cemetery. There must be about seventy graves of Whites, not counting the women and children, who alone number nearly thirty. I should say the natives number about forty. A sad three week's work! "Ben" and our guns were blazing away as fast as they could, while we were in the cemetery. The two and five pounders were active about 8 p.m.

92nd DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, January 11th.

A lovely bright morning. One shell from "Ben" at 9 a.m.; rifles cracking away all round. A bombardment of our Fort at 4.30 p.m. We had always considered ourselves pretty safe, because the Dutch Minister lived next door to us! It may be they no longer consider their Pastor, for the first two "Bens" fell in his yard. Then they fired thirty-two 1 pound Maxims as fast as they could. Fortunately no one was hurt.

To make matters worse, the Colonel sent a message to say that his "lookers-out" informed him that at sundown, "Ben" was pointing at Early's Corner. We, therefore, expected firing during the night, and no one would go to sleep, I turned in and slept well, only disturbed by heavy firing early the next morning.

Two 5 pounders were fired at 8.15 p.m., the last of which struck the house we are messing in. It burst in the sitting room. One of our men, and a daughter of the house, were in the room at the time. It seems incredible that they escaped without a scratch.

93rd DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, January 12th.

Shelling began at 5 a.m. from all guns on our Fort Ayr, situated on the N.W. of the town. The fort was named by Capt. Cowan (B Rifles), and the late Capt. Vernon (who fell at Game Tree on December 26th), who are both Ayrshire men. Rapid firing was kept up till 7.30 a.m. by "Ben" during that time firing 22 shells. One Protectorate Regiment man was wounded. Several more shells from "Ben", all in the same direction, during the day.

There was a very strange shooting star, or comet, seen last night at 7.45 p.m. which I forgot to mention. At first sight it appeared like a very bright star, shooting upwards, to almost disappear. Then in its trail appeared a very bright coil, resembling the coil of a serpent, in three distinct coils. It remained perfectly visible for twelve minutes, before gradually vanishing away. The natives in the Stadt were terrified, screaming like mad people at the sight of it.

94th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, January 13th.

Shelling only from the five pounder all day. "Ben" did not fire a single shot. There was a lot of rifle fire on the town; and a volley at 9 p.m.

95th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, January 14th.

"Ben" has been moved away, and her new position is not yet located. Quiet all day.

96th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, January 15th.

Very quiet till 12 noon, when "Ben" fired three shells from her new position, N.E. of the town, at a distance of 3 miles. Dull all day, and very like rain. Heavy firing on Cannon Kopje and Location from "Ben", at 5.00 p.m. The 5 pound and 1 pound Maxims were shelling the town. Two shells from "Ben" on Cannon Kopje at 8.00 p.m. and a rifle volley on the town.

97th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, January 16th.

Quiet till 11 a.m. when "Ben" began putting a shell in the Railway Institute which is being used as a Convalescent Home. The patients were all at dinner and, strange to say, only the waiter was slightly wounded in the head. His hat was fairly riddled with pieces of shell! Shelling during the afternoon on Cannon Kopje, and a volley on the town at 4.30 p.m. Heavy rain at night.

98th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, January 17th.

Shelling from "Ben" throughout the day. The 5 pound and 1 pound Maxims also at it. One native was wounded. Graham died in hospital this morning. He was never really conscious since the accident. His wife was shot by a bullet in the laager some time ago, and she died from the wound. To-day all matches and condensed milk are commandeered. Tinder boxes are now being freely sold and used for matches.

99th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, January 18th.

"Ben" began, and kept firing about one shell every two hours, all day long. The last shell came over at 8.15 p.m., killing a Cape boy. A rifle volley was also fired at 8.30 p.m., killing a native and wounding another. The 5 pounder and 1 pound Maxim were also busy all day.

100th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, January 19th.

To-day is the 100th day of the Siege. Whoever thought it would last this time. How much longer it will continue nobody knows. We get no news whatsoever. "Ben" began before 8 a.m.; also the other two guns. Shelling kept on all day as usual. There is a good deal of sameness about this affair - it is the same thing, day after day. Here we have been shelled day after day for about 90 days; yet it is wonderful the few lives that are lost.

As we were all sitting at tea at 6.30 p.m., one of "Ben's" dropped in the road in front of our house. Needless to say there was little more tea eaten! No one was hurt, the only loss of life being that of a dog. I was down at the river this afternoon, and had a swim - a real treat in these desperate times. Peaches are now ripe, and this has been a good year for them. The few trees that are here in Mafeking are well laden. I bought some at 3/- per 100.

I also wrote to Jim to-day. I have not heard from him since December 3rd. I rather think they are keeping back my letters as there might have been something in them they

did not wish me to know. I hope Jim is writing to you, and that you are getting the letters. No doubt you will be very anxious to hear from us.

101st DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, January 20th.

Shelling as usual from three guns. Two natives were wounded. Very hot. A death occurred in the hospital from shell wounds.

167th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, March 27th, 1900.

I came into hospital on February 20th, after being in bed 3 days with what proved to be Typhoid Fever. I had a very slight attack, my highest temperature being 102.4°F. The fever was on me for about fourteen days. My diet was milk and beef tea. I got very, very thin and weak. I was not allowed anything to eat until eight days after my temperature was normal. I then had light milk puddings, etc. and only the day before yesterday did I begin to eat a little bit of meat.

I got up for the first time on the 19th March, but could not manage to walk alone till yesterday. I am still very weak and thin, but they are doing all they can to feed me up. Doctor, Matron and nurses are all very kind. I am getting stronger every day and it will not be long before I am able to leave.

The Boers still surround us. For the first two weeks of my stay here, shelling and sniping was about as usual. During the third week they were remarkably quiet, "Ben" only firing four shells in the whole week. There was a Cape Policeman killed, and one wounded, the latter being struck by a 5 lb. shell in the face, losing his eyesight and his nose. He is still living and doing well, but quite blind. This is the man that brought news that Jim had got out safely. He had met him in Kenya.

We have had news all along. The Relief of Ladysmith; the fall of Bloemfontein; and the capture of Cronjé, etc. etc. In the last few days there has been a lot of good news coming in, and people's hopes are running high.

Plumer's Column is within 35 miles of us, and Jim is coming in with it. I have had several notes from him. Major Goold-Adams, who has been to see me several times here, has kept Jim informed of how I am getting on, so I have not written to him.

Capt. Cowan (Town Volunteers) has also been to see me several times. We all have great hopes that we will soon have relief. This morning's rumours are that the Relief Column from the South was at Vryburg a week ago, and that Plumer will be in on Sunday. No doubt the end is very near, and it is time. We have gone on for nearly six months.

Food stuffs are now very scarce. The rations are very poor. The hospital is now full up with cases of fever and dysentery, as the result.

8 oz. Bread
14 oz, fresh Meat.
½ oz. Coffee.
¼ oz. Tea.
2 oz. Sugar.

that's the daily ration per man. The bread is very poor, being made of Boer meal, crushed wheat and crushed oats. These are the oats that were here for the horses, They are crushed, and the husks sifted out (some of them). The husks were used for feeding horses

till last week, when a Scotsman showed the Colonel some "Sowens" he had made for them. The Colonel tasted it, and immediately set him to work to make it in quantities for the people. This mixture can be bought for 3d. per pint, and it is good food. It is wonderful what men will eat when they get hungry!

The Commissariat Officer commandeered all the starch in town for food purposes, and they say starch pudding is delicious. There is one shop allowed to open every Sunday for the sale of foods. They have a limited supply for each purchaser.

2 lb. tin mutton	- 4/6d.
½ lb. tin sardines	- 2/-
Tin fruit	- 3/-
Icing sugar	- 4/- per lb (no other to be bought)
Tinned butter	- 5/- per lb.
Jellies	- 1/- pkt. etc.

These are about the run of prices, eggs when you can get hold of any are 1/- each. Fowls 7/- and 8/-. Milk is very scarce but if you happen to get hold of a native with a bottle for sale he will want 1/6 for it.

The enemy is very noisy this morning, after being very quiet for 4 or 5 days, scarcely firing a shot. This morning at 6.45 a.m., with "Ben", 2 and 9 pd. and 5 pd., 1 and 12 pd. and 1 lb. Maxim, they began firing on the town, and are still at it as I write this at 11.30 a.m. They have undoubtedly had reverses with Plumer, for three of the above mentioned guns have just arrived.

170th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, March 30th.

The last two days and to-day have been very quiet. News came in to-day from the High Commissioner, dated March 10th. The Railway is repaired to about 30 miles north of Kimberley, or 295 miles south of Mafeking. Lord Kitchener is busy running down rebels in Prieska District, in West Colony, with a strong force. I am getting stronger every day. The enemy fired over 900 shells on Tuesday last, and wounded only one man. Rain seems over now, It has set in a bit cold, giving a foretaste of colder weather soon.

172nd DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, April 1st.

A flag of truce came in from the enemy this morning, informing the Colonel that there was an engagement between them and Colonel Plumer's Force on Saturday, and asking him to remove his dead. Two wagons were sent out, and returned about 7 p.m., bringing in the bodies of the three men killed. I also learn that in yesterday's engagement, (six miles from Mafeking), there were thirty-five men wounded And eleven missing.

178th DAY OF SIEGE Saturday, April 7th.

Heavy shelling during the afternoon, I am almost well, and now able to walk about a bit.

79th DAY OF SIEGE Sunday, April 8th.

Quiet day as usual. Went down town for a walk in the afternoon. Party of cattle

looters, consisting of 25 natives, who went out on Friday, are reported to have been led into a trap. They were captured by the Boers, who killed every one of them. Nice day. Chilly night.

182nd DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, April 11th.

The Boers have been very noisy to-day. They began early with seven guns, namely: "Big Ben", the 94 pounder, 1 and 15 pd; 1 and 12 pd; and 2 and 1 pd Maxims. Firing kept up all day. "Ben" alone fired 72 shells. Very little damage done. One native wounded and a few horses killed, was all the loss of life.

183rd DAY of SIEGE. Thursday, April 12th.

To-day begins the 7th month of the Siege. Weather very dull, showery and cold. I had two teeth drawn this morning, and my gums are a bit swollen and tender. I am obliged to keep in for fear of cold. Had a letter from Jim this morning. He is well and still at Kanye. News also in to-day, but nothing of any importance. The bread ration is reduced to 6 oz. per man. So a man is now getting 1 quart "Sowens"; 6 oz. bread; 1 lb. meat; ½ oz. coffee; ¼ oz. tea; 1½ ozs. sugar; and 1 lb. vegetables. So after all, we are not hard pressed, after 6 month's siege.

185th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, April 14th.

One of Plumer's men, who was wounded in that engagement, and has since died in the Boer laager, was brought in here last night and buried this morning. Another party of native cattle looters were cut up during the night. Six of their wounded were brought up here at 3 a.m. this morning.

Heavy shelling from 1 Pound Maxim and 9 pd. gun on Fort Ayr this morning. One man killed and another wounded. The latter has had to have one leg off; the other leg is also broken, I am looking at him, as I write this lying in my bed. Poor fellow, there is little hope for him. It is one thing to sit at home, and read and write about war, and the gallant warriors; but it is quite another thing to be here in this hospital and see the result of war and "gallant deeds."

I have quite recovered from my illness, and will be going out to-morrow. This will make my stay here eight weeks, all but one day. I will endeavour to look after myself until the end of the siege, and will then probably have a fortnight down in Cape Town before I start work again.

187th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, April 16th.

My Birthday! "Ben" has really gone at last. She fired her last shot on Saturday, April 14th. They say she has gone to Kroonstad, to assist in a combined stand they are making there against Lord Roberts. Anyway it is a relief to us she is gone. Two or three smaller guns are still here, but those we don't fear so much as "Big Ben." Wet afternoon and night.

188th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, April 17th.

Still raining and likely to be a wet day. It is also very cold. The rains are very late

this season. We usually get dry frosty weather at this time of the year. I have been indoors for most of the day. My day duty is very light.

189th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, April 18th.

Raining for most of the night. It still continues, and is likely to keep on all day long. I am getting on very well. I must take care of myself while the rain lasts, I also manage very well with the rations. I am messing with several others in a private house, and we are very well cared for.

I had "Sowens" for breakfast, which goes down fairly well when you are hungry. I use my sugar to sweeten it a little, and drink my tea and coffee without sugar and milk. It is wonderful what people will take to when they try - and are hungry. Then I had soup, meat and little vegetables for dinner. I will have "Sowens" again, and the other 3 oz. of bread, for tea. No fear of over-eating oneself these times! But I thank God that we are no worse off. No news this week so far.

191st DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, April 20th.

A nice bright morning. News in from Lord Roberts. So we are here till the 18th May at the very least! They have started killing off the horses before they get any poorer, and preserving the meat in the form of smoked sausages, which will be issued to the Garrison for rations, on Monday.

193rd DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, April 22nd.

Nice day. Very quiet. News came in to-day, but none of it is made public. No more "Sowens" to be issued to the natives, and all sales stopped from to-morrow. So we can get nothing but our daily ration of one quart per day. The natives are having horse soup.

195th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, April 24th.

A lovely day. Rain seems gone at last. It is dry and chilly. Typhoid fever broke out rather badly in the Cape Police trenches last week. Two men died in hospital yesterday and two to-day, therefrom. The dry weather will put a stop to its spreading further. Horse flesh is being issued to the Garrison as rations. It is good! May I never have worse.

196th DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, April 25th.

An attack was expected early this morning. The Garrison stood to arms at 4.30 a.m., but the Boers failed to attack. Our bread ration is reduced to 4 ozs. I get on very well with the rations. God makes the food sufficient for the needs of my body.

I feel very well and the weather is enjoyable. I had for breakfast: a good plate of "curried Sowens"; a bit of fried meat; about 2 oz. bread; and tea without sugar. I said from my heart, thank God for a good breakfast.

All meat is now commandeered, and private killing is strictly prohibited. I still sleep indoors, and get off night duties. I only do one hour on the look out during the day. It is nice - to be able to walk about and feel safe, now "Big Ban" is away.

198th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, April 27th.

Runners came in from North and South. A letter from the High Commissioner dated April 17th in which he says he hopes to reach us with relief in three or four weeks at the latest. So that is the 15th May. I hope we shall not be disappointed. I am not so well. Yesterday and today, the weather is dull and chilly. We still get 6 oz. bread, although on Wednesday, it was reduced to 4 oz. To-day's bread ration is awfully sandy.

200th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, April 29th.

A lovely day. Horse beef issued all round to-day. Tasted it for the first time at breakfast. It is not at all bad - a luxury that people at home don't get!

201st DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, April 30th.

Feeling better to-day. A lot of runners came in, but no news made public.

202nd DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, May 1st.

More runners in to-day. I had a letter from Jim. He is down with fever, which he says is very bad on the Malopo, and up at Molepolole and Notwani. Natives, he says, are dying like flies. He gives me some Mosita news. The Dalys are against the English, and one of the sons is serving here with the enemy. Keeley is practically a prisoner on his farm. He is not able to leave; and the Boers have taken most of his cattle. Kinnear, the trader, at Pitsani, and Sharp, at Jan Massibis, are both at Kanye.

203rd DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, May 2nd.

We are having dry and healthy weather now. A bit chilly at night, but lovely during the day. I am glad to see the last of the rain. It will be better for us all.

I am keeping fairly well considering the circumstances. I have an abnormal appetite! At least, it seems so to me, and this is very trying when you know you can't get enough to satisfy it. To-day I have done very well as regards food, the best I have had since coming out of hospital.

Just follow me, and I will let you know all I did to-day. I got up at 7.15 and went round to the fort to draw my day's rations, namely:

- 12 oz. horse beef (minced).
- 1 quart "Sowens".
- 200 Split peas.
- 6 oz. bread.
- (1 oz. sugar, 1oz. coffee, ¼ oz. tea I get weekly).

I returned at 7.40 a.m. Had a wash and then read till breakfast, 8.15 a.m. This consisted of:-

- A plate of "Sowens" spiced with Grd. Cinnamon;
- 4 oz. Horse beef, fried in Salad Oil, with a tomato, (the latter I had given to me)
- 3 oz. Bread;
- A cup of tea, less sugar.
- I give my sugar ration to Mrs. Masters and family, in whose house we are messing.

I read and walked about till 10.30 a.m. I then had a cup of tea at 11 a.m. I walked down to Mrs. Earlys, and had a cup of "Bovril" (which costs 5/- a 4 oz. bottle). I took a short walk, and returned to dinner at 1.15 p.m. This consisted of:-

3 oz. vegetables with 4 oz. Horse Beef (Boiled);

A cup of milk and sugarless tea (also a luxury that English people don't drink).

I then took a walk down to the river, to Mrs. Webster's, about 1,000 yds, distant. I had a cup of coffee (with milk in it) at 2 p.m. 3 tomatoes at 4 p.m., and at 5.15 p.m. tea with Mr. Webster, sitting outside his back door. This meal consisted of two mealie cobs, roasted on the coals. I was hungry and I think I never tasted anything sweeter. I also had a cup of coffee, and returned at 6.15 p.m. to my usual tea, which consisted of 4 oz. fried horse flesh, 3 oz. bread, and tea without sugar or milk. I read till 8 p.m., and then retired to bed well satisfied.

This may, or it may not, be of interest to you, but it will give you an idea how the time is spent; and also of what a day's rations are without extras.

I spend a good deal of my time at Mr. Webster's! He has large Market Gardens beside the river and, of course, has plenty of vegetables. All these are, however, commandeered, and he is not allowed to sell any. Mrs. Webster is a Salvationist, and is a very kind hearted woman. She is a Colonial, and her own brothers are with the enemy here fighting against us. Mr. Webster is also a Colonial, of Scotch descent. His father was a survivor of the "Birkenhead." He is very Scotch like, and is known in Mafeking as "Dan" Webster.

The Boers were shelling a little to-day, with two guns, at herds of cattle and horses. We are not troubled with much shelling in town now, which is a great relief. Almost everyone is expecting General Carrington will be here to relieve us before the 24th May, but I will not be surprised if we are here till the end of June,

207th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, May 6th.

The enemy made a raid on some cattle at 11 a.m., and succeeded in getting 40 horses and mules. One of our men was killed.

208th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, May 7th.

Runners came in from Plumer bringing six fat oxen with them.

211th DAY OF SIEGE. Thursday, May 10th.

Had a bit of Plumer's beef for breakfast! A nice change from horse beef. A lovely day. Very quiet. No news.

212th DAY OF SIEGE. Friday, May 11th.

A special order issued to-day that only one third of the men are allowed away from the fort at a time. An attack is expected.

213th DAY OF SIEGE. Saturday, May 12th.

Awakened rather suddenly at 4 a.m. by heavy rifle firing out East. Bugle blowing and bells ringing for the alarm. I hastily dressed, and rushed off to the fort amid showers

of bullets. The whole place was astir in a very few minutes, and ready for the attack. One of our men who was standing beside me was hit in the head by a bullet which proved fatal, for he died two days later. He fell at my feet. I managed to keep cool and calm in face of this distressing sight.

Before 5 a.m., the firing out east ceased, and we were somewhat alarmed to see the native Stadt in a blaze, and heavy firing going on there. We soon learned that about 150 of the enemy had succeeded in entering the Stadt, and taking possession of part of the B.S.A.P. Fort. The remainder of the enemy were in two parties, spread out in the rocks of the river in the Stadt. Our men, quick as lightning, surrounded the B.S.A.P. Fort, and the Stadt, making the enemy prisoners.

It seems to me that the whole battle was anticipated by our people, for no sooner had this advance of the enemy passed our outside lines - which was done without a shot being fired - than our men closed in behind, opening fire on their support force of 600 men who were coming on, and turning them back.

During the morning some twenty-five of the enemy in the Stadt surrendered after a deal of firing. Things remained like this till about 4 p.m., when after a little firing from our men, the Fort lot surrendered, including Commandant Eloff and two other officers. The remainder of the enemy were left until after sundown. In the moonlight, about 7 p.m., they were pressed by our men with shell, bullet and bayonet, and they speedily surrendered. A number of them escaped, or rather were allowed to escape, under the heavy fire of our men. I saw this lot of prisoners being marched into the Market Square.

The enemy's casualties were 108 prisoners, 19 wounded, and 15 killed, besides their losses outside our forts which were heavy. We lost four killed and a few wounded, thus ending the Boers final attack on Mafeking. Only about a half of the prisoners were Boers, the remainder being foreigners, who give the Dutch an awful name.

It was intended that General Snyaman[sic] was to have made an attack on the East side of the town. The signal for his advance was to have been the burning of the Stadt, but he and his men lost nerve at the last moment. He is an awful coward.

214th DAY OF SIEGE. Sunday, May 13th.

A few 9 pound shells during the morning. White flags in and out all day long. The Dutch removed their dead. Quiet for the remainder of the day. Standing to arms all night.

215th DAY OF SIEGE. Monday, May 14th.

Great movements in the S.E. Laager all day. A company of horsemen were seen moving south, Also the arrival of a troop in the S.W. Laager from the south.

216th DAY OF SIEGE. Tuesday, May 15th.

Runners in from N. and S. I had a letter from Jim. The news is that the relief forces coming from N. and S. are both near. The S.E. Laager is seen to be clearing. Donkey sausage for rations to-day. Nicer eating than horse. Thank God for donkeys!

217th AND LAST DAY OF SIEGE. Wednesday, May 16th, 1900.

RELIEF AT LAST!

S.E. Laager still clearing away, and great excitement in the S.W. Laager. A company of horsemen left the S.E. Laager at noon, going round west. Heavy gun firing heard during the afternoon, about 6 miles away to the west, beginning at 2.30 p.m. and lasting till 5 p.m. Supposed to be our relief force, but we do not know definitely. The Colonel keeps things very quiet.

About 8 p.m., eight of the Imperial Light Horse rode into town from the relief force and gave us all the news. Great cheering. These men returned, and reported the way clear. So the Relief Column immediately moved in, reaching us by sunrise.

Thursday, May 17th, 1900.

The Relief that came in during the night consisted of about 2,000 men, 900 coming from Kimberley, and the remainder from the North. The men from the South came from Kimberley in 12 days. Quick work!

They went out in force during the early morning, and attacked the S.E. Laager. This was a great surprise to the enemy, who cleared out for all they were worth, leaving quantities of food stuffs behind. The first to run from the Laager was General Snyman[sic] and Commandant Botha, who were at breakfast when the shelling began. They had not expected this to happen so soon, thinking that their men who opposed our relief force yesterday and were driven back, would again oppose them to-day and thus keep our relief force outside for a few days. But our men gave them the slip, by coming in last night.

This is what one of the nurses told Mrs. Webster:- Yesterday (the 20th), up in the laager, where there are still two German nurses, and two wounded men, she (the nurse) said she was never more surprised in her life, the morning our shelling began, to see their General running away.

Our men took possession of the laager, and captured a 5 pound gun. Our fellows had such feeds as they had not had in their lives! The Town Guards paraded on the Market Square, at 10.30 a.m. to cheer the Relief on their return from their good morning's work. Great excitement and cheering. At noon, the Artillery went out to follow the enemy up. Firing was heard at 2 p.m., about 6 miles away, in the direction of the retreating enemy. But the enemy succeeded in getting away.