



# Newspaper Reports

## Wellow

### FROM A WELLOW MAN

The following letters have been received by the Rev. Le Gendre G. Horton, vicar of Wellow, from Sergeant Edward E. Husband, 2nd Battalion Somerset Light Infantry, now serving in South Africa. Sergt. Husband is a Reservist, and until he rejoined the colours was a porter on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway at Ashton-under-Lyne:-

Bethulie, Orange Free State Border, South Africa.

Saturday, May 26 1900.

Reverend Sir and Madam.

Just a few lines to acknowledge receipt of your kind present, which came to hand quite safely yesterday, and I am glad to say found me quite safe, although I am beginning to feel the stress of this hard campaign. I presume the papers at home have noted our removal from General Buller's command at Elandsplaagte, Natal. We sailed from Durban to East London, then trained to Aliwal North. From there we marched through Rouxville, fought the Boers at Lushman's Kop and totally routed them, and then we relieved the garrison at Wepener. After a two days' rest we started off across country to Smithfield, where we stayed for a fortnight and disarmed about 300 Orange Free State Boers, and then we came on to this place. We are off again tomorrow by train to Fourteen Streams, where we rejoin General Hart and the Irish Brigade. In view of the glorious successes of our arms recently, I think the end of the campaign is really in sight, the collapse of the Boers has been as remarkable as their determined stand at the commencement of the war. It is a pitiful sight to see the misery and distress caused by the enemy throughout the country; everywhere they go they carry wanton destruction and spoilation of property. Hundreds of the more illiterate Boers were coerced by lies and tales of phantom victories to take up arms against us to their sorrow. I have seen the Basutos; they are a fine, manly tribe, who are embracing Christianity and have English schools and are adopting English customs. They have suffered a lot through the Dutch, and hate them fiercely; in fact they have required a very strong hand to keep them in leash.

I thank you and Mrs. Horton very much for the Testament, and I shall always prize it very much indeed. It is a nice convenient size to carry in the pocket of my khaki coat and makes up for the loss of my bible, which, being too big, I was obliged to send back to the Base Depot. I also desire to thank you for your kind letter which came safely to hand before I left Natal, but owing to our marching through the enemy's country we were isolated from all postal communication from the outside world. So you will understand my silence. Hoping this will find Mrs. Horton, yourself, and family quite well.

I beg to remain, Reverend Sir, your humble servant,

"EDWARD HUSBAND."

Krugersdorp, Transvaal.

June 21 1900.

Reverend Sir,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your very kind letter dated May 9, which came safely to hand at Lichtenburg, about 130 miles from this place. I cannot express to you how pleased I am to think that the people of Wellow and yourself and Mrs. Horton have been so kind as to make up a parcel of garments for my Company H. I have shown your letter to the officer commanding my company and he is delighted, and intends enclosing a note of thanks to you when I can write acknowledging the receipt of the parcel. I must explain to you that on our arrival at Vryburg (Bechuanaland) from the Orange Free State, on May 29, our regiment was divided, four companies and the Volunteer Company remaining to garrison Vryburg, and the other four companies, under the command of Major R. B. Williams joined General Hart's Irish Brigade, and with the Union Brigade under General Barton with Royal Horse, Field Artillery Cavalry, Imperial Yeomanry, and Mounted Infantry, the whole under the supreme command of Gen. Archibald Hunter, marched out of Vryburg on May 31. Taking a line N.N.E. from Vryburg, the force moved forward towards Mafeking until it reached Maribogopan, and on Whit Sunday morning about 8.30 a.m. we crossed the Transvaal border and gave three hearty cheers. From there we moved in a more easterly direction, right across country to Lichtenburg. From there we marched to Friedrickstad, and then on to Randfontein, through the Gold Mining District to Krugersdorp. Since we started from Vryburg we have marched about 240 miles, through blinding dust, scarcely any water, and often on half rations, but I am pleased to say that the Somersets have pulled through and had only three men fall out the whole time. Yesterday all branches of the service present here paraded in front of the Town Hall to hoist the Flag of Freedom and put the seal of Old England on the place for good and all. I hope. We gave three cheers for her Majesty the Queen, and I can tell you the town rang again with our voices, and our helmets went up in the air like a cloud. The Boer residents here seem very depressed over the turn of affairs, but they'll have to get used to it, I suppose. Now I have endeavoured to give you a rough outline of our most recent movements, and you will see that as we are so far away from our headquarters the parcel has probably gone to Vryburg; therefore we have not yet received it, nor any intimation from Colonel Gallway to that effect. Nevertheless I assure you that the contents will be very acceptable to us "Absent-minded Beggars," and I hope to be able to acknowledge receipt at an early date. I have not had the pleasure of meeting the gentlemen to whom you refer in your letter, but am keeping my eyes and ears open for them yet. I am very thankful to yourself and Mrs. Horton for calling on Mrs. Husband occasionally. I dare say she is longing for my return, but we must do our work first, and then we can turn our faces homeward, knowing that this is not a half done job as it was in 1881. We are expecting to march from here in a few days, but do not yet know if we go to Johannesburg (18 miles) or Pretoria (60 miles). I must ask you to excuse pencil, sir, as pen and ink is out of the question on service.

Hoping this will find yourself, Mrs. Horton, and family quite well, I beg to remain, Reverend Sir, your obedient servant.

EDWARD E. HUSBAND (sergeant).

2nd Somerset L.I., Field Force, South Africa.

**Bath Chronicle 26 July 1900**