

to advance again. Indeed, if we retired to the Tugela, we should most likely have all the Zulu army at our back, and be obliged either to destroy all our ammunition and stores before we left Ekowe, or abandon them on the march if attacked, as in all probability we should be by overwhelming numbers.

We have 1,365 Europeans here all told, and about 100 Natives, including pioneers, but exclusive of leaders and drivers, the number of whom I don't quite know. We have in round numbers 1,200 rifles and 332 rounds of ammunition for that number, also 127,000 rounds Gatling, 37 Naval Rockets, 24-pounders (shot, not shell rockets), 46 Rockets, (shell) for 7-pounders, also for 7-pounders 200 Shrapnel, 254 common shell, 20 double shell, and 33 case. It is almost impossible to get an accurate return of food, but I think we must have over three weeks' supply, the cattle, however, may be swept away at any moment, as of course they have to be kept in the wagon laager outside. I am keeping a small reserve in the ditches, where we stable the horses also, although commanded, the ground is perfectly open round here, except one or two small patches of wood, which would give cover, but which are being cut down as fast as we can do it. The brushwood, however, is all destroyed, the road to Ekowe from the Tugela is a mere beaten track, and at this season of the year very bad in places, especially this side of the Inyazane, which is often very steep, narrow, and sloping towards the valley (where cut on the side of a hill) thus rendering a wagon liable to upset. The latter defect we remedied en route, but as there is no stone in the country I am afraid it will never be possible to do more than for each convoy to repair the road for itself. There is nothing to repair it with except logs and brushwood, which of course won't stand the traffic of a large number of wagons. I know of no place between this and the Lower Drift where a dépôt could be advantageously formed, nor even fortified posts. The camping ground on the left bank of the Umsindusi is, however, nice and open, but it is commanded at one point toward the Amatikulu. Our camping ground at the Inyoni was on a knoll, but it is only nine miles from the Tugela. You ask if a Zulu can climb over our parapets here without assistance? I fear he can in some places, but we are working hard at deepening the ditches. We want medicines, and I have written to Tarrant about them, as I have told you what food and ammunition we have got, you will be able to judge of what we can do. I find it quite impossible to get information. Our Kafirs won't do spy. They are afraid of being taken. Thanks for your good wishes. Has there been any raid made on Natal?

Sincerely and respectfully yours,
(Signed) C. K. PEARSON.

DEAR KINGSCOTE,

Send this letter to the General, by special mounted messenger if possible, to Durban, first telegraphing the pith of it to him. Send the enclosed small piece of paper to Dr. Tarrant. Tell Major Graves the following officers and non-commissioned officers' Natal Native Contingent are here: — Captain Sherving'on; Lieutenants Orwin and Webb; Interpreter Grieg; Sergeants Swann, Behrends, Sherrer; Corporals Adams, Whiffler, Schuler, Schmidt, Meyer, Crossman, Phillipe, Fayard, Westphall, also twenty-six natives. Send us news whenever you can. Dark nights and rainy weather is the time.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) C. K. PEARSON.

The position generally is weak, being slightly commanded on three sides by hills within musketry range, but the whole of the front has been traversed by wagons, cornsacks, &c.

The water (very good) is under the fire of the fort within 150 yards, and efforts (which show good results) are being made to obtain water by sinking on the site itself, the troops bivouac at the alarm posts shown.

Ekowe, February 6, 1879.

DEAR LORD CHELMSFORD,

I RECEIVED yesterday morning your letter of the 2nd instant and a Telegram from the Deputy-Adjutant-General of the 4th. In the latter I am reminded of the inadvisability of reinforcements being sent to me as they would only help eat our food. When I wrote upon this subject I was not quite clear as to the immediate future course of this column. I now quite recognize our position and I quite see, too, the mistake which would be made by reinforcing us. We are now very strongly intrenched. Good thick parapets, ditches no where less than seven feet deep and ten feet wide. In places they are both deeper and wider, the ditches are partly flanked as well, either by flanks, stockades, caponnières or cuttings in the parapet. Enfilade and reverse fire have been well considered and traverses have been constructed to protect us from both. The batteries are masked and spare sand bags provided to protect the gunners from fire upon any point from which the gun is not actually firing.

Trous-de-loups are being made on the glacis, and a zig-zag will be made to the watering-place about 60 yards from the fort, to ensure the safety of the watering party. We have three entrances, a main entrance over a drawbridge, over which carts or unloaded wagons can pass; this is drawn back at night; a small foot bridge to the watering place which is topped up on the alarm sounding, and a trestle bridge, also a foot bridge, which is dismantled at retreat. Near the main entrance is a sally port leading into the ditch where at night we have some earth close's, as, of course the day latrines are some distance from the fort. In a hollow below this face are two cattle laagers built of wagons chained and reined together. The circular one holds the slaughter cattle, and the other most of the trek oxen. These are protected by an L shaped work, nevertheless, the cattle are a constant source of anxiety to me, as they might be taken away during a dark night if the Zulus should be enterprising, at least so it seems to me. I trust I may be wrong. We are better off for food than I thought we were, and, if our cattle are left to us, we shall be able to get along for over three weeks from this day, and, with many essentials for some time longer. Heygate has sent a pretty accurate return to the Commissary General, which he must have received, as it went with my letter which you have acknowledged.

Our resources in the way of ammunition you also know. As regards dividing our entrenchments, so as to defend our stores efficiently in the event of the garrison being reduced, I am afraid it could not well be done without very materially altering everything. Every building is now within the fort, and was preserved in the belief that all your columns were to have been fed from this line, and that, consequently, stores on a large scale would be required, also a fair-sized garrison. I mean some three hundred or four hundred men, for, of course, it was not then contemplated that