

Lieutenant Ogilvie with two guns was up on Monte Christo; two 12-prs. being also on Hussar Hill.

At 2 A.M. the 4.7-inch guns were moved to a better position on a spur at the foot of Monte Christo, and commenced shelling the enemy at daylight on the 20th, continuing all day. An hour before dusk I believe we destroyed a gun, whose position we had been trying to find all day; anyhow, it was silenced.

On the 21st General Hart crossed the Tugela by punt and ford, and with no great opposition took the kopjes opposite Coleenso, Fort Wyllie, &c. Our troops were then sent over by a pontoon bridge which had been thrown across just below Hlangwani, and took the low hills on the left of Pieter's Hill.

Lieutenant James with two guns was also sent across, and took up a position on the kopjes a mile or two away on the other side.

The two 4.7-inch guns were moved down at dark and the crews bivouacked near the pontoon. At daylight on 22nd we came into action and shelled the enemy until 4 P.M., when we moved to cross the river, but, owing to the pontoon breaking, we bivouacked that night before doing so, and crossed at daylight on 23rd with two 12-prs. under Lieutenant Melville.

I took up a position near Lieutenant James' guns, and placed Lieutenant Melville on a kopje on my left.

That day, upon which there was very heavy fighting, the naval guns were disposed as follows:—

Two 4.7-inch on kopjes, four 12-prs. in the neighbourhood, and six 12-prs. with Lieutenant Ogilvy on Hlangwani.

At 9 A.M. all the guns opened fire, which was replied to by a brisk fire from the enemy. During the day our infantry advanced, and took the southern slopes of a commanding, strongly fortified, and entrenched position at the summit of a range of hills close to the route to Lady-smith.

Towards evening General Hart, with the Irish Brigade, assaulted the summit, but did not succeed in taking it, and at dusk entrenched himself just below the last ridge leading up to it. He left, however, many killed and wounded on the glaxis.

During the whole day the enemy shelled very vigorously, and it is beyond my comprehension how so small an amount of damage was done, as they were shooting with great accuracy. A dozen shells, mostly 40-prs., fell within a radius of 20 yards round the 4.7-inch guns, and a great many passed over, while others fell a very little short.

I took the big glass up to the 12-prs. which were engaging on Grobler's side, to try to discover guns, and there I think it was even warmer, for we had a "Pom-Pom" on us as well as two or three big guns. It was here that my coxswain, Thomas Tunbridge, who was sitting down on a stone, was struck by a shell, which tore away half his thigh. Fortunately the shell did not burst, as there was a little knot round the glass where an officer was pointing out the position of a gun to me. Only four men were wounded all day by shell, and one shot by a rifle bullet in the evening.

So soon as it was dark the enemy began to snipe our hills pretty freely; in fact, about 9 o'clock it amounted to a considerable fire. We got the men under cover, and no damage was done. The firing continued till daylight.

At dusk Lieutenants Melville's and James'

guns were moved to a more forward position, but were sent back next morning (24th) across the river to Monte Christo.

On the 24th the shelling continued as on the previous day, but our guns did not receive nearly so much attention.

I think the enemy had moved some of their guns to fire at the 5-inch guns just behind a kopje on our right, and could not get at us so well. I also think the 40-pr. right in front of us was disabled by us, at all events, temporarily, on the day before, as I saw none of its shells on our plateau that day.

At 8 P.M. we moved the 4.7-inch guns down, and bivouacked near the pontoon, crossing at daylight on 25th, and taking up a position on the north-west spur of Hlangwani that evening.

There was no firing on this day, burying and ambulance parties being out.

On Monday the enemy knocked our schantzes to pieces, apparently not having discovered that we had departed.

Two 4.7-inch guns with platform mountings came across from Chieveley. We mounted one on a hill to the right of Hlangwani, just finishing by 5 A.M. I left the other till night, not wishing to do it in daylight, as we were only 2,300 yards from the enemy's highest position on the range. It was very heavy and tiresome work in the dark, and the glimmer of a lantern to the front always produced some sniping.

On this, as on every other occasion, Baldwin, the senior Gunnery Instructor of H.M.S. "Terrible," showed himself to be an invaluable man.

26th February.—A pontoon bridge was thrown across the river just below the hill upon which the gun was mounted.

Shelling continued as on the previous day, but no particular movements of our troops that I am aware of.

During the night we mounted the other platform gun, finishing by 3 A.M.

Sniping was worse than ever all night when the Engineers rigged a sand bag defence for them. I remained with these two guns during the fighting on that great day, 27th, and not only saw every detail of the fight from relatively quite close to, but also the finest shooting from one of them that I have ever seen in my life.

Once mounted and at the ranges at which they were required to fire, the platform has a great advantage over the wheeled mounting.

Having once got the range, of course, you can put as many shots in as you like, and as quick as you like. A man from the "Philomel," Patrick Casham, was the captain of the gun, and a born shot.

I will submit his name, with others that have been brought to my notice, later.

At least 10 different guns always claim to have put some particular gun out of action, so I will only observe that through the big glass I saw this gun put three lyddite shells, in one minute, into the embrasure of the gun on Grobler; that gun never fired again, nor were the wheels visible afterwards, though I had previously seen them distinctly.

At about 7 or 7.30 A.M. the Fusilier Brigade advanced to cross the pontoon, and Colonel Reeves, of the Irish Fusiliers, pointed out to me, as he passed, the position up the hill to which they and the Scotch were to go.

This enabled us, I think, to help the Irish considerably. The Scotch, however, went further to the right than I was aware of, and did not get much assistance, as, when they