

the Royal Artillery, two guns, the section Royal Engineers, the Administration Staff, and the remainder of the conductors, drivers, and leaders. There would be also the two Naval Rockets, the two dwarf 7-prs., and the Royal Artillery Rocket.

In my letter I proposed taking the latter and also one of the dwarf 7-prs., but as I did not intend sticking to the high road I afterwards thought they—especially the 7-pr.—would be an incumbrance; but, of course, hereafter some of these guns (the two field guns, I suppose) would have to be removed from hence, as so many could not be spared for one fort. In your letter of the 8th you told me that in the anticipation of the reduction of this garrison you considered the interior arrangements of the fort should be altered, so that it might the better be defended with the smaller number. In my letter I endeavour to explain to you that in my and the Captains of Royal Engineers opinion this would be a difficult undertaking, as the fort was originally constructed to contain stores for your whole army, and we had, therefore, included all the existing buildings; that we never contemplated having to resist a determined attack from a large force; but that having been informed by you of the probability of such an event, we have been working hard at constructing flanks, traverses, enlargements, &c., so as to enable a smaller force to hold the place successfully.

I told you that my march depended upon the reply I should receive from you; that the messengers had engaged to return by Saturday morning; and that if it was true there was a large force of Zulus in the neighbourhood of the Ingoni (I know there were and still are some 4,000 or 5,000 somewhere about the Inyazore), I asked you to send what troops were available at the Tugela to meet us, and suggested they might be on the high ground near Adams's house, overlooking the Ingoni, by sunrise on Monday. I selected this spot, as the road I intended to follow joins the waggon road just below. It is a mere Kaffir path, to the west of the waggon road, much less bush on it, and reduces the journey to the Tugela to about 25 miles. In the same letter I gave you in detail the quantity of food we had left. At that date we had for the present garrison—

- 200 slaughter oxen,
- 6 weeks' bread-stuff, exclusive of whole mealies,
- 2 months' coffee,
- 1 month's tea,
- 6 weeks' sugar,
- 3 months' salt,
- 1 month's pepper,
- 6 weeks' lime juice,
- 1 month's preserved vegetables.

The runners have not since returned, so that either they must have been caught going to the Tugela, or your returned messengers caught on their way up, or you have not yet replied to my letter.

The mealies in the neighbourhood are now getting pretty fit for food, though not yet ripe, and will do very well for the Kaffirs, so we are going to begin raiding a little. This will help us to spin out the breadstuff for a few days longer, I hope. Had we marched on Sunday night we should have had a terrible time of it. It was the worst night we have had since we left Maritzburgh. It poured here with rain, and the wind at one time blew a perfect hurricane, and all the early part of the night it was dark as pitch. Our sick list remains steady, and no sign of typhoid or anything of that kind.

We have 38 in hospital, including the wounded;

three men died (see below) last week of diarrhoea and fever. They were always weakly men and had been ailing some time.

The band of the Buffs or 99th play every afternoon in the fort, which affords us some pleasure. We have found some cricket gear among the volunteer's baggage, also a number of books, which, of course, I have jumped at. In one of your letters you asked about Billtong; I have already inquired whether it could be made, but I am told we must wait for another month when the air will be drier.

We have no news here; we have not been molested in any way, and are beginning to fear that the Zulus don't intend to attack us here; at any rate, as long as we are so strong.

They are all round us, however, and exchange shots pretty often with the vedettes. Young Rowden, 99th Regiment, has proved himself most useful as head of our Mounted Scouts; he and his men are most vigilant.

Believe me, &c.,
(Signed) C. K. PEARSON.

Death Report.

- 1270 Private W. Macleod, 13th February, Diarrhoea; Buffs.
- 1795 Private E. Oakley, 15th February, Diarrhoea; Buffs.
- J. Moore, 11th February, Diarrhoea; Volunteer Brigade.
- Private Oakley was married; his wife is at Pietermaritzburg.

Inclosure 2 in A.A.

COLONEL WOOD, V.C., C.B., forwards a report (delayed on the road) from Commandant Schermbrucker, dated Luneberg, 11th instant, from which it appears that on the night of the 10th instant, a war party of Umbeline crossed the Pongolo river in the vicinity of Luneberg. Umbeline was present in person. This Impi about 1,500 strong, having been joined by Mambumbu's tribe, commenced massacring the friendly natives on our border, committing the most frightful barbarities; at one kraal they killed two men, six women, and burnt seven children alive. Neither age or sex were spared, and the dead were horribly mutilated. The enemy made off at dawn with his spoil, comprising many hundred sheep and cattle, towards the caves of Manyoba; but a patrol, under Lieutenant Schwartzkopf, consisting of sixty natives and six Kaffrarian Rangers (mounted) came up with a division of the enemy (300 strong) as he was crossing the Intombi River, put them to flight with a loss of fifteen killed, and recovered many sheep and cattle. On our side there were no casualties.

W. BELLAIRS,
D.A.G.

From the Lieutenant-General Commanding in South Africa to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for War.

Maritzburg, Natal,
February 24, 1879.

SIR,
WITH reference to my Despatch of yesterday's date, in which I stated that pending the arrival of reinforcements I felt unable to make any forward movements from the Lower Tugela, I have now the honour to report that I last night received intimation from Admiral Sullivan of the arrival of H.M.S. "Shah," with 160 troops from St. Helena.