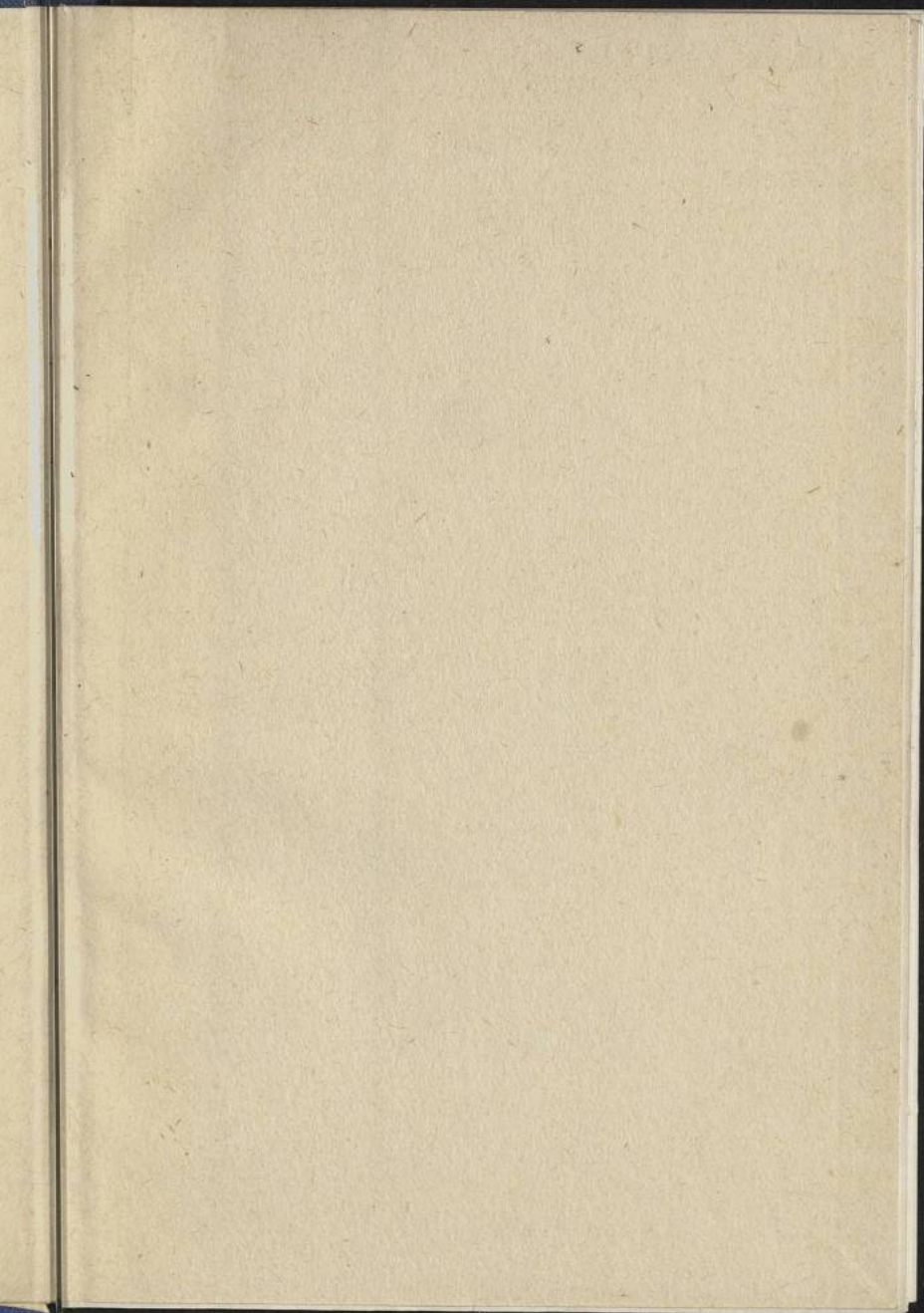
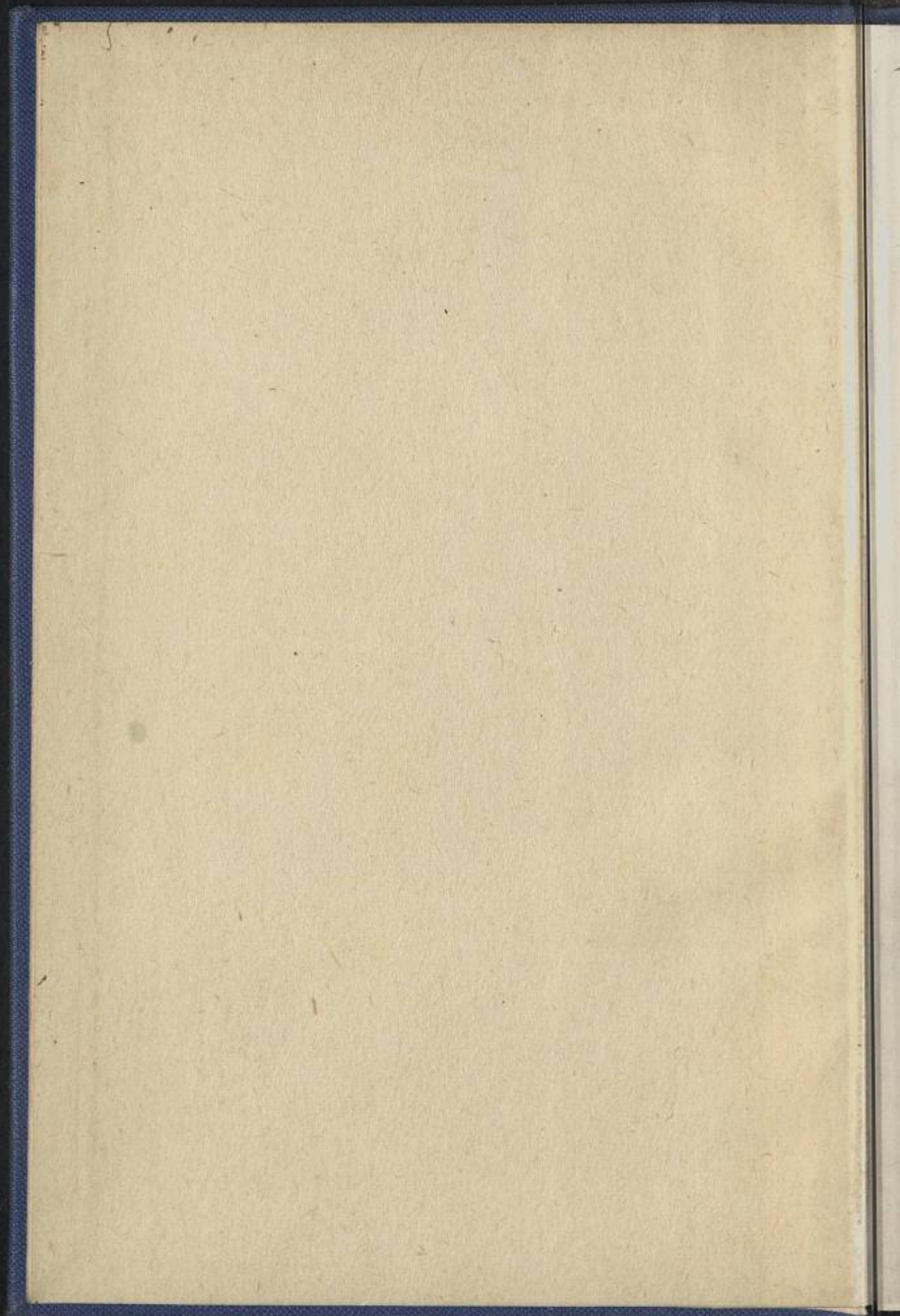


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A. PEET

A
SHORT
HISTORY
OF
WHALE ISLAND.

*Compiled from Information supplied by Past
and Present Officers and Men.*

PORTSMOUTH:
CHARPENTIER AND CO., NAVAL PRINTERS,
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1908.

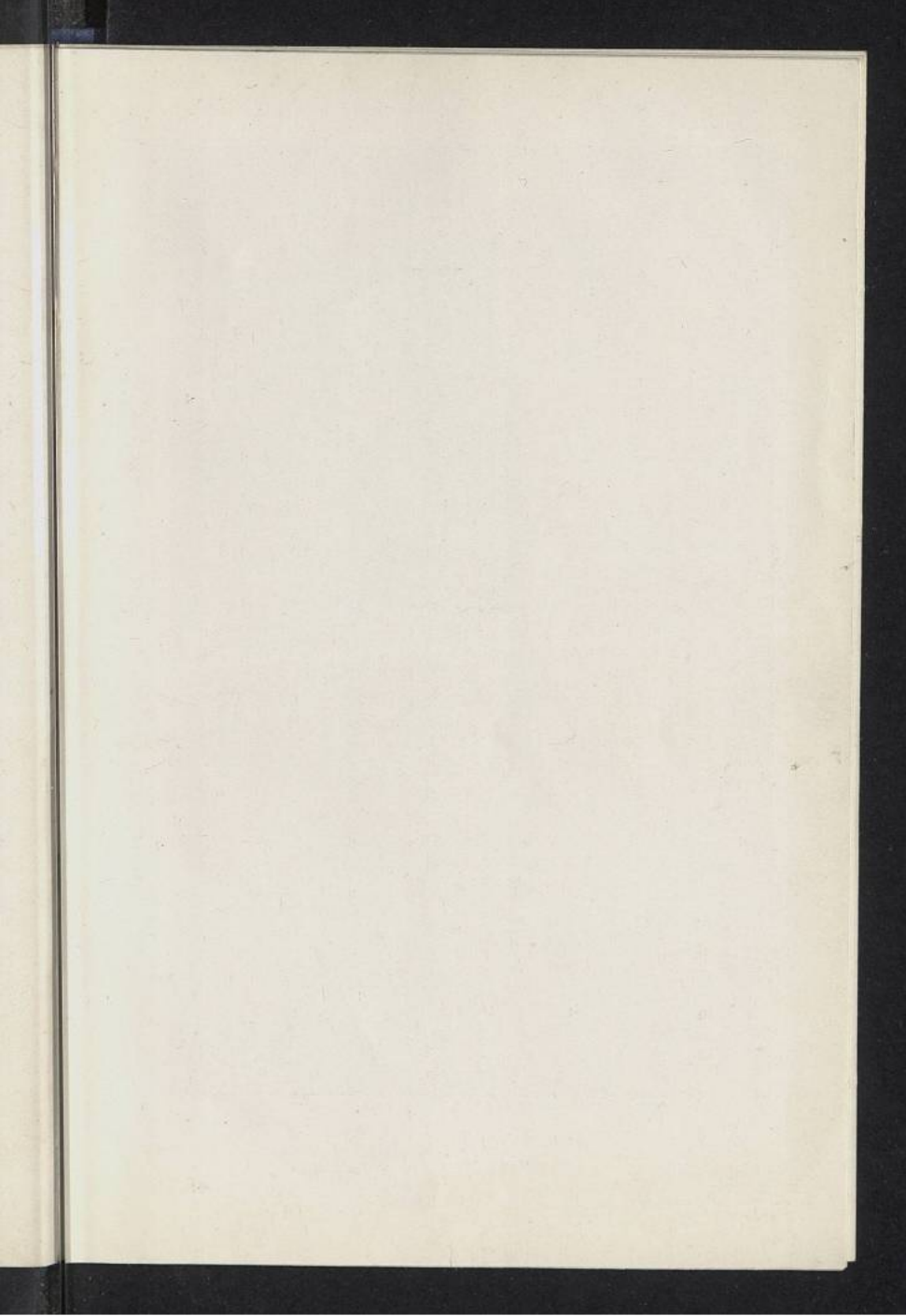


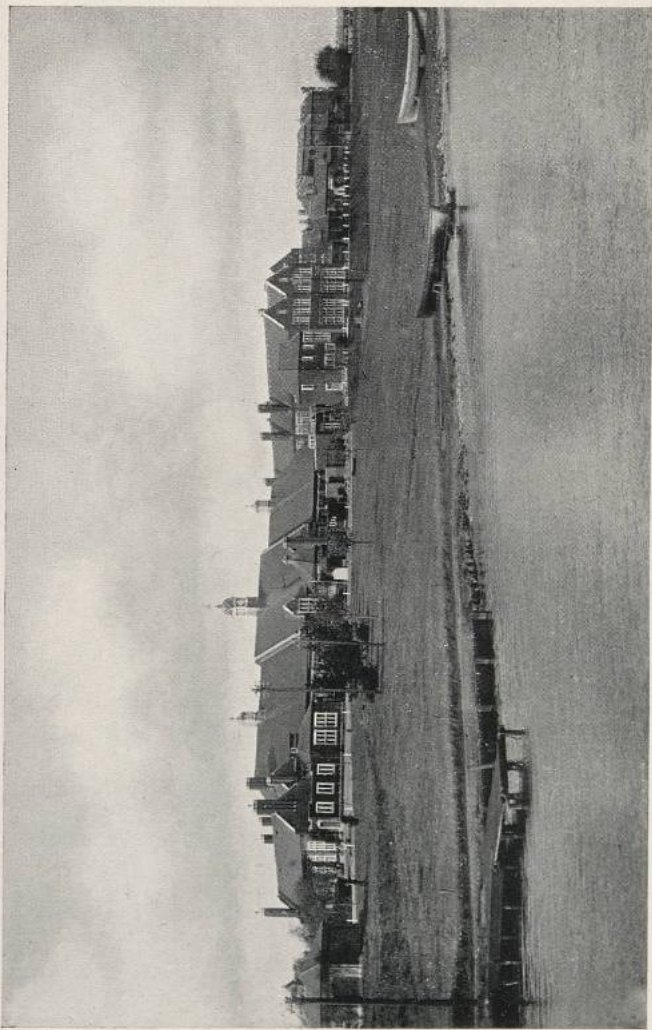
H.M.S. "EXCELLENT" IN ACTION.

NOTICE.

It is requested that any errors or omissions discovered by readers may be sent to the Commander, H.M.S. "Excellent."

NOTICE





WHALE ISLAND FROM THE SHORE, 1908.

A SHORT HISTORY

OF

WHALE ISLAND.

1830. The Naval Gunnery School was first established at Portsmouth in the year 1830, when the events of the war with the United States had directed the attention of Gunnery Experts to the vital importance of good Gunnery in the Navy. The origin of the School was chiefly due to the appeals of General Sir Howard Douglas to the Admiralty. Sir Howard, like Captains Joseph Needham Taylor and Sir Philip Bowes Vere Broke, R.N., of the "Shannon," had been instrumental in securing the general fitting of sights to ships' guns in the early years of the peace, and also with Captains James Marshall and Thomas Hastings, had long taken a wide and active interest in all that pertained to the development of Artillery Science. The School was started on board the "Excellent," and was entrusted to the direction of Commander George Smith, an officer well known for his own improvements in Gunnery.

1832. The School was at first only tentative, but in 1832 the system of Gunnery Instruction was extended and permanently established on board the "Excellent," under Captain Sir Thomas Hastings, who remained in command until 1845.

The first "Excellent" was a 74 gun ship, launched in 1787, and broken up in 1835.

The second was the "Boyne," a 104 gun ship, launched in 1810, and converted into a Gunnery School in 1834, when she was re-named "Excellent." She was broken up in 1861.

The third ship was the "Queen Charlotte," launched in 1810 at Deptford. She took the place of her predecessor in 1859. Her length was 190-ft. 7-in.; beam, 53-ft. 7-in.; and displacement, 4000 tons. She also was re-named "Excellent," and when the Gunnery School was eventually established at Whale Island she was sold out of the Service to Mr. J. Reid, and broken up in 1892. Her figure-head was removed and is now on the Heavy Gun Battery, after having been fixed for some years over the Officers' block.

The "Excellent" was moored in the creek at the entrance to Fountain Lake, she accommodated about 1000 officers and men, and as the system of Instruction developed, the two-deckers, "Calcutta" and "Illustrious," were moored in line with her, and joined by bridges.

Target practice was carried out over the mud flats. For this purpose, there was also a wooden stage on the mud off the Port Quarter of the "Excellent," which mounted 3 guns, and a small craft, called the "Rolling Motion Boat," was moored between the "Excellent" and "Calcutta," and approached by a Jacob's ladder. In this boat were four 9-pdr. M.L. guns for firing over the mud, the boat being rolled while the men were firing.

Until the year 1869, Boys were also trained in the "Excellent;" they were shipped straight from shore, and trained in both seamanship and gunnery before being sent to seagoing ships. For this purpose the Mizzen Mast was kept fully rigged until 1869, when it was dismantled, the boys transferred to other training ships, and the "Excellent" became a Gunnery School only. (The "Illustrious" was taken away about 1869.)

There existed to the northward of the "Excellent" two small Islands, chiefly composed of mud. The larger of the two was about $11\frac{1}{2}$ acres in area, and was called Whale Island on account of its shape at high water giving it the appearance of a whale's back. The smaller Island was only about $\frac{1}{10}$ th acre, and was called little Whale Island. Both Islands were quite barren except that there was a small Elder tree on the larger Island. (This tree is still in existence.)

WHALE AND LITTLE WHALE ISLANDS 1856

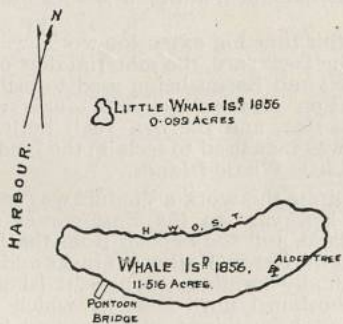


PLATE I.

The larger Island, in the fifties, began to be used by the "Excellent" for Rifle Drill, and a Pontoon Bridge was built at the S.W. corner to facilitate landing.

Plate 1 shews the Islands as they appeared at High Water in 1856, at the time they were called Big and Little Whale Islands. In 1856 they were acquired by the Admiralty, and shortly afterwards they were officially turned over to the "Excellent," then commanded by Captain Sir Thomas Maitland.

In 1859 a Rifle Range was commenced, 400 yards in length, and this was completed by 1863. In 1864 the first Pier was built for the Island, and it was lengthened from time to time. It was built by men from "Excellent," and most of the material used was obtained from the old Frigate "America," which was aground for many years at the mouth of Whale Island creek, near where the Gunboats are now moored. The old Pier was covered in as the Island was extended, and a new Pier built further out.

About this time big extension works were in progress in the Dockyard, the material dug out of the New Docks and Basins being used to reclaim land for extension of the Dockyard. This was completed by 1867, and the Sea Wall built, and the material was then used to reclaim the land between Big and Little Whale Islands.

To facilitate this work a Viaduct was constructed from the Dockyard to the East corner of Large Whale Island, and the deposit from the Dockyard was brought over in Railway Trucks and dumped, thus gradually forming the present Island. This process continued until 1880, by which time the Islands had been joined and increased to the size shown in *plate 2*. As the Island increased, the Railway was pushed further inland, thus reducing the labour which, at this time, was furnished by convicts. Some Targets on piles were also placed on the mud to the Westward for Rifle firing at 500, 600, and 800 yards, the firing points being at the spots shewn in *plate 2*.

During this time the old "Excellent" still remained the Gunnery School, the Island being used for "Rifle Firing and Drill" only.

WHALE ISLAND 1865 TO 1880

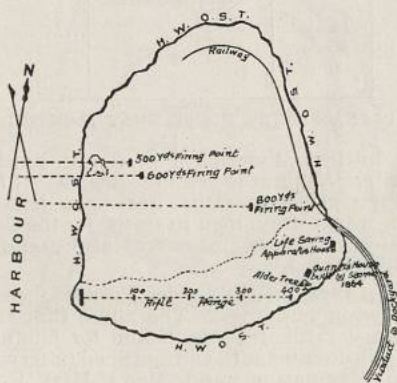
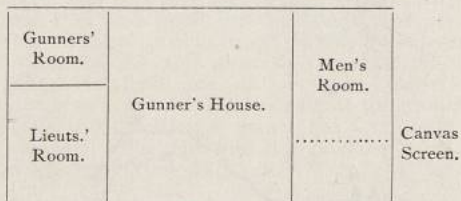


PLATE II.

1864. The first house was built in 1864 by Seamen of the "Excellent," under Mr. Reeves, Gunner, who occupied it when completed. It was called "The Excellent house that Jack built," and was in the S.E. corner on the spot shewn in *plate 2*. The Elder tree already mentioned was in the garden, and remained there until 1890. The house, which was demolished in 1887, had 3 rooms built on to it in about 1868, one for Lieutenants and one for Gunners to lunch in, and one room for the Seamen. If Sub-Lieutenants lunched on the Island a canvas screen was put up in the Men's room (*see plan*).



PLAN OF "THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT."

1872. In 1872, the Board of Trade built the Life Saving Apparatus House which still remains, though the apparatus has been removed. The idea was to train men in its use for the Coast Guard service. The apparatus was also useful for entertainments.

1879. In 1879, on the Lower Parade, there were the following buildings, "The house that Jack built," Room for Lieutenants, Room for Gunners, Room for Sub-Lieutenants, Cutlass Shed (afterwards made into Gymnasium and Men's Mess Room), Life Saving House and Canteen.

In 1879, a quarter of a mile track, 3 feet broad, was made on the uneven ground where the cricket pitch now is, and the "Excellent's" first Athletic Sports took place. Prizes were given away by Mrs. Maltby (wife of Lieutenant Maltby, retired).

1883. In 1883, the Proof Butt Mast was erected for Signal communication with the "Excellent," but previous to this, viz. in 1879, the Island had been joined to the Ship by telephone during some trials

WHALE ISLAND. 1885.

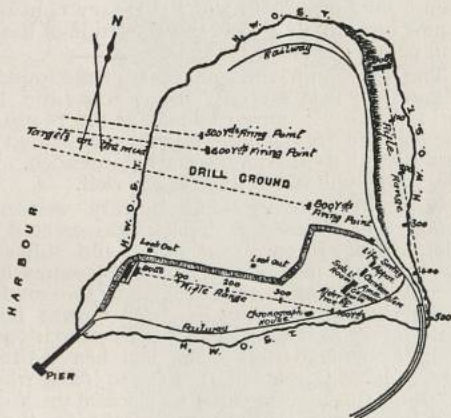


PLATE III.

of Nordenfelt and Hotchkiss Guns. The telephone on the Island was installed in a moveable wooden hut, now used as a potting shed. The Mast by the present Guard Room was erected in 1888.

1884. In 1884, the two iron targets and marking butts on the Lower Range were done away with, a pit made, and 4 Wimbledon targets put in the place. See *plan 3*. This range was given up later and the pit filled in.

1886. The Heavy Gun Battery was commenced in 1884 and completed in 1888. Another building erected at this time was the Machine Gun Battery (now the Field Gun Shed); an extension was also made to the S.W. corner of the Island and a new Pier built, while the Upper Rifle Range, having been demolished on account of the Heavy Gun Battery, a new one was built on the East side of the Island and called the No. 2 Range.

The question of the soundness of the foundations began to cause anxiety about this time, but no serious defect occurred except at the South end of the Heavy Gun Battery which was extended 10 feet further out than was originally intended. Otherwise the foundations have stood well.

When the Heavy Gun Battery was nearing completion in 1887, a derrick was erected at the Pier Head. It consisted of an old ship's lower mast, bedded in concrete, stayed by wires leading to dolphins (wood piles driven in the mud), and fitted with a swinging derrick. It was not very satisfactory as it took nearly 200 men to lift a heavy weight about 10 tons. The last heavy lifts were two 10-in. M.L. guns of 18 tons in 1889, when the dolphins in the mud came to, slacked up the wires and brought nearly all the strain on the mast. After this all heavy weights were brought across viaduct, the engine having a very long tow rope. About 1893 a steam travelling crane was used, but when lifting a 6-in. gun in 1896 the crane and gun toppled over the Pier Head. The present crane was erected in 1898.

1886. It will be seen from *plate 4* that at this time the development of the means of instruction in Heavy Gun Drill ashore was rapidly proceeding, the West Battery was under construction, the



THE PARADE GROUND, 1907.



Machine Gun Shed was built and the Chronograph Room constructed, and also the "Rolling Motion Platform." The latter consisted of a wooden platform on which could be mounted light guns. By revolving a pump-handle arrangement the platform was made to oscillate so as to represent the motion of a ship. It was in use until about 1900, when the invention of the "Dotter" sealed its fate.

1887. In 1887 the Magazine on the Parade ground was built, and also the Proof Cell and Gantry, for use in testing gun-mountings.

1888. The Seamen's Quarters were commenced in 1888, and the first four Blocks, A, B, C, and D built that year. These were followed by E, F, G, and H the following year. In order to ensure a sound foundation for these buildings the ground was excavated and a solid concrete biscuit laid. The concrete biscuits under the first Blocks have old wire rigging embedded in them to prevent cracking, but the walls of C and D Blocks nevertheless cracked before the roofs were on the buildings.

The foundations of eight Seamen's Blocks, Officers' Blocks and all buildings built previous to these were laid by convict labour, and all bricks used in A, B, C and D Blocks and all previous buildings were made by convict labour in the Extension Works. Most of the later buildings were built by contract.

The Seamen's Blocks are all of identical design, being two-storied buildings with two rooms on each floor. Each room has accommodation for 30 Seamen. There are also 4 rooms in each Block for C.P.O's., a bath room and 4 lavatories.

1889. A, B, C, and D Blocks were occupied in 1889 by 500 Petty Officers and Seamen under the command of Lieutenant Ricardo.

The Water supply for these buildings came to the Island from the Town main in Simpson Road by a 3-in. main. This was subsequently increased to a 6-in. main. All water comes from the reservoirs on the Portsdown Hills.

In 1889 the plans were approved for the Officers' Mess, and the buildings were commenced in 1890. Unfortunately the kitchen was put in front facing

the lawn, the windows were too high to see out of, there was no hall, and the walls commenced to open out before it was finished; however all these things were eventually altered, the back wall of the Mess Room was shored up, and subsequently buttresses were built. See *plan of Officers' Quarters*.

The first two buildings were the Centre Block and East Block, followed a year later by the West Block. All these Blocks were detached, and with their occupation the old ship "Excellent" was finally abandoned and sold, but the name has always been retained.

The original idea was that there should be a Canteen and large general Mess Room for 700 men, the men were to sleep in the Blocks and have their meals in the Mess Room. However, in 1890 it was decided to alter this and to allow the men to mess in their own Blocks, and the old Mess Room was turned into a Lecture Room. See *plate 6*.

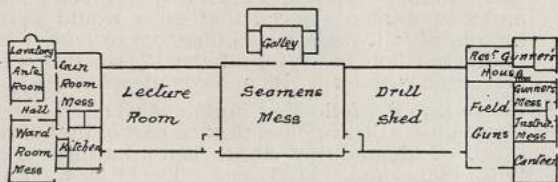
In 1889 the extension of the Island was continued to the South and Southward, the Pier altered and a temporary Waiting Room built.

Considerable difficulty was experienced when extending the Island to the South. Owing to the heavy soil being deposited in the soft mud it squeezed the latter out in to the Creek running East from the Pier, more especially where the Creek skirted the Island. This went on for some time, although many barge loads of shingle were deposited on the mud. The slipping away in time gradually lessened, and was practically stopped later by long trenches being dug and filled in with shingle, etc.

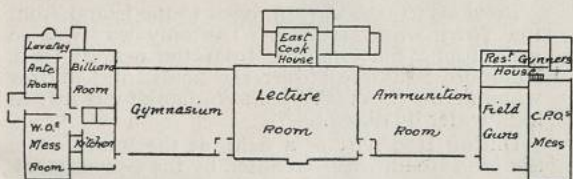
Up to this time very little had been done to level the Island, etc., but in 1886 the Upper Parade was roughly levelled and grass seed sown; a pond was also dug for teaching "Bridging" (subsequently filled in in 1890), and a road was made across this ground to the West Battery, with trees on each side.

It was not however until 1890 that a subscription list was sent round the Fleet to collect money for making a Cricket-ground on Whale Island. £120 was raised, the present pitch was levelled and drained, a chalk foundation made and the ground turfed. A pony (price £8) was purchased and also

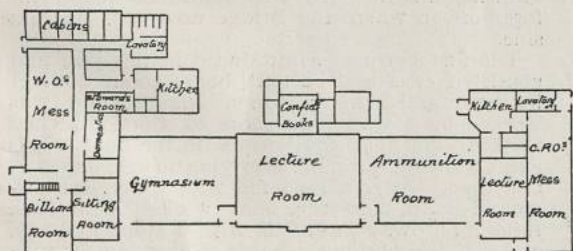
PLANS OF LECTURE ROOM BLOCK



1888



1890



1908

PLATE VI.

a lawn mower. The pony was a nice looking grey, but sensitive, and if not carefully watched during firing would make for the Pier at full speed if he hadn't much behind him. This he did several times.

In 1891, on the occasion of their Lordships' visit to the Island, the patch of grass was shewn to them, and they were convinced that grass would grow successfully; it was decided therefore to level and drain the whole of the top of the Island, this was proceeded with forthwith and completed by 1894.

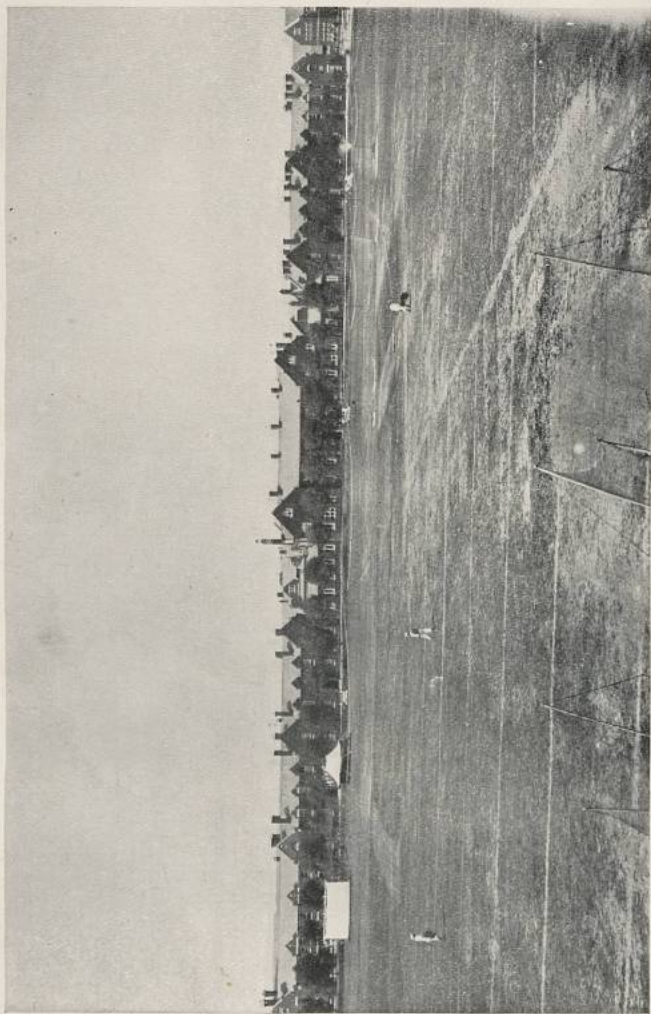
1890. In 1890 the following buildings were erected: the Seamen's Cook-house, the first part of the Office Block, Gun-Mounting Shed, Men's Latrines and Wash-house, and Guard-room. The latter was not in its present place, but as shewn in plan VII.

Some mention must here be made of the land approach to the Island.

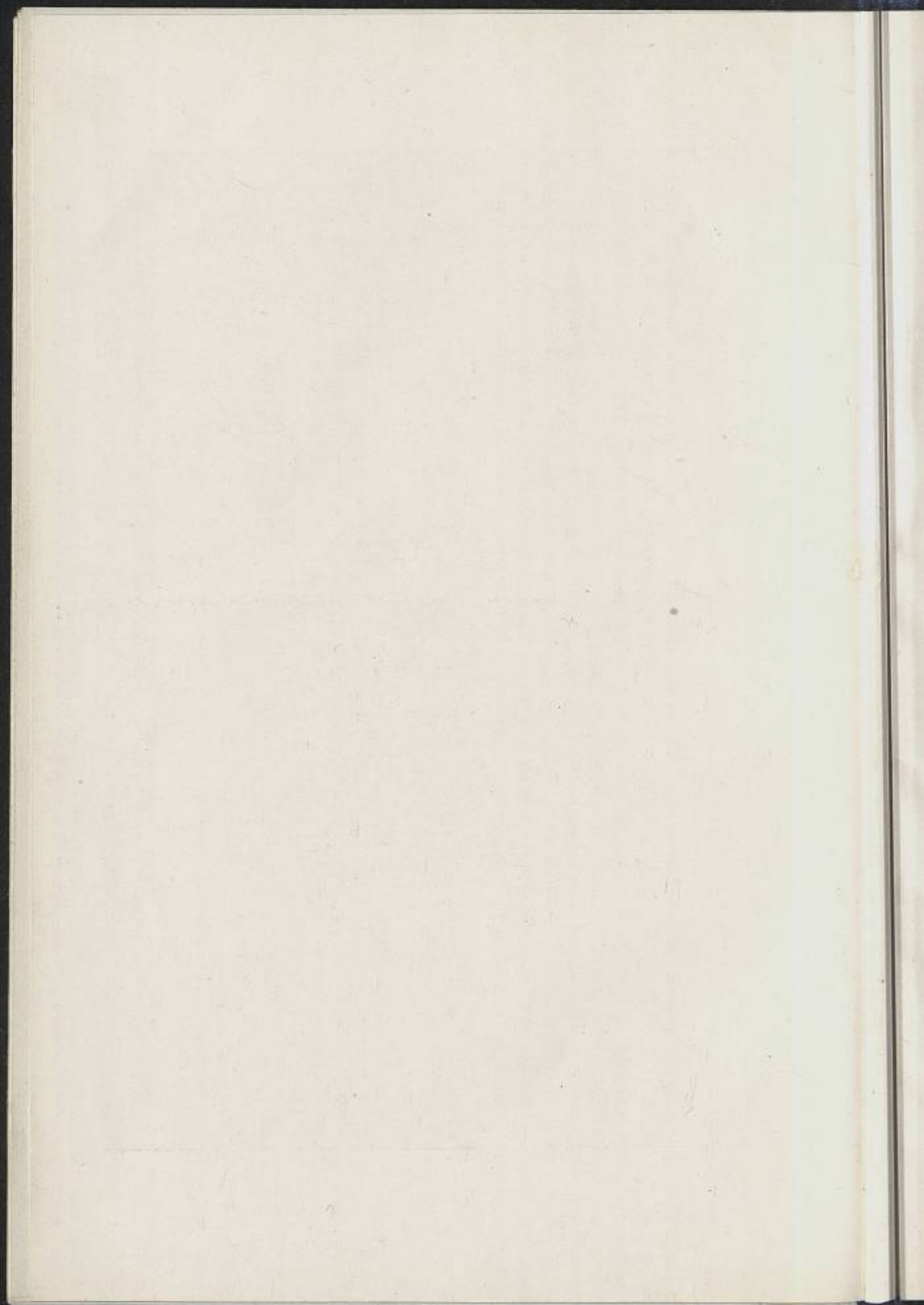
Previous to 1889 the approach to the Island from the Town was very bad. The only way was to walk round the foreshore from the nearest road, Rudmore Square, or over the fields, and at low water across the creek by a two-plank footway; at high water by dingy.

During 1889 part of a field, at the west end of Simpson Road, was purchased by the Government, and a road cut through it to the foreshore, the piece on each side being allotted to Staff Instructors for gardens, the roadway was continued round the foreshore to where the Bridge now ends on that side.

The first Ferry was introduced in this year and consisted of a flat-bottom boat, about 26 feet long (obtained from Horsea Island), and was worked by a wire from shore to shore, attached to the drum of a small winch in the boat. This was very slow work, only carrying 20 men across at one time. After a time the wire winch was dispensed with, and the boat worked with oars. Later a hardway was made with a stone footway, and a floating bridge, capable of carrying 100 men fully equipped, was designed and built by Carpenter Lieutenant Chitson, then Carpenter of the Island. This bridge was worked by a wire and winch in a similar way to the boat.



THE OFFICERS' QUARTERS AND LAWN.



WHALE ISLAND. 1891.

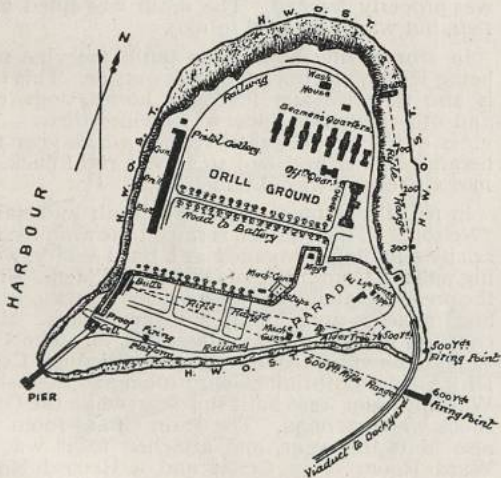


PLATE VII.

The present causeway was begun in 1890 and completed in 1891.

1891. In 1891 the Boat-house and Work-shops were erected on the S.E. bank, and the following were also built:—Sick Bay, Provision and Clothing Store, buildings for Gunner's Stores, and the Gas and Water Meter Houses. An extension was also made to the Warrant Officers' Quarters.

1892. In 1892 great trouble was experienced in keeping the Lower Range dry, the water from the upper plateau coming through the bank and keeping the Lower Range in a swampy condition. A large open brick drain was built at the foot of the bank (at a cost of £400) and the Lower Range was properly drained. The drain was filled in in 1894, but was re-opened in 1903.

In 1892 a vine house was built, the vine roots being led into a concreted tank outside. This tank is also the cemetery for dead horses, dogs, cats, and other luxuries upon which vines thrive. The vines did very well until 1906, in which year they became barren and had to be cut right back. In 1908 a fine crop was obtained.

In 1892 the Canteen Block was built and named "Nelson." The Canteen is run on the Ship System, *i.e.*, by a manager engaged at a fixed salary, working under a Committee of Officers and Men. Under the present management it has been very successful, and makes a good profit with low prices. Many charities are generously subscribed to. The Coal Pound, Bowling Alley, Officers' Racquet Court, Drill Shed, Footbridge Guard-room and Stamshaw Waiting-room were built this year, while the Office Block was extended. The Main Guard-room was also built this year, and attached to it was the Ward Room Wine Cellar and a Record Room. Unfortunately the records have been burnt.

The present road to the Pier Head was made at this time. The old road was between two lines of fire, *viz.*, the Rifle Firing on the Lower Range and the Proof Butts, and this firing was continually being stopped for traffic, so a new road was made.

The first Ball was given at Whale Island in 1892, The date and time were arranged so that guests

WHALE ISLAND 1893.

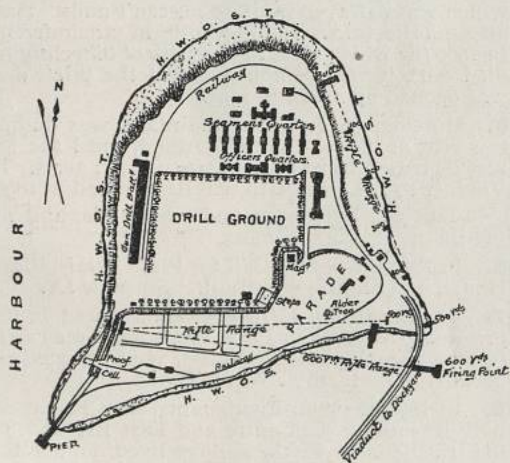


PLATE VIII.

could drive on to the Island as the causeway was covering, and leave before it covered again, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The dance was given in the Canteen, with a covered way to the Mess Room for supper. It was customary for the dance to be on Thursday, the decorations being left up for the Instructors to give a dance on the Friday.

1893. The Magazine near the Pier was built. See *plan of the Island at this date.*

1894. In 1894 the 600 yard firing point was added to No. 2 Range. The brick drain on the lower ground was also filled in, and a Bicycle track made. The result was that the lower ground became a quagmire in rainy weather. The Bicycle track cost £150, which was defrayed by the Canteen Funds. It was an asphalt track, about $\frac{1}{8}$ mile in circumference. In 1900 (by which time the novelty of bicycling had died out), it was demolished and the brick drain was opened up again in 1903.

1895. More deposit from the mainland was dumped this year at the North of the Island, until the area was increased to its present size, viz., 72 acres. The Viaduct to the Dockyard was demolished in 1896.

In 1895 the Drying-ground was made, and also the Board of Works Offices.

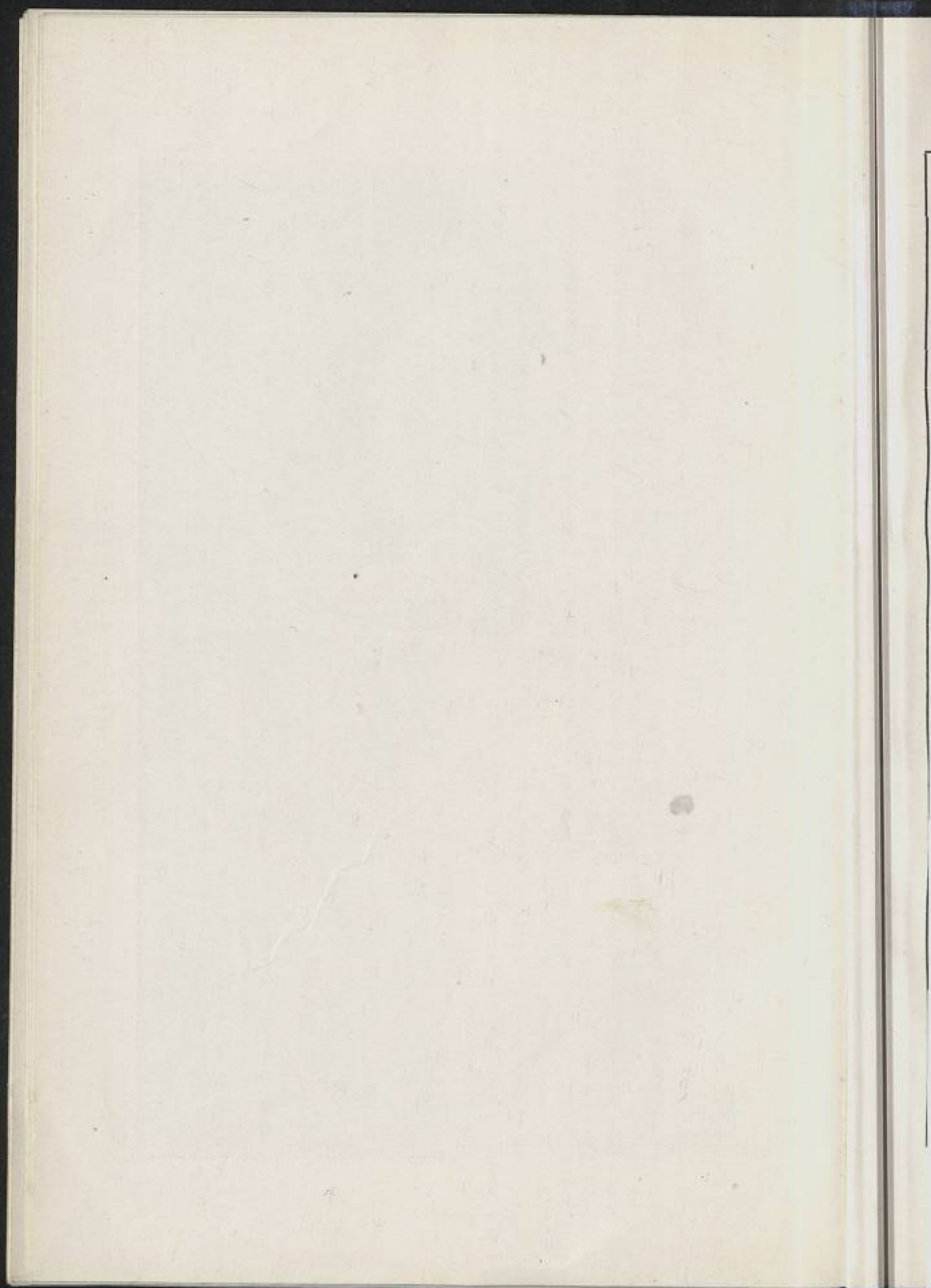
1896. In 1896 the Safety Cell for Plate Trials, Pigeon House, and Stables were built. See *plate IX.*

1897. The new Proof Cells were commenced in 1897, previously all Armour Plate Trials had been carried out in the old hulk "Nettle," but it was now decided to do them at Whale Island.

1898. In 1898 the Sub-Lieutenants' Mess Room was built by joining the Centre and East Blocks. The Sub-Lieutenants in these days lived in the R.N. College, and only came up to the Island for Gunnery during the day. They used to lunch in a room in the Warrant Officers' Block. The Heavy Gun Battery was also extended, a second Proof Cell built, and the 40 ton Crane put up at the Pier Head. By having this Crane, Guns, Mountings, and Armour Plates could be readily brought to the Island in lighters, and hoisted out into a railway truck, instead of, as previously, having to be brought round by road.



FIELD BATTERIES AT DRILL.



WHALE ISLAND 1896.

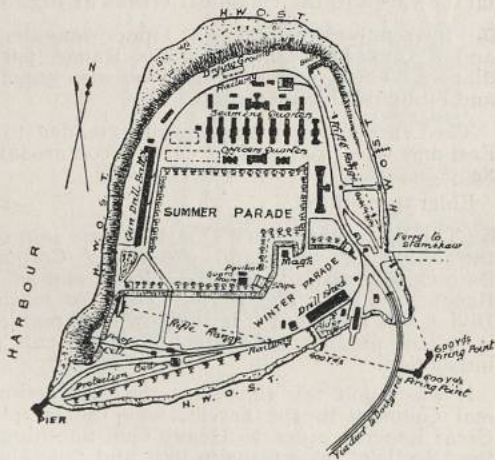


PLATE IX.

- 1899.** In 1899 the North End of the Island was re-levelled, and two Seamen's Blocks added, J and K. The Seamen's Blocks are lettered A to L, each Block being named after an Admiral, viz., "Anson," "Blake," "Collingwood," "Drake," "Effingham," "Frobisher," "Grenville," "Hawke," "Jervis," "Keppel," and "Lyons," and the Canteen "Nelson." The Officers' Quarters were further extended by joining the West and Centre Blocks, the extra space forming a Billiard Room. In this year the swing-bridge to Stamshaw was built; this was a very important development, as it opened up the Island to wheeled traffic at all times, irrespective of the tide. It was necessary that the bridge should be a swing-bridge, owing to the barges which go up the Creek to the Chemical Works at high tide.
- 1900.** In 1900 the Rifle Range at Tipnor was extended and a Cook-house built for the Range parties' dinners. The Armourers' Shop was also extended and brought more up to date.

The Officers' Block was further extended to the East and West, giving more cabin accommodation. See *plan*.

Elder tree shifted.

- 1901.** The Warrant Officers' Quarters were improved the following year, and the Ships' Corporals' Barrack Room built at the North end of the Racquet Court. The Diving Tank for teaching Diving was built, but it is not now used regularly, it is still used occasionally for experiments and instruction.

It was about this time that the resurrection of real Gunnery in the Service was taking place. Great impetus given to Heavy Gun Shooting by the "Scylla's" prize firing in 1899, and the value of a good Captain of a Gun began to be appreciated. The demand for better trained men reacted on the Gunnery Schools and a new Heavy Gun Battery was commenced at the North end of the Island, with the view of firing with Morris Tube towards Tipnor. The Battery (called the North Battery) is now fitted with the latest training appliances, about two million rounds of ammunition being fired annually. See *plate XI*.

1902. In 1902 it was decided to build a large room for Hydraulic Machinery, to cost £11,000. This was eventually countermanded and the suggestion made to have Dummy Turrets in lieu, and this was finally approved.

The question of installing an Electric Light plant on the Island was also discussed this year, but it was finally decided to light the establishment from the electric plant in the Dockyard. This work was commenced in 1905, and as soon as the wiring of the Officers' Quarters had been finished a temporary Dynamo Plant was set up on the sight of the present Squash Racquet Courts, and from this, assisted by secondary batteries, the Officers' Mess and cabins were lit for about eighteen months. The Island circuits were finally joined up to the Dockyard mains in April, 1907.

1903. In 1903 the structural work of the North Battery was completed. It had been arranged that each gun was to be in a casemate and have running-in gear; the guns were to fire with Morris tube at moving targets running along a rail.

In April, 1903, as the work was not completed, as many casemates as possible were done away with, and on account of danger to the rifle parties, the idea of firing towards Tipnor was "knocked on the head."

1904. In 1904 it was decided that the Captain of "Excellent" should live on the Island, at the West end of West Block. A garden and tennis court were laid out, trees planted, and plan of house approved. The idea, however, was countermanded, as it was considered that the Captain's wife might get ill and necessitate firing at the Proof Butts being stopped, so the house is still unbuilt, and an Admiralty letter states that M.L.C.A. have decided not to build a Captain's house.

A three-roomed Motor and Cycle House was built this year at a cost of £400, the Officers' Mess agreeing to pay a yearly rental for the use of it. The house has, however, hardly ever been used as a Bicycle House as it is so far from the Mess, and two of the rooms are continually required for Service work, and in 1907 the Admiralty decided to

WHALE ISLAND 1902

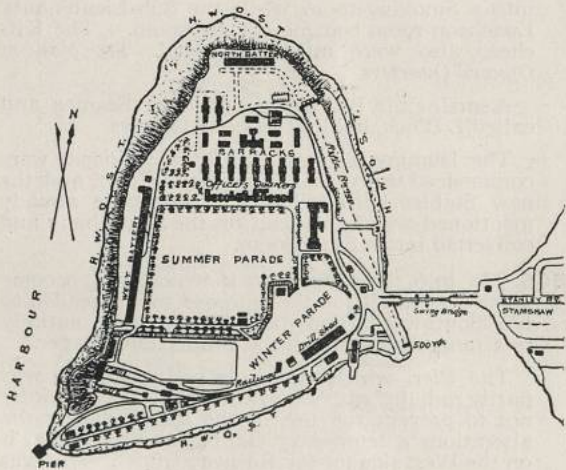


PLATE XI.

charge a rental for the Motor-room only at the rate of £10 a year.

1905. In 1905 it was decided that all Sub-Lieutenants, while going through the Gunnery Course, should be accommodated at Whale Island. As the average number learning Gunnery at a time is 80, this meant a great enlargement of the Officers' Mess. It was decided to extend the West Block to the West and North West, and this was completed in six months, giving 80 extra Cabins, with Bath-rooms and heating appliances. At the same time the Officers' Mess-room was doubled by an extension to the Northward, two new Billiard-rooms and a Lavatory made, and the old Billiard-room turned into a Smoking-room, while the Sub-Lieutenants' Luncheon-room became a Card-room. The Kitchens also were much improved. See *plan of Officers' Quarters*.

A small extra Block was added for Seamen and called L Block, holding 30 Petty Officers.

The Dummy Turrets already mentioned were commenced this year, and finished in 1907, and the new Stables built. The old Boathouse already mentioned was hauled up on the South bank and converted into a Store-room.

1906. In 1906 the Office Block which had become much too small for the purpose was extended to the Southward, and the old building entirely re-arranged, making all the Offices much larger.

The Pier, which was in a bad condition, was partly re-built, with Ferro concrete piles. In order not to prevent the use of the Crane during the alterations a temporary Gantry was run under it on the West side for the Railway trucks. This was removed in 1908, by which time the partial re-building was completed.

The new regulations with regard to Ward-room Servants came into force this year, the Marine Servants being relieved by untrained Boys entered straight from the shore. This necessitated reconstruction of the Ward-room Domestic's quarters, and reduced the number of rooms available for the accommodation of Seamen.

WHALE ISLAND 1908.

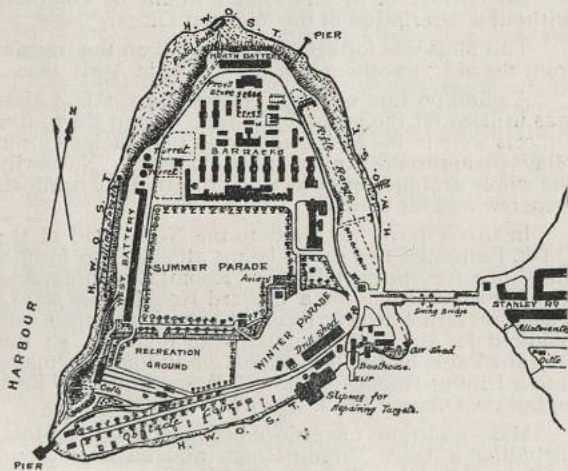


PLATE XII.

1907. In 1907 a new Kitchen was made for the Warrant Officers' Mess, with gas cooking appliances, the old Kitchen being converted into a Domestic's Mess.

The Squash Racquet Courts were also begun, and finished in 1908. *See plate XII.*

This completes the list of works carried out on the Island up to the present date.

CHIEF AND W.O.'s MESS.

No History of Whale Island would be complete without a description of the Warrant Officers' Mess.

This Mess was formed on the Island on the transfer from the old "Excellent" in the Creek, in April, 1890.

A small portion of what is now the C.P.O.'s Mess was utilised for the purpose *pro-tem*. About thirty-five Officers were in the Mess and had to take their meals in relays owing to the limited space available. Naturally the whole arrangement was very primitive and comforts were few and far between.

In 1891 a move was made to the North End of the O.Dk. Buildings, two rooms being allocated to form a Mess, one (the present Billiard Room) for dining, and another smaller one for a Billiard Room. (*See plans.*) The latter idea, however, received a check as a place was required for the Sub-Lieutenants to lunch in, so the Billiard Table had to be "shaken," and the room made into a Dining Room for these Officers, until the East end of the Officers' Block was ready for use.

Many additions have since been made to the Mess, including a large Dining Room and an ante-room, while the Kitchen and Domestic's Quarters were greatly improved in 1907.

There are thirty-nine cabins for the use of Officers.

The room now used as a Billiard Room was formerly the Ward Room Mess. This room contains, besides the Silver Billiard Trophies, an oil painting of Mr. A. Lambert recovering £70,000 bullion from the wreck of s.s. "Alfonso XII." This was presented by W. A. O'Gorman, C.E.

In the ante-room is a small library with some valuable books and a number of very interesting trophies and curios presented by various Officers.

The Mess is governed by a President (the Senior Chief or other Gunner on the Staff) and four Staff Gunners, these latter being elected.

Among the many pictures in the Mess is one of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, presented by His Royal Highness.

A museum of very rare curios is in the ante-room. This was presented by an Officer of the Mess, who obtained the Collection during his travels in Australasian and other seas. One of the most rare articles in this Museum is a Kava Bowl from the South Sea Islands, used by the South Sea Islanders for fermenting their Kava, a kind of beer prepared from the root of the "*Macropiper Methysticum*."

A model of a full-rigged two-decker, made out of bones, more than a century ago by a French prisoner of war at Chatham, is another much valued presentation.

In the hall is to be seen a fine turtle's shell on which are engraved the names of all past and present Captains and Commanders of H.M.S. "Excellent."

The first Warrant Officers' Dance took place on February 26th, 1904. This was arranged by a Special Committee of four, and proved the forerunner of the Monthly Winter Socials, and an Annual Xmas Ball now held. These have always been very successful and popular.

The Warrant Officers' Mess has always been to the fore in Rifle Shooting and Sports of all kinds. One of the most remarkable features of the Mess is the intense interest taken in Rifle Shooting. Many past and present Members are of course famous shots, and the success of the "Excellent's" Rifle and Revolver Teams is largely due to this.

A Lawn Tennis Club has recently been started.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS' MESS.

The Chief Petty Officers' Mess occupies the South Wing of the Lecture Room Block. Originally, in 1872, the C.P.O.'s and Staff Instructors' Mess was a combined one, and was situated in the after part of the Lower Deck of the old "Excellent" (starboard side).

In 1877, owing to the increase of the Staff, a new Mess was built, taking in the whole of the after part of the Lower Deck of the "Calcutta," with a Large Pantry and Smoking Room each side.

In the latter part of the year 1889, part of the Mess were living on the Island in a small portion of the Lecture Room Block (see *plate VI.*), and in 1891 all Instructors left the old ship and came up to the Island, two separate Messes being formed, one the South End of the Lecture Room Block, called the Chief Petty Officers' Mess, and the other the Staff Instructors' Mess in A 2 Room.

In 1892 the Chief Armourers joined the Mess, and are now amalgamated with them.

In 1905 the Mess was much enlarged by the absorption of the Resident Gunner's House, and also by a slight extension to the Eastward. This provided a larger Mess, a Kitchen and Bath Room, etc.

The Average No. of Members is about 70.

BRIEF HISTORY OF P.O. STAFF INSTRUCTORS' MESS.

The Mess was started in 1832 in the old "Excellent" ("Queen Charlotte"), and consisted of about twelve members, all Staff Instructors being messed together. On the removal of the Gunnery School to Whale Island in 1889 the Instructors were berthed in the small cabins in the Blocks to look after the adjoining room, windows being placed to facilitate this. These rooms are now used by the C.P.O.'s. A room in what is now the C.P.O.'s Mess was used as a Mess-room. In 1890 the Chief and 1st class Petty Officers separated, the 1st class P.O.'s, then numbering about 20, being accommodated in A2 Room.

With the growth of the Establishment the number of Staff Instructors increased, and in May, 1902, it was found necessary to accommodate the Petty Officer Staff Instructors in two rooms, A3 and A4 being selected, the three Staff Armourers, Painter, and Plumber being included to bring the numbers up to 60, which has since been the average membership.

In 1893 it was resolved that the President of the Mess should be elected by the Members, irrespective of seniority.

Of recent years the Mess has undergone considerable improvements, a piano, library, etc., being added, and the Dining Room made more comfortable.

A feature of the Mess has always been that all P.O.'s who have been enrolled as Members are considered as Members as long as they are P.O.'s on the active list. In addition there is a roll of Honorary Members elected from those who by their rank, promotion, or leaving the Service, are not eligible for membership, but have rendered to the Mess good services.

Yearly, since 1899, there have been Outings in Summer, which generally take the form of an excursion to the country by brake, finishing with a social evening, all Members in the harbour being invited.

Since 1907, at the breaking up of instructions for Christmas leave, a Smoking Concert has been held, to which are invited all the principal officers of the

Establishment, Members in the harbour, and representatives of the Petty Officers' and Sergeants' Messes in the Garrison.

During the Football Season matches are played with the Officers of the Establishment, and Sergeants' Messes in the Garrison, the latter being generally followed by an impromptu Smoking Concert. The season 1907-08 was a very successful one for the team. They lost but two of the 15 matches played, and at a benefit match played against a team selected from H.M. Dockyard, in addition to winning, had the satisfaction of handing over nearly £43 to the Naval Disaster Fund.

Petty Officers' Balls were held from 1892 to 1898, in the Canteen on the night after the Officers' Ball, but on the opening of the Bridge in 1899 the custom was dropped, owing to the Officers' Ball being given on a Friday.

In 1908 the custom was revived by a Ball held in the Lecture Room, organised by the P.O. Staff Instructors' Mess, for the Petty Officers and their friends. It proved a very successful function, and was attended by the principal Officers of the Establishment, and representatives of all P.O.'s and Sergeants' Messes, there being about 300 guests.

Members of the Mess have always figured largely in the "Excellent's" Shooting Teams, and in addition matches are arranged with other Messes in the Garrison, a feature of the 1908 season being a triangular match with the W.O.'s and C.P.O.'s, the P.O. Staff Instructors being the winners by 19 and 84 points respectively.

TROPHIES, ETC., WON AND PRESENTED.

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1893 | 1st prize, Inter-Room Cricket Tournament. |
| | 2nd " " " Shooting " |
| 1900 | 1st " " " Cricket " |
| 1901 | Challenge Cup and 1st prize, Inter-Room Football Tournament. This being the first year the Challenge Cup was competed for, a miniature of the Cup was presented to the Room by the winners. |
| 1902 | 2nd prize, Inter-Room Cricket Tournament. |
| | 2 Bronze Statues presented by Mr. Gordon and Mr. Harris. |

- 1903 2nd prize, Inter-Room Cricket Tournament.
 1904 Clock and 1st prize, Tug-of-War Competition.
 1905 " 1st prize, Inter-Room Field Gun Competition.
 Challenge Cup & 1st prize, Inter-Room Shooting
 Competition.
 Challenge Cup and 1st prize, Duke of York's
 Shooting Competition.
 Challenge Cup and 1st prize, Inter-Room Cricket
 Tournament.
 Challenge Cup & 1st prize, Inter-Room Football
 Tournament.
 Championship Cup, W.I. Sports, P.O. Horsburgh.
 1906 2nd prize, Inter-Room Cricket Tournament.
 Championship Cup, W.I. Sports, P.O. Horsburgh.
 Gong presented to Mess by Staff Armourers.
 1907 2nd prize, Inter-Room Football Tournament.
 Championship Cup, W.I. Sports, P.O. Horsburgh.
 1908 2nd prize, Inter-Room Shooting Tournament.

In addition a large number of plants have been presented by Mr. Wroe, and a large proportion of the pictures and ornaments have been given by members on promotion.

"VEGETATION ON THE ISLAND."

The afforestation of the Island is a subject that much care and thought have been given to by Officers. The soil of Whale Island is chiefly clay and mud, with a generous allowance of old bricks, coal dust, etc., and, having been dug out from a considerable depth close to the sea, is not an ideal ground for vegetation. That the soil has very rapidly improved in the last 20 years is, however, indisputable and natural, and it is also "Virgin Soil."

The continual planting of trees and shrubs, and the working into the heavy soil of grit and dust from the roads by the ever pervading wind, as well as the natural settling of the Island, has accomplished this improvement, and of late years it has been possible to plant any fairly hardy tree or shrub with success. The enemy of vegetation is more the wind than the soil, wherever there is shelter trees flourish, but in exposed parts of the Island the prevailing S.W. wind, which is felt in its full

force, makes it most difficult for young trees and shrubs to establish themselves, unless well protected when first planted.

There were two kinds of trees originally planted on the Island, Canadian Poplar and Black Poplar, mostly Canadian. Most of the trees planted between 1886 and 1893 were purchased, some through the Works Department and others by private funds, the exceptions being those received from the "Marlborough" Recreation Ground.

When the trees are pruned and shrubs trimmed each year, the best of the cuttings are planted in the tree nursery, to the N.E. of the Battery, and many of the present trees have this origin.

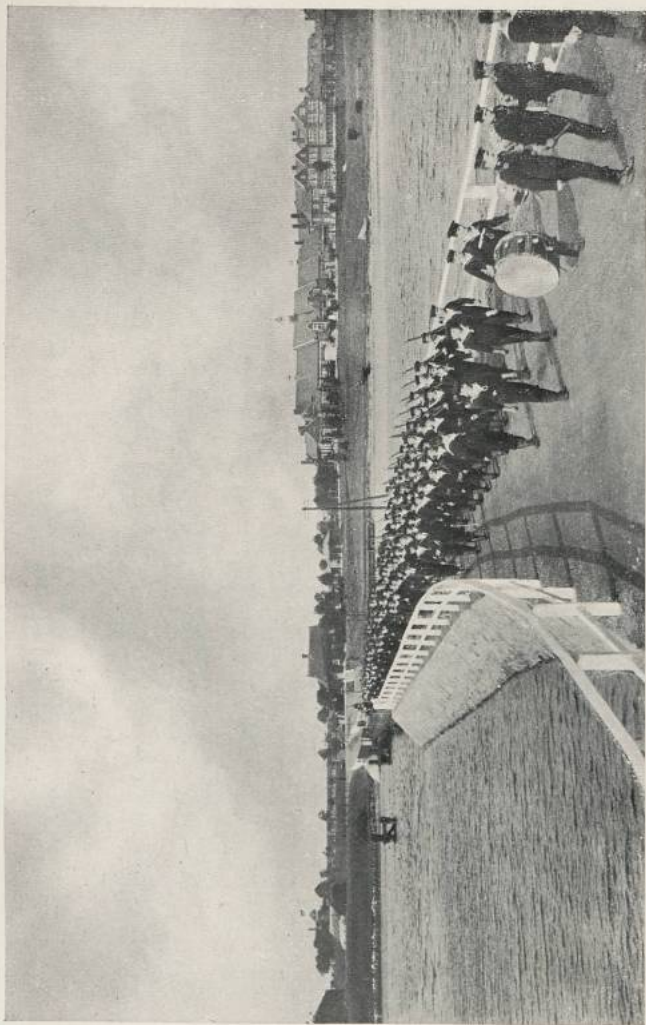
Many of the shrubs, plants, etc., planted on the Island were purchased from private funds, others have been presented by officers and their friends.

Previous to 1888, all the ground North of the Upper Parade was in an absolutely wild and rough state. Just as the railway lines had been taken up and the mud tipped out of trucks, so it remained, with an abundance of weeds, coalsfoot, &c., and a kind of Millet (not generally seen near this district) grew in abundance, often five and six feet high. During the early part of 1888, levelling was commenced for A, B, C, and D Blocks, and was continued around the sites of the Officers' Blocks and Seamen's Blocks, and gradually for other buildings to the northward.

During the summer of 1889 the Millet (before mentioned) had grown so thick and high on the West side of the Battery as to interfere with the sighting of some of the guns at the targets in the mud. An evolution was made to clear them, and every available man was sent from "Excellent" and Tenders to pluck them up by the roots. It took a whole day to do this and clear the ground.

A light crop of hay from the Upper Parade Ground and Range Banks, etc., was cut in 1889, and there was sufficient to make a stack, this being the first hay stack made from grass grown on the Island. From that time the Island has produced sufficient grass each year to make a fresh stack, which, more or less, lasts the horses through the year.

In 1891 an expert from Kew Gardens visited the



BATTALION LEAVING THE ISLAND.

1 Row
2 Row
3 Row
4 Row

Island to give advice as to the best shrubs, &c., that would stand the cutting winds and damp sea air on the most exposed parts of the Island. Many of the shrubs at the South end of the Battery were purchased and planted there on his recommendation, with a view of sheltering the Upper Parade.

During the time the Upper Parade was being turfed hundreds of turfs were cut at Tipnor and brought over to the Island by a floating bridge worked by a temporary wire laid out from the north shore of the Island to Tipnor. In 1892 about 200 firs were purchased from a nurseryman near Fareham, and planted. They were tied up in bundles with bands of withes. When taken off the withes were straightened out, cut in lengths, and stuck in the ground to shelter the garden nursery, east of Coal Pound. They quickly took root and were several feet high in a few years. All willows grow readily on the Island, a notable tree being one grown from a willow cutting brought from Napoleon's grave, St. Helena.

During 1892 a trial was made a ing potatoes and mangel wurzels on a strip of nade ground north of the Island. The ground was pl ed up and levelled. One half was sown with mangel wurzels and the other half with potatoes. The mangel wurzels at the end of the season were not worth digging up, but the potatoes yielded very well, and the best of them were sold to the Canteen at market prices and the money expended for plants.

Of recent years a large number of allotment gardens have been made and given to the Ship's Company, and any sort of vegetable grows well in them if the owner knows the rudiments of gardening.

It has always been a subject for discussion whether the trees should be pollarded or not. The argument of those in favour of doing this is that unless it is done the old roots work down into the bad soil and die. As a matter of fact the best trees on the Island are those between the buildings. These have never been pruned, and it shows that it is not the soil but the wind which kills the trees. When young trees are planted, if they are too long, they work about in the wind, and their stems crack and the tree eventually dies. They should be planted short and well protected, and stayed for five years, and if necessary slightly pruned yearly to make

their stems stronger. After this they should be left alone, except for cutting out dead wood. It is absolutely necessary that trees for Whale Island should come from a hardy nursery; surface rooting trees do best. The Shrubbery, the South side of the Lawn, was planted in 1906 and 1907. About 400 shrubs were planted, and as these grow they can be transplanted to make other Shrubberies. The Ilex's in front of the Officers' Quarters were planted the same time. The Rose Garden was laid out in its present form in December, 1906, and the Poplar Hedge around it was planted in January, 1908. The Yew Hedge on the South side was planted about 1901, but hardly started growing until 1907, when a fence was built to protect it and it is now flourishing. The best Manure for the heavy soil at Whale Island is Horse Manure, and luckily this can be easily obtained. It should be collected in the summer so as to be ready for winter use.

WHALE ISLAND HORSES.

Means of transport on the Island used to give some trouble, and although the railway on the Island and an engine and trucks were left when the viaduct was demolished, the large acreage and the distance from the town caused much labour in transport of material and the effects of officers and men. This was overcome by horse transport, a few horses having been given by various officers' friends, as being too old for ordinary work ashore, formed the origin of the Whale Island stud. They were stabled in a building originally put up as a cook house, where the Sub-Lieutenants' Quarters now exist. Although the horses were all given on the understanding that they were to be shot in a few years, when too old for work, they were all still in existence in 1907. The Island air and the light work they are put to evidently agreeing with them.

The names of the horses were:—

	<i>Given by.</i>	<i>Age 1907.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
Nellie	Mrs. Jacomb		Died
Prince	Mrs. McCarthy	17	Still here
Dick	Lady Sinclair	25	Shot 1907
Winchester	Mrs. Long	26	Shot 1907
Cephas	Capt. Learmouth	33	Still here
Captain	Bought	15	Sold 1907

In 1896 the old stables were demolished and the new ones erected on the present site.

In 1907 the Admiralty approved of three horses being bought for the sum of £135. Winchester and Dick were shot as too old for work and three new horses bought. These were named :—

Captain, age 6 years, bought from Mr. Prior, Horndean.

Kate (mare), age 5 years, bought from Mr. Knight, Portsmouth.

Cephas II., age 5 years, bought from Mr. Knight, Portsmouth.

ARMOUR PLATE TRIALS, EXPERIMENTAL DEPARTMENT, etc.

Heavy armour plates were tested on board the hulk "Nettle" as far back as the sixties, and continued to be tested there until 1900, when the new Proof Cells, being completed, testing was carried out at Whale Island and the "Nettle" removed.

Actually the first plate fired at in the Proof Cell at Whale Island was a 6-in. plate of Messrs. Vickers, Sons and Maxim, on 13th April, 1899.

The adjustable Gun Mounting for Guns 9.2-in. and below, working on Railway lines was received the same year.

Many of the light or thin armour plates, sections of ships' sides, sections of coal bunkers, light Q.F. and machine gun shields, were however tested on the Lower Range at Whale Island from about 1870 till 1890, and, after the trials, had many resting places (for show) round the Island, the last being round the Lower Parade ground, near the brick drain under the bank.

They were removed in the year 1890, some were returned to the Dockyard, some buried in butts of Lower Range to support the bank, and others formed pathways over drains, &c. Since that date a large number have again accumulated and are mounted in racks near the Proof Butts.

An Experimental Lieutenant was first appointed officially in 1883, viz., Lieutenant Young Husband. He

was also appointed Captain of the "Kite." Subsequent Experimental Officers have been—

Lieutenant	J. Honner	...	9th June, 1891.
"	F. C. Tudor	...	2nd February, 1892.
"	M. E. Browning	...	5th January, 1894.
"	J. F. Murray Aynsley	...	2nd September, 1895.
"	D. L. Dent	...	30th April, 1898.
"	G. P. W. Hope	...	8th June, 1898.
"	S. R. Drury Lowe...	...	19th April, 1900.
"	H. Lynes	...	4th July, 1902.
"	H. R. Crooke	...	2nd July, 1903.
"	H. W. W. Hope	...	1st March, 1905.
Comdr.	E. P. C. Back	...	
"	A. W. Craig	...	
"	H. Lynes	...	

Proof of Mountings was first superintended by a Gunnery Lieutenant until 6th November, 1900, when a Chief Gunner took charge of the proving, being promoted to Lieutenant on 1st April, 1903.

On 3rd December, 1906, the Experimental Department took over charge of the Proof Butts and of the proving of mountings.

Originally every transferable mounting in the Service was sent to Whale Island to be proved, but on the 23rd June, 1905, an Admiralty order was issued stating that only one in every ten transferable mountings was to be tested at Whale Island, the remainder being tested on board at the gun trials.

This reduction, combined with the general reduction of all transferable mountings, has considerably lessened the work of proving, but at the same time the amount of experimental work at the Proof Butts has considerably increased.

The first Experimental Commander (Commander Back) was appointed in 1902. He was placed in charge of part of the experimental work only, mainly Fire Control and Plate Trials.

In 1905 Commander A. W. Craig was appointed, and took command of the whole Experimental Department.

He was succeeded in January, 1908, by Commander H. Lynes.

CAPTAINS OF H.M.S. "EXCELLENT."

	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
Sir Thomas Hastings, Kt.	Apl., 1832	Aug., 1845
H. D. Chads ...	Aug., 1845	Jan., 1854
Sir Thomas Maitland ...	Jan., 1854	June, 1857
R. S. Hewlett, C.B. ...	June, 1857	June, 1863
A. C. Key ...	June, 1863	Sept., 1866
A. W. A. Hood ...	Sept. 1866	July, 1869
H. Boys ...	July, 1869	May, 1874
T. Brandreth ...	May, 1874	Jan., 1877
F. H. Herbert ...	Jan., 1877	Mar., 1880
J. O. Hopkins ...	Mar., 1880	June, 1881
W. Codrington, C.B. ...	June, 1881	April, 1883
J. A. Fisher, C.B. ...	April, 1883	Nov., 1886
J. Ingles (<i>temp. addtl.</i>)	May, 1884	Aug., 1884
C. E. Domville ...	Nov., 1886	June, 1890
H. L. Pearson ...	June, 1890	June, 1893
L. A. Beaumont ...	June, 1893	July, 1894
A. L. Douglas ...	July, 1894	Nov., 1895
E. F. Jeffreys ...	Nov., 1895	Aug., 1897
W. H. May, M.V.O. ...	Aug., 1897	Jan., 1901
A. Barrow ...	Jan., 1901	Apl., 1903
P. Scott, A.D.C., C.V.O., C.B., LL.D. ...	Apl., 1903	Mar., 1905
F. T. Hamilton, M.V.O. ...	Mar., 1905	July, 1907
R. G. O. Tupper ...	July, 1907	

LIST OF COMMANDERS, H.M.S. "EXCELLENT."

	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
William Arthur ...	Mar., 1864	Nov., 1869
W. H. Maxwell ...	Nov., 1869	Nov., 1872
H. F. Cleveland ...	Nov., 1872	Nov., 1875
C. L. Oxley ...	Nov., 1875	Feb., 1879
L. A. Beaumont ...	Feb., 1879	Mar., 1882
C. C. Drury ...	Mar., 1882	May, 1885
A. McLeod ...	May, 1885	May, 1888
F. C. B. Simpson ...	May, 1888	Jan., 1890
Percy M. Scott ...	Jan., 1890	Jan., 1893

Commanders of H.M.S. "Excellent" (continued).

H. M. Spencer Login	...	Jan., 1893	Jan., 1895
C. H. Bayly	...	Jan., 1895	Oct. 1897
T. B. S. Adair	...	Oct., 1897	Jan., 1900
A. H. Christian	...	Jan., 1900	Dec., 1901
R. J. Prendergast	...	Dec., 1901	Dec., 1903
Harold Christian	...	Jan., 1904	Mar., 1906
A. E. M. Chatfield	...	Mar., 1906	

FIRING COMMANDERS.

W. Henderson	...	...	1903	1905
B. H. Smith	...	...	1905	1907

STAFF-LIEUTENANTS.

The number of Senior and Junior Staff-Lieutenants in the Gunnery School allowed has varied considerably, the present Staff being 3 Senior Staff and 10 Junior Staff. The following is a list of the 1st Lieutenants of the "Excellent":—

		<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
Lieut. H. B. Richards	...	1832	1834
" F. D. Hastings	...	1835	1836
" J. H. Ward	...	1837	1838
" G. K. Wilson	...	1838	1840
" E. H. Kenney	...	1840	1841
" R. Moorman	...		
" W. H. Dobbie	...	1842	
" W. Austin	...	1842	1843
" Sir W. Wiseman, Bart.	...	1844	1845
" R. Jenner	...	1846	
" T. Hodgkinson	...	1847	1851
" M. Burrows	...	1851	1852
" S. H. Henderson	...	1852	1855

Staff-Lieutenants of H.M.S. "Excellent" (continued).

Lieut.	T. B. Lethbridge	...	...	1855	1857
"	Douglas Walker	...	...	1857	1858
"	Edward Field	...	...	1858	1859
"	P. L. Ward	...	...	1859	1860
"	M. Singer	...	...	1861	1862
"	W. H. Liddell	...	...	1862	1863
"	C. D. Saunders	...	...	1863	1866
"	Edward Poulden	...	...	1866	1868
"	J. A. Fisher	...	...	1868	1869
"	H. B. Stewart	...	...	1869	1872
"	W. H. B. Selby	...	...	1872	1873
"	H. F. Grenfell	...	...	1873	1875
"	J. Brown	...	...	1875	1876
"	A. B. Jenkins	...	...	1876	1877
"	R. N. Custance	...	...	1877	1878
"	W. A. B. Acland	...	...	1878	1879
"	J. H. Rainier	...	...	1879	1880
"	T. F. Hammill	...	...	1880	1881
"	J. E. T. Nicholls	...	...	1881	1882
"	A. Barrow	...	...	1882	1883
"	R. F. O. Foote	...	...	1883	1884
"	J. E. Meryon	...	...	1884	1885
"	P. M. Scott	...	...	1885	1886
"	J. H. T. Burke	...	...	1886	1887
"	E. W. Lloyd	...	...	1887	1888
"	E. A. Simons	...	...	1888	1889
"	F. G. De Lisle	...	...	1889	1890
"	J. Honner	...	...	1890	1891
"	R. H. Peirse	...	...	1891	1892
"	T. B. S. Adair	...	...	1892	1893
"	A. W. Waymouth	...	...	1894	1895
"	A. W. Ewart	...	...	1895	1896
"	M. E. Browning	...	...	1896	1897
"	A. C. Leveson	...	...	1897	1898
"	C. F. Dampier	...	...	1899	1900
"	W. R. Hall	...	...	1900	1901
"	Hon. H. D. E. H. Boyle, M.V.O.	...	...	1901	1902
"	C. M. de Bartolome	...	...	1902	1903
"	W. Henderson	...	...	1903	1903
"	C. T. M. Fuller	...	...	1903	1904
"	A. N. Loxley	...	...	1904	1905
"	C. Maxwell-Lefroy	...	...	1905	1905
"	R. M. Burmester	...	...	1905	1907
"	O. Backhouse	...	...	1907	1908
"	A. J. Davies	...	...	1908	

RESIDENT OFFICERS AND CHIEF GUNNERS
OF WHALE ISLAND.

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Rank.</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
G. Reeves	Gunner	1865	1870	} Occupied "house that Jack built."
F. Lattimer	"	1870	1875	
W. Pearce	"	1875	1880	"
E. May	"	1880	1885	"
G. Bradburn	"	1885	1887	"
G. Bradburn	"	1887	1888	} Occupied new house
C. E. Joy	"	1888	1893	
C. Gunner	"	1893		"
W. Barrett	"			"
*S. Dawe	Ch. Gunner			"
J. H. Wells	Lieutenant			"
J. Hickey	"			"
F. Bryant	"			"
J. Jarvis	Ch. Gunner			} Live outside.

*Died in the house.

TURRET SHIPS ATTACHED TO
"EXCELLENT."

1. The "Royal Sovereign" was the first turret ship attached to the "Excellent." She commenced duties about 1868, and was relieved by the "Glatton," 1872.

The "Royal Sovereign" was an old line of battle ship cut down and armed with 9-in. M.L. guns in turrets. The lion, now over the West Battery centre door, was her figure-head. When she paid off it was placed in the Admiral Superintendent's garden, and presented to Whale Island in 1892 by Sir John Fisher.

The alteration of ship and introduction of guns mounted in turrets were designed by Captain Cole, who was lost in the "Captain," September, 1870.

2. The "Glatton" relieved her in 1872. She had 12-in. M.L. 25 ton guns. In the summer of 1872 she proceeded to Portland under the Captain of the "Excellent" for trials, and was moored parallel to and

off the east breakwater. The "Hotspur" was moored 200 yards off and fired at the "Glatton's" turret armour.

3. The "Hero" relieved the "Hotspur" in 1890. She mounted two 12-in. guns.

4. The "Colossus" relieved the "Hero" in 1904. She mounted four 12-in. B.L. guns in two turrets, and a number of men under instruction were accommodated on board her to relieve the accommodation at Whale Island and to reinforce her own ship's company.

5. The "Colossus" was relieved by the "Revenge" in 1907. By this date the dummy turrets at Whale Island were in working order and the "Revenge" was added, not as a Turret Drill Ship, but as a Battle Practice Ship for the instruction of Officers and Petty Officers in Battle Practice and Fire Control.

CRUISER TENDERS TO "EXCELLENT."

1. "Narcissus."
2. "Grafton."

GUNBOAT TENDERS TO "EXCELLENT."

- "Stork," from the '60's to 1870.
- "Skylark," from 1870 to 1880.
- "Medway," from 1880 to
- "Raven,"
- "Comet," Paid Off 1907.
- "Excellent,"
- "Drudge,"
- "Arrow," Paid Off 1908.
- "Mastiff," Paid Off 1908.
- "Kite,"
- "Gleaner, from 1907
- "Vestal," from 1908 (Sloop)

VISITS OF CELEBRITIES TO WHALE ISLAND.

- 1884. Members of Parliament.
- 1885. H.R.H. Prince of Wales and William II.,
German Emperor.
King of Portugal.
- 1898. T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of York.
(Tree planted in Rose Garden.)
- 1904. His Majesty the King.
- 1907. Colonial Premiers.
- 1907. Prince Fushimi.

CADET CORPS.

In 1906 H.M.S. "Excellent" Cadet Corps was inaugurated.

The Corps is composed of the sons of the Warrant Officers, Petty Officers and Men of H.M.S. "Excellent," past and present, and is open to all such boys between the ages of 9 and 13.

The first Company was enrolled in July, 1906, and consisted of 25 boys.

The expenses are defrayed by subscriptions from the Officers and Canteen, the chief expense being to fit the boys out with suitable uniforms, the cost being about £1 per boy.

Instruction is given three nights a week by the Staff Instructors of the "Excellent," who give their services voluntarily, the instructions including, among others, elementary principles of Gunnery and Field Training, Seamanship and Gymnastics.

The Commander of the Corps is a Junior Staff Lieutenant of the "Excellent," and he is assisted by two Gunners and a Committee of Chief and 1st Class Petty Officers of the various branches.

A second Company was enrolled in 1907, bringing the total strength of the Corps up to 50.

In May, 1908, an Entertainment was organised in aid of the Corps, which considerably increased the funds.

The Rules and Regulations for the conduct of the Corps can be seen in the printed handbook.

TROPHIES PRESENTED to H.M.S. "EXCELLENT."

<i>Trophy.</i>	<i>Description.</i>	<i>By whom Presented, and Date.</i>
Bollard	Was on board "Inflexible" at the Bombardment of Alexandria. A shot struck it, base first, and imprinted on the fracture the name of the maker.	Captain J. A. Fisher, C.B., R.N. 1883.
Krupp Gun	This gun was presented to Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour, K.C.B., by the Khedive of Egypt, 1882.	Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour, K.C.B. 1883.
Do.	Do.	Do.
Do.	Do.	Do.
Do.	This gun was captured by the Naval Brigade, at the taking of the Taku Forts, China, on the 17th June, 1900.	Captain J. R. Jellicoe, C.B., R.N., H.M.S. "Centurion"
47 m/m Gun	Was taken from the Chinese T.B.D. "Taku," on her capture at the taking of the Taku Forts, China, on the 17th June, 1900.	The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty
6-pr. Hotchkiss	This gun was landed from H.M.S. "Orlando," at the relief of Tientsin, and badly damaged by a shell.	Commander Dampier, R.N.
3 Howitzer Guns	Formerly part of the armament of H.M.S. "Minotaur."	
2 Projectiles	Picked up on the battlefield at Lima, after the battle between the Chilian and Peruvian Forces.	
8-in. M.L. Gun, S.B.	This gun was taken from the Russian Flagship, in the Sea of Azov, by H.M.S. "Miranda," (Captain Lyons, R.N.), 1855.	
10-in. M L. Gun	This gun was captured from the Japanese at Shimonoseki, by H.M.S. "Euryalus" on 6th September, 1864.	The Naval Ordnance Dept.
13-in. Mortar	One of the Mortars used in Bombardment of Sebastopol, 1855.	Do.
7-in. M.L. Gun	This gun was captured from the Japanese at Shimonoseki, by H.M.S. "Euryalus" on 6th September, 1864.	Do.
2 Mortars	Taken from the Palace at Mandalay by the Naval Brigade during the Burmese operations, 1836-7.	The Captain, Officers, and men of H.M.S. "Bacchante"
2 Swivel Guns	Captured from Nana's Stronghold, West Coast of Africa.	Admrl. Bedford, C.B. 1884.
32-pdr. Gun	This gun was captured from Nana's Stronghold, West Coast of Africa.	Admrl. Bedford, C.B. Jan., 1895
1½-pdr. Gun	This gun was captured from Nana's Stronghold, West Coast of Africa.	Do.

3-in. M.L. Gun	Captured by the Boats of H.M.S. "Excellent," under Lieutenant J. Harper, R.N., 29th July, 1839.	Lieut. J. Harper, R.N. 1.46.
	One of the flanking guns in the Creek Battery, Sebastopol, 1855.	
1-pr. Hotchkiss	These two guns were taken from the Chinese Flagship, "Chen Yuen," after being sunk by the Japanese at the Battle of the Yalu River, 1894.	Admiral Lord Alcester, May, 1889.
7-in. M.L. Gun	This gun was taken from the Japanese at Shimonoseki, by H.M.S. "Euryalus," on the 6th September, 1864.	The Naval Ord- nance Dept.
3-in. M.L. Gun (Chase)	This gun was taken from the Japanese at Shimonoseki, by H.M.S. "Euryalus," on the 6th September, 1864.	Do.
6-in. Howitzers	Three in number, on Quarter Deck. Presumably Service Guns. No details concerning these guns.	
2 Round Shot		Commander Ewart, R.N.
2 25-pdr. R.B.L. Guns	Used in Saluting Battery, H.M.S. "Victory"	Sir J. A. Fisher, K.C.B.
1 47-in. Field Carriage	Used in the Relief of Ladysmith.	From H.M.S. "Terrible."

LIST OF TROPHIES WON BY OFFICERS AND
MEN OF H.M.S. "EXCELLENT" SINCE 1880.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Trophies Won.</i>	...	<i>Where Won.</i>
	Admiral's Prize (Ryder)	...	Browndown
1880	" "	...	"
1881	" "	...	"
1881	General's Prize	...	"
1882	Admiral's Prize	...	"
1884	Admiral's Cup	...	"
1884	Nordenfelt Cup	...	"
1884	Brinsmead Shield	...	Wimbledon
1885	Admiral's Prize	...	Browndown
1886	General's Prize	...	"
1886	Admiral's Prize	...	"
1888	General's Prize	...	"
1888	Inter-Regimental Trophy	...	Aldershot
1890	General's Prize	...	Browndown
1890	Griffon Challenge Cup	...	"
1891	Admiral's Prize	...	"
1891	General's Prize	...	"
1892	The Steward's Cup	...	"
1892	St. George's Challenge Cup	...	"

1893	Revolver Cup	...	...	Browdown
1893	General's Cup	...	...	"
1894	Goldsmiths' & Silversmiths' Cup	...	...	Aldershot.
1894	St. George's Challenge Cup	...	...	Browdown
1894	Admiral's Cup	...	...	"
1895	Mew Langton Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1895	Symonds' Cup	...	...	"
1895	"Excellent's" Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1895	Pike, Spicer Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1895	Sartorius Cup	...	...	"
1895	General's Cup	...	...	"
1895	"Portsmouth Times" Challenge Shield	...	...	"
1895	Navy and Army (Charity) Cup (Football)	...	...	Wrexham
1896	Mew Langton (Outright)	...	...	Browdown
1896	"Excellent's" Challenge Year	...	...	"
1896	Pike, Spicer Challenge Year	...	...	"
1896	"Portsmouth Times" Challenge Shield	...	...	"
1897	St. George's Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1897	Diamond Jubilee	...	...	"
1897	Sartorius Cup	...	...	"
1897	General's Cup	...	...	"
1897	"Portsmouth Times" Challenge Shield	...	...	"
1898	General's Cup	...	...	"
1898	Queen Charlotte Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1898	Pike, Spicer Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1898	Brinsmead Shield	...	...	Bisley
1898	Methuen Cup	...	...	Aldershot
1898	United Service League, Divison I. (Football)	...	...	Portsmouth
1899	St. George's Challenge Cup	...	...	Browdown
1899	Queen Charlotte (Outright)	...	...	"
1899	Admiral's Cup	...	...	"
1900	Whitehead Revolver Cup	...	...	Bisley
1901	"	"	"	"
1902	"	"	"	"
1903	"	"	"	"
1903	St. George's Challenge Cup	...	...	Browdown
1903	Humphries Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1903	Inter-Port Revolver Cup	...	...	Plymouth
1903	Aldershot Challenge Cup	...	...	Aldershot
1903	"Excellent" Challenge Cup	...	...	Browdown
1903	Pike, Spicer Challenge Cup	...	...	"

1904	Sartorius Cup	...	...	Browndown
1904	Brinsmead Shield	...	...	Bisley
1904	Admiral's Cup	...	...	Browndown
1904	R.M.A. Cup	...	...	"
1904	Whitehead Revolver Cup (Navy)	...	...	Bisley
1904	Humphries Challenge Cup	...	...	Browndown
1904	Diamond Jubilee Cup	...	...	"
1904	Pike, Spicer Challenge Cup	...	...	"
1904	United Service League, Division II. (Football)	...	...	Portsmouth
1905	R.M.A. Cup	...	...	Browndown
1905	Diamond Jubilee Cup	...	...	"
1905	Sartorius Cup	...	...	"
1905	Whitehead Revolver Cup (Navy)	...	...	Bisley
1905	St. George's Challenge Cup	...	...	Browndown
1905	Newhaven Charity Cup	...	...	Newhaven
1906	Sartorius Cup	...	...	Browndown
1906	Inter-Port Revolver Cup	...	...	Plymouth
1906	Whitehead Revolver Cup	...	...	Bisley
1906	Pike, Spicer Challenge Cup	...	...	Browndown
1906	Newhaven Charity Cup (Football)	...	...	Newhaven
1907	Regimental Trophy	...	...	Browndown
1907	Newhaven Charity Cup	...	...	Newhaven
1907	Portsmouth League, Division I. (Football)	...	...	Portsmouth
1908	Brinsmead Challenge Shield	...	...	Bisley
1908	Humphries Challenge Cup	...	...	Browndown
1908	Inter-Port Revolver Cup	...	...	Portsmouth
1908	Sir J. Whitehead Cup	...	...	Bisley
1908	Whitehead Revolver Cup	...	...	"
1908	Newhaven Charity Cup (Football)	...	...	Newhaven

OTHER CUPS OR TROPHIES IN THE ESTABLISHMENT.

Year.

Trophy.

Cup presented by Comdr. P. Scott.

Cup presented by Officers and Men of "Excellent," to be held by best shot of year belonging to "Excellent's" Rifle Club.

- 1902 Cup won by Gunnery Staff of "Juno" at Wellington, N.Z., and presented to Whale Island.
- 1899-03 Two Silver Shields presented to Whale Island by 6-in. and Barbette Guns' Crews, H.M.S. "Canopus."
- Duke of York's Cup, presented by H.R.H. to encourage good shooting.
- Miniature of Duke of York's Cup.
- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Inter-Room Football Cup | } Presented by | |
| " Cricket " | | } Canteen. |
| " Shooting " | | |

ANIMALS, PETS, Etc.

RABBITS.

About 1874 either the Commander or 1st Lieutenant of the "Excellent" sent some rabbits adrift on the Island, and, in spite of skirmishing parties and being hunted down occasionally during the dinner hours, etc., they rapidly increased in numbers, until about 1884 when the ground was being prepared for the Battery and Lecture Room Block.

In 1888 several were seen. In 1889 the last one emerged from a hole in the west bank at the back of the Battery and was captured by a Gunnery Instructor.

PHEASANTS.

The first pheasantry was built in 1893, and there have always been pheasants kept on the Island since that date. The Pheasantry has had to be continually shifted, chiefly on account of the rats. The first Pheasantry was in the centre of the plot south of the Chief Petty Officers' Mess (the present rose garden). It was moved in 1900 to the S.W. corner of this plot, and in 1905 to the shrubbery at the south end of the West Battery. Here, however, its accessibility to rats, being so close to the sea, caused considerable loss of eggs and young birds, at least, at any rate the rats got the credit for their disappearance, so in 1907 the present one was commenced and laid with a concrete floor

(with a plentiful supply of bricks and glass), into which was fixed small meshed wire netting. This should keep the rats out for some time.

FOXHOUND PUPPIES.

It has been the custom for some years to walk foxhound puppies on the Island, a very good place for them as they are away from other dogs and can roam all over the Island. The first pair were "Fernery" and "Dash," from the Cranley and Horsham Hunt. "Dash" died on the Island, age 9 months. Another puppy was "Cross," the property of Commander Bayly, 1896. She was run over and killed. Other puppies were:—"Dogsaline," "Rymer," "Rallywood," "Glory" and "Gravity." Former won first prize at the Hambleton Puppy Show, 1905. "Bridesmaid" and "Bertha." Former won 2nd prize. "Faithful" and "Brevity," 1906. "Harmless" and "Handmaid," 1907.

Other pets have been:—A monkey, named "Brownie," it died of pneumonia in 1897. Also "Amelia," the bear, brought home from Comox, Esquimalt, by the "Grafton," and given to the "Excellent" on paying off. She died May, 1904. Also two laughing jackasses.

Pigeons have been kept at Whale Island since 1894.

In 1894 Homing Pigeons were established on the Island. Later they were transferred to Haslar, and in 1904 the pigeon house was converted into a range finder house. A few carriers still remain, however, for ornamental purposes.

NOTES OF INTEREST.

DEPENDENCIES OF THE "EXCELLENT."

Borough Island. In 1879 was used for field gun drill. In 1903 only used for boys, and in 1904 the boys were withdrawn from there and taken to "Excellent."

"EXCELLENT'S" PENDANT.

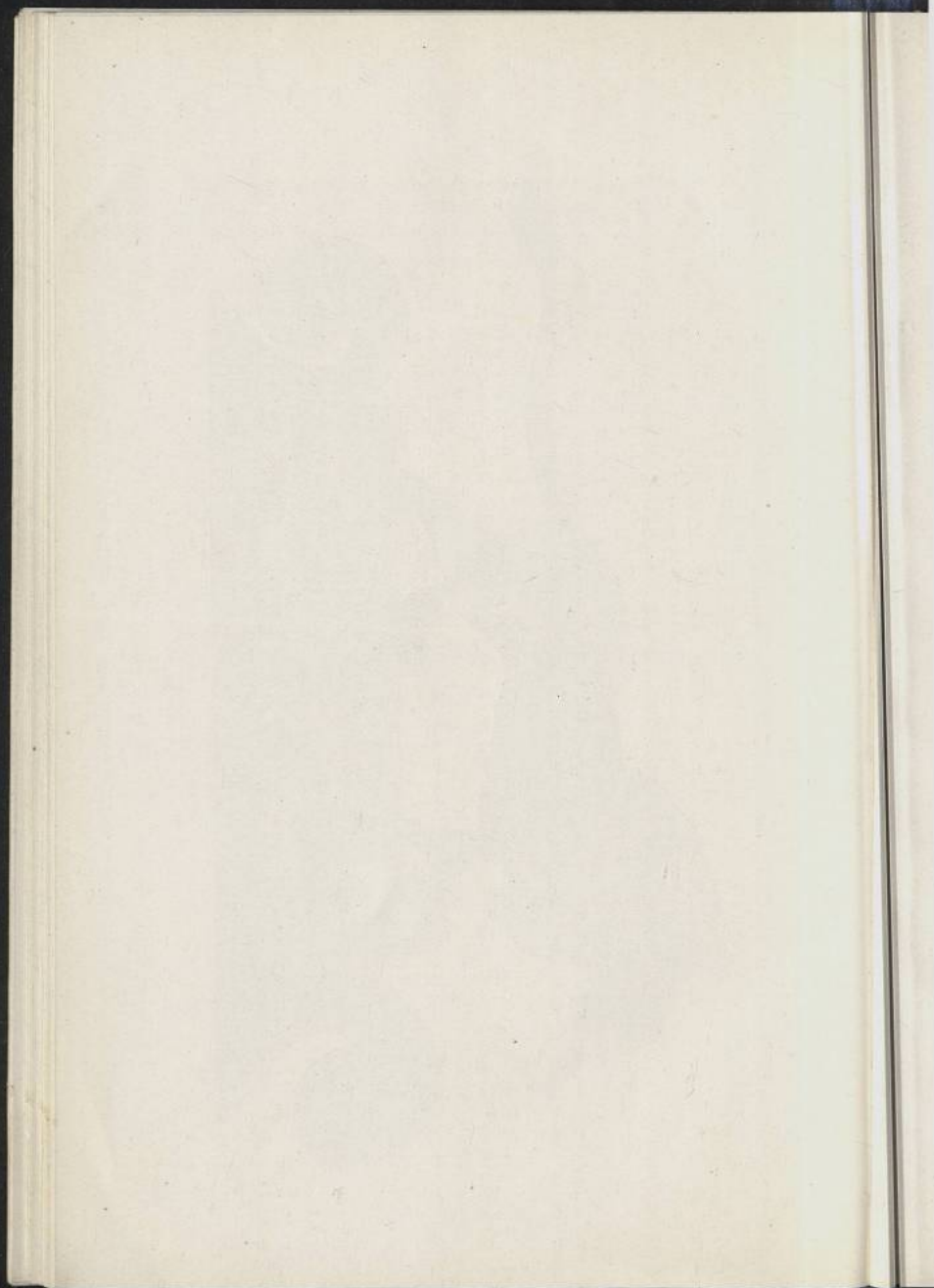
1832 to 1880, hoisted in "Excellent."

In 1891, hoisted in "Handy."

Finally shifted to Whale Island.



H.M.S. "EXCELLENT'S" MOTTO.



In October, 1908, three Peacocks were presented by Commander Davies, R.N., of Wickham.

In 1892 an electrician, named Bennett, was added to the complement of the Island.

In 1904 a photographer was added to the complement of the Island.

In 1904 a circular saw was erected outside the Armourers' shop.

The men's kitchen at the back of the Lecture Room was converted into a Confidential Book Store.

In 1892 a Skating Rink was made west of West Officers' Block; it was puddled under, and had a tap to turn off when you wanted to close the drainage for flooding. When the Sub-Lieutenants' Block was built it was converted into a Lawn Tennis Court.

The first Clock was placed in Tower of Lecture Room late in 1887.

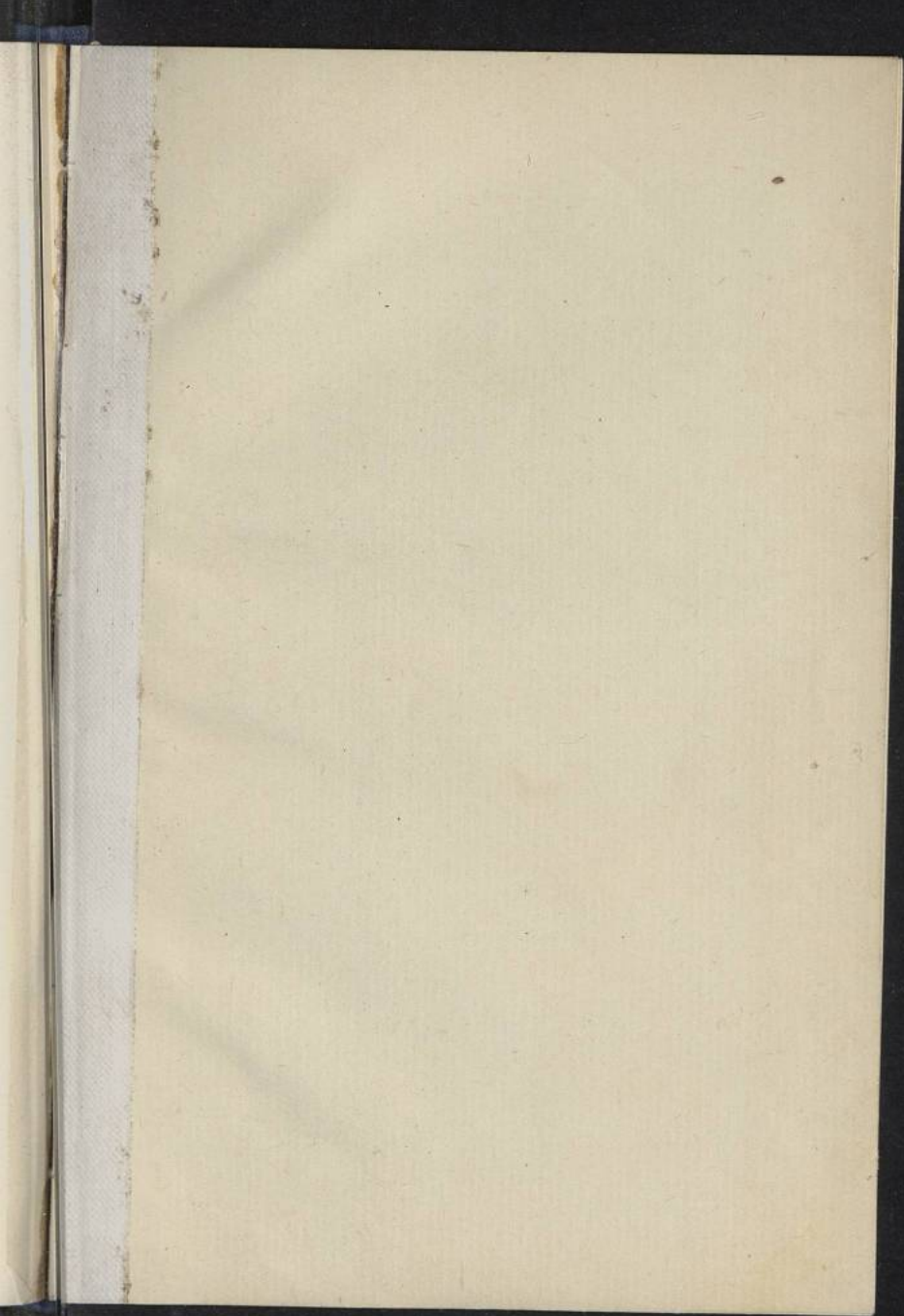
It was made by Armourers of the "Excellent," under directions of Capt. Lloyd, then First Lieutenant, and it worked electrically.

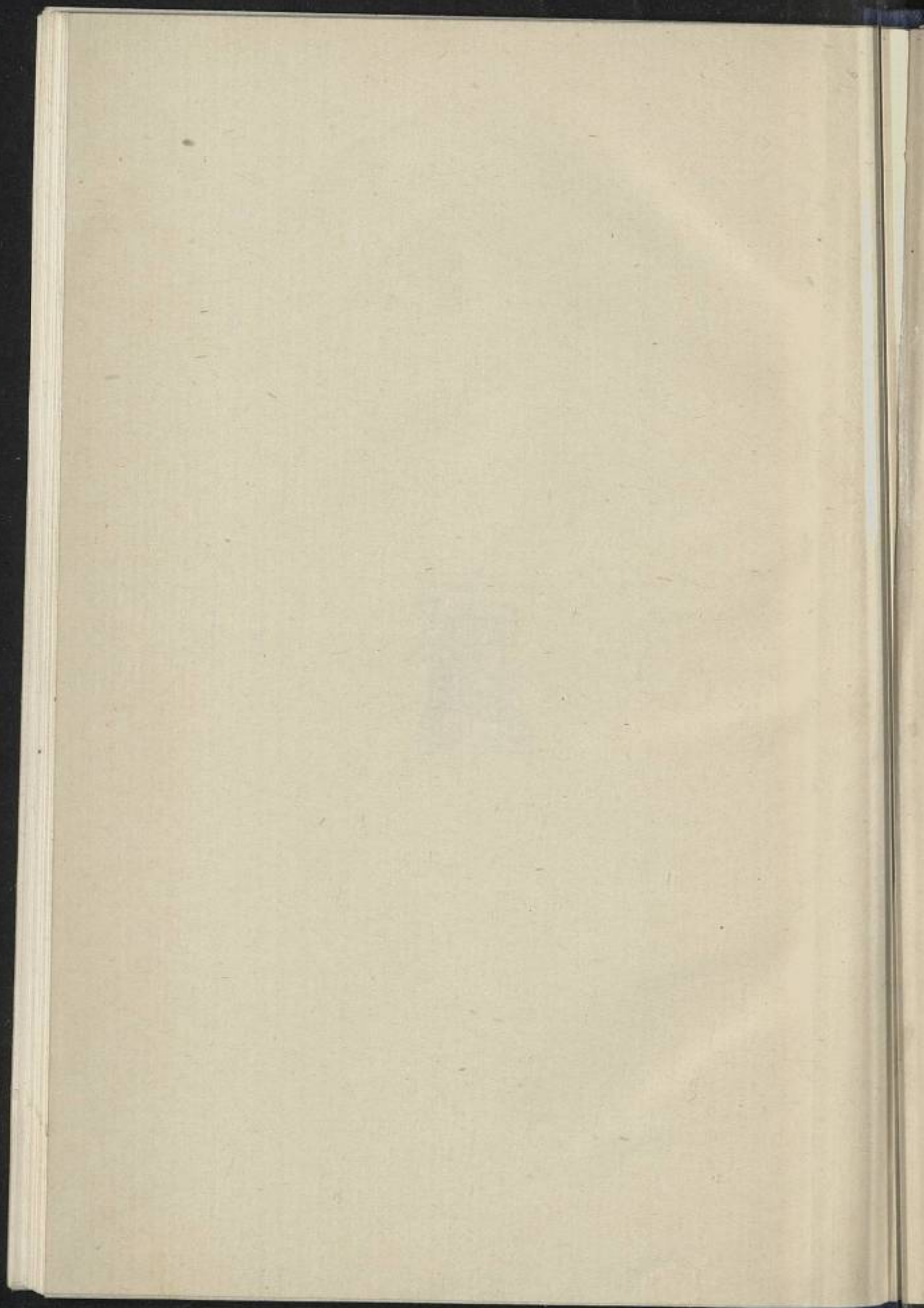
It consisted of a dial and hands facing the Battery, and only a few works inside, magnet, weight, etc., which were connected by wires to a battery inside the Tower, from the battery wires were led to the second hand of a clock (purchased by Captain Lloyd) on the north wall in the Mess Room. When the second hand of the Mess Room clock completed one revolution it made contact with wires which completed the circuit, set works in motion, moved hands of clock in the Tower on one minute and prepared for the next move. This gave plenty of trouble owing to the second hand often making a weak contact, especially when the Tower Clock hands were working up from 6 to 12 o'clock.

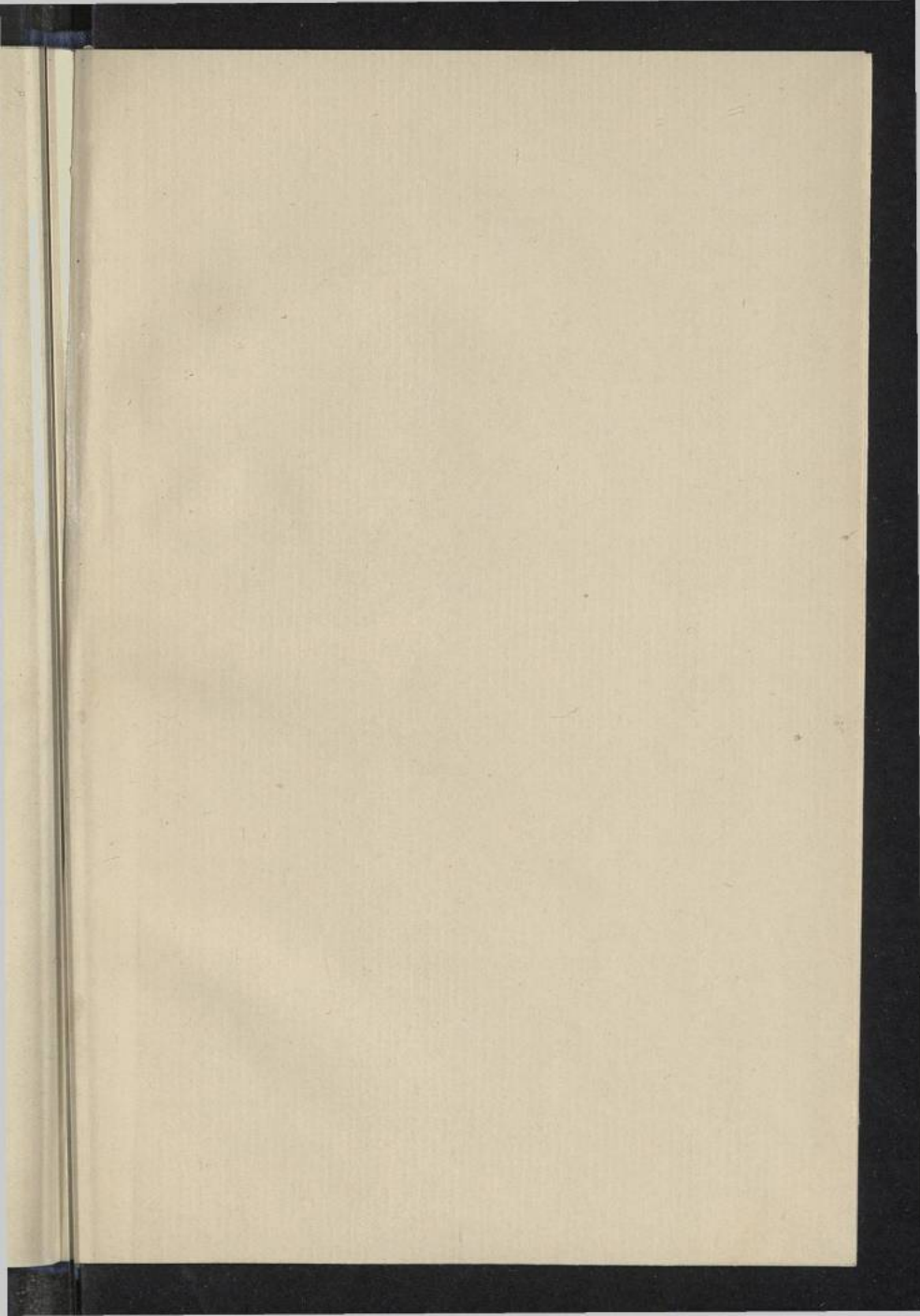
In 1887 Gunnery Lieutenants were asked to subscribe and buy a clock; one was purchased and put into a small Tower that there was on the top of the present Lecture Room.

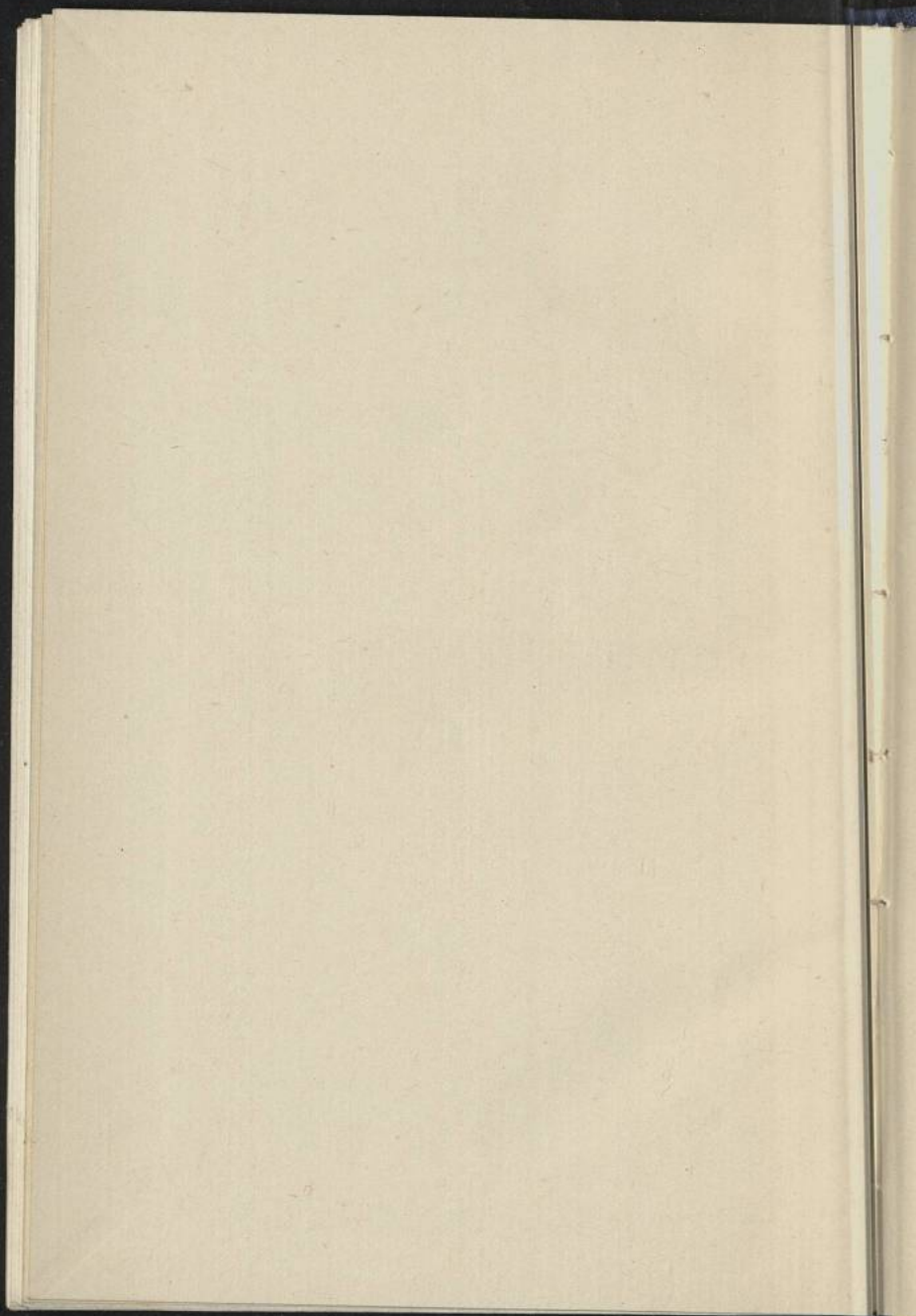
In 1892 it was decided to build a large Tower and put a four-faced clock into it. When the Tower was partly completed it was found that when the roof was put back the clock would be inside the building instead of outside, the whole structure was therefore "jacked

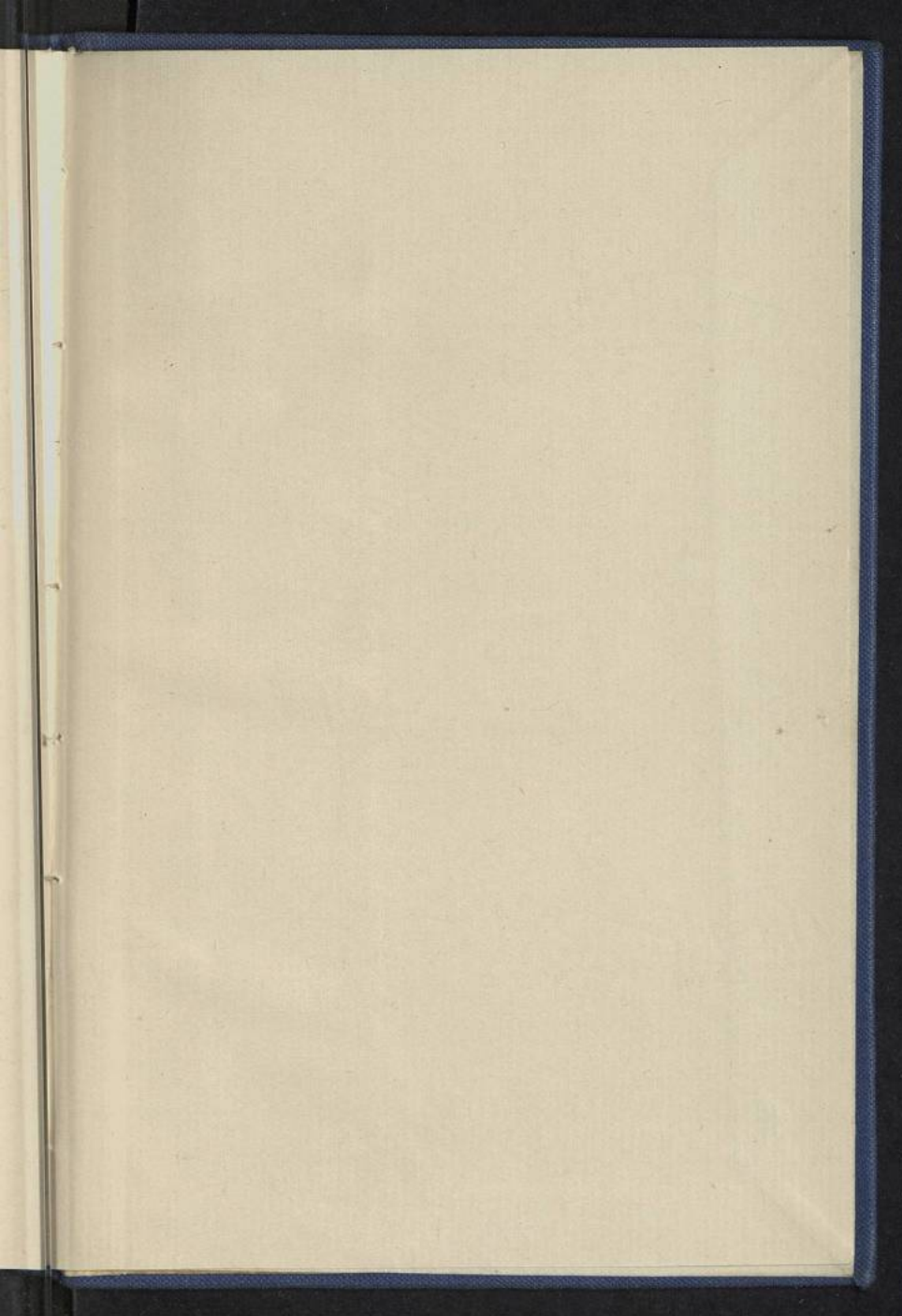


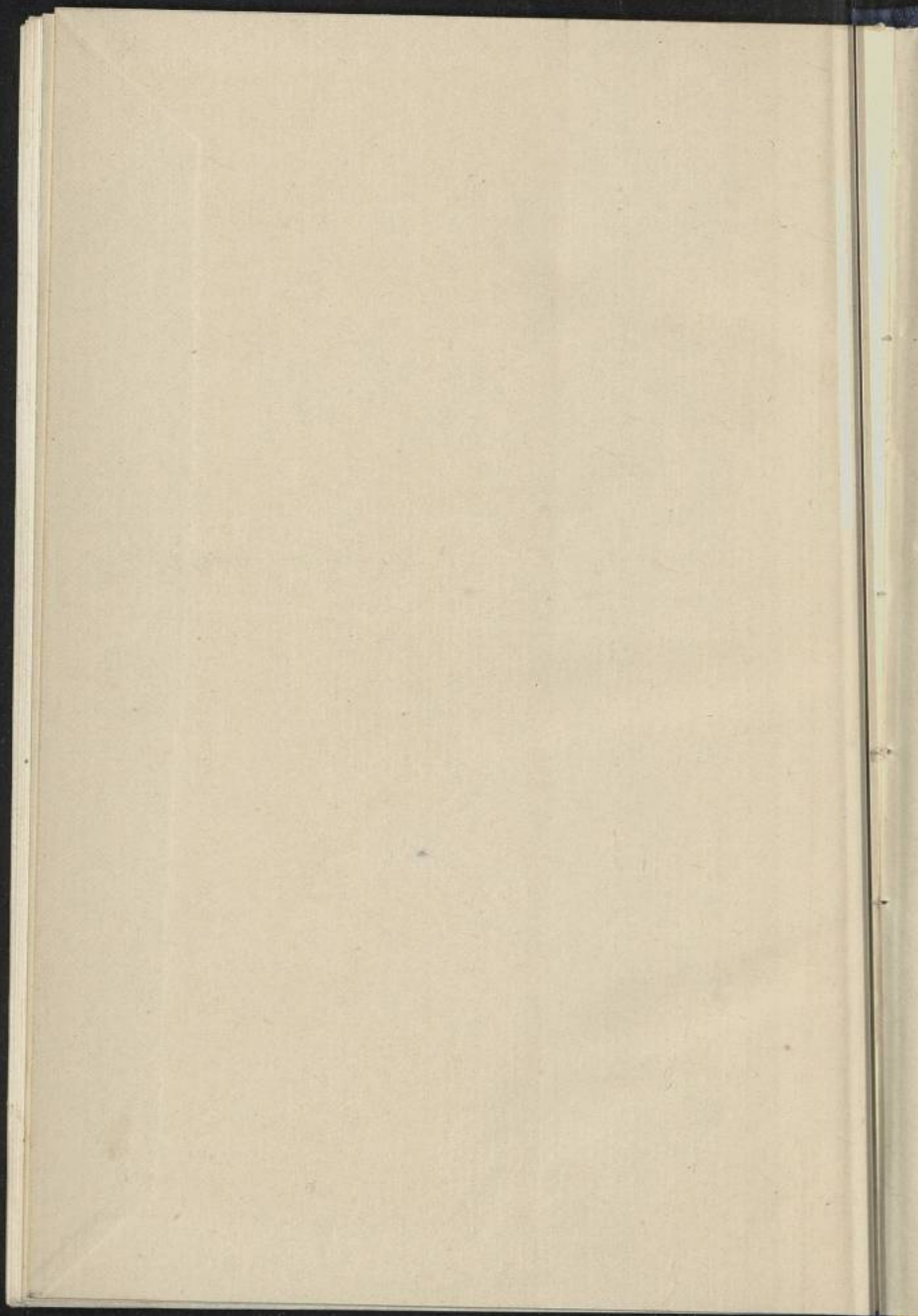


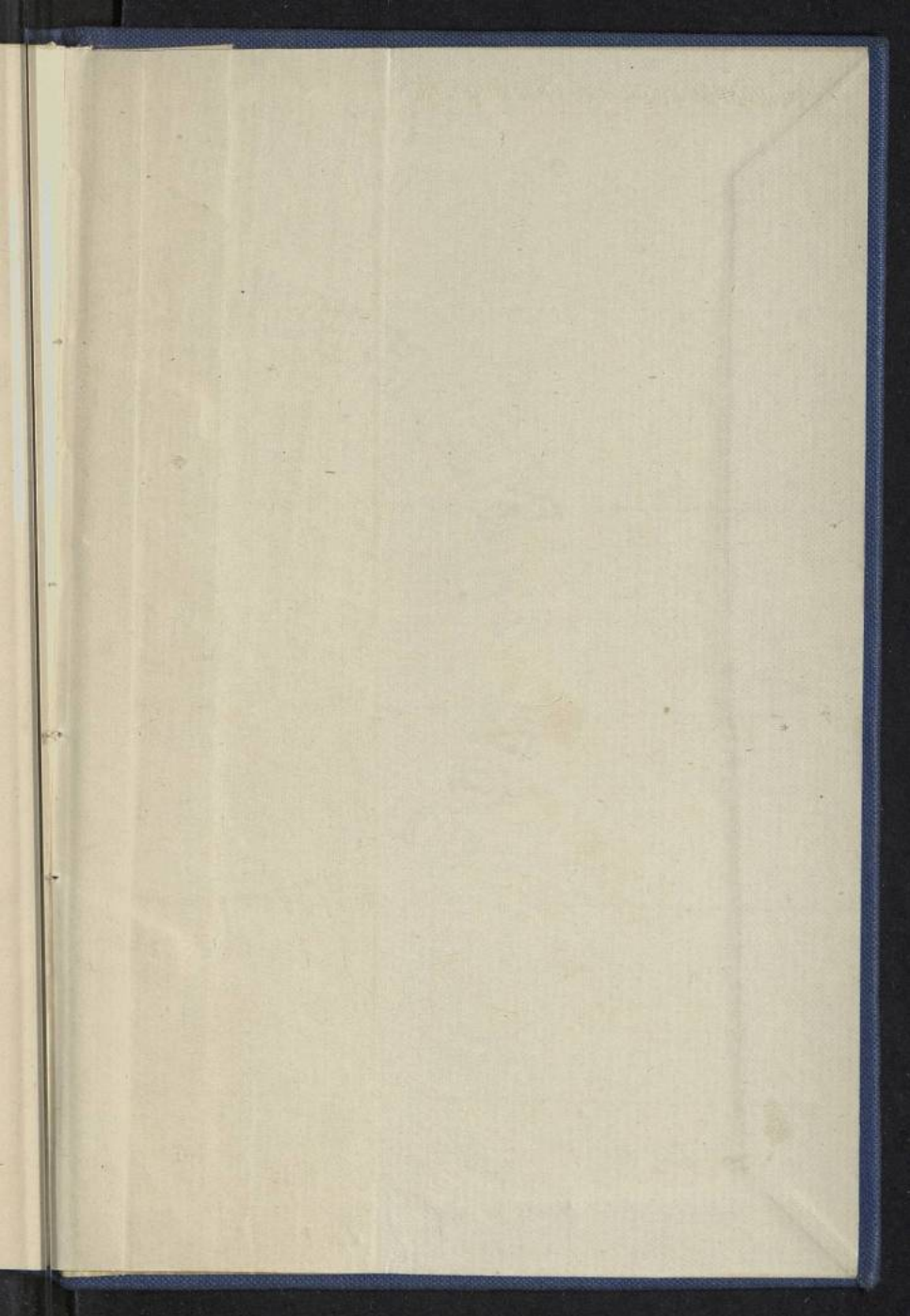












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