



# ORDERS & MEDALS RESEARCH SOCIETY

This is to Certify that

*Meurig Jones*

Presented an Exhibit

*“Odd Men. British Cavalry in South Africa 1899-1902”*  
at the Society’s 2022 Convention

**“ODD MEN”**

**British Cavalry in**

**South Africa**

**1899-1902**

**Men who served in the  
war..... but not with their  
parent regiment.**

- **What they did**
- **Claspos they earned**
- **How to spot them**

## **Who or what is an “odd man”?**

An “odd man” is someone who serves in a campaign outside of their regiment that may or may not be serving in the same campaign.

In the context of the Second-Anglo Boer War, 1899-1902 these roles can be:

- Officer’s Servant – where the officer is himself may be an “odd man”
- Reinforcement drafts to a different regiment
- Signallers – signal units at Brigade & Division formed from different regiments
- Staff formations – including looking after the foreign military attaches
- Field Hospital
- Colonial units
- Shoeing-Smiths & Farriers – attached to colonial units, mounted infantry, veterinary or remount departments

By virtue of being an “odd man” their campaign medal entitlement can be different to their parent regiment.

The Queen’s South Africa medal with 26 clasps is ideal for spotting the “odd man”, even the King’s South Africa medal can highlight an “odd man”.

## Reading the medal – How to spot an “odd man”

1. When did the regiment arrive in South Africa?
2. When did the regiment leave South Africa?
3. What are the common clasps for the regiment?
4. Which regiments did not deploy to South Africa?

The table below answers these questions.

The data in this table has never been produced before and gives the most complete view of where regiments and “odd men” served in the war.

The data is more comprehensive than shown in *British Battles & Medals* (7<sup>th</sup> edition), Spink 2006.

**Download the "Odd Men" Identifier table here:**

**<http://www.casus-belli.co.uk/pages/Odd Men Identifier.pdf>**

## The Research & Sources

The main data for this exhibit comes from the medal rolls which have been put into a database allowing for in-depth analysis. Not every man is included in his regiment's main roll.



### Queen's South Africa medal:

- Cavalry Regiments WO100-112 thru 119
- Remounts WO100-234
- Staff WO100-299
- Miscellaneous rolls such as WO100-130 (Imperial Yeomanry), -211 (Mounted Infantry)



### King's South Africa medal:

- Cavalry Regiments WO100-302 thru 305
- Remounts WO100-354
- Staff WO100-355

**Printed Sources:**

**British Battles & Medals (7<sup>th</sup> Edition), Spink 2006**

**Abbott, PE, *Recipients of the Distinguished Conduct Medal 1855-1909*, Hayward & Son, 1987**

**Anglesey, The Marquess of, *A History of the British Cavalry vol 4 1899-1913*, Leo Cooper 1986**

**Forsyth, DR, *The Defenders of Kimberley Medal Roll*, privately published 1977**

**Jones, HM & MGM, *A Gazetteer of the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, The Military Press, 1999**

**Spiers, Edward (ed), *Letters from Ladysmith*, Frontline Books, 2010**

**Walker, C, *Mafeking Siege Register*, privately published 2009**



# King's South Africa Medal

Regiments that left the war in 1900 or deployed in 1901 would not accumulate the 18<sup>th</sup> months service required for a King's South Africa medal. Therefore, KSA medals to men from these regiments indicate an "odd man".

Regiment	KSAs issued
1 <sup>st</sup> Life Guards	17
2 <sup>nd</sup> Life Guards	19
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dragoon Guards	12
3 <sup>rd</sup> Dragoon Guards	31
3 <sup>rd</sup> Hussars	105
20 <sup>th</sup> Hussars	4
Royal Horse Guards	22



**Left:** Lance-Corporal 3894 Thomas Wright, 3<sup>rd</sup> Dragoon Guards.

He went to South Africa in 1900 and served as a signaller. Records do not indicate which formation he was attached to.

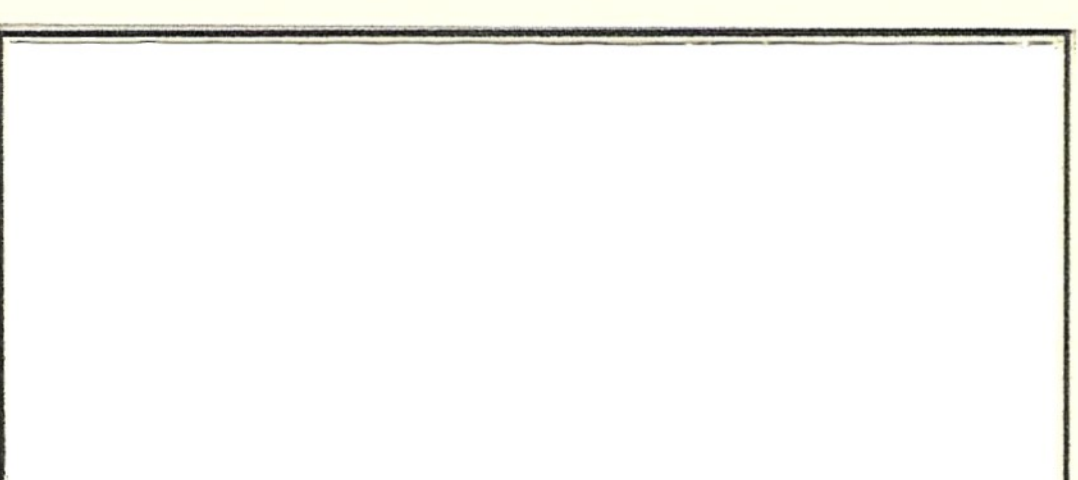
Thomas earned a QSA with the clasps Cape Colony, Orange, Free State.

# Defence of Mafeking – October 1899 – May 1900

In September 1899 Colonel RSS Baden-Powell Colonel decided to garrison Mafeking to defend the railway to Cape Town. The majority of the garrison were colonials and a town guard. He had a handful of regulars, and just three officers and nine men from the cavalry.

Cpt CC Bentinck	9 <sup>th</sup> Lancers	Protectorate Rgt
Cpt GC Wilson	Royal Horse Guards	Protectorate Rgt, ADC to Baden-Powell
Mjr AHC Hanbury-Tracey	Royal Horse Guards	ADC to Baden-Powell
Trpr 1139 J Waterston*	Royal Horse Guards	Servant Cpt GC Wilson
Cpl-Farrier 1322 W Nicholls	1 <sup>st</sup> Life Guards	Protectorate Rgt
Cpl-SS 1761 G Noller	1 <sup>st</sup> Life Guards	-
Cpl-SS 1950 S Bothwell DCM	2 <sup>nd</sup> Life Guards	Protectorate Rgt
Cpl-SS 1528 J Hawkesworth	2 <sup>nd</sup> Life Guards	-
Cpl Sddlr AJ Braisher	12 <sup>th</sup> Lancers	Protectorate Rgt
Cpl-SS 4015 H Kelland	17 <sup>th</sup> Lancers	Protectorate Rgt
Cpl-SS 4128 A Robertson	17 <sup>th</sup> Lancers	Protectorate Rgt
SS 4361 R Robinson	17 <sup>th</sup> Lancers	Protectorate Rgt

\* veteran of Tel-El-Kebir, Abu Klea (Camel Corps) and The Nile. Awarded the DCM for Abu Klea and Gubat.



**Above:** Corporal Shoeing-Smith 4015 Henry Kelland, 17<sup>th</sup> Lancers. He was later killed at Modderfontein (Tarkastad), September 17, 1901.

# Defence of Ladysmith November 1899 - February 1900

## Cavalry Defenders

5th Dragoon Guards (481)

5<sup>th</sup> Lancers (477)

18<sup>th</sup> Hussars (412)

19<sup>th</sup> Hussars (532)

11<sup>th</sup> Hussars (105)\*

4<sup>th</sup> Dragoon Guards (14, 50% of their deployment)

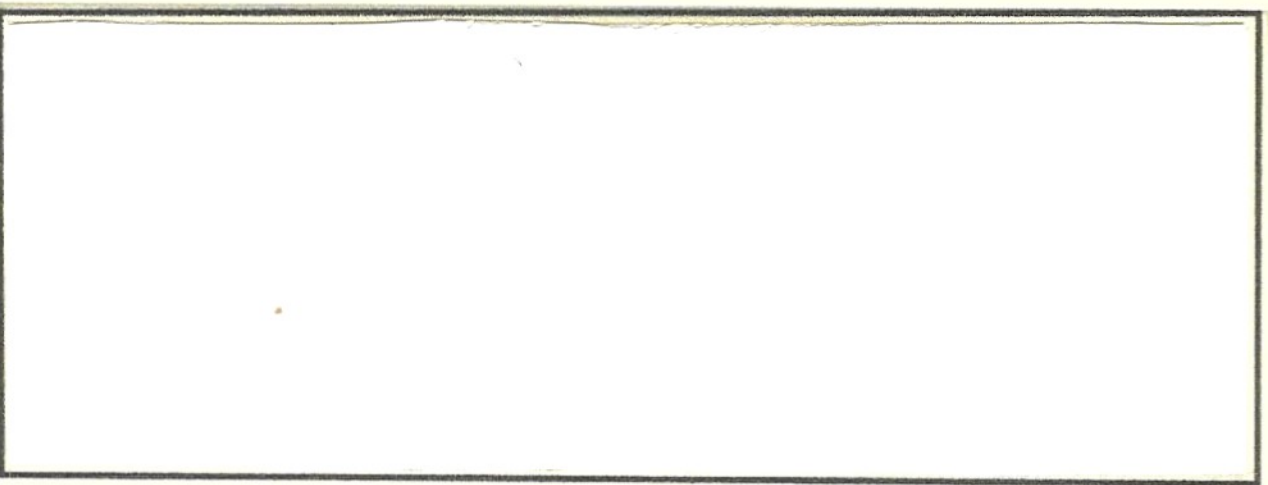
“Odd men”:

Another 12 cavalry regiments were represented by 44 men.



Drawing the enemy's fire.

\* Served with other regiments, see the panel “11<sup>th</sup> Hussars”



**Left: Pte 4055 Arthur Smedley 4<sup>th</sup> Hussars**

The regiment did not serve in South Africa. Arthur was one of 14 men sent from India with the 18<sup>th</sup> (British) Field Hospital, RAMC. They at Talana before being besieged.

A comrade Sgt T Robinson West Yorkshire Rgt (an infantry “odd man”) wrote home about Talana, “up in the fighting line nearly all the day, administering First Aid to the wounded..attached to the 18<sup>th</sup> British Field Hospital, and was left behind when the troops departed for Ladysmith. We were taken prisoners next day..being non-combatants, we were handed over on the 4<sup>th</sup> November...and have been besieged ever since.”

Leeds Mercury 27-03-1900 quoted in *Letters from Ladysmith*, Edward Spiers, Frontline Books, 2010

# Relief of Ladysmith December 1899 to February 1900

Clasps: Relief of Ladysmith and Tugela Heights

Relief Force - 18 – 20,000 men

Two and a half cavalry  
regiments:

1<sup>st</sup> Dragoons (618)

13<sup>th</sup> Hussars (583)

14<sup>th</sup> Hussars (382)

Another 20 cavalry regiments were represented  
by 152 men.

Of these 82 were drafts for the regiments  
besieged in Ladysmith: 5th Dragoon Guards, 5th  
Lancers, 18th and 19th Hussars. The remaining 69  
from 16 regiments served on the Staff, as  
signallers or officer's servant.

**Left:** Pte 3245 George Wesley

Butcher 12<sup>th</sup> Lancers

10<sup>th</sup> Brigade Staff

From Woburn, Bedfordshire.

Enlisted 1890, discharged

1902. Served WW1, home

service.

**Centre:** Trp 1122 Robert

Pearce 1st Life Guards

Servant to Lt Lord JS

Cavendish, 1st Life Guards.

Served 21 years, entitled to an

LSGC. Became a publican.

**Right:** Trpr 1122 George

Seamour 7<sup>th</sup> Dragoon Guards

Officer's servant, probably to

Cpt RGO Bramston-Newman,

whose role is unknown. They

both earned the same clasp

combination, the only two to

the regiment.

# Double Reliefs

## Kimberley and Mafeking

A very scarce combination overall, just seven examples to the whole Army:

7<sup>th</sup> Hussars – Prince Alexander of Teck, Captain and two servants; Ptes 4211 C Mott and 3809 WC Jeffrey

10<sup>th</sup> Hussars – Pte 3754 J Mann

Army Service Corps x 3

The cavalry that relieved Kimberley was literally worn out and could go no further. To provide a mounted force to relieve Mafeking 420 defenders of Kimberley rode to Mafeking in their place.

Pte Mann of the 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars volunteered into the Kimberley Light Horse as Trooper 509 to earn the Relief of Mafeking clasp.

## Kimberley and Ladysmith

Just two of this combination to the Army.

Pte 3715 Thomas Stitt 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons (Right:)

L-Cpl 3328 George Schofield 14<sup>th</sup> Hussars (P, RoK, T, TH, RoL)

Records do not reveal how these two men came to earn these clasps. But knowing the clasp qualification dates (below) we know that both had to be at Klip Drift on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1900, followed by Paardeberg.

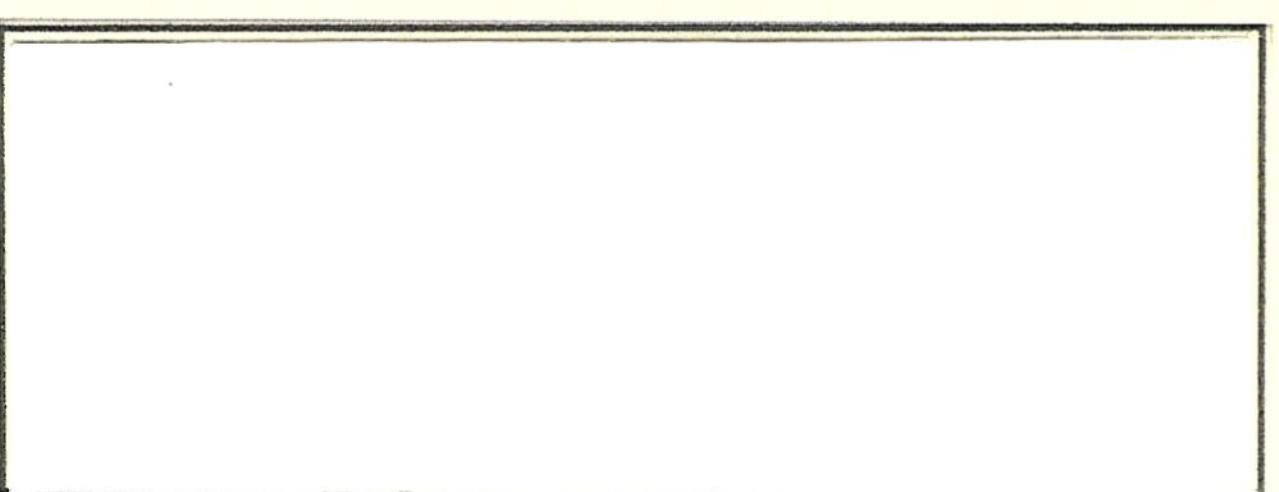
They then moved to Natal to earn the Relief of Ladysmith clasp and Schofield earned the Tugela Heights clasp.

Then Stitt returned to the west to be at Driefontein on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

Relief of Kimberley (at Klip Drift): 15th February 1900

Paardeberg: 17th – 26th February 1900

Tugela Heights: 14<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> February 1900

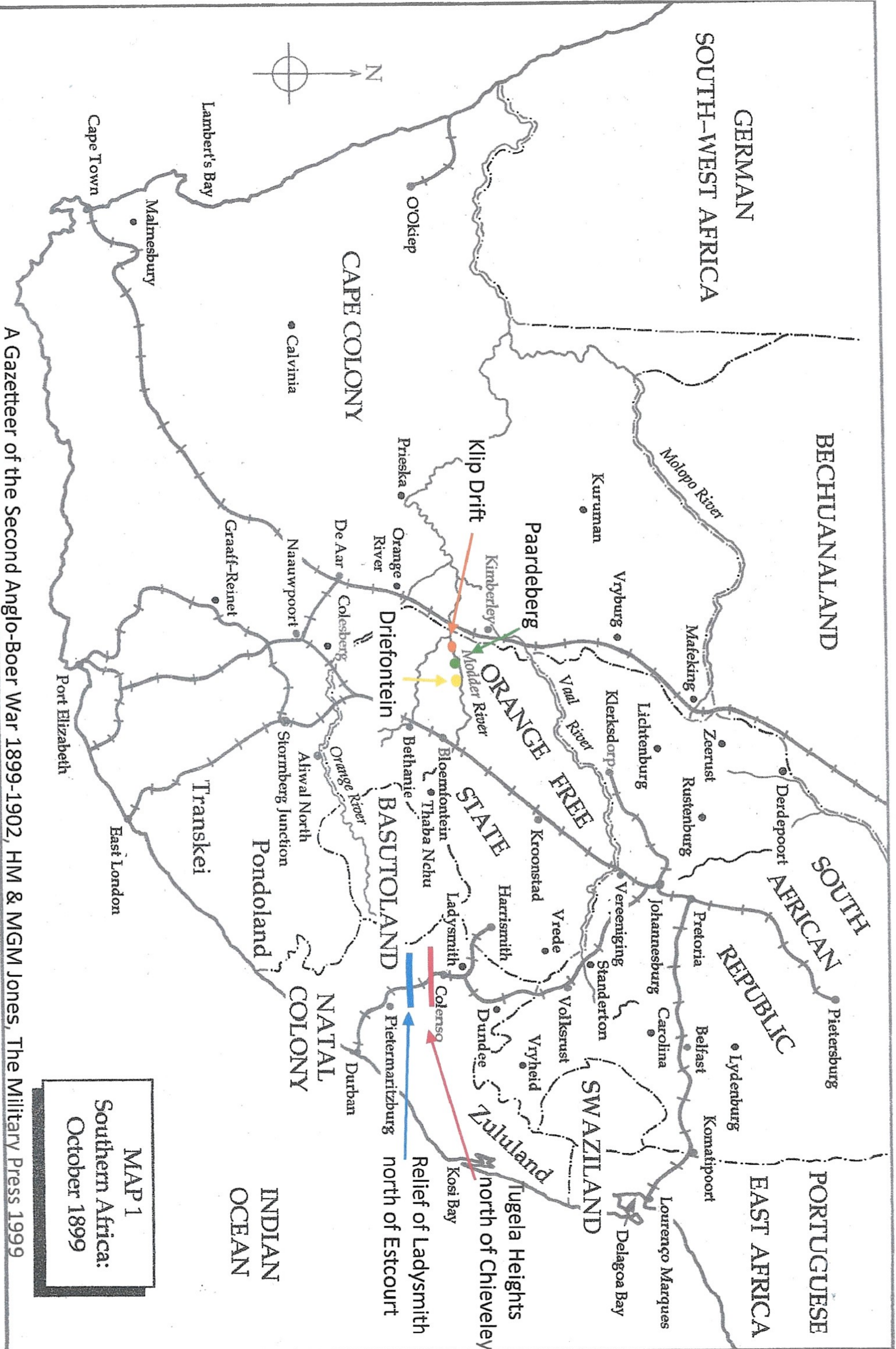


**Relief of Ladysmith: 15<sup>th</sup> December 1899 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 1900**

**Dreifontein (at Poplar Grove): 10<sup>th</sup> March 1900**

**The map shows the areas for each clasp and an indication of the distances each man covered.**





MAP 1  
Southern Africa:  
October 1899

A Gazetteer of the Second Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902, HM & MGM Jones, The Military Press 1999

## Ladysmith and Mafeking

The most common of the Double Reliefs to the Army. The Mafeking Relief force was deliberately engineered to have 100 regular infantry from the fusilier regiments representing the four nations of the United Kingdom. But there are only two examples for the cavalry:

Lt-Col RWR Barnes 4<sup>th</sup> Hussars, Cpt & Adjt Imperial Light Horse

**Below:** Pte 2918 HH Harris 13<sup>th</sup> Hussars, attached Imperial Light Horse

Henry had passed a Veterinary class in 1893 was probably attached to the ILH on account of his knowledge. He was discharged in 1902 with a poor disciplinary record.

With the outbreak of World War I he was keen to do "his bit" and enlisted for the Army Service Corps. Serving in France he died from disease in October 1915 aged 43. He was married with three sons and a step-son.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars – The regiment that served but did not deploy



In 1899 the 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars were stationed in India and Egypt where they amalgamated. They were not ordered to deploy but sent 299 men to the war, nearly 50% of the regiment. They supplied reinforcement drafts to regiments that did deploy.

© National Army Museum

### Defence of Ladysmith (105 clasps)

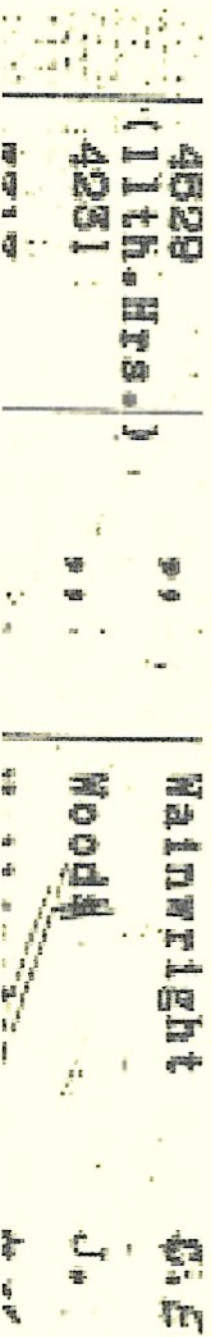
5 <sup>th</sup> Dragoon Guards	48
5 <sup>th</sup> Lancers	19
18 <sup>th</sup> Hussars	14
19 <sup>th</sup> Hussars	20
Staff	2
Army Veterinary Dept	1
Imperial Light Horse	1

The next biggest draft served with the Remount Department; 141 men helped maintain the stock of horses available to the Army. Only two of these men had served in the Defence of Ladysmith.

Ten men from the Defence of Ladysmith were also part of the force that relieved Mafeking, eight are confirmed attached to the Imperial Light Horse. The other two probably were as no Regular cavalry regiment served in the Relief of Mafeking. Identifying defenders of Ladysmith can be problematic, although the majority of QSAs traced are named "11<sup>th</sup> Hussars", one has been found named "19<sup>th</sup> Hussars".

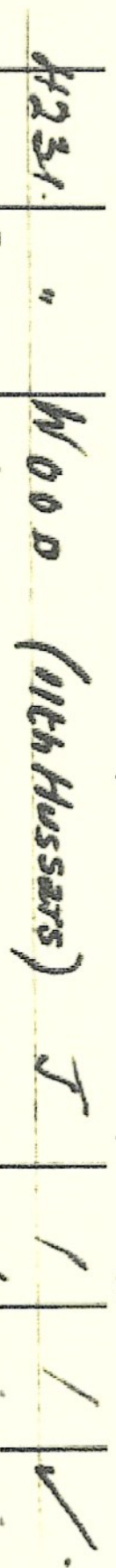
**Below: Pte 4231 John C Wood 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars**

John travelled from India to South Africa and was attached to the 19<sup>th</sup> Hussars for the Defence of Ladysmith. On the 19th Hussars' QSA roll (WO100-119 p51) he is identified



as "11<sup>th</sup> Hussars", yet his QSA is named to the 19<sup>th</sup> Hussars.

He is similarly noted on the 19<sup>th</sup> Hussars' KSA roll (WO100-305 p373), but the KSA is named 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars.



John re-enlisted in October 1914 and was sent to the Garrison battalion, Yorkshire Rgt serving in India to earn a British War Medal as his sole entitlement for World War I.

## Farriers, Saddlers and Shoeing-Smiths

British cavalry had a ready source of trained farriers, saddlers and shoeing-smiths. Some 122 men with these skills were attached to units such as the Army Veterinary Department, Remount Department, Imperial Yeomanry, Mounted Infantry and colonial units. Many of these men didn't earn clasps to set them out as "odd men".

**Left:** Shoeing-Smith 2790 J James 13<sup>th</sup> Hussars. The regiment served in the Relief of Ladysmith. James was attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mounted Infantry and did serve with the 13<sup>th</sup> Hussars at all. No service papers survive to add detail to his service. This is a unique combination to the regiment.

Only two men of the 13<sup>th</sup> Hussars were present at Belmont and Modder River, the other Pte 3132 J Cowie served on the Staff of the Guards Brigade.

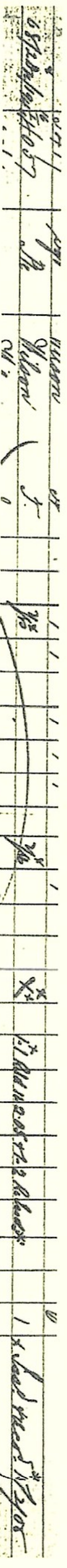
Only two men of the 13<sup>th</sup> Hussars received the clasp Johannesburg, the other is Pte 2918 HH Harris, see "Double Reliefs" panel.

## Issuing Anomalies

### Defence of Kimberley October 1899 - February 1900

No regular cavalry regiments served in the defence of Kimberley, yet two QSAs were issued one each to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons and 14<sup>th</sup> Hussars. In both cases the medal rolls are clearly marked, but there are contradictions.

Pte 4057 T Wilson 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoons medal roll shows entitlement to Paardeberg and Defence of Kimberley.



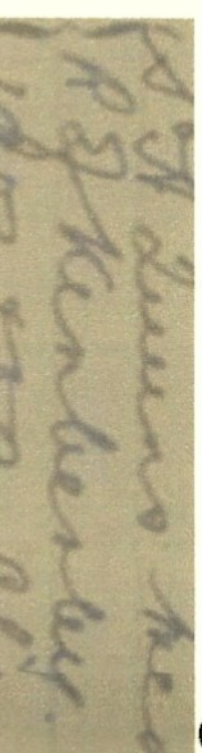
Service papers survive and show he arrived at the Cape in November 1899, after the siege had begun.

He was initially issued a QSA with one clasp – Cape Colony. In 1905 this medal was returned and he was re-issued with a QSA with the two clasps.

Trumpeter 3609 FY Garrard, 14<sup>th</sup> Hussars medal roll shows entitlement to Paardeberg, Dreifontein, Defence of Kimberley and Transvaal.

3609	FY	Garrard	14 <sup>th</sup>	Hussars	Paardeberg	Dreifontein	Defence of Kimberley	Transvaal
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Service papers show he arrived at the Cape in December 1899, after the siege had begun and entitlement to the Relief of Kimberley clasp which is more likely.



Garrard's group, with a Kimberley Star (issued un-named with no roll extant) that must be an embellishment, is known to be on the market.

Neither name is included in the first published roll for the Defence of Kimberley compiled by DR Forsyth in 1977. Don Forsyth was a great researcher, he and those he collaborated with were obviously unaware of either man serving in the defence.

How either man got in to Kimberley during the siege, if they ever did, is an enduring mystery.

## Wepener – Issuing Confusion

The siege of Wepener in April 1900 was marked with the clasp “Wepener”.

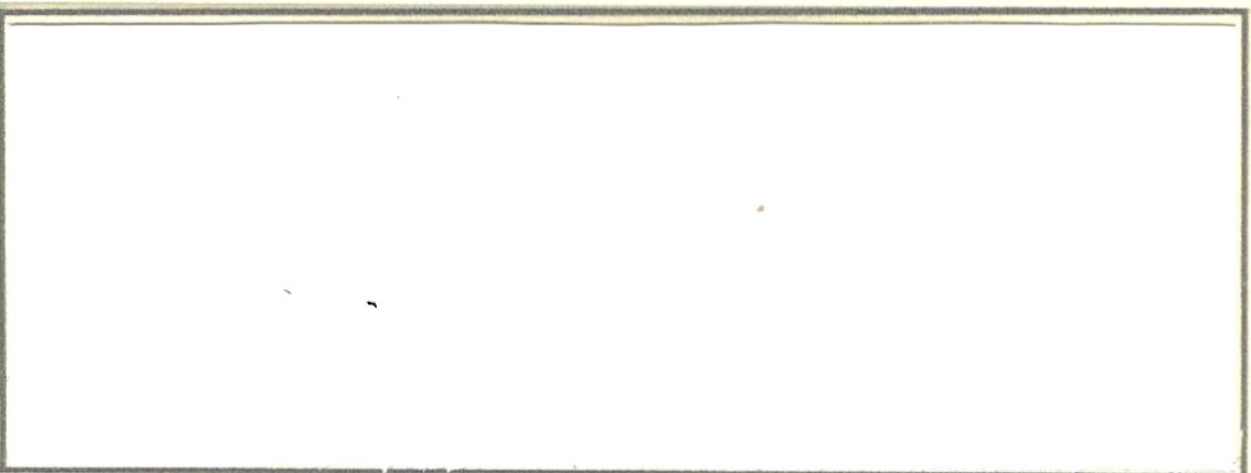
Four officers and three men from the regular cavalry served in the defence:

Lt-Col HM Grenfell	1st Life Guards	2 <sup>nd</sup> Brabant's Horse (commander)
Cpt PB Cookson	1 <sup>st</sup> Life Guards	1 <sup>st</sup> Brabant's Horse
Trpr J Tosh	1 <sup>st</sup> Life Guards	2 <sup>nd</sup> Brabant's Horse (possibly servant to Lt-Col HM Grenfell)
Cpt H Fielden	7 <sup>th</sup> Hussars	1 <sup>st</sup> Brabant's Horse
Mjr JA Henderson	8 <sup>th</sup> Hussars	1 <sup>st</sup> Brabant's Horse (commander)
Pte A Stewart	8 <sup>th</sup> Hussars	Servant to Mjr JA Henderson
Trpr W Farrington	21 <sup>st</sup> Lancers	2 <sup>nd</sup> Brabant's Horse

Unlike other sieges there were not separate “Defence” or “Relief” clasps, this caused confusion when medal rolls were prepared. Some units in the relief force, notably the Border Horse, claimed the “Wepener” clasp. This was corrected before medals were issued.



However, not all such errors were caught. The most well-known example are the medals issued to members of the Naval Brigade from HMS Doris. But clasps were also issued to the Imperial Yeomanry HQ that led the relief force. This included three men of the regular cavalry serving as servants to Major-General JP Brabazon, commanding the Imperial Yeomanry.



**Left:** Pte 2675 Arthur Swales 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars - one of Major-General Brabazon's servants. He is only shown in the Imperial Yeomanry medal rolls. Brabazon and his staff were awarded the Wepener clasp. The roll is later annotated to show all, but not Brabazon or Swales, having the Wepener clasp reclaimed. Brabazon's medal in the Royal Hussars Museum does not have the Wepener clasp on it.