

Some years ago it was suggested that batteries should be placed on Ward's Island, Hallswell Point, and a site to the north of the city, in order to concentrate a heavy fire on the bay in front of the town. All these points are, however, more than 3,000 yards apart; whilst at the Heads the entrance is only 2,000 yards wide, and there are favorable positions for land batteries. Under these circumstances, therefore, it is manifestly preferable to keep the enemy's vessels outside the port, and to defend Wellington, against attack by sea, by placing a battery at the Heads on Dorset Point—armed with three 7-ton and three 64-pounder rifled guns—and providing three torpedo boats of the kind which I have already described.

A battery on the opposite shore, and submarine mines across the channel, could be added in the future, should it be considered necessary to augment the defences. For the present, one work and the torpedo boats will suffice. The number of shots that could be fired at a ship, passing at ten knots an hour, during 5,000 yards of her course through the channel, would exceed fifty.

The arrangements for manning the work will be considered hereafter, and, as it is about eight miles distant from Wellington, it should be rendered self-defensible by a stockade and ditch on the land side and by scarping the rock on the sea side. It will also be desirable to construct a small defensible post on the signal station overlooking the battery, to be garrisoned in the event of an enemy attempting to land.

The enemy, finding the Heads defended, might attempt to attack Wellington by landing at one of the adjacent bays, and marching into the city from thence. This operation, although no doubt difficult, is not impracticable, for a landing could be effected during all but southerly weather at Island Bay, situated about 6,000 yards to the west of the entrance and 4,000 yards from the southern portion of the city. From this point a valley extends towards the city, thus affording more favorable ground for the operation than Lyall Bay to the east of the former, where the sea generally breaks in all weathers. From Lyall Bay there are two roads into Wellington, one which skirts the shore of Evans Bay and Lambton harbor, and the other which runs over a high range of hills. Some apprehension has been expressed that an enemy might land in Porirua harbor, distant twelve miles from Wellington, with a fair coach road all the way, which could however be easily obstructed. This being a bar harbor with an entrance not easy of navigation, it is only available for small vessels—except in fine weather and with off-shore winds, when large vessels may anchor within the line of the outer Heads.

Although I consider that a landing at the points mentioned is extremely improbable, it is manifestly preferable to be prepared to meet the contingency, and this can best be done by the maintenance of a field force.

The possibility of hostile vessels bombarding the city, from outside the entrance to the port, is a risk that can be safely disregarded. An enemy could, no doubt, throw shells into Wellington as the ranges