

expected to follow the counsels of the borough fathers, who clearly felt that by eleven o'clock people ought to be in their own homes. Despite this well-intentioned advice, it was as though after a series of set-backs for British arms and the subsequent damage to the Empire's prestige, there were elements determined to celebrate any future advance, however insignificant it might appear.⁷

The relief of Pretoria followed closely that at Mafeking. In Banbury, in the absence of a borough council celebration, people took to the streets and indulged in what the *Banbury Advertiser* considered to be a wave of vandalism.

Under the headline :

<p style="text-align:center">PRETORIA DOUBTFUL PATRIOTISM IN BANBURY WHOLESALE WINDOW SMASHING AT THE TOWN HALL BUILDINGS</p>

readers learned that on receipt of the news from Pretoria, Banburians once again greeted the news with a display of flags, the ringing of bells and the sound of hooters. The council however decided that since Mafeking was so recent, there was no call for yet another local celebration. One section of the townspeople felt otherwise, many participating in spontaneous street demonstrations. Bonfires were set up at Broad Street and at Town End. Indications that the celebration was likely to rival that for Mafeking was suggested by the display of balloons and the frequent detonations of fireworks.

Until the late evening the atmosphere in the town was good humoured, though at about half past ten the mood changed. What was described as 'an organised attack' then took place on the Town Hall, the Police Station, and the caretaker's house. More disturbing was the readiness with which the some of the demonstrators tore up cobble stones to be used as missiles to break windows, the police station proving to be the most popular target. Catapults also figured in the work of destruction.

Once again the mayor's shop received the attention of the mob, the shutters being dismantled. A flag pole bearing the Union Jack was damaged when the rope was slashed, the standard being left forlornly at half mast. It was not until early the following day that quietness

⁷ *New York Times*, 19 May 1900.