

and men are doing well; most excellent work is being done at the Naval Hospital, the medical officers of which derive great assistance from Mr. Elliott, torpedo gunner, who has the Röntgen apparatus.

Captain Prothero reported to me verbally that Fleet Surgeon Porter on the field of Graspan was well up to the front with his bearers and did very fine service for the wounded.

R. H. HARRIS,  
Rear-Admiral.

Chieveley Camp,  
December 16, 1899.

SIR,  
I BEG to report that the whole force under Sir Redvers Buller advanced at 4 a.m. yesterday intending to take the positions of the enemy on the other side of the Tugela.

The Brigade under my command was disposed as fellows:—Two 4·7" guns and four 12-prs., which were on the outpost line in a position 10,000 yards from the main works of the enemy, from which place we had been shelling them on the previous day, advanced to a small rise about 5,000 yards from the entrenched hills across the Tugela.

Six 12-prs. under Lieut. Ogilvy, with Lieut. James of H.M.S. "Tartar" and Lieut. Deas, of "Philomel," were attached to the Field Artillery under Colonel Long, and placed under his orders, to work down towards Colenso on the opposite side of the railway, which was on our right.

Two 12-prs. under Lieut. Burne held the kopje from which we advanced.

For details of what occurred to the six 12-prs. under Lieut. Ogilvy, I refer you to his report, enclosed.

My guns, supported by the King's Royal Rifles and Scottish Rifles, came into action about 5.30 a.m., and commenced shelling the enemy's rifle pits and gun positions, but did not draw a single shot.

Meantime the Brigades of Generals Hart and Lyttleton on the left, and those under Generals Hillyard and Barton on the right, with the Cavalry further out, were working round to cross the river above and below Colenso respectively.

After we had been shelling for about half-an-hour, and the troops had got within range, the enemy opened a tremendous fire from every imaginable direction from miles of rifle pits along the river and on three ridges behind entrenchments, and kept up a continuous fire from guns planted everywhere right in the middle of a plain and on every ledge and hillock commanding every approach.

We kept our guns going on any gun positions that offered and on the trenches, General Buller being with us and directing the fire for an hour or so. I think we silenced a few guns, and am told the lyddite did tremendous execution in the trenches that we could get at.

Their heaviest gun, and one that did tremendous damage to our troops in both directions, was placed very cunningly behind the three hills upon which their principal positions were, commanding a broad valley on each side of them, running down towards the river without being visible from our guns.

At an early stage General Hart's Brigade, which had suffered tremendously from a front and flank fire, retired, and Colonel Lyttleton's Brigade were ordered to cover their retreat.

The Artillery under Colonel Long, which had approached to within 500 yards of the trenches before a shot was fired, were raked at that range

as they came into action, and, after a short time, were driven from their guns, taking refuge in a "donga." They lost 8 guns and most of their officers and many men.

Away on our left the Field Artillery with Hart's Brigade were so roughly handled that they also were driven back, leaving 2 guns, which were afterwards recovered.

General Hillyard's Brigade pushed on doggedly and got into Colenso; and I was ordered to keep up as hot a fire as possible on the rifle pits to enable him to carry out the withdrawal which was subsequently ordered. The withdrawal appeared to be as hot a business as the attack, and took a good long time.

About noon I was ordered to withdraw the two 4·7" guns, and, as soon as the retreating brigade were abreast of us—every one else having gone back—the remainder of the guns were ordered to be withdrawn, and we arrived at the kopje we occupied the day before about 2.30 p.m.

The enemy did not devote much attention to us, being, I suppose, too busy with the troops. Only two guns, that I could discover, were firing at us, and none of their shell did us any damage. We silenced both.

It was extremely difficult to discover where the guns were fired from. The guns were beautifully concealed, and were mostly firing smokeless powder. We fired at ranges from 3,000 to 11,000 yards. The firing was good, and the lyddite shell burst well.

It was blazing hot, and all hands worked well.

I have the honour to be, Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

E. P. JONES,  
Captain Commanding Naval Brigade.  
Rear Admiral  
Sir Robert H. Harris, K.C.M.G.,  
Commander-in-Chief.

Chieveley Camp,  
December 16, 1899.

SIR,  
I HAVE the honour to submit the following account of the part taken by the 12-pr. guns forming the battery under my command during the action in front of Colenso. Acting on orders received from Captain Jones, R.N., I reported myself to Colonel Long, C.R.A., who directed me to attach myself to him until the guns had been placed in a suitable position. I therefore directed Lieut. James, of "Tartar," to lead the battery behind the Royal Artillery Field guns, and told him that we were to form up on the left of the Royal Artillery guns when they came into action. About 6 a.m., the guns being in column of route march with Naval guns in the rear, I was riding in front beside Colonel Long about 450 yards from Colenso Station, when he directed Colonel Hunt to bring his guns into action just in front of a deep "donga" running across our front at right angles to the railway. He then told me to come into action on the left, and proceeded to arrange our different zones of fire, while the Royal Artillery guns were getting into position. In front of us was a line of trees up to which our skirmishers had advanced, also a few artillery outposts. Just as I was about to direct my guns where to go, and as the Royal Artillery were unlimbering, the outposts turned sharply and a murderous fire, both rifle and shell, was opened on the guns and ammunition column. I immediately galloped back to my guns and found that the fire had caught them just as the two centre guns were going through a drift across another donga