

It has been mentioned that a Naval Brigade,³ under Captain Edward Pitcairn Jones, of the *Forte*, and Commander Arthur

Yours faithfully
E. P. Jones
Capt. R.N.

CAPT. EDWARD PITCAIRN JONES, C.B., R.N.

Henry Limpus, of the *Terrible*, joined General Sir Redvers Buller⁴ in Natal, previous to his first advance for the relief of Ladysmith.

¹ Lambton's despatch of Feb. 28.

² A memorial to those of the Brigade who lost their lives in S. Afr. has since been erected in Victoria Park, Portsmouth.

³ Of 39 officers and 403 men from *Terrible*, *Forte*, *Tartar*, and *Philomel*. The officers, other than those of the Natal Naval Volunteers (for whom see note on p. 503), were then, or later, as follows: *Forte*, Capt. Edward Pitcairn Jones (C.B., Oct. 21, 1900); Lieuts. Francis William Melville (Com., Oct. 21, 1900), and George Percy Edward Hunt (D.S.O., Oct. 21, 1900); Staff-Surg. Frederick John Lilly (Fleet-Surg., Oct. 21, 1900); Actg.-Lieut. John Miles Steel (Lieut., June 30, 1900), and Gunner Edward Holland; *Terrible*, Com. Arthur Henry Limpus (Capt., May 2, 1900); Lieuts. Frederick Charles Ashley Ogilvy (Com., Mar. 9, 1900), Spencer Reginald Strettell Richards, James Stuart Wilde, and George Pinnick England; Sub-Lieut. Stephen Newcombe; Surgs. Ernest Courtney Lomas (Staff-Surg., Oct. 21, 1900), and Charles Clarke Macmillan (D.S.O., Oct. 21, 1900); Engineers John Frederick Arthur, and Alfred Edward James Murray; Asst.-Eng. Francis John Roskrige (Eng., July 2, 1900); Gunners Joseph Wright, Edwin John Cole, and Edwin Williams; and Mids. Percival Francis Willeughby, Richard Thornton Down, Reginald Becher Caldwell Hutchison, Austin Charles Ackland, Alwyne Edward Sherrin, Herbert Edward Walter Christian Whyte, George Macgregor Skinner, Gerald Lord Hodson, William Wybrow Hallwright, Herbert Seymour Webb Bolders, and James Andrew Gardiner. *Tartar*, Lieuts. John Edmund Drummond, and Herbert William James (Com., Oct. 21, 1900); and Staff-Surg. John Douglas Hughes; and *Philomel*, Lieuts. Arthur Halsey (Com., Oct. 21, 1900), Charles Richard Newdigate Burne, Archibald Deas, and Francis Alexander Clutterbuck; Mids. William Rimington Ledgard; and Clerk Walter Thorne Hollins.

⁴ To Sir R. Buller, as naval A.d.C., was attached Lieut. Edgar Lees (Com., June 30, 1900).

Early in November a few small detachments of bluejackets had been sent north from Durban—one from the *Tartar* to work a 7-pr. in an armoured train; another, also from the *Tartar*, under Lieutenant Herbert William James, to defend Pietermaritzburg with a couple of 12-prs.; another, from the *Philomel*, under Lieutenant Arthur Halsey, to the same town with two more 12-prs., when James moved forward to Frere; and yet another, from the *Forte*, under Lieutenant John Miles Steel, to defend the railway at Mooi River. During that period four of the *Tartar's* men were taken prisoners by the Boers, and one was killed, while defending the armoured train on November 15th.

Captain Jones was ordered to proceed with his Brigade to the front on November 26th, and he started that afternoon. On November 29th he reached Frere, where a detachment of the Natal Naval Volunteers¹ reinforced the command, and afterwards formed a welcome addition to the crews of the 4·7-in. guns, of which Jones then had two, besides twelve 12-prs., and eventually eighteen.

Further detachments from the ships joined at Frere, until at length the Brigade attained nearly its full strength.

Early on December 12th, the Brigade, with the two 4·7 and six of the 12-pr. guns, accompanied General Barton towards Chieveley, pitched its camp on Gun Hill, and placed the guns in position under Buller's direction. On the morning of the 13th, fire was opened on the positions and camps of the Boers about Colenso and Hlangwani; but, the range being great, with a mirage, the work was discontinued after two hours and a half's shelling. On the 14th, the guns were moved out to Shooter's Hill, 2000 yards nearer. This reduced the ranges to 5000 and 9000 yards respectively. There was no

¹ The detachment of Natal Naval Volunteers serving with the Ladysmith relief force consisted of 62 officers and men under Lieuts. James E. Anderton, and Nicholas William Chiazzari, with three old 9-prs. It proceeded to the front on Sept. 30, 1899. On Oct. 30, Anderton escorted the *Powerful's* Brigade to Ladysmith, but returned at once. On Nov. 3, when ordered to evacuate Fort Wylie, spiking the guns and abandoning ammunition, the detachment disobeyed orders, and carried off everything except a broken gun-carriage. On Dec. 9 the detachment joined Capt. Edward Pitcairn Jones's Naval Brigade, and subsequently took charge of a 4·7-in. gun. On Jan. 16, 1900, Lieut. Chiazzari distinguished himself by working the punt at Potgieter's Drift. On Feb. 19 the two Lieutenants took charge of two 4·7-in. platform guns. After the relief of Ladysmith, Lieut. Anderton and 25 men, with Lieut. Barrett, who had been in Ladysmith, rejoined Capt. Jones. That part of the detachment was dismissed at Durban on June 25, 1900. Chiazzari, who was deservedly awarded the D.S.O. Oct. 21, 1900, was the first Volunteer in the Empire to win that distinction (*Natal Volunteer Record*).

reply; and it is more than probable that little damage was done to the enemy's works. That day the whole of the rest of the army advanced about six miles, from Frere to Chieveley; and orders were issued for the operations which it had been determined to undertake on the following morning, when Buller was to endeavour to force the Tugela at Colenso. Two 12-prs., under Lieutenant Charles Richard Newdigate Burne, were to remain on Shooter's Hill; six 12-prs. were to join Colonel Long, R.A., and act under his orders; and the two 4·7-in. guns, with four 12-prs.,¹ were to move at daylight to a point about 3000 yards from the river, and 800 yards west of the railway. The remaining six naval guns were at that time, two at Frere, two at Estcourt, and two at Mooi river.

At dawn, on the 15th, the detachment with which were the 4·7-in. guns, advanced across the veldt to within about 5000 yards of the entrenched hills on the north of the Tugela, and opened fire at 5.20 A.M., but drew no reply. In the meanwhile, Colonel Long, with the 14th and 66th batteries, R.A., and the six naval 12-prs., under Lieutenants Frederick Charles Ashley Ogilvy, (*Terrible*), Herbert William James (*Tartar*), and Archibald Deas (*Philomet*), was advancing along the east side of the railway, and so got down to some low ground which was cut up with dongas, near the river's bank. The Royal Artillery batteries led, and, at about 6 A.M., took position to open fire, while the naval guns were ordered to their left. Long was then about 1200 yards from the Boers at Fort Wylie, and 450 yards from Colenso station. Suddenly a tremendous fire burst forth from among the trees towards the river, from rifle pits near the river's bank, and from Fort Wylie and its neighbourhood. The gunners and horses of the R.A. batteries were rapidly shot down or driven from their pieces, which were completely silenced within about half an hour. Galloping to his guns, Ogilvy found that the native drivers of four out of his six teams had bolted, and that the oxen belonging to them were almost unmanageable. James, however, succeeded in bringing his two guns into action on the left, against Fort Wylie, and Deas did the same with his two; but the remaining guns, under Gunner Joseph Wright (*Terrible*), were for some time jammed in the drift, and were only extricated and brought into action by the aid of

¹ These were under Captain Jones in person.

some artillery horses. Everyone knows how gallant and repeated were the efforts made by the army to recover its two batteries, and how bloody was the almost hopeless struggle, but two of the weapons being saved. The Navy could help only indirectly, by continuing to sweep the Boer positions with lyddite; and, unfortunately, the enemy's guns proved most difficult to make out, being admirably placed. At length, after James¹ had moved his two guns over to the west of the railway to strengthen the force there, Buller was compelled to order a general withdrawal. That was at about 11 A.M. The naval guns were brought out of action one by one, as oxen could be obtained to move them; and it was fully 2 P.M. ere the last of them returned to Shooter's Hill. There was no attempt at pursuit.

In the course of this costly battle of Colenso, the Naval Brigade's work was magnificently done. The *Terribles* extricated their jammed guns and waggons from under a heavy shell and rifle fire with notable coolness. Deas, who had one of his guns capsized, mounted it again without delay and brought it into action; and all hands, including the Natal Naval Volunteers, behaved admirably. Happily, although the loss of the army was very heavy, the Navy had but three men wounded. Among the officers favourably mentioned, in addition to those whose names have been given already, were Surgeon Charles Clarke Macmillan, Midshipmen Herbert Seymour Webb Boldero,² and Gerald Lord Hodson,² and Clerk Walter Thorne Hollins.

On the 17th, the two 4.7's and the six 12-prs. were moved back from Shooter's Hill to Gun Hill; and Ogilvy's six 12-prs. returned with the bulk of the army to Frere, there to await the reinforcements which were being sent forward under Sir Charles Warren. At Gun Hill, where the main part of the Naval Brigade encamped until January 10th, 1900, the 4.7-in. guns persistently worried the Boers, and occasionally covered reconnaissances. On December 19th, General Buller ordered the guns to cut the road bridge over the Tugela. The range was 7500 yards; and, at first, some difficulty was experienced in doing the work, but at length, thanks largely to the accurate aiming of a 4.7 by its captain, William Bate, one of the spans was severed by means of a lyddite shell. On December 22nd, one of the guns, having begun to show signs

¹ Com., Oct. 21st, 1900.

² Noted for promotion.

of wear, was dismantled, a fresh gun, obtained from Durban, being mounted in its place within an hour, and the whole operation being done by man power, without sheers or tripods. At about the same time, nine of the *Forté's* and *Philomel's* bluejackets, from the guns at Mooi river and Estcourt, were attached to the balloon section of the army, and afterwards made themselves very useful with it. On January 6th, when the Boers made an attack on Ladysmith, the force went forward in hopes of being able to create a diversion, but scarcely drew the enemy's fire. Yet, upon the whole, the fortnight spent at Gun Hill was extremely monotonous. To fill up the time, some of the men worked up 6000 yards of 6-in. rope into mantlets for use in an armoured train; and some of the officers completed a telescopic survey of the country near them.

On January 9th, Warren's force began to arrive at Frere, whereupon, on the three following days, Captain Jones moved his Brigade away to the British left, and, on the 13th, had his 4·7-in. guns in position on Mount Alice, one of the heights overlooking Potgieter's drift, on the Tugela. Two dummy 4·7's were left, with four of the 12-prs., at Chieveley, and two 12-prs. at Frere; and it was at that time that, as has been already noted, Captain Scott mounted a third 4·7-in. on a railway truck. It is doubtful whether the dummies ever deceived the Boers; but the other guns assisted General Barton in harassing and containing the enemy at Colenso, while the rest of the relieving army entered on that unfortunate part of the campaign which included the operations at Spion Kop.

"It may be gathered," says Lord Roberts, "that the original intention was to cross the river at or near Trichard's drift, and thence, by following the road past Fair View and Acton Homes, to gain the open plain north of Spion Kop, the Boer position in front of Potgieter's drift being too strong to be taken by direct attack. The whole force, less one brigade, was placed under the orders of Sir Charles Warren, who, the day after he had crossed the Tugela, seems to have consulted his general and principal staff-officers, and to have come to the conclusion that the flanking movement . . . was impracticable. . . . He accordingly decided to advance by the more direct road leading north-east and branching off from a point east of Three Tree Hill. The selection of this road necessitated the capture and retention of Spion Kop."

Mount Alice, part of Spearman's Hill, is a plateau about 1000 feet above the river level, commanding a view of the Tugela valley, and of the country between it and Ladysmith. From it the entrenchments at Caesar's Camp were plainly visible. Immediately below Mount Alice is a second plateau, extending almost to the river, and about 400 feet above it. To the east is Potgieter's drift,

whence the land rises in a wide concave, on the west to the heights of Spion Kop, and on the east and south-east, towards the Vaal Krantz ridge. From the left front of Mount Alice, away to beyond Colenso, far to the eastward, there was a line of huge defences covering the undulating, donga-intersected, boulder-strewn slopes which, towards the river, are for the most part very steep. The top of Spion Kop, the highest ground in the vicinity, is about 1500 feet above the river.

On the afternoon of January 16th, part of the army crossed the river, practically unopposed, at Potgieter's drift, and, by the following morning, occupied the chain of low kopjes near it. Eight naval 12-prs., along the edge of the plateau under Mount Alice, assisted in covering the advance. Most of the rest of the army crossed at Trichard's drift, six miles west of Potgieter's. The advance then commenced, every yard being stubbornly contested, and Warren's right being at length apparently arrested. Spion Kop barred its way, and the right became, as it were, the pivot on which the attack wheeled forward. During this time the naval guns daily assisted in shelling the Brakfontein position and Spion Kop; and so matters went on, until the evening of January 23rd, when it was decided to take and hold Spion Kop. By 3.30 A.M. on the 24th, the position was occupied with but slight opposition; and soon afterwards the naval 12-prs., having left their plateau and crossed Potgieter's drift, were covering a demonstration against Brakfontein. As the day cleared, it was seen that the Boers, beyond the further ridges of the Kop, were doing terrible execution with rifle and gun fire upon the troops on the crowded shoulder. The enemy's guns could not, however, be seen from Mount Alice; and, soon after noon, James's two naval 12-prs., besides other reinforcements, were ordered up, though they could not actually begin the ascent until the evening, ere which time one of the 4.7's had received instructions to move at dawn to the westward, to a point whence the Boer guns could be reached. The other naval guns were of use in helping to clear the way for the assault, which was made against the north-east summit, the conical hill, and the centre summit—all commanding points whence the Boers were driven. That night, it looked as if the worst was over, but before dawn on the 25th, it became known to the Naval Brigade that the Kop had been evacuated. James never reached the top. This was followed by the withdrawal of Warren's whole force to the south side of the Tugela. In the next few days,

six naval 12-prs., with other guns, were put in position on Zwaart Kop, and one of the 4·7's was moved to Signal Hill.

It is useless here to follow in any detail the course of operations in which the Naval Brigade, though constantly of great value, saw little exciting service. Suffice it to say that on February 5th, at the beginning of the movement against Vaal Krantz, the naval guns succeeded in doing some damage to two out of three troublesome Boer pieces on Spion Kop, though the latter could not be seen; that on the 6th, when two of the 12-prs.¹ had been moved to the eastern spur of Zwaart Kop, a lucky shell from the 4·7² on Signal Hill blew up the ammunition of a Boer 6-in. gun at a range of 11,500 yards; and that during the retirement on the 8th and 9th, the 4·7-in. guns covered the withdrawal. On the 11th, the naval guns were again back on Gun Hill. On the 12th, Scott's 6-in. gun on field mounting arrived at Chieveley, and three additional 4·7-in. guns on platforms were reported as being on the way up from Durban.² Two of the *Terrible's* 12-prs. were at that time attached to a small force stationed at Eshowe, in Zululand, to check Boer incursions in that direction.

On February 13th, orders were given for what proved to be the beginning of the final and successful effort of the indomitable Buller to reach his goal. A move was to be made to the right front. Hussar Hill was to be used as a foothold from which to reach out on the right to Cingolo and Monte Christo, whence Green Hill and Hlangwane could be rendered untenable, and Colenso could be turned. On the morning of the 14th, in consequence, Hussar Hill was seized, four of the naval 12-prs.⁴ assisting to occupy it. The 15th witnessed little more than an artillery duel, in which Gun Hill took its share. On the 16th, during which the fire was continued, the 6-in. naval gun was placed on Gun Hill. Cingolo was captured on the 17th. On the 18th the naval guns did specially useful work. The 6-in. on Gun Hill drove away a Boer 6-in. at Bloy's Farm, 18,500 yards distant, and later, with the three 4·7's—one being on the railway truck—silenced a hostile 6-in. which opened on Hussar Hill from the Colenso kopjes. That day the army made itself master of Monte Christo, and everywhere pushed back the enemy upon the river.

On the 19th, two 4·7-in., with other guns, moved to Bloy's

¹ Under Lieut. Burne.

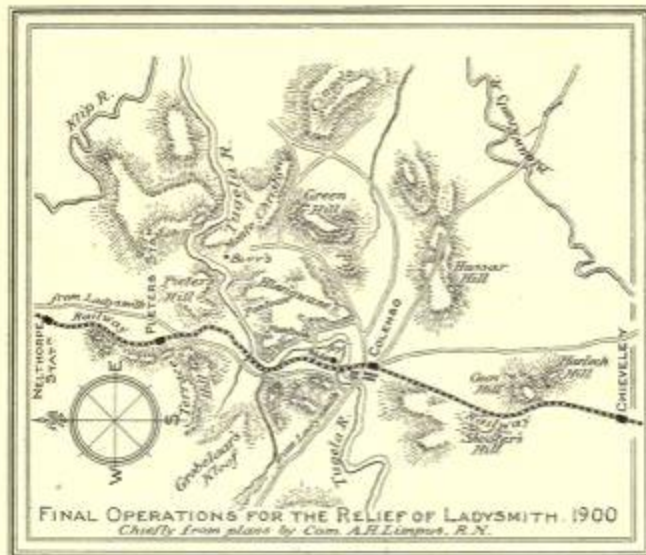
² Under Lieut. England.

³ They arrived on Feb. 16th.

⁴ Under Lieut. Ogilvy.

Farm, and two 12-prs.¹ to Monte Christo, where, in the course of the night, the 4·7's joined them. General Barton had previously occupied Hlangwane. On the following morning it was apparent that the Boers were all north of the Tugela; and General Barton entered Colenso, though he subsequently had to evacuate it, only to retake it later. Thus, on the 21st, Colenso became the rail-head for British supplies.

More 12-prs. were advanced, and four of them were posted on Hlangwane. The two 4·7's from Monte Christo were taken down



One inch equals about five miles.

to the river in readiness for crossing by a pontoon which had been thrown over about a mile north of Fort Wylie; and the advance of the army continued. On the 22nd, more forces crossed the river: the two 4·7's, still south of the river, but close to the pontoon, shelled Terrace, otherwise Hart's, Hill; two 12-prs. took up positions on the Colenso kopjes; and there was a lively artillery action, the Boers evidently strengthening, and intending to hold if they could, the line Grobelaar's Kloof, Terrace Hill, and Pieter's Hill. That

¹ Ogilvy's.

evening, and during the following night, the enemy was very stubborn and determined, and even made counter-attacks.

On the morning of the 23rd, the two 4·7's and two more 12-prs. were brought up among the kopjes; and two 4·7-in. platform guns, with the 6-in. on Gun Hill, assisted in the effort to keep down the hostile fire, four 12-prs. also helping from Hlangwane. The Boers had at least three 45-prs., and a dozen 12- or 15-prs., besides numerous smaller guns and pom-poms, engaged. Towards night, Hart made an assault on Terrace Hill, but was bloodily repulsed.¹ So determined, in fact, was the resistance, and so strong were the positions to be carried, that, though Hart temporarily held a few points which he had gained, he was obliged to abandon most of the advanced ones early on the 24th. These points were reoccupied later; yet further progress in that direction seemed impossible. It was therefore decided to hold the firing line which had been acquired, but to withdraw the reserve battalions and guns south of the river, take up new gun positions to command and enfilade the Boer lines, prolong the British line to the right, and work round the enemy's left flank, thus threatening in succession Pieter's Hill, Railway Hill,² and Terrace Hill. Four naval 12-prs.,³ therefore, were at once sent back to Monte Christo.

February 25th was Sunday, and there was no firing; but the movements begun overnight were continued, and two platform 4·7's from Gun Hill were ordered to Hlangwane, while two wheeled 4·7's joined the 12-prs. on the north spur of Monte Christo, where they were nicely hidden. With General Coke, who held the Colenso kopjes, were two naval 12-prs. The 26th was spent in desultory firing, and in the preparation of a pontoon for effecting a crossing of the Tugela just below the falls.

Early on the 27th the pontoon was thrown across, and a great bombardment of the Boer positions began, the various naval guns making excellent practice. By 9 A.M. the crossing commenced; and by 2.15 P.M. General Barton had taken Pieter's Hill. Three hours later General Kitchener was master of Railway Hill and the adjoining nek, and then, after the further positions had been searched with a redoubled fire from every available gun, was joined by General Norcott, and triumphantly drove the Boers from Terrace Hill,

¹ The naval loss on the 23rd was 5 wounded.

² Two miles south of Pieter's Station.

³ Under Lieuts. Melvill and James.

leaving them in possession of but one small knoll of all the hundred that had once barred the road to Ladysmith. It was Majuba Day.

Early on Wednesday, February 28th, the last knoll was taken without the firing of a shot, the bulk of the army crossed the river, and towards evening part of the relieving force entered Ladysmith. On the 29th there was a general advance to Nelthorpe station.¹

On March 3rd the 4·7's were taken into Ladysmith by train, and the Brigade and the 12-prs. trekked thither and camped beyond the town, two miles to the north-east. The *Terribles* were sent back to their ship at Durban on the 11th and sailed thence in her for China, where they found other active work awaiting them. Such of the guns² as remained, and could no longer be manned by the diminished force, were handed over to the army. In the interval her Majesty's gracious thanks to officers and men for their services were received.

