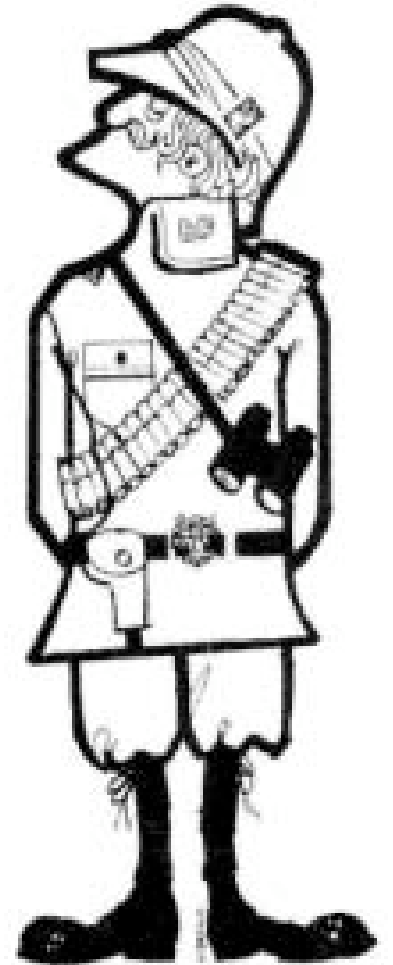


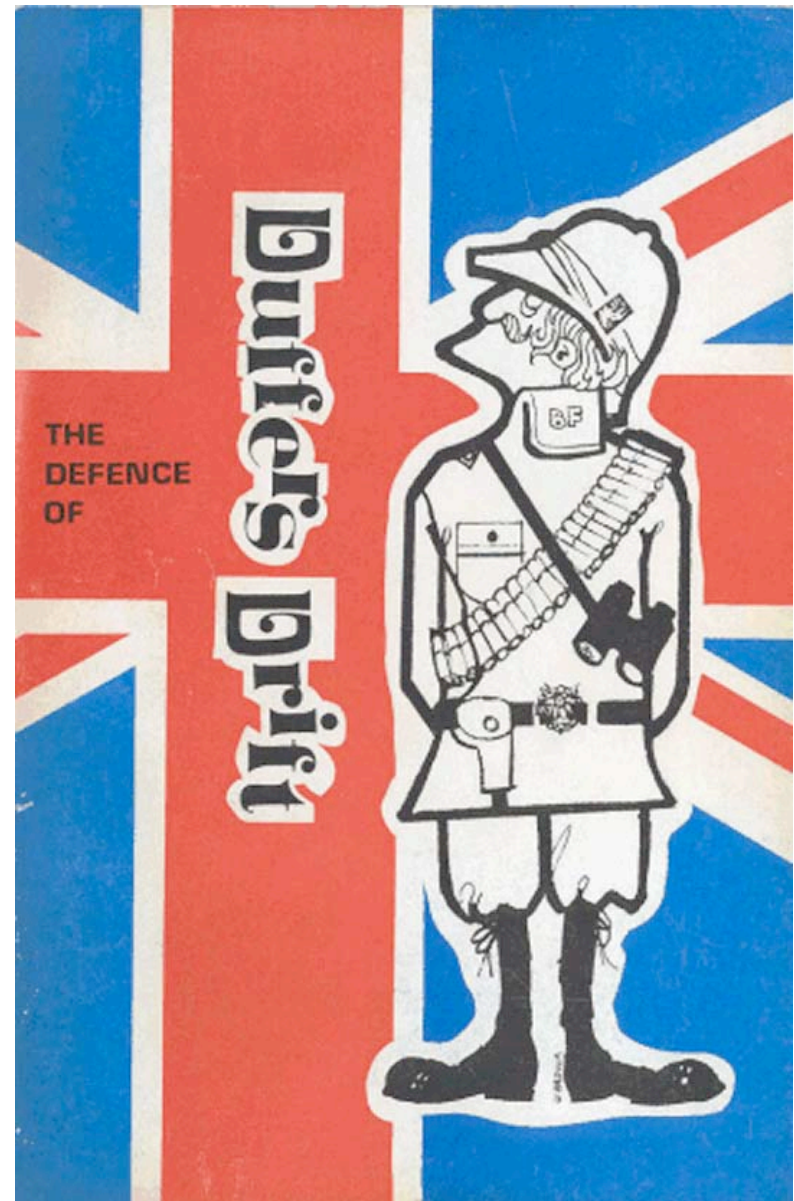
## 1.4: Small-Unit Tactics

Alex Montgomery



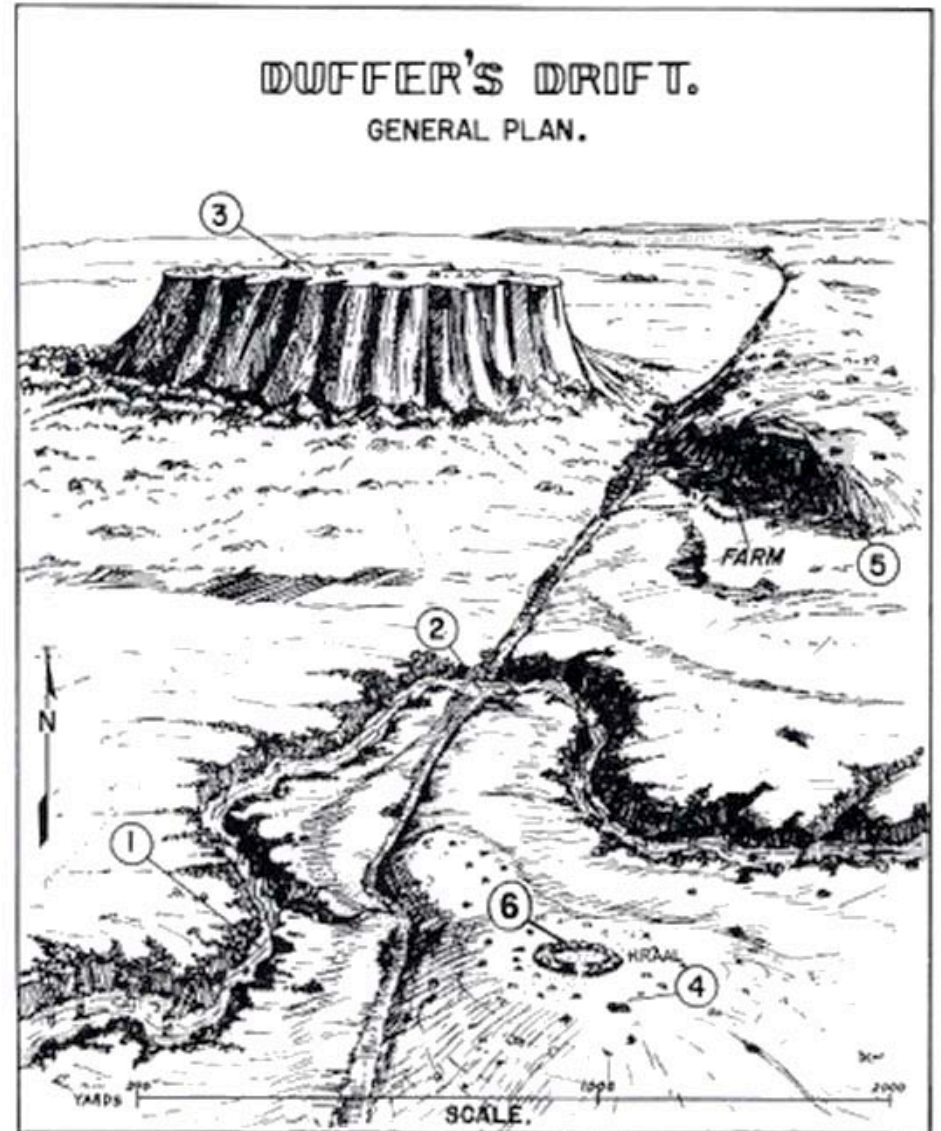
# Defence of Duffer's Drift

- E.D. Swinton (1868-1951)
- Credited for inventing the tank
- Fought in the Boer War (1899-1902)
  - Dutch settlers v. British
  - Guerrilla warfare
  - Ended Treaty of Vereeniging, May 1902



# Defence of Duffer's Drift

- (1) SILLIAASVOGEL RIVER
- (2) DRIFT
- (3) REGRET TABLE MOUNTAIN
- (4) WASCHOUT HILL
- (5) INCIDENTAMBIA
- (6) KRAAL

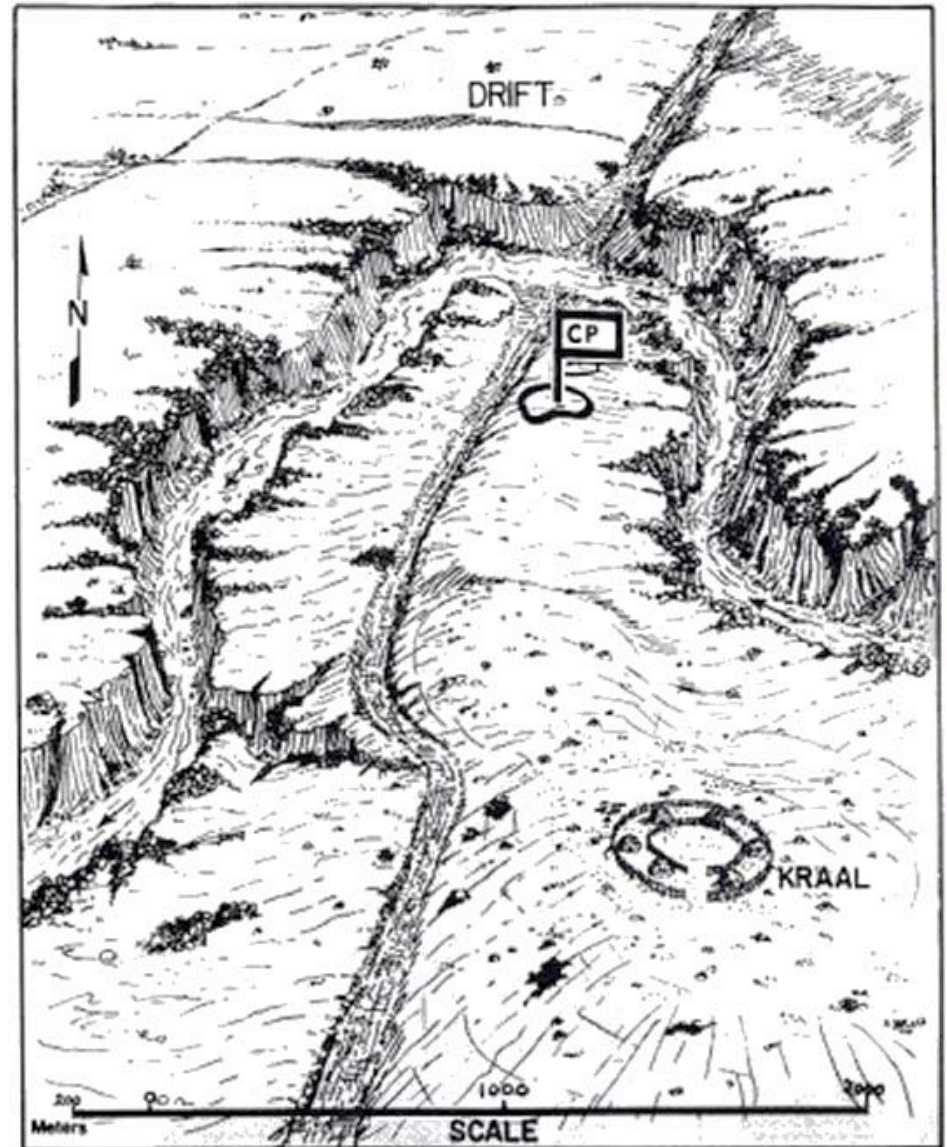




# First Dream

## Assumptions

- Picks, shovels unnecessary
- Rising ground good
- Guard target closely
- Natural obstacle
- Enemy far away
- Information from locals valid
- Locals not hostile
- Fires a good idea



# First Dream

## Results:

- Assault before dawn
- Locals aid Boers in intelligence
- Brits: 10 killed, 21 wounded
- Boers: 1 killed, 2 wounded
- Boer convoy crosses drift

## Lessons:

1. Do not put off defense
2. Do not trust locals
3. Do not advertise position
4. Do not be in tents

# Second Dream

Assumptions:

- Keeping posts further out gives more time
- Square Trenches sufficient
- Soldiers only diggers
- Keep locals out, fires out sufficient



# Second Dream

## Results:

- Brits: 24 killed, 6 wounded
- Boers able to fire from cover of bushes
- Brit position known
- Brits unable to fire from cover
- Square trenches increase casualties

## Lessons:

5. With modern weapons:
  - a) Don't sit on top of drift
  - b) Make positions away from concealed ground
  - c) Make defences concealed and bullet-proof
  - d) Square trenches not effective
6. Spread disinformation
7. Force labor



# Third Dream

## Assumptions:

- Position outside horseshoe better cover
- Straight trench w/ single break sufficient
- Sufficient to guard male population
- Enemy has same arms as you





# Third Dream

## Results:

- Shelled from a distance
- Trenches useless (a target) against indirect fire
- Location given away by other locals

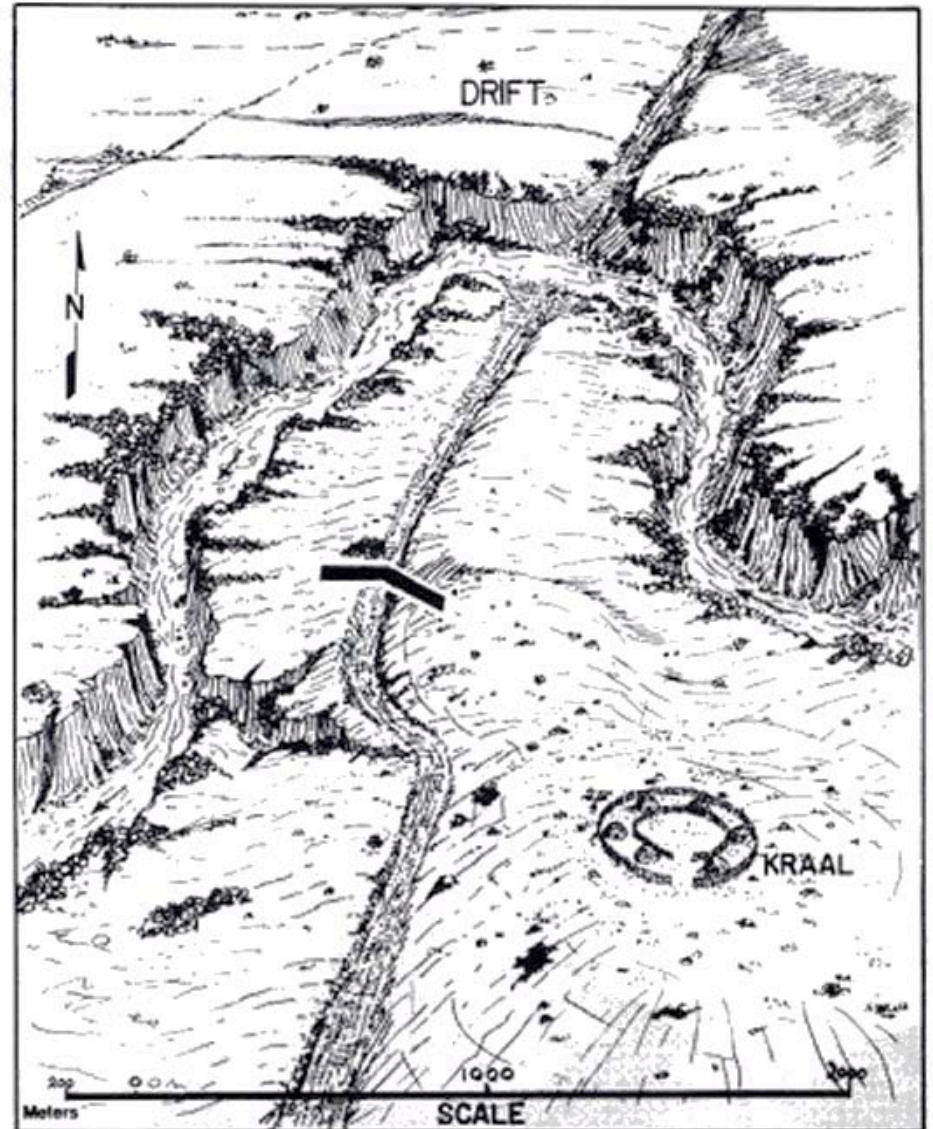
## Lessons:

8. Gather all possible locals
9. Against shelling, scatter troops; against direct fire, gather.
10. Narrow, steep, trapezoidal trenches necessary

# Fourth Dream

## Assumptions:

- Dead animals won't be noticed
- Solid parapet sufficient for return fire
- Obvious front: North
- No cover for trench necessary



# Fourth Dream

## Results:

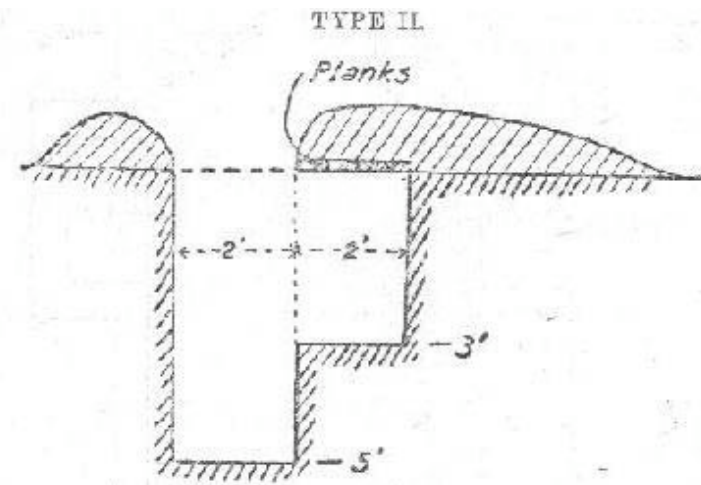
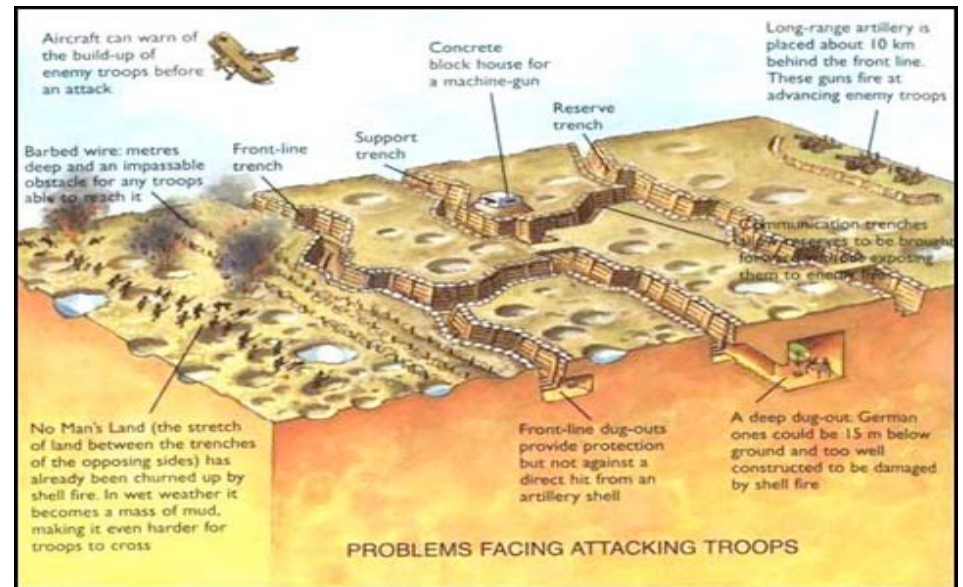
- Position detected
- Trench enfiladed
- Position surrounded
- Brits incapable of returning effective fire
- Brits: 25 killed, 17 wounded

## Lessons:

11. The front is everywhere
12. Watch your rear
13. Beware of being enfiladed
  - a) Rifle fire
  - b) Long-range guns
14. Do not put your trench behind rising ground
15. Do not huddle your men
16. Cover from sight worth more than from bullets
17. Surprise a great advantage
18. Conceal your position
19. Look from the enemy's view

# Trench Design

- Trenches built in zig-zag to avoid enfilading
- Support/Communications/Reserve trenches connected
- Allow for reinforcement under cover
- Cover under parapet against shelling
- Back and front covered against shelling/fire
- Cut-outs for firing



SECTION OF COVER TRENCH C.C.  
(This may be covered over in places if material is available.)



# Fifth Dream

## Assumptions:

- High ground is sufficient
- Guarding ground is a solely defensive operation
- Cover is the main criterion when choosing positions



# Fifth Dream

## Results:

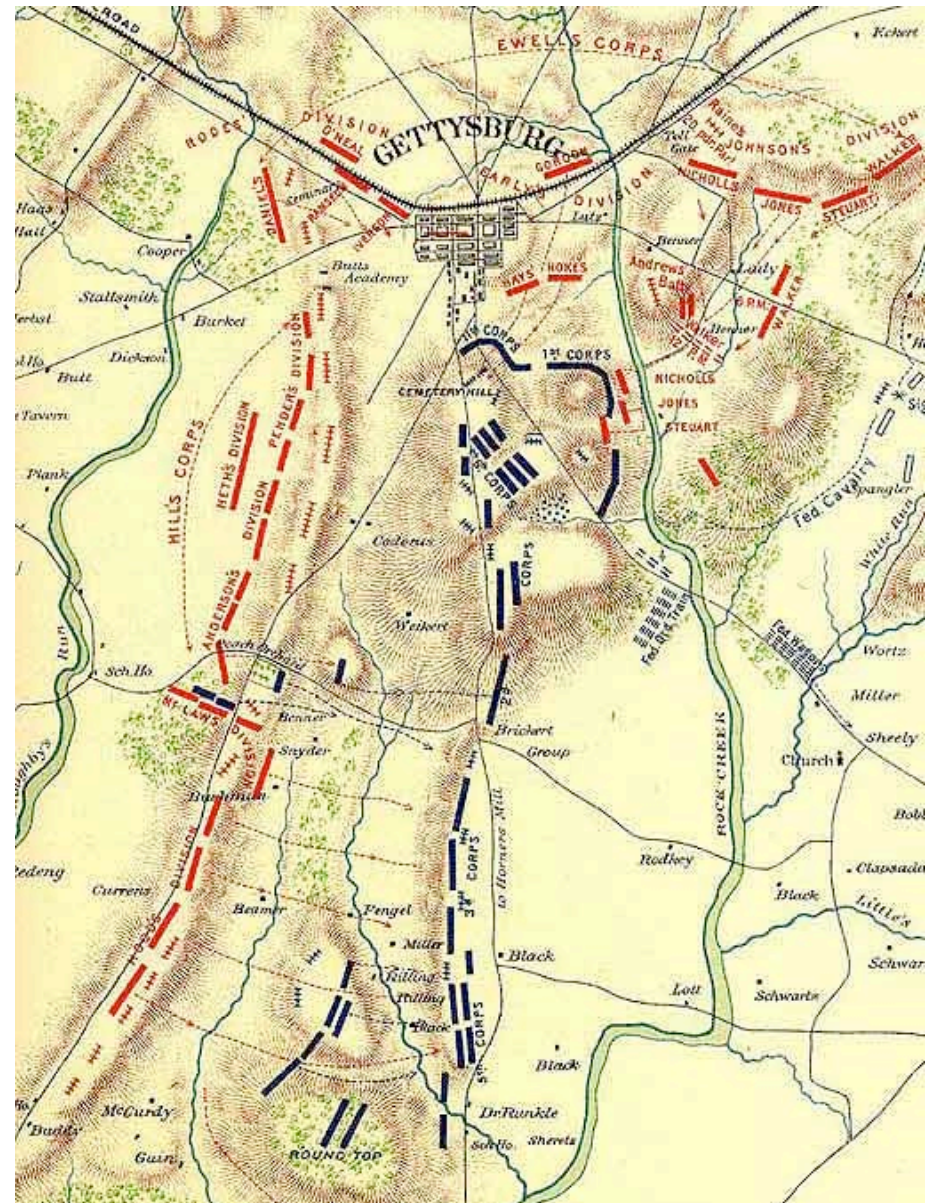
- Deception useful
  - Boer scouts caught off-guard
  - Sandbags provided false target
- Ground made up for numbers
- “Dead ground” made road safe for Boers to pass under covering fire

## Lessons:

20. Beware dead ground
21. Hill not the best (only) place to hold
22. Bluffs are good

# Force Deployment

- Good ground:
  - Highest points
  - Close to objectives
  - Be aware of dead ground
  - Can direct fire to multiple areas
- Internal lines:
  - Capable of quick reinforcement
  - Troops don't waste energy





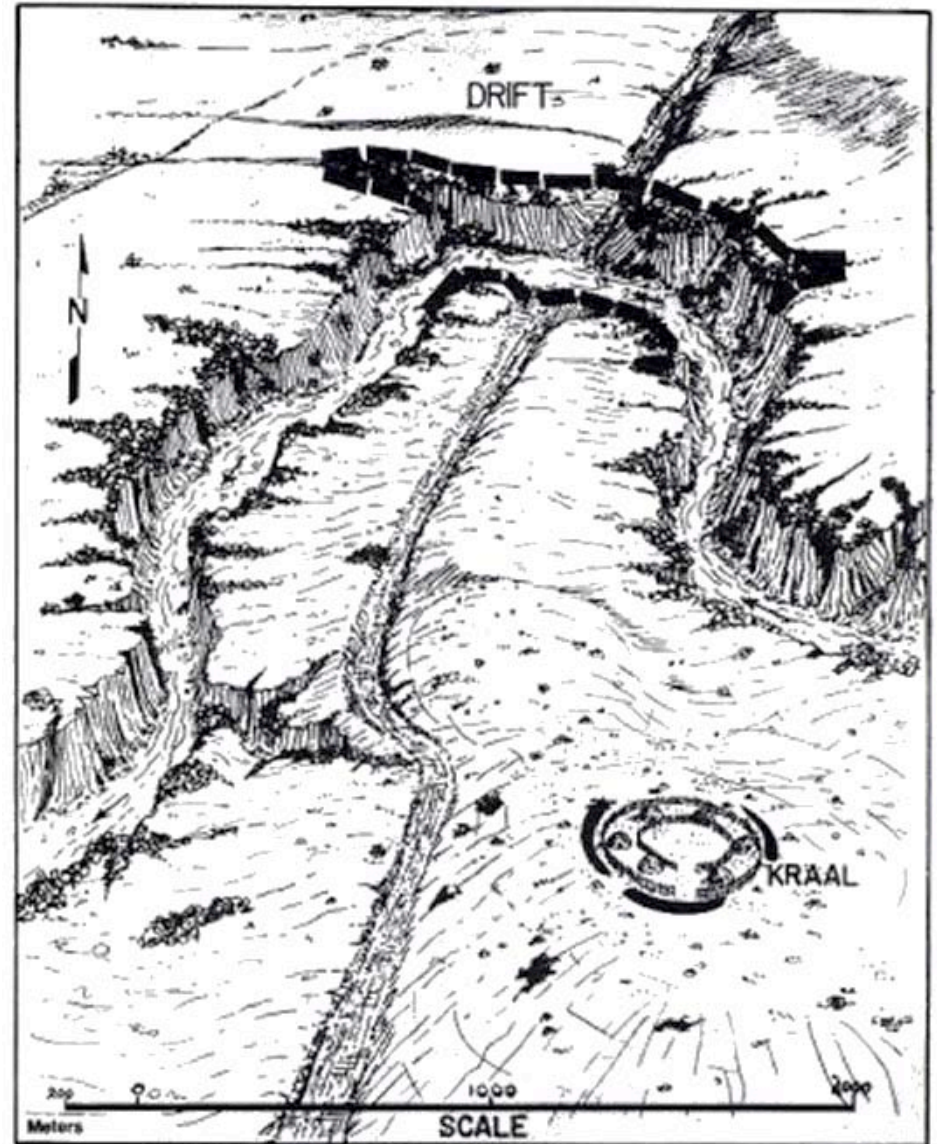
# Sixth Dream

## Strategy:

- Trenches to cover dead ground
- Decentralized command
- Use of natural cover
- Extensive deception

## Results:

- Brits: 11 killed, 15 wounded
- Boers: 25+ killed
- Drift held





**Commentary...**