

The Carrington Extracts
From the diaries of
Caroline Kipling

Introduction to Book 2

Book 2

Book 2 of the Extracts continues from the year 1900. Charles Carrington provides an introduction, starting with a brief note on a minor dispute between two Cambridge newspapers in January 1900, and going on to provide a useful summary of the main events of the second South-African War and its aftermath, interleaved with notes on Kipling's whereabouts at the time. [A.J.W.]

CAMBRIDGE CHRONICLE v. CAMBRIDGE INDEPENDENT NEWS 19 JANUARY 1900

A quarrel between two Cambridge local papers. One of them had met Beresford (*'M'Turk' in Stalky & Co.*) and asked him for 'gen' about RK's schooldays. Beresford wrote to RK for permission but got no reply. He then released some stories which did not square with *Stalky and Co.*

The Judge rejected the whole story. *Stalky* was fiction and it didn't matter what comment was made on it.

BOER WAR DATES
1899-1900

[Summary by CEC (*Charles Carrington*)]

Kruger's Ultimatum

Following an influx of British and other foreign workers to the gold and diamond mines in the two Boer republics, Britain attempted to obtain full voting and citizenship rights for the uitlanders. After negotiations failed, the British tried to force the Boers' hand, by moving

troops up to the borders of the Free State and the Transvaal. On 9 October 1899, President Kruger of the Transvaal issued an ultimatum – ‘Remove your troops or we will declare war on the British Government’. The British didn’t and the Boers did.

11 Oct War declared.

16 Oct. A.M.B. (“*The Absent-Minded Beggar*”) written

21 Oct. Elandslaagte *This was the second battle of the war, and was a tactical victory for the British, though the commanding General threw away the advantage, by withdrawing.*

30 Oct. Nicholson’s Nek *This was a battle at the start of the Siege of Ladysmith, and was a major defeat for the British.*

31 Oct. A.M.B. published.

28 Nov. Modder River *This was a battle in which General Lord Methuen, who was trying to relieve Kimberley (where Cecil Rhodes was trapped), was opposed by General de la Rey, and General Cronje, who introduced tactics which foreshadowed the trench warfare of World War 1. However, when the British managed to outflank the Boer positions, they withdrew.*

Dec Magersfontein *This was a defeat for the British*

Forces under Methuen, though the Boer casualties were not inconsiderable.

10 Dec. Stormberg

This battle was the second of three British defeats in what came to be known as 'Black Week', and was largely due to the incompetence of the general, Gatacre, and his staff.

14 Dec. Offer of KCB

15 Dec. Depressed – war news.

15 Dec. Colenso

This was the third defeat of British forces in six days. Buller's strategy was to advance on the Boer republics with three columns – Methuen and Gatacre had been repulsed; now it was Buller's turn.

19 Dec. Recruiting Meeting.

The news of these three tactical defeats came as a shock to the British public. The army had not been in a stand-up fight against an enemy armed with modern weapons since the Crimean war, and the casualties were high, compared to those suffered in the Sudan two years earlier. (They included Lord Robert's son, killed at Colenso: he was awarded one of four VCs for his actions, which his father thereafter wore on his right breast.)

However, within two-and-a-half months, the British had achieved their original aims. Buller eventually crossed the Tugela River and relieved Ladysmith, on 28 February. Gatacre's job had been to secure the Cape Middle Province, and this was achieved after the arrival of British reinforcements, the Boers having failed to take advantage of their battlefield success. And Lord Roberts, hastily sent out with reinforcements, relieved Kimberley on 15 February, and forced Cronje and his army to surrender after the battle of Paardeberg. It had been "an imperial lesson".

1900

20 Jan.- 5 Feb At Sea

1899 had been a miserable year for the Kiplings, and they went south for the winter again

24 Jan. Spion Kop.

Another British defeat on the road to Ladysmith. The commanding general, Warren, lost control of the battle when it might have been won. The British withdrew over the Tugela River, but Buller took charge again,, and Ladysmith was relieved four weeks later, but not before the Boers had given Buller another bloody nose.

5 Feb. Vaalkranz

The third of Buller's failed attempts to get through to Ladysmith.

14 Feb. Relief of Kimberley.

17-27 Feb. Paardeberg and relief of Ladysmith

General Cronje's force of 3,000 Boers was surrounded and forced to surrender, (a major blow for the Boers). After another series of actions along the line of the Tugela River, the Boers withdrew to a line of hills 30 miles north of Ladysmith, and the British forces were able to march in unopposed.

22-26 Feb. On the train

24 Feb. Letter in train.

Kipling went in an ambulance train up to the railhead at the Modder

River. On 24th, he took down a home letter at the dictation of a soldier who had lost an arm. [See CARRINGTON. p.306 and John McGivering's notes on "With Number Three" in NRG.]

13 Mar, Bloemfontein

Following Paardeberg, there was nothing to stop the British occupying Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State.

19 Mar.R. leaves for Bloemfontein.

Kipling had been asked by Roberts to help produce a newspaper for the troops, The Friend. [See John Radcliffe's notes on "A Burgher of the Free State" in NRG]

27 Mar. Karee Siding

This scuffle was Kipling's first 'active service', in which he got shot over.

“ Death of Joubert

Commandant General of the South African Republic (the Transvaal) died in hospital after being injured on a raid into Natal the previous November. Kipling wrote a poem "General Joubert" as an epitaph to a brave foe.

31 Mar. Sanna's Post (?)

This engagement, a tactical victory for the Boers, resulted in the capture of Bloemfontein's source of water, which in turn aggravated an outbreak of enteric fever and cholera.

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3 Apr. R. at Cape Town
11-27 Apr. At Sea

Kipling returned to England, as planned, and plunged into national politics in support of Milner's policies in South Africa.

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| 17 May | Relief of Mafeking. | <i>Mafeking was at the northern tip of CVape Colony, close to the border of Bechuana land (now Botswana). It was besieged by the Boers from the start of the war until 17 May 1900, and turned the commander of the garrison, Colonel Robert Baden-Powell into a national hero.</i> |
| 31 May | Johannesburg. | <i>British troops entered Johannesburg</i> |
| 5 June | Pretoria | <i>British troops took Pretoria, capital of the Transvaal. This ended the fighting between large bodies of men: but guerrilla warfare continued for two more years.</i> |

SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY 1902-1908 [Summary by CEC [Carrington]]

June 1902 Peace

The Treaty of Vereeniging was signed on 31 May. It brought about the end of the two Boer republics as independent states, but they were given limited self-government as colonies of the British Empire, and in 1910 became part of the Union of South Africa.

- 26 Dec. Chamberlain at Durban – Jan. (1903) in Transvaal.
- Joseph Chamberlain was the Secretary of State for the Colonies at this time. He was a Liberal Unionist (a Liberal who was against Irish Home Rule), in alliance with the Conservatives.*
- 1903 Chamberlain replaced by Lyttleton. [as Colonial Secretary]
- Chamberlain had resigned from the government to campaign for Tariff Reform and Imperial Preference.*
- Dec. Milner approves Chinese Labour,
- Alfred Milner (1854-1925), then Lord Milner, was the British High Commissioner for South Africa, and Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. In the reconstruction which followed the peace treaty, the mine-owners on the Rand were finding it difficult to recruit native labour, and pressed for authorisation to import Chinese coolies on three-year contracts.*
- 1904 (early) Jameson PM (Prime Minister) of Cape.
- Leander Starr Jameson (1853-1917) was Prime Minister of Cape Colony, February 1904 – 1908. He had led the ‘Jameson Raid’ in 1896, the intention of which had been to provoke an uprising in the Transvaal against the rule of the Boer Republic: the raid failed, and he was tried in London and given a nominal prison sentence. He returned to South Africa and resumed his career in politics and business. Kipling based his poem “If” on the character of Jameson (CARRINGTON p. 382).*
- July 1904 Chinese begin work [indentured Chinese labourers]
- April 1905. End of Milner’s tour of office. \ Selborne [as H.C. for S. Africa] [as Col. Secretary]

[Carrington's note (that the Earl of Selborne was Secretary for the Colonies) is incorrect. Lord Selborne(1859-1942) was a Conservative politician, who had just spent five years as First Lord of the Admiralty. He remained the High Commissioner for South Adfrica until the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. A.J.W.]

Dec. 1905

Balfour retires.

A.J. Balfour (1848-1930) was Prime Minister, 1902-1905. He succeeded Lord Salisbury (his uncle) in July 1902 after peace had been declared.

Jan. 1906

Gen. Election.

This resulted in a Liberal landslide victory, and set the pattern of British domestic and imperial policies for the next ten years.

June

Bambata's [*current spelling 'Bambatha'*] Rebellion – Natal (last Zulu rising).

This arose from the colonial government's imposition of a poll tax. Mahatma Gandhi, then a lawyer in South Africa, wrote supporting the government.

Dec.

Lyttleton's Constitution annulled.

Alfred Lyttleton had become Colonial Secretary in September 1903, and in March 1905, had introduced representative government for the Transvaal. The incoming Liberal government cancelled this, but introduced a new Constitution the following year.

Feb. 1907

Transvaal Elections

Botha PM (of Transvaal)

Fischer PM of OFS (*Orange Free State*)

The new British Liberal government introduced a new Constitution, and elections were held which resulted in Boer control

of the Transvaal parliament, despite the fact that settlers of British stock substantially outnumbered the Boers: however, the population distribution was such that the Boer party gained the greatest number of seats.

General Louis Botha (1862-1919) was a Boer leader of considerable military ability who was never captured during the Boer War (he is credited with having captured the young Winston Churchill). He was a signatory of the Treaty of Vereeniging and became the generally accepted leader of the Boers in both the former Boer republics. He later declared unconditional support for the adherence of the two Boer colonies to the British Empire, and at the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 became the first Prime Minister of the Union.

Abraham Fischer (1850-1913) was a Boer politician, the first and only Prime Minister of what was now the Orange River Colony (formerly the Orange Free State) in 1907. At the Union in 1910, he joined the Union cabinet.

1907-1908

Trouble with Gandhi in Transvaal.
'Ethiopian' movement in Natal.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948), usually given the Indian honorific Mahatma (meaning 'high-souled' or 'venerable') had been born in India, and studied Law in London. He went out to The Orange Free State in 1893 to represent a group of Muslim Indian traders in Pretoria. He became a leading representative of all Indians, of whatever religion or caste, in their fight for civil rights. The particular 'trouble' referred to here concerned a bill promulgated by the Transvaal government requiring all Indians to register. Gandhi encouraged the Indian community in non-compliance with the law, and the public outcry against the brutality with which the law was enforced, forced a compromise.

The 'Ethiopian' movement was provoked by the Christian Church of Ethiopia sending native Africans to the USA to be educated. This was seen as a forerunner of an Africa for the

Africans movement, which would imperil white rule. It was confined largely to Natal, although it was prominent in Cape Colony. The Church was at this time united with the Coptic Orthodox Church.

Sep. 1907

Fall of Jameson's Ministry

Merriman comes back (as premier of S. Africa – *sic*)

Jameson (see above, 1904) had become Prime Minister of Cape Colony as the leader of the Progressive Party, which was almost exclusively made up of settlers of British stock, and British immigrants. They actually lost power on 02 February 1908.

Merriman was John Xavier Merriman (1841-1926). He had emigrated to Cape Colony in 1849, and became a full-time politician, supporting the South Africa Party. He remained Prime Minister of Cape Colony, until the formation of the Union in 1910.

[Carrington is incorrect in describing Merriman as "premier of South Africa": as remarked immediately above, he was Premier of Cape Colony. A.J.W.]

Nov. 1906 (?)

Jameson appealed to Selborne to move for Union (of South Africa)

Selborne was now the High Commissioner of Great Britain in Cape Colony, and Governor of the Orange River and Transvaal Colonies.

12 Oct. 1908

Nat. Convention, Durban.

This convention, which included both Boers and British colonists set out the terms and conditions under which the four colonies would unite. These were transmitted to the British Government (which supported the proposal) and were enacted

as the South Africa Act of 1909, which brought the Union of South Africa into existence on 31 May 1910.

[C.C./A.J.W./J.R.]

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