

HOW WE ESCAPED FROM PRETORIA

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How We Escaped from Pretoria by Aylmer Haldane

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AYLMER HALDANE

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FROM PRETORIA**

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Photo by
J. Conell, Studio.

CAPTAIN HALDANE, D.S.O.

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PRETORIA

BY

CAPTAIN AYLMER HALDANE, D.S.O.

2ND BATT. GORDON HIGHLANDERS

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N O T E.

As those of my readers who chanced to see the brief accounts of our escape from Pretoria which have appeared in the English and other papers may possibly observe some slight discrepancy between those narratives and the one in the following pages, I take this opportunity of explaining the cause thereof.

In the press account I was unable to take the public entirely into my confidence, since on the night of the seventh day after leaving Pretoria we met with very material assistance from our own countrymen, the fact of which could in no way be disclosed without placing the lives and property of those who unhesitatingly risked both in the most imminent peril.

Until the war approached a successful termination I could not give a full and complete account of our adventures, and at the same time tender our heartfelt thanks to those without whose timely aid we should have had the greatest difficulty in reaching the Portuguese frontier.

LADYSMITH, *May* 1900.

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HOW WE ESCAPED FROM PRETORIA.

I.

CHIEVELEY TO PRETORIA.

"The most unkindest cut of all."

AFTER the fight of the 21st October at Elandsiaagte I was sent to Pietermaritzburg together with other wounded, there to be cared for and made fit to resume my place at the front. But during the last days of October and the first of November events rapidly developed; and Ladysmith becoming surrounded by the Boer main army, I found myself cut off from my regiment, which formed part of the beleaguered garrison. As soon as I could walk I obtained permission to proceed to Estcourt, the farthest point north held by the relieving force, whence I hoped to have an opportunity of passing through the Boer lines with despatches and so rejoin my regiment. At Estcourt I was attached for duty to the 2nd battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, one of those battalions which had taken part in the dashing capture of Talana Hill and the retreat to Lady-