

struck in the chest by a small piece of shell and bruised, but not incapacitated.

The firing of the right 4·7-inch gun was good. That of the left (Lieutenant Hunt), which is usually good, was most erratic, owing to the gun having become badly eroded, there being a difference of quite 1,000 yards in comparison with the gun laid exactly at the same elevation by clinometer. There were only a very few shells that did not burst.

The balloon ascended yesterday and made observations.

I enclose a rough plan of the various positions.

I have, &c.,

E. P. JONES, Captain.

Enclosure to letter No. 139 of the 28th February, 1900, from the Commander-in-Chief on the Cape of Good Hope Station.

Naval Brigade, Chieveley,  
February 18, 1900.

SIR,

IN continuation of my letter, posted 9th February, at Spearman's Camp, I have the honour to report that at 6 p.m. I struck camp on Spearman's, and proceeded to Springfield Bridge, arriving at 11 p.m. with two 4·7-inch guns. Here I was joined at daylight on the 10th by Lieutenant Ogilvy, who had marched from Zwartz Kop the previous day with six 12-prs.

We continued our march at 6 a.m. to Pretorius' Farm, where we camped, and, at 3 a.m. on the 11th, marched with General Hart's Brigade to Chieveley, arriving at 11 a.m.

Lieutenant Burne, with two 12-prs., was left with General Warren at Spearman's, and marched on the 10th to Springfield Bridge, where he remains under Colonel Burne Murdock.

On my arrival here I was informed by General Buller that a 6-inch gun and two or three 4·7-inch were coming up from Durban.

The 6-inch gun arrived on Monday, 12th, two 4·7-inch guns this morning, the third being on its way and due here to-night.

Only four men came with each 4·7-inch gun, and 50 with the 6-inch.

I have made up the crews with Natal Naval Volunteers, and with soldiers for ammunition supply, &c., and, having no other officers available, have placed two of the guns in charge of two Lieutenants of Natal Naval Volunteers, who have been attached to 4·7-inch guns for over two months, and are efficient officers.

The guns being usually some distance apart, it is desirable, if possible, to have a Lieutenant or Sub-Lieutenant with each large gun, and one for each pair of 12-prs.

I have sent Mr. Wilde with two guns to Frere, and brought Lieutenant Melville's two guns down here.

On Monday morning one Battalion, a Battery of Artillery, and a large body of cavalry went out to seize Hussar Hill, about four to five miles to the north-east of this.

On Wednesday, 14th, at 7 a.m., the troops were out in force to occupy Hussar Hill. Lieutenant Ogilvy with four 12-prs. followed immediately in the rear of the leading Brigade (General Barton's), got his guns into position so soon as the hill was in our possession, and shelled the enemy.

The enemy were in pretty good force on the surrounding hills, Hlangwani and Monte Christo

being strongly occupied by them, and a brisk shell fire was exchanged with them.

While our troops entrenched themselves, the 4·7-inch guns from here were shelling Hlangwani.

There were about eight casualties. I rode out yesterday to see how the 12-prs. were getting on, and found them in position with sand-bag defence. There was only very desultory firing all day.

This morning the firing commenced soon after daylight, and continued briskly all the forenoon, while our troops advanced slowly to take positions on Monte Christo and Cingolo.

There was an exchange of shell fire as on yesterday. I was informed from General Buller's Headquarters that we disabled a gun on Hlangwani and killed several men.

The weather was, and is, so intensely hot that I think the General did not wish to push the men on too much.

Saturday, 17th.—The firing and forward movement recommenced at 5 a.m.

Last night I was ordered to detrain the 6-inch gun and to bring it into action on this hill.

This was done without difficulty, although the railway truck was bent down in the middle in an alarming manner, so soon as the weight came on the middle of the truck.

This morning we opened fire with it. The wheels are rather too small for the gun, and we cannot get the extreme range out of it without sinking the trail, which, of course, limits the fire to one direction at a time. It is heavy to move, and takes three teams of oxen, but so long as the dry weather continues, and the veldt is hard, it can be moved about the country round here.

The third 4·7-inch gun, with platform mounting, arrived last night. They are now all on the trucks awaiting orders as to the position they are to take up.

18th February.—The latest news received in camp last night was that our infantry had advanced half-way up Cingolo Hill, and that the cavalry were on the top of it at the south-east end, the objective being the Nek on the left side of Cingolo, between that hill and Monte Christo.

The fighting is continuing this morning, but it is so far away that we can only hear the guns. There are at the front four 5-inch guns, six Howitzers, four Naval 12-prs., and several batteries of artillery. We cannot reach much beyond Hlangwani Hill from here, which is, I imagine, the ultimate objective after Monte Christo is taken, as it commands the whole of the defences of Colenso, and also the bridges and fords across the river.

10 a.m.—I have just received a wire from the General that our troops had captured Cingolo and advanced down the Nek. They are now about to attack Monte Christo, and heavy gun fire is going on.

11 p.m.—The troops took the southern half of Monte Christo this afternoon, and I have just received orders to move two 4·7-inch guns to a position in that neighbourhood at daylight. I go with them.

I have, &c.,

E. P. JONES, Captain,  
Commanding Naval Brigade.

Rear-Admiral

Sir Robert H. Harris, K.C.M.G.,  
Commander-in-Chief.