

BUCKLER'S HARD  
AND ITS SHIPS

BY  
JOHN,  
SECOND LORD MONTAGU  
OF BEAULIEU

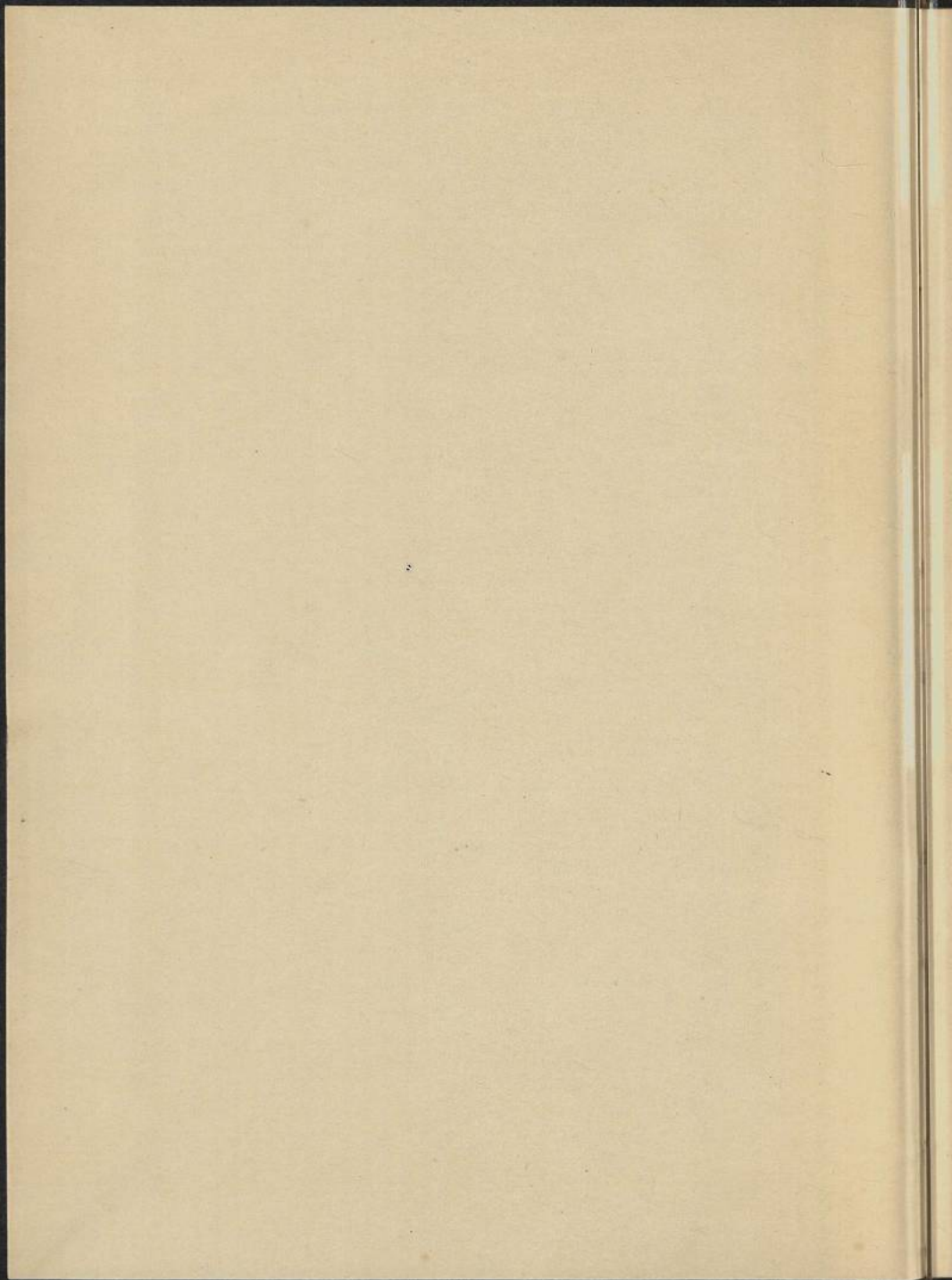
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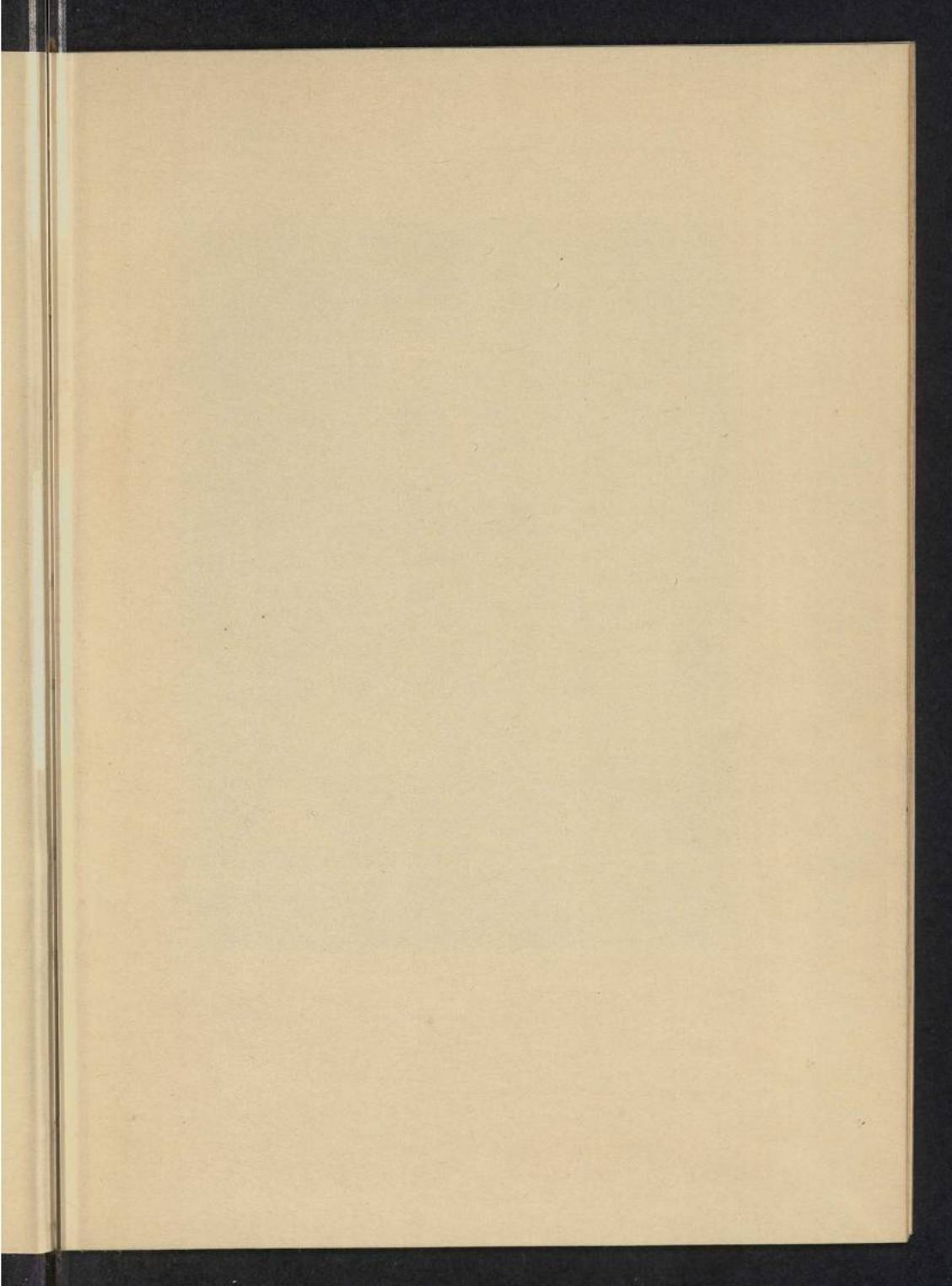
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BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS





## JOHN, SECOND DUKE OF MONTAGU

(FOUNDER OF BUCKLER'S HARD),

*Born* 1689

(STYLED LORD MONTHEMER 1702 TO MARCH 9, 1708-9)

Master-General of the Ordnance, 1742-49.

Knight of the Bath, May 27, 1725, on the reconstruction of the Order, and Grand Master from that date.

Governor of the Isle of Wight, 1733-34.

Died at his house in Privy Gardens, July 16, 1749.

Colonel of the 1st Troop of Horse Guards, 1715-21 and 1737

Lieut.-General of Horse, 1739; General of Horse, 1746.

Colonel of 2nd Regiment of Horse, 1740.

Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, 1715.

Lord-Lieutenant of Warwickshire, 1715.

M.D. of Cambridge, October 7, 1717.

Fellow of the College of Physicians, 1717.

Fellow of the Royal Society.

Knight of the Garter, March 31, and installed April 30, 1718.

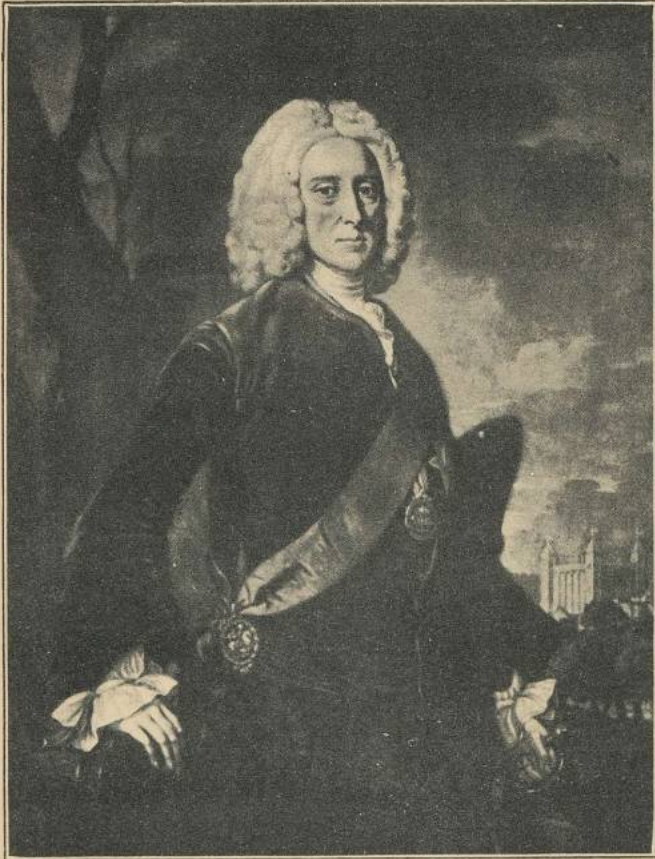
Member of the Privy Council, January 22, 1736.

Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners, 1734-40.

Lord High Constable at the Coronation of George I., October 20, 1714.

Bearer of the Sceptre with the Cross at the Coronation of King George II., October 11, 1727.

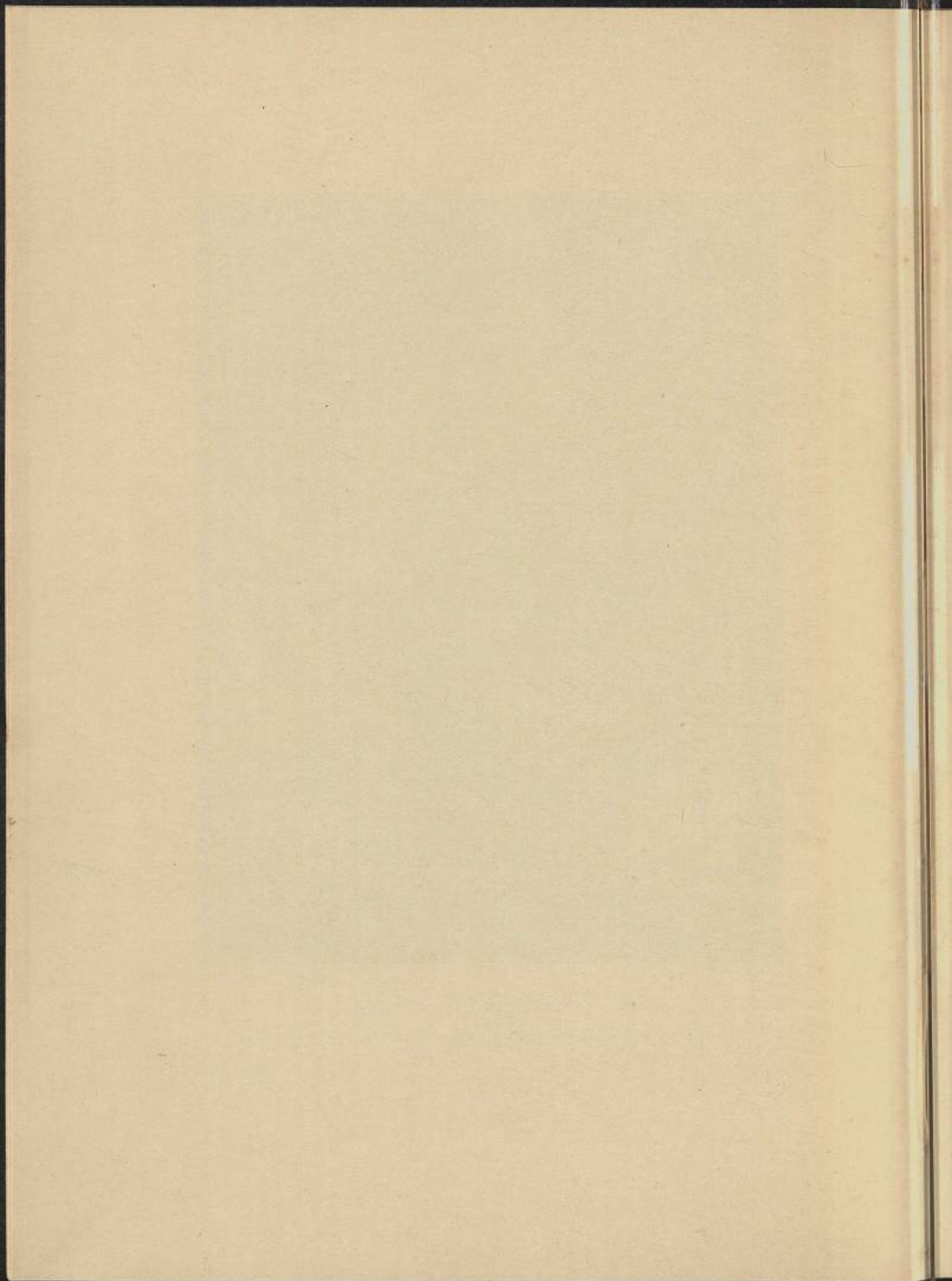
One of the Lord Justices of the Realm, May to August, 1745; May to November, 1748.



JOHN, SECOND DUKE OF MONTAGU.

*After a picture by Hudson in the possession of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*

Frontispiece.

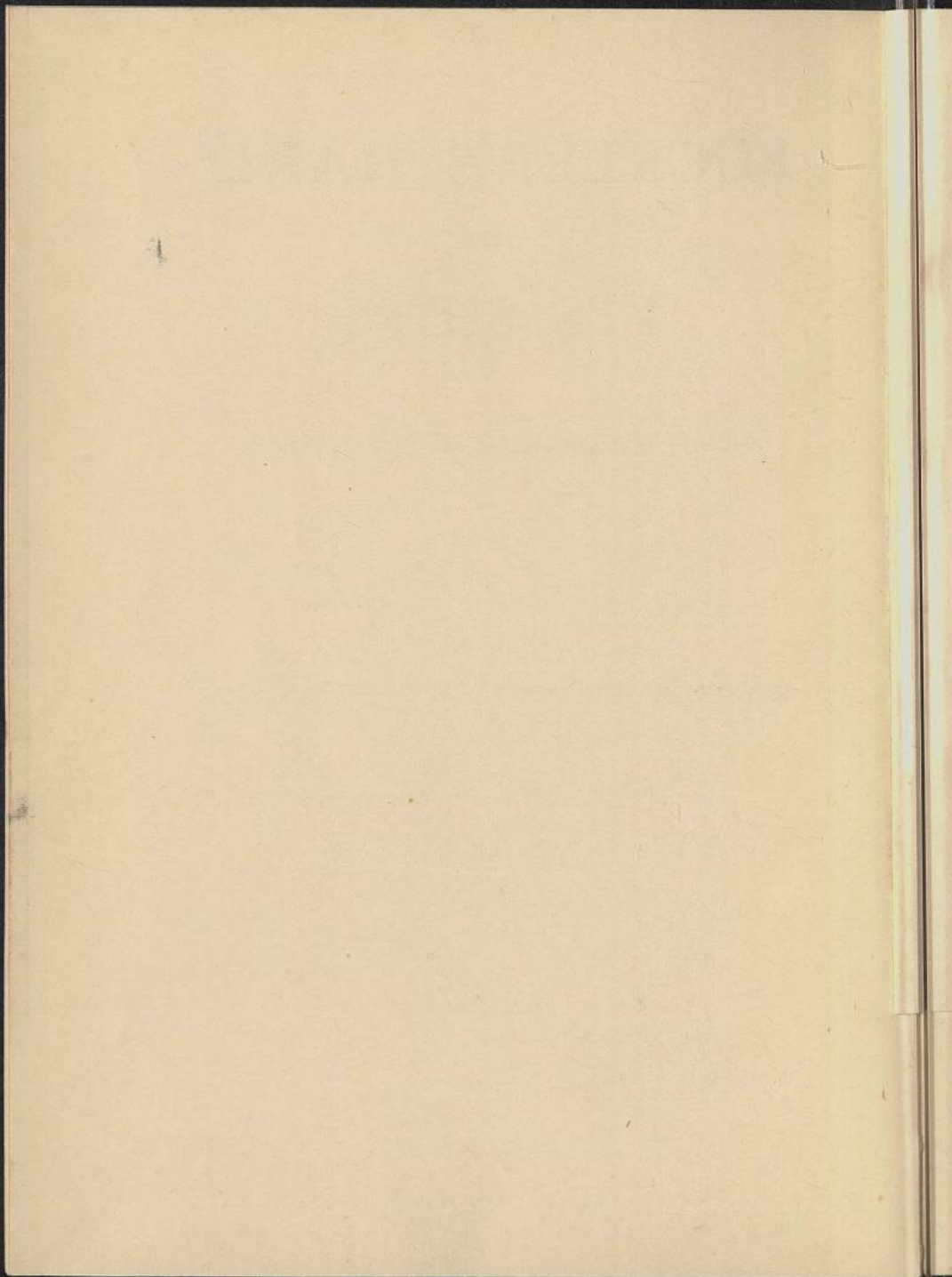


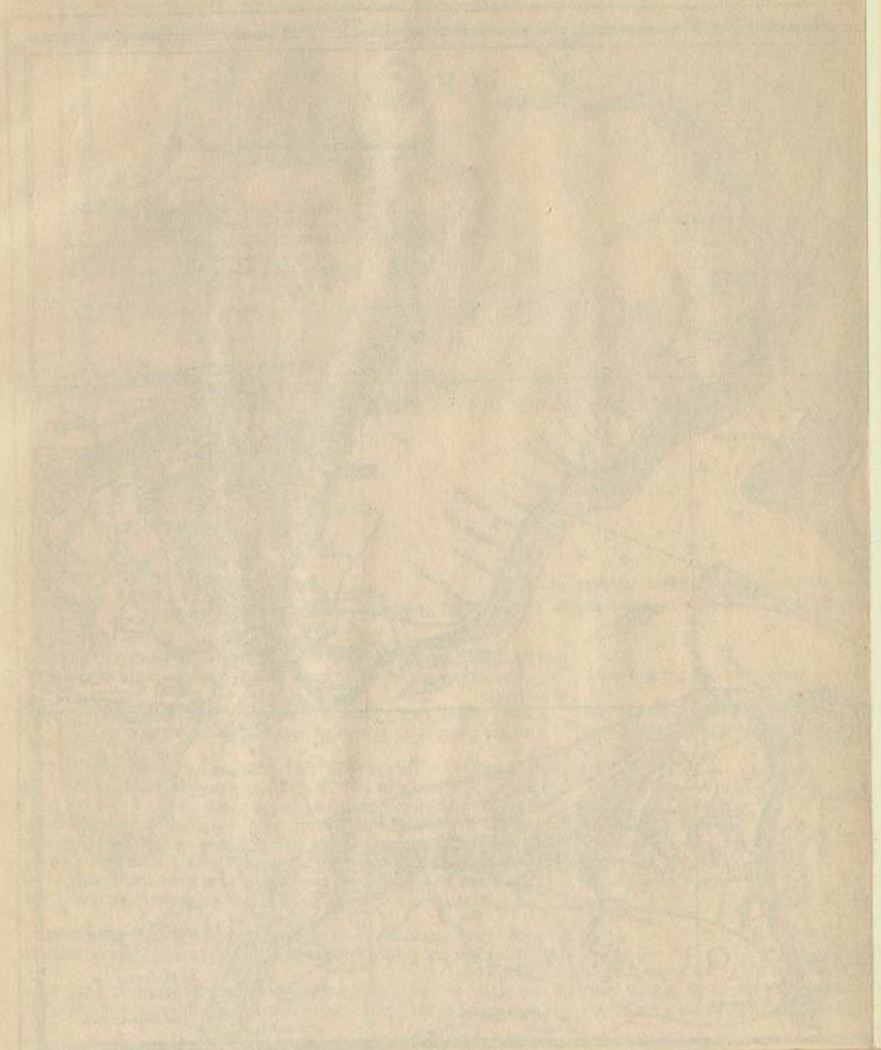
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AND  
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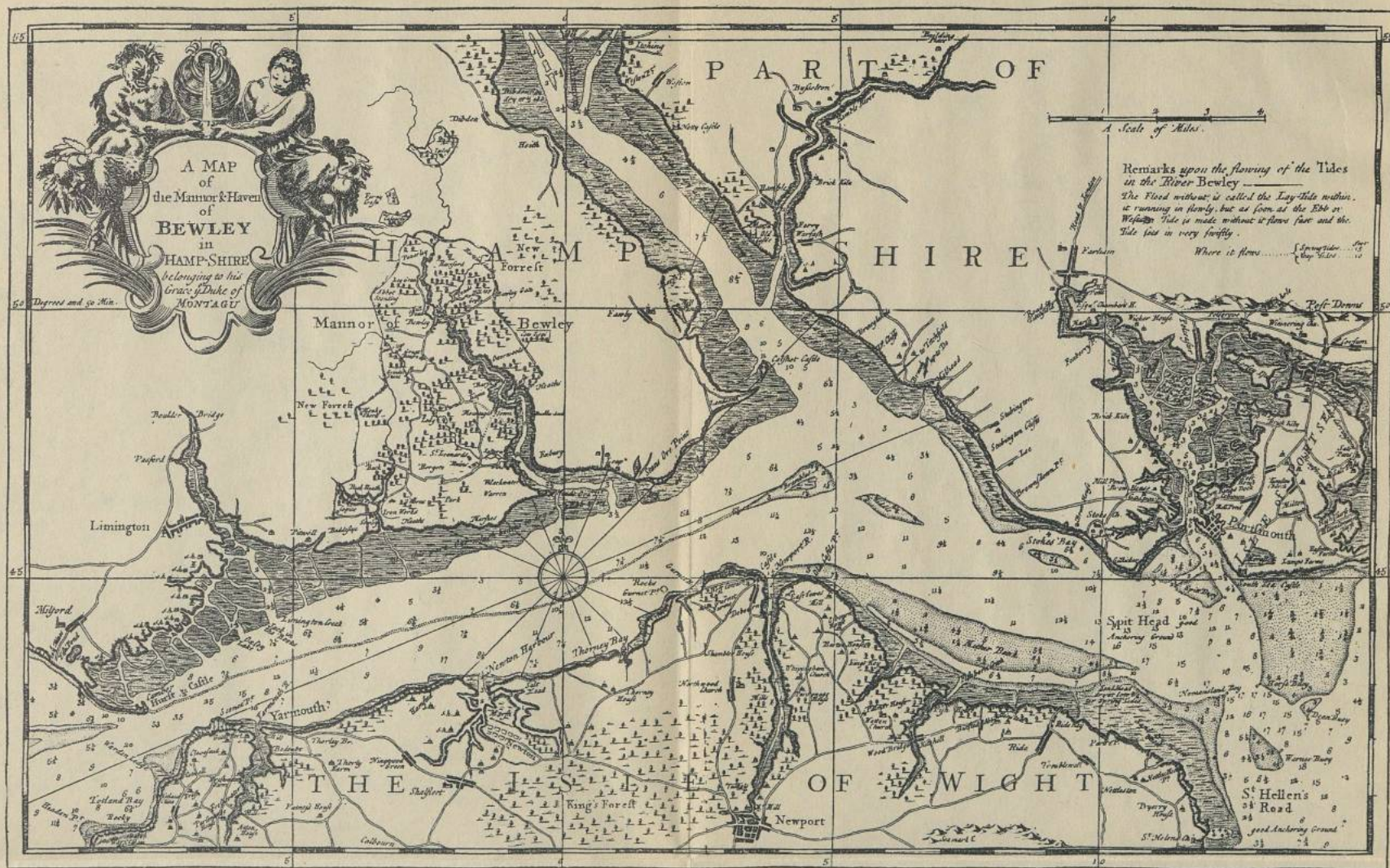
SOME HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS

BY  
JOHN  
SECOND LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU

LONDON







**T**HE River of Bewley is a safe Harbour, with Depth of Water sufficient to bring up Ships of almost any Burden as far as *Bucklebard*, which is two Miles from the Sea, where is a Convenient Key 100 Foot long, and 80 Foot wide, the depth of Water being 18 Foot.

Adjoining to the Key there is a good Situation for a Town, upon a rising Ground, gravelly Soil, with plenty of Fresh Water.

Bewley is situated between *Southampton* and *Lymington*, and is more Advantageous for Trade than *London* or *Bristol*, by reason that Ships may Sail from this Harbour to the Eastward, with the same Winds that Ships may from *Bristol*, with which they cannot Stir out of the River of *Thames*; and to the Northward with the same Winds they may Sail from *London*, with which they cannot Stir out of *Bristol*.

Bewley is distant from *Salisbury* 20 Miles, from *Winchester* 20 Miles, from *Ringwood* 16, from *Christ-Church* 16, from *Southampton* 5, from *Lymington* 5, from *Rumley* 12, from *Fordingbridge* 16, from *Andover* 25, from *Stockbridge* 22; which Places, and many other considerable Cities, Towns, and Villages, in the West of England, that are now supplied with *West-India* and other Foreign Commodities, either from *London*, or *Bristol*, may be supplied with Sugars and all other Foreign Commodities, as well as with the Commodities of this Country, upon more reasonable Terms from

this Place than from any other, Considering there will be no Charges at this Port, and the Conveniency of Carriage from thence by Water, and Land, to all the Neighbouring Towns, upon the easy Terms following:

	per TUNN.		
	l.	s.	d.
To CHICHESTER, ———	0	3	0
To PORTSMOUTH, ———	0	2	0
To SOUTHAMPTON, ———	0	1	0
To REDBRIDGE, ———	0	1	6
To NORTHAM, ———	0	1	6
To BUSSELTON, ———	0	1	6
To LYMINGTON, ———	0	1	0
To EXETER, PLYMOUTH, and all the Western Coast to the Lands End, for	0	6	0

All these PLACES lie Convenient for Land Carriage to *Rumley*, *Salisbury*, *Winchester*, *Waltham*, *Alresford*, &c.

There is great Conveniency for making Docks for Building Ships, and great Quantities of Timber growing on the Place fit for Ships or Houses, and Brick and Tiles made there at very reasonable Rates.

There is likewise a Market once in every Week, and two Fairs in every Year.

The Tenants of the Manor have Common without Stent, for their Cattle and Hogs, on the *New Forest*, with the right of cutting Turf there for their Firing.

They are also free from Toll, and Wharfage, &c. in all Ports throughout the King's Dominions; being ancient Demesnes by Grants of the Crown.

P R O P O S A L S

**F**OR the greater Encouragement of Trade in the said Harbour, any Merchant, or other Person, that is willing to settle there, may, upon Application to his Grace the Duke of *Montagu*, have a grant of a Piece of Land, 170 feet in Depth, and 40 feet in Front, at the Yearly Ground Rent of Six Shillings and Eight-pence only, and so proportionable according to a greater or lesser Quantity of feet in Front.

That every House may have a Close of Land belonging to it, in the Neighbourhood (if required) of two Acres, at the Yearly Rent of 13 s. and 4 d.

That the Front of all Houses be built entirely with Brick. Three Loads of Oak-Timber will be allowed *Gratis*, for every House so to be Built.

The abovefaid Grants to be made for 99 Years, if either of three Persons nominated shall so long live, without paying any Fine for the same.

This map was probably made about 1750, though the exact date is not ascertainable. It shows with accuracy the leading features of sea and land, which have not altered to any serious degree at the present date, March, 1909.

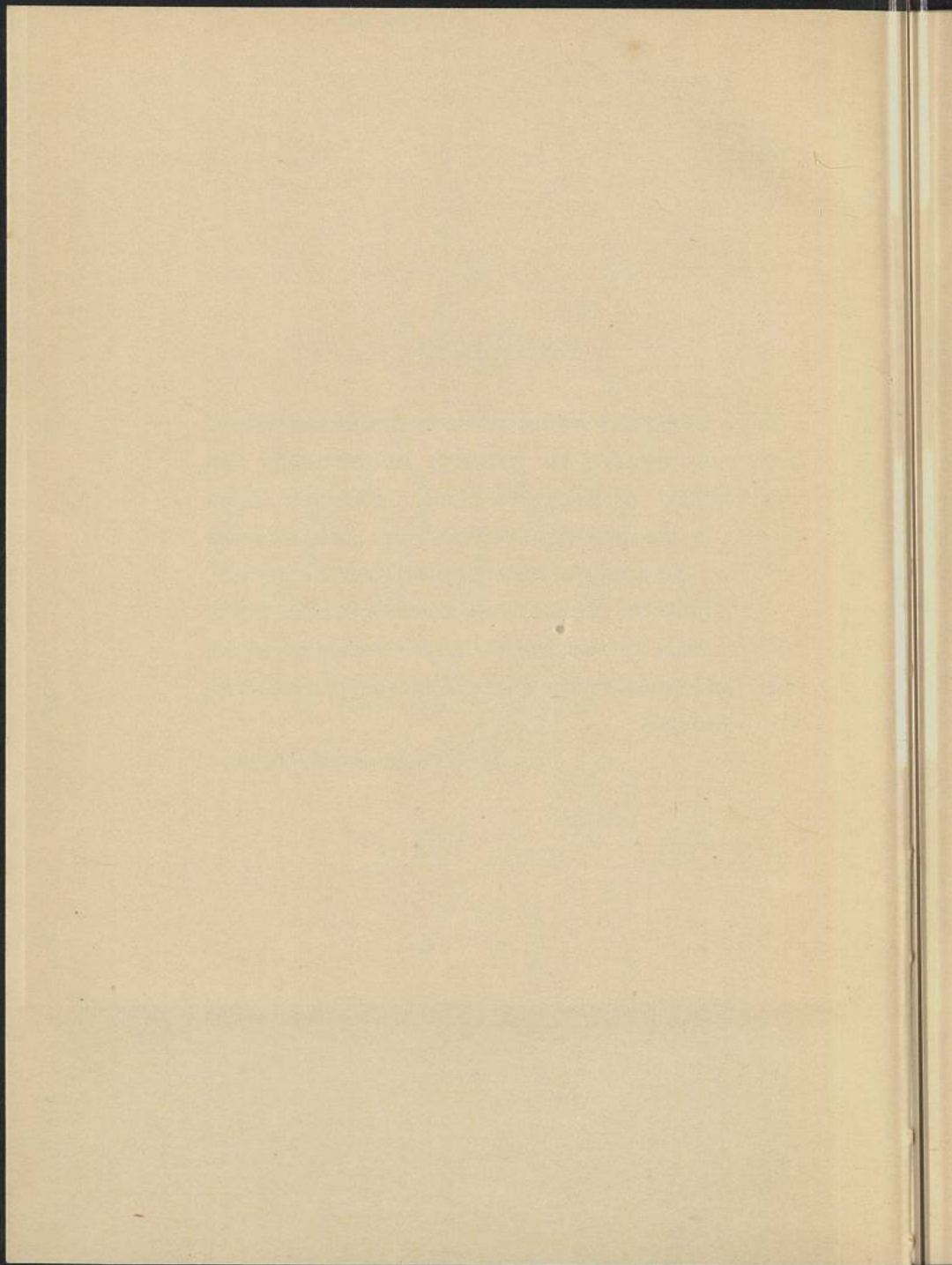
## PREFACE

I HAVE thought it worth while to put on record the history, so far as I can gather it, of the quaint old-world village of Buckler's Hard. The part it has played in the past will interest, I am sure, all those who love the study of how England became great.

I am indebted for much of the information to the navy records, to the *Journal of the Hampshire Field Club*, and to an article in it from the pen of Rev. G. N. Godwin.

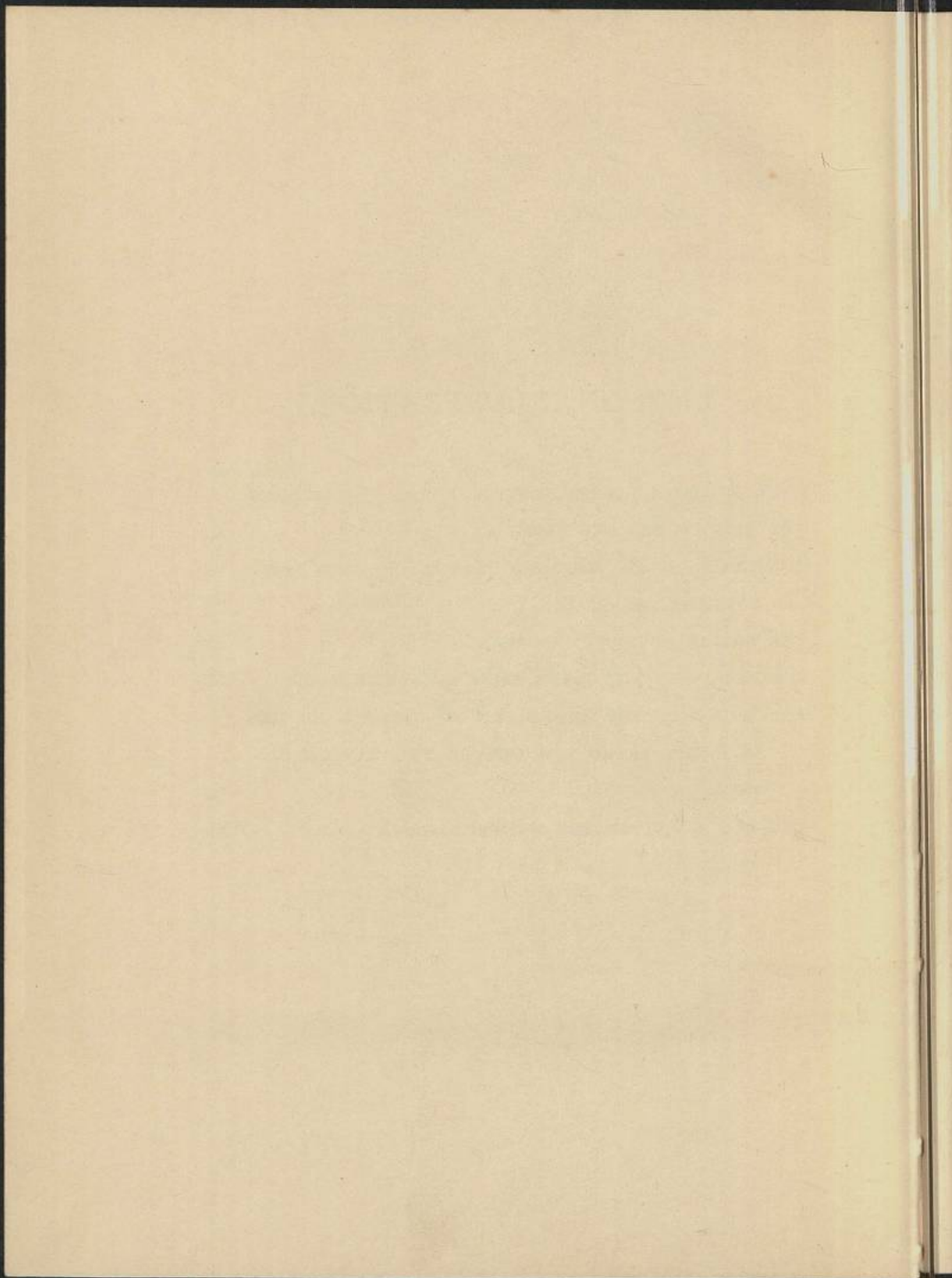
MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU.

February, 1909.



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## BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS

BUCKLER'S HARD is the name of a small village some two and a half miles from Beaulieu, situated on the west bank of the Beaulieu River in Hampshire. No one seeing the place to-day would think that Buckler's Hard, once a town of considerable size, had played a great part in the past, and that it had largely contributed to the dominion over the seas which Great Britain holds to-day. But there is no doubt that the stout oak-built ships which were launched there from 1743 to 1818 helped in no small degree to lay the foundations of our Empire. During the Napoleonic wars they took part in nearly every fight of importance, and at the Battle of Trafalgar there were three battleships which had been built at Buckler's Hard, all famous vessels—the *Agamemnon*, the *Swiftsure*, and the *Euryalus*.

At the end of this book I give the list of the ships and their approximate tonnage, and the number of

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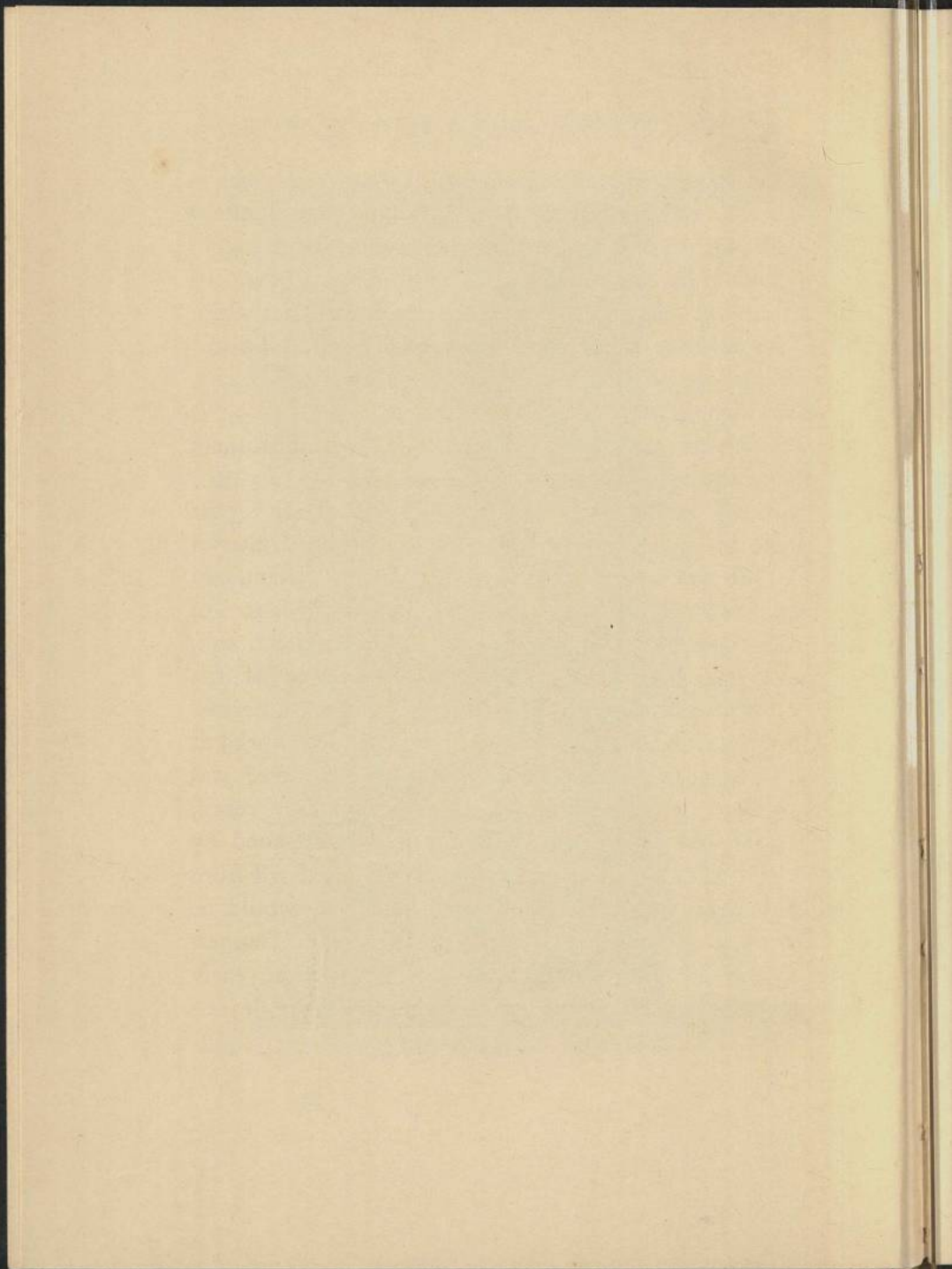
guns they carried, so far as can be traced from various official and non-official records. All that is left to-day of the busy shipyard, the slipways, the forges and shops, are the docks where the ships used to lie, some old launching timbers of spine oak, stout as ever, and the oak posts to which the mooring cables used to be fastened. Occasionally in dry weather the outline of now-deserted streets and traces of the foundations of once picturesque houses can be seen. The glory of the once famous shipyard has departed, but around Buckler's Hard to-day exists that mysterious and indefinite charm which seems to linger round spots where great affairs were carried on.

The early history of Buckler's Hard is shrouded in the mists of time, but it is probable that it was a fishing and agricultural village from very early times. The fact that there is an excellent spring of water there, and a gravel landing-place, would have naturally led to its being made a habitation for mankind. On the Beaulieu River there are only six places along its nine miles of estuary where the gravel soil stretches right down to low-water mark, and Buckler's Hard is the principal of these. Therefore when John, second Duke of Montagu, was looking out for a place at which to create and encourage local industry—to wit, shipbuilding—it was natural that he should have chosen Buckler's Hard. The name of Buckler's



THE SITE OF THE OLD SLIPWAYS.

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## BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS 11

Hard, or, as it was originally spelt, Buckle's Hard, is probably derived from a local family, the Buckles, who lived there for generations ; and as for the term "hard," it is used along the South Coast to describe a landing-place in the case of rivers or estuaries where the banks in other spots are specially soft. To this day the mud or ooze of the Beaulieu River is of a peculiarly tenacious character and great depth, as those who have been stranded upon it from Roman times to this day have found out.

The reason for the development of the port 150 years ago lay in the fact that John Duke of Montagu owned the sugar-producing island of St. Vincent in the West Indies. His Manor of Beaulieu was heavily timbered with excellent oak, and enjoyed, moreover, all the privileges of the Cinque Ports as a free harbour—a legacy inherited from the Abbots of Beaulieu—and the ironworks at Sowley Pond, where the great forge-hammer was worked by a water-wheel, were within easy reach, about four miles away. Statements were issued by the noble Duke proving that ships could sail from the Beaulieu River and Solent when they would be wind-bound alike at Bristol and in the Thames. Extensive quay frontages were offered at a yearly rental of 6s. 8d. apiece, on a ninety-nine years' lease ; three loads of timber were given gratis for every

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house erected, and the cheapness of water-carriage from Buckler's Hard was strongly insisted upon.

At many adjacent points on the coast shipbuilding had long been going on—at Southampton, Lymington, and elsewhere. The Duke wished to attract a firm to settle at Buckler's Hard, and went to some pains to induce a builder to come. At Bursledon, on the east side of the Southampton Water, for half a century previously there had also been a shipyard, Mr. William Wyatt having built there the *Devonshire*, 100 guns, in 1692, and the *Winchester*, 60, in 1693. This latter ship was lost two years afterwards off Cape Florida.

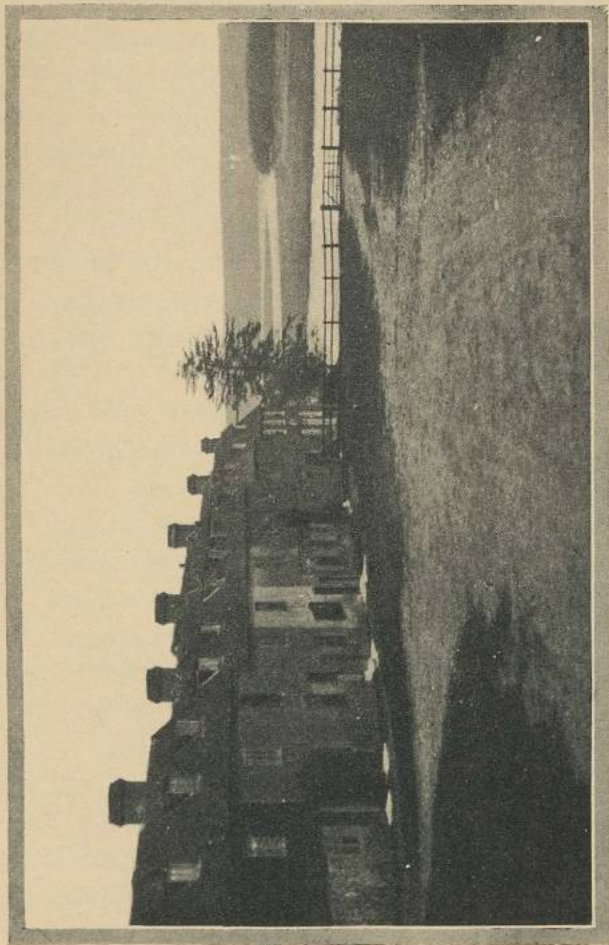
The firm of Wyatt and Co. appears to have been attracted to Beaulieu by the advantages offered by the Duke, and in September, 1743, they commenced operations. The result was that in 1745 they launched the *Surprise*, 14 guns; in the following year the *Scorpion*, 18 guns; and in 1749 the *Woolwich*, 44 guns. The *Surprise* had a crew of 160 men; the *Scorpion* carried 14 swivels in addition to her 14 guns, and had a complement of 110 men. The *Woolwich*, launched in October, 1749, carried 50 guns and 300 men. It is expressly stated, in a business abstract compiled for the firm of Adams and Co. in 1801, that "Henry Adams was overseer to building the above three ships." This is

the first mention of this veteran shipbuilder, who, born in 1713, was only thirty years of age, therefore when he undertook the responsible task of superintending the building of the *Surprise*. For sixty-two long years he was destined to build and design ships of war. In a list of "Ships built for Government at Buckler's Hard, from September, 1743, to January, 1791," there is some doubt shown as to whether a few may not have been constructed at Deptford, where Henry Adams also had a shipyard. But there can be no doubt that the vast majority were built on the Beaulieu River. The *Centurion*, 50 guns, was, according to the *Naval Chronicle*, also built by him at Harwich in 1774, and the same authority states that the *Majestic* was built on the River Thames in 1785, as was also the *Solebay*, 32 guns. It is thus evident that Mr. Adams was engaged in shipbuilding elsewhere, and the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* of July 11, 1789, when the *Illustrious*, 74 guns, had been launched on the Beaulieu River on the previous Tuesday, stated: "This makes the twenty-first of the line that Mr. Adams has built at Buckler's Hard, besides which he has built as many more at other places." The evidences of Buckler's Hard having been a great shipbuilding yard are overwhelming, and the descendants of the old shipwrights are in some cases

still alive to-day. There are men living to-day who remember hearing first-hand tales of the shipwrights told at one of the inns, now no more, at the top of the "street."

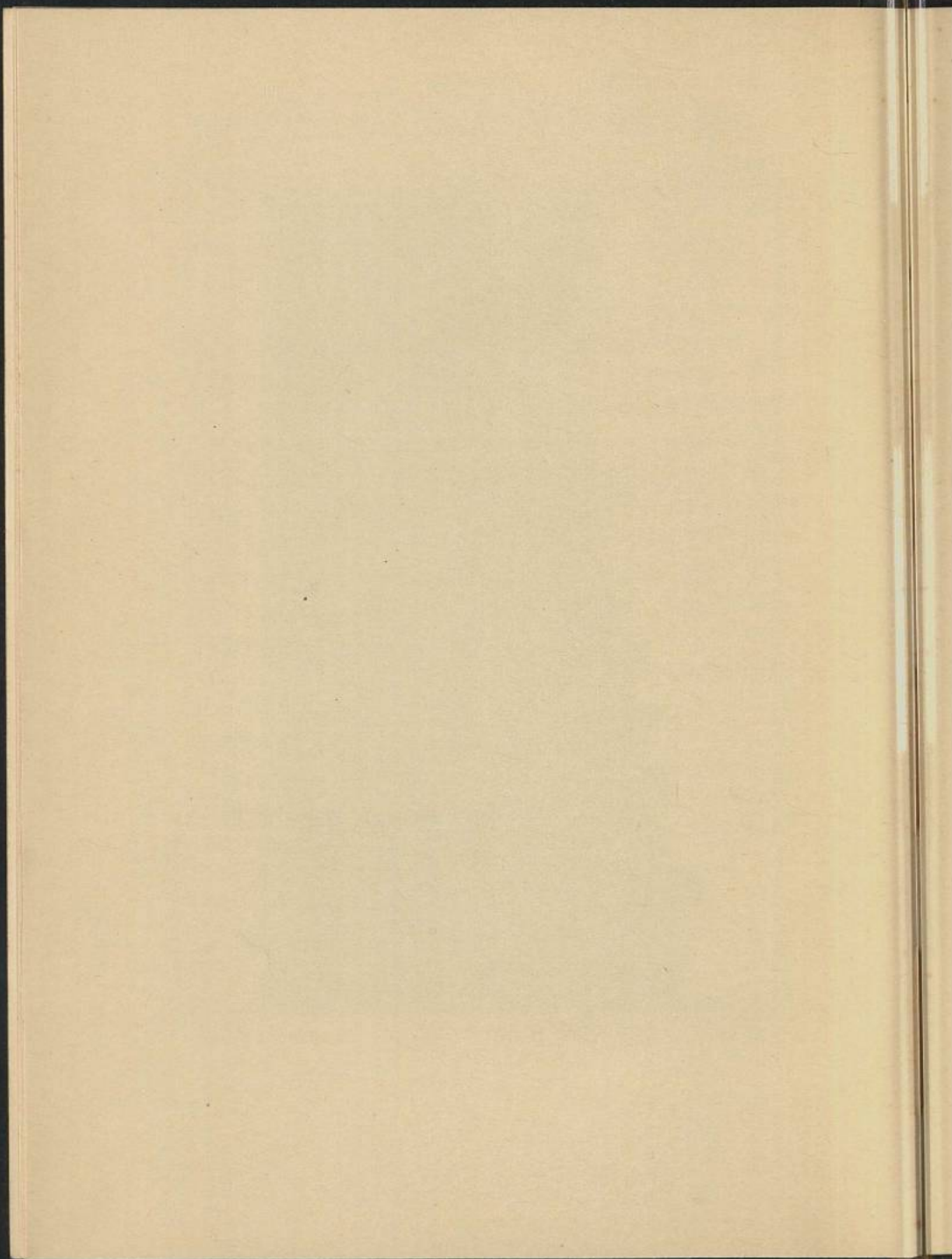
Wishing to perpetuate his family name, and to make Buckler's Hard a great seaport, John Duke of Montagu renamed the town Montagu Town. The new settlement grew with the need of the country for ships. When, however, in 1748, the island of St. Vincent was declared neutral by treaty, the Duke's bright hopes of a great West Indian trade vanished. But shipbuilding for peaceful and warlike purposes still progressed from the time when Wyatt and Co. first commenced operations in September, 1743. The *Surprise* was ready and fitted out when war was declared against France on May 18, 1750, as was also the *Scorpion*. In 1759 the *Surprise*, under the command of Captain Antrobus, captured the French *Vieux*, 8 guns and 36 men, and in 1761 the *Scorpion* (Captain Hallum) took the French *Boscawen*, 10 guns and 80 men. In the following year the *Scorpion* foundered in the Irish Channel; she had by then mounted 16 guns in all. The *Woolwich* does not appear in the Navy List of 1756, but was on the coast of Africa, commanded by Captain Daniel Deering, in 1760. It is not known what became of her.

The *Surprise* was in 1760 on duty in the Mediter-



BUCKLER'S HARD (MONTAGU TOWN), LOOKING EAST TOWARDS THE RIVER.

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anean, commanded by Captain Joseph Frainem, but was broken up before 1775.

The *Mermaid*, 24 guns, was launched at Buckler's Hard in 1749, and was lost ten years later, under the command of Captain Hackman, near the Bahama Islands, with about 160 men on board.

The *Kennington* was a ship of the same class, with a crew of 160 men. She was comparatively a new ship in 1748, having just replaced an older vessel of the same name which was on the Lisbon Convoy Service in 1741. She saw service during the Seven Years' War, and was on the Mediterranean Station at its conclusion, Captain Robert Barber in command. In 1778 she was laid up "in ordinary" to await events, and was not, so far as can be traced, again commissioned.

The *Lion* transport, of 151 tons burden, and mounting 4 guns, was launched at Buckler's Hard by Henry Adams in 1753. She was classed with ships of 60 guns, and was at Portsmouth on May 18, 1756. In 1760 she was at Jamaica, commanded by Captain Edward Le Cras, and when peace was signed in 1763 she was on the Home Station under Captain J. Stanton. Before 1777 she had been replaced by another ship of the same name.

The *Gibraltar*, 20, took the water in the early part of the year 1756. In the same year, under the

command of Captain Clevelenad, she captured the *Glaneur* privateer, 16 guns and 100 men, which was purchased by the Government and renamed the *Gibraltar's Prize*. Captain Walter Griffith commanded her in 1760 and 1763 in the Mediterranean. In 1778 she, like the *Kennington*, was laid up "in ordinary," but in 1781, rigged as a brig, and mounting 14 guns, she was, whilst commanded by Captain W. Anderson, captured by the Spaniards off Gibraltar.

The year 1757 saw the completion at Buckler's Hard of a sailing lighter of 56 tons, and of a sailing longboat of 30 tons burden; also of the *Coventry*, 28 guns. In the following year she, in company with the *Thames*, 32 guns, another Buckler's Hard ship, took the *Morat*, privateer, 8 guns and 80 men, in the English Channel. Captain Francis Burslem was in command in 1760, and in 1762, under Captain Carpenter, she made prizes of four privateers: the *Groignard*, 10 guns and 126 men; the *Guerrier*, 10 guns and 120 men; besides the *Audacieux*, 10 guns and 104 men, and the Spanish *Dos Amigos*, 8 guns and 50 men. In 1782 she was obliged to surrender in the Bay of Bengal to an overpowering French force, which left Captain Wolsley no alternative but to save the lives of his crew, which would otherwise have been spent to no purpose.

## BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS 17

The *Levant*, 28, launched in 1758, was, under Captain Tucker, at the Leeward Islands in 1760, and was still in the West Indies under Captain John Laforey when peace was signed in 1763. In 1778 she was in the Mediterranean, under the Hon. G. Murray, but was soon afterwards sold out of the service. Sir Thomas Slade designed this ship, which was of 590 tons burden.

The *Thames*, a 32-gun frigate armed with 12-pounders, was also launched in 1758. In the same year the French *Le Palmier*, 74 guns, captured the *Stork*, 14, commanded by Captain Tucker, in the West Indies; but in 1759 she was herself chased into Brest by the *Thames*, commanded by Captain Colby, who in the same year took the French privateer *Morat*, 8 guns and 80 men—either the same ship as that already referred to, or another built by the French to replace her—with the assistance of the *Coventry*, and in 1760 the *Bien-Aimé*, a privateer of 8 guns and 113 men.

On October 23, 1793, the *Thames*, Captain James Cotes, was on her way to Gibraltar, 30 men short of her complement, when at 9.30 a sail was sighted which proved to be the French frigate *Uranie*, carrying twenty-eight 18-pounders, ten 8-pounders, and four brass 3-pound carronades. A sharp action ensued. Both ships ceased firing to refit, when four French ships

came up, and the *Thames* at length had to strike to *La Carmagnole*, a French 40-gun frigate, and was towed into Brest. Her name was changed to *La Tamise*, and she was armed in a similar manner to the *Uranie*. During the twenty months that she remained in French hands she proved herself a very active cruiser, bringing no fewer than twenty English prizes into Brest. On June 7, 1796, she was retaken off Waterford after a fierce fight by the *Santa Margarita*, 36 guns, Captain G. Parker. She was much damaged in her hull, sails, and rigging, but, battered as she was, again found her place in the English Navy as a 32-gun (12-pound) frigate. In 1798 she was at Portsmouth, commanded by Captain Lukin. In the following year we hear of her at Lisbon, and once more at Spithead. The beginning of the last century saw her in Falmouth Harbour for Channel Service. Her latter days were better than her former. On July 21, 1811, she, together with the *Cephalus*, 18-gun brig, captured without serious loss eleven French gunboats, a felucca, and a martello tower on the enemy's coast. On November 1, 1811, she landed marines who, aided by 250 men of the 62nd Regiment, defeated the French and captured the defences of Palinuro in Sicily. On May 14 following, she, together with the *Pilot*, 18-gun brig, forced the fort of Sapri to surrender at

discretion. Her gallant master, Roger Langlands, here gained promotion to the rank of Lieutenant. On February 26, 1813, she and the 30-gun frigate *Furieuse* compelled the surrender of the island of Ponza, on the coast of Naples. Before 1818 this gallant old ship had taken up her last moorings. The length of her gun-deck was 127 feet; of her keel, 104 feet 8½ inches; breadth, 34 feet 6 inches; depth of hold, 11 feet 9 inches; tonnage, by the measurement of the time, 656.

The *Hayling Hoy*, of 132 tons, and mounting 4 guns, was launched in 1760. Then came a pause, for it was not until 1764 that the *Europe*, of 64 guns, took the water. She is said to have been built at Lepe, at the mouth of the Beaulieu River, maybe for the sake of deeper water. But she seems to have been the only ship built there, and Buckler's Hard still continued to re-echo to the ring of shipwrights' hammers. The length of keel of the *Europe* was 130 feet 9 inches, and it is said that the keel timbers required for the Buckler's Hard ships were brought from near Salisbury, there being no timber in the neighbourhood sufficiently large for the purpose; a goodly quantity of the Beaulieu timber must by then have been used up. The length of her gun-deck was 159 feet and her tonnage was 1,369. She was a sister-ship to the *Exeter*, 64,

## 20 BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS

and was designed by Mr. William Bateley. In 1778 she was flagship at Newfoundland, under Vice-Admiral John Montagu, a relation of the Duke's, and Captain R. King. Early in 1784 she was laid up "in ordinary," but was considered capable of repair. She was employed during the great Napoleonic war as a prison-ship at Plymouth, under Lieutenant J. Gardner, who commanded her in 1799. In 1801 she was returned as being no longer in commission, and was soon afterwards broken up.

At least two famous *Hannibals* were built at Buckler's Hard. The first of them was built in 1759, 1772, or 1779 (accounts differ). Her tonnage was 1,044, and off the Cape of Good Hope, on October 26, 1781, she captured the French *Neckar*, 28; but she herself was, on January 18, 1782, when commanded by Captain Christie, taken off Sumatra by the French fleet, and her officers and men handed over to Tippoo Sahib, by whom they were treated most cruelly. "Many of these unfortunate men perished during their captivity, and numbers of them were not released till after the war," says the account of that time.

Another *Hannibal*, the last but one of her class built here, was launched in 1810, and was "in ordinary" at Plymouth in 1818. An old man named Biddlecombe, who died only a few years ago,

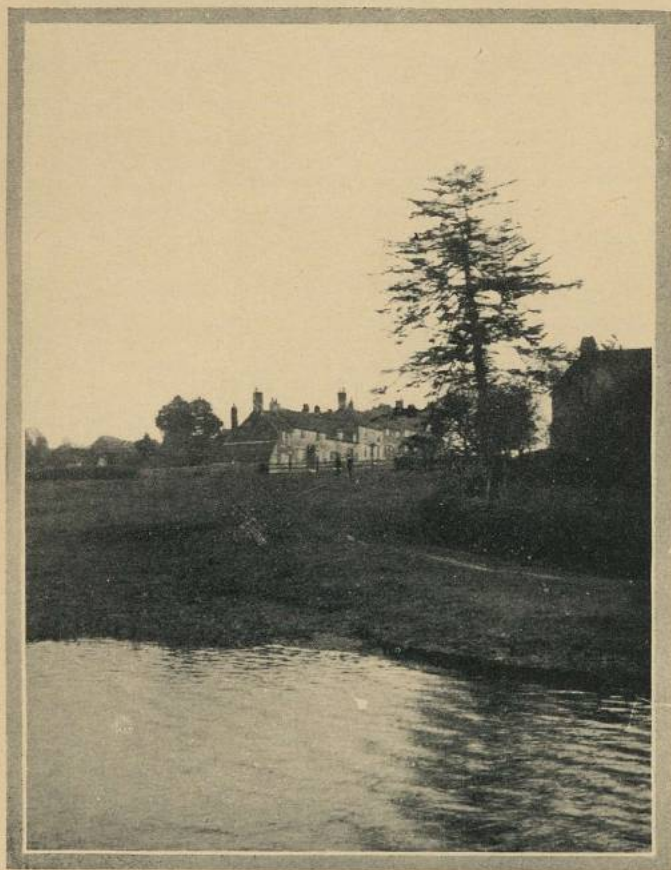
always a resident at Buckler's Hard, remembered seeing her launched. The men-of-war built here, when launched, were as a rule taken round to Portsmouth, and coppered within forty-eight hours after being docked. This "oldest inhabitant," whom the writer knew well, used to say that one of the men who came to fetch the ship gave him "a quart pot full of sugar, and I was as pleased as if he had given me the ship." The father of Mrs. Biddlecombe was a trunnel-maker at Buckler's Hard, and helped to make solid the stout sides of the ship known as Nelson's *Agamemnon*; for the great naval hero trod her deck for some years, and fought her and sailed her constantly.

The *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* of April 10, 1781, contained an account of the launch of the *Agamemnon*, which I give here: "There was launched at Buckler's Hard the *Agamemnon*, a fine 64-gun ship, built by Mr. Adams, of that place." Her gun-deck was 160 feet in length, her keel measuring 132 feet, with a burden of 1,384 tons. She rapidly became a famous ship, and in February, 1783, Horatio, Lord Nelson, was appointed as her Captain, and in the following October she kept up a gallant running fight with four French frigates and a brig corvette. She helped to capture the *Ça Ira*, 80, and the *Censor*, 74, off Genoa, in

## 22 BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS

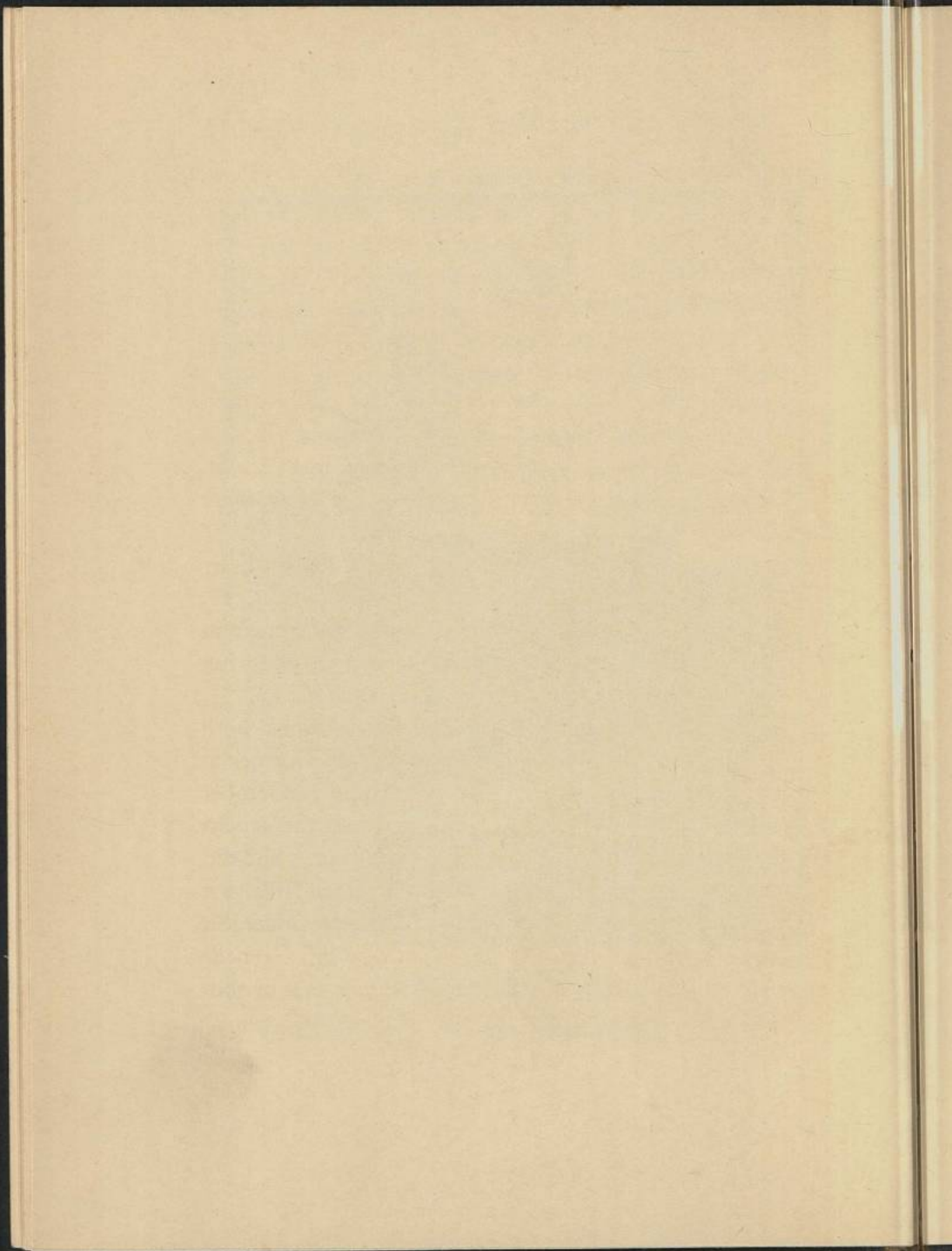
1795. In the same year she was (with other ships) chased by the Toulon fleet of 17 sail of the line, helped to make prize of the *L'Alcide*, 74, and captured a number of privateers. She was in every affair of importance in the Mediterranean, and whilst in command of her Nelson lost his right eye, at the siege of Calvi. It was one of her crew who, at the Battle of St. Vincent, tucked under his arm the swords of the Spanish officers upon the quarter-deck of the *San Josef*, as coolly as if they had been faggot-sticks. The *Agamemnon* played a noble part at Copenhagen, and bore her full share in Sir Robert Calder's action off Cape Finisterre. The battle-thunder of Trafalgar raged around her, and in the following year she was with Sir John Duckworth off St. Domingo, when five sail of the line struck, amidst ringing English cheers. Nelson's *Agamemnon*, after a glorious career, was finally wrecked in Maldonado Bay, in the River Plate, in May, 1809.

The year 1773 was a busy one at Buckler's Hard, witnessing the launch of no less than three ships. The *Greyhound*, 28 guns, was launched in July. In 1778 she was commanded by a Lieutenant, name not given, and in 1781 she was lost upon the South Sand Head, near Deal, but Captain W. Fox, her then Captain, and the crew were saved.



THE CRADLE OF THE "AGAMEMNON."

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BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS 23

The *Triton*, 28, was launched in October, 1773. Five years afterwards Captain S. Lutwidge commanded her on the North American Station. In November, 1782, she was being repaired at Limehouse, by Messrs. Edward Greaves and Co. She sailed for the West Indies, returned to Portsmouth, and was broken up before the year 1796.

The *Thetis*, 32, was launched in November, 1773. Captain J. Gell commanded her in 1778, but only three years afterwards she was lost at St. Lucia. Captain Robert Linzee and her crew were saved.

The *Ambuscade*, 32, was launched at Deptford, by Mr. Adams, in September, 1773. The *Levant*, 28, came into the Buckler's Hard Docks for repair in April, 1771, as did also the *Le Brune*, 32, after her capture and addition to our navy in 1771.

The *Centurion*, 50, and the *Hector* were both launched by Mr. Adams in May, 1774, the former at Harwich, and the other at Deptford; and in October of the same year the *Vigilant*, 64, left the stocks at Buckler's Hard. Her tonnage was 1,347. She did good service under Captain Kingsmill on July 27, 1788, in Admiral Keppel's action, and also under Sir Digby Dent, in Admiral Byron's action off Grenada on July 6, 1779. She ended her career as a prison-ship at Portsmouth, for French seamen captured by

## 24 BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS

our cruisers. She was "out of commission" in the year 1801, and never again saw service.

The *Experiment*, 50, was launched in August, 1774. Four years later Sir James Wallace was her Captain, and took her to the North American Station. On her passage from New York to Savannah with stores, in September, 1779, she was dismasted in a heavy gale of wind, and a few days afterwards "had the misfortune to fall in with the French fleet, and after a most gallant defence, in sight of the whole (British) fleet, was obliged to surrender to the superior force of the enemy."

The *Hound*, 18, was launched in March, 1776. She sailed for the East Indies on October 13, 1782, under Vice-Admiral Sir H. Parke, and in September, 1783, was sold out of the service. She was then sloop-rigged, and mounted 14 guns.

The *Pelican*, 24, was launched in April, 1777, sailed for the West Indies, and in 1781, whilst under the command of Captain (afterwards Admiral) C. Collingwood, was wrecked during a hurricane at Jamaica, only a portion of her crew escaping with their lives.

The *Pacific*, 20, was repaired at Buckler's Hard in 1777, and relaunched in December of that year.

The same year and month saw the launch of the *Romulus*, 44, which was in 1781, when commanded

by Captain George Gayton, captured off the Chesapeake River by the *Eveillée* and two French frigates of Admiral Termany's fleet.

The *Hydra*, 24, launched in April, 1778, was sold out of the service in April, 1783. Hers was but a brief career.

The *Pandora*, 24, was launched in May, 1779, and was three years later in North America, under Captain John Inglis. The next year we find her under repair at Chatham, but before 1793 she had disappeared from the Navy List. Her fate is uncertain.

The *Garland*, 28-gun frigate, of some 700 tons burden, was launched in January, 1779, her gun-deck being 120 feet in length. She was at first named the *Sybil*, but her name was altered about 1797 because three years previously a very beautiful French frigate of 44 guns, named *La Sybille*, had been captured, and added to the English Navy under the name of *Sybil*. There is still in existence a list of the crew of the *Garland* when called to quarters, and most interesting is it to read the muster-roll of heroes who fought the guns of this dashing frigate. The West Indian negroes used to sing :

“ You go on board the flagship,  
 Dey ask you for to dine ;  
 Dey give you lots of salt horse,  
 But not a drop of wine.

## 26 BUCKLER'S HARD AND ITS SHIPS

“ You go on board the *Garland*,  
Dey ask you for to dine ;  
Dey give you plenty roast beef,  
And lots of rosy wine.

“ Oh, de happy, happy *Garland*,  
With lots of rosy wine.”

The *Garland* at last went ashore on the coast of Madagascar, and her ship's company endured great hardships before they reached a friendly port.

The *Brilliant*, 28, the first of her name, was launched in May, 1779. She is noted for having run foul of, and swept away, the last of the masts of the *Royal George* (sunk in 1782) which remained above water at Spithead, after which a buoy, removed some years ago, was placed over the wreck. In November, 1796, she came under the command of that gallant sailor and friend of Nelson, Captain Henry Blackwood, who in this small ship, by dint of bold manœuvres and spirited fighting, made a daring escape from two French frigates in the Bay of Santa Cruz. The *Brilliant* captured several French privateers, one of which was the smart lugger *Pointe du Jour*, of Roscoff, of 3 guns and 30 men, whose Captain had a few months previously made a specially daring escape, when a prisoner of war, from a hulk in Portsmouth Harbour. In the year 1810 the *Brilliant* fell into the hands of ship-breakers.

The *Zephyr*, pierced for 24 guns, but only mounting 14, was launched in May, 1779, and was at once fitted out as a Channel cruiser. She was rigged as a sloop, was commanded by a Lieutenant, and was under repair early in the year 1784 at Sheerness. She disappeared from the Navy List before 1793.

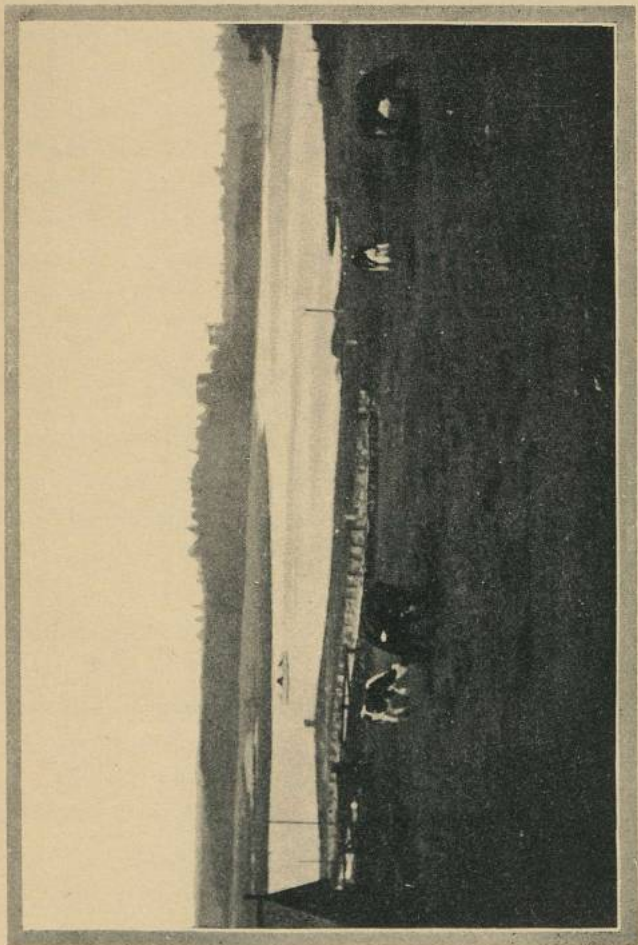
Mr. Adams did not confine his activities to Buckler's Hard during these busy years, for he built and launched the *Orpheus*, 32, at Deptford in June, 1780, as also the *Africa*, 64, in April, 1781, and the *Andromache*, 32, in November of the same year; the *Carnatic*, 74, was launched in January, 1783, at the same yard; and the *Majestic*, 74, in February, 1785; the *Solebay*, in March, 1785; and the *Orion*, 74, in June, 1789. The name of Mr. Adams's partner at Grove Street Yard, Deptford Green, was Mr. Barnard. The lease of this yard finally expired in January, 1793, which was probably the reason why Buckler's Hard was the only place at which Mr. Adams built ships after that date.

The *Gladiator*, 44, was launched in 1782, and sent round forthwith to Liverpool to be fitted for home service. She was long employed as a convalescent-ship at Portsmouth, and certainly never went to sea before 1810, if at all. She, however, bore a

well-known name, for on board this ship was held many a court-martial, in which was at stake both the lives and honours of admirals, captains, lieutenants, gunners, and seamen. The recent accident to the present-day *Gladiator*—lying at the moment of writing near by on the shores of the Isle of Wight—recalls the name nowadays.

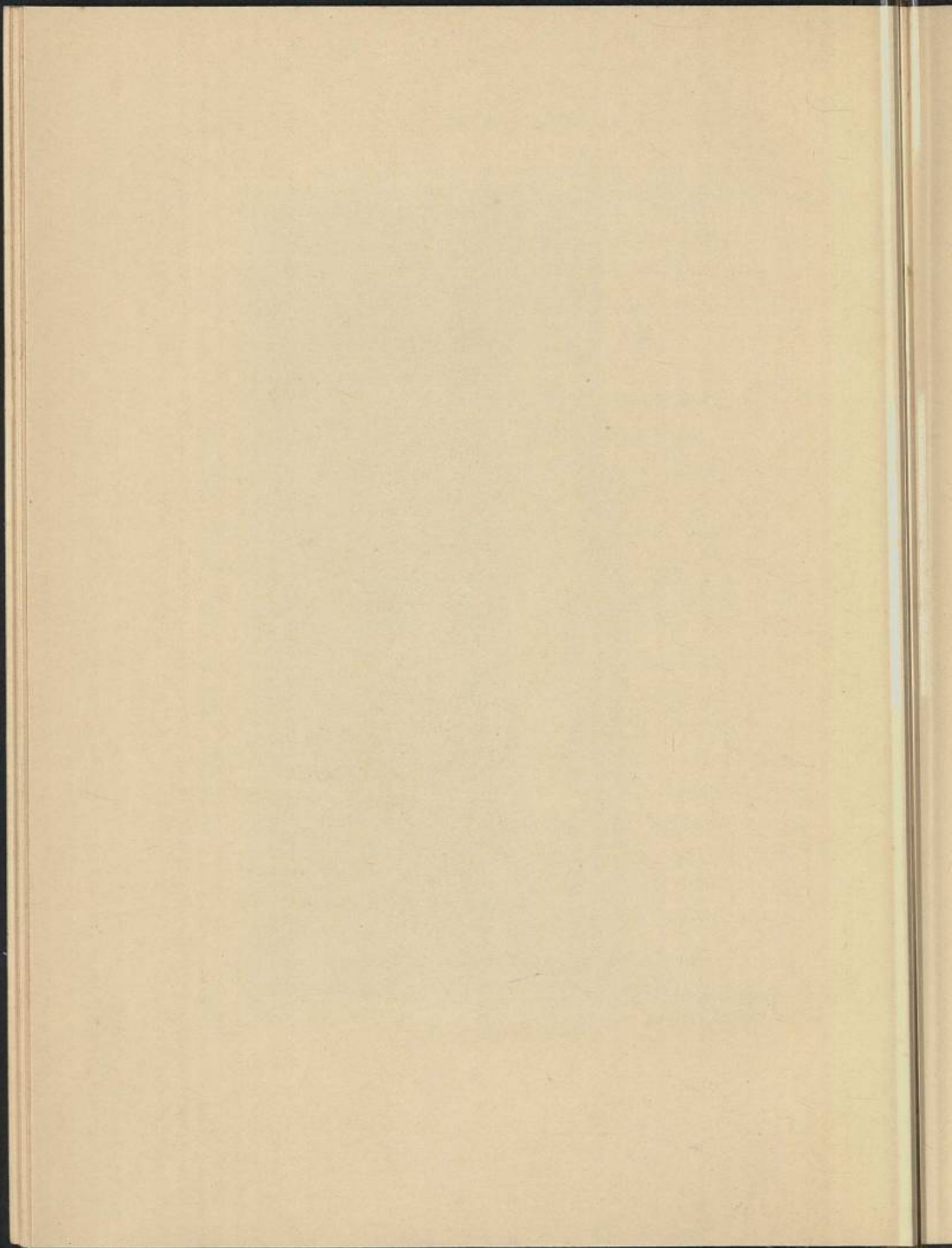
The *Heroine*, 32, glided into the waters of the Beaulieu River in April, 1783. She was built on speculation, and was purchased in her frame by the Government. She was of 779 tons burden, and was ready for sea in the following August. Two years later she was in the East Indies, whence she returned in 1798, to be laid up "in ordinary" at Portsmouth.

In November, 1783, was launched the *Indefatigable*, 64 guns, only to be reduced ten years later to a frigate. She mounted twenty-six 24-pounders on her main-deck, eighteen 12-pounders on her quarter-deck and fore-castle, and four 42-pounder carronades. She retained the masts and yards of a 64-gun ship. On April 22, 1793, after a run of 168 knots in fifteen hours from the Lizard, she captured the French frigate *La Virginie*, 40 guns, which was added to our fleet. The *Indefatigable* took several French privateers; in 1797 she recaptured the *Hyæna*, late British frigate, and also took the *Vaillante*, 20, which proved, under the name of the *Danaë*, a



LOOKING DOWN THE RIVER FROM BUCKLE'S HARD,

To face page 28.



welcome addition to the fleet. On July 13, 1797, the *Indefatigable* was nearly lost on the Penmarks (on which her consort the *Amazon* was wrecked), whilst engaging the disabled French, 74, *Droits de l'Homme*, which latter ship went ashore in Audierne Bay, and became a total wreck. The crews of the English frigates fought up to their knees in water on the main-deck, the *Indefatigable* having at the same time her masts badly splintered, and 4 feet of water in her hold. It is no wonder that the *Naval Chronicle* for 1799 says that "under her present able commander, Sir Edward Pellew, Bart., she has proved worthy of her name, and has rendered very essential services to this country."

The *Sheerness*, 44, was to have been off the stocks in August, 1784, but her launch did not, after various delays, take place till July, 1787. She was commissioned for the West Indies, and before 1809 her place in the Navy List had been taken by a vessel purchased in 1797. She was sold out of the service in 1810.

The *Illustrious*, 74, was ready for launching in 1789. In July of that year His Majesty King George III. and his Queen, who were staying at the Duke of Gloucester's house at Lyndhurst—now called the "King's House," and the residence of the Deputy-Surveyor of the New Forest—on their way

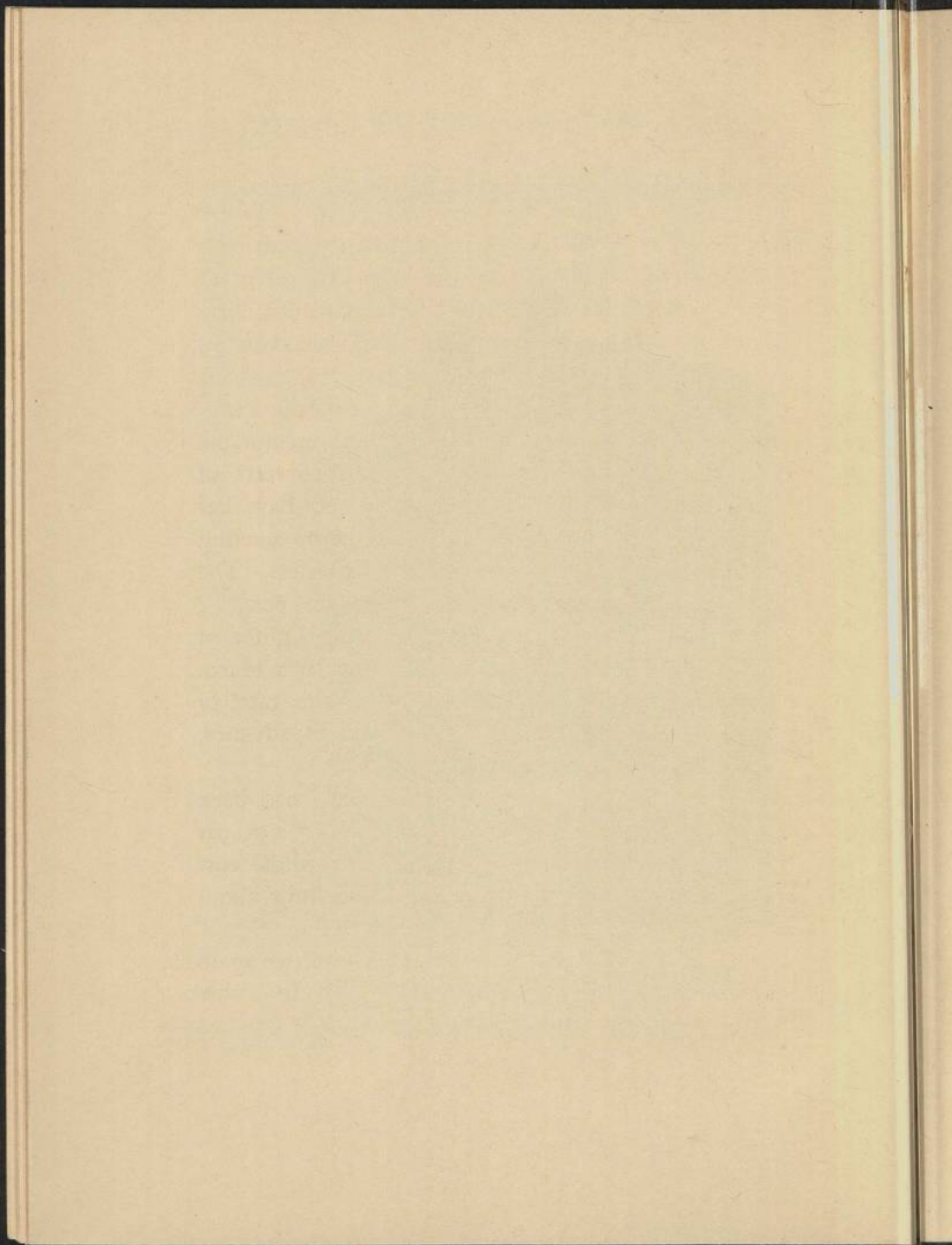
from Windsor to Weymouth, their favourite watering-place, paid a state visit to Beaulieu, where they were royally entertained by John Duke of Montagu. The *Illustrious* was then on the stocks at Buckler's Hard, and, strange to say, fired a salute of 21 guns, in honour of Their Majesties' visit, whilst still upon dry land, a circumstance probably without a parallel in our naval annals. On July 11, 1778, we read in the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*: "On Tuesday last H.M.S. the *Illustrious*, of 74 guns, was launched from Mr. Adams' yard at Buckler's Hard. The launch was exceedingly fine, and she is esteemed by gentlemen in the sea-faring line to be as handsome a ship of her class as any in H.M.'s Navy." Drawings of her still in existence confirm this statement. Ten years later, when under the command of Captain T. L. Frederick, she went ashore during a heavy gale of wind on the rocks near Avenza, in the Mediterranean, and, in spite of Lord Nelson's strongly expressed hopes that she would be got off, became a total wreck. Her Captain set her on fire, to save her from the French.

On May 17, 1790, we again read under the head of Portsmouth news in the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*: "Arrived the *Beaulieu*, frigate, 36 guns, lately launched at Beaulieu" (Buckler's Hard was undoubtedly meant), "and is since come into the



THE HOUSE OF THE ADAMS FAMILY, SHOWING AT THE SIDE THE  
LARGE WINDOWS OF THE BANQUETING-ROOM.

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harbour." She was built on speculation, and was bought on the stocks for £12,250. A great future was before her. Not to enlarge upon her numerous captures of French privateers, she was present at the capture of the Dutch fleet at Camperdown on October 11, 1797, by the gallant Admiral Duncan, on which occasion she did duty in repeating signals. On July 22, 1801, she, in company with four other frigates, played an heroic part in the ever-memorable cutting out of *La Chevette*, a French corvette of 20 guns and 350 men, from Camaret Bay, her quartermaster, James Wallis, a true hero, steering the prize until out of range of the batteries. The ship-breakers closed round the *Beaulieu* in 1800.

In December, 1789, a sailing mooring lighter of 119 tons burden was launched at Buckler's Hard. The price paid for her was £952, at the rate of £7 17s. 6d. per ton, £220 being paid in advance, when the contract was signed.

In the previous month a "chain boat" had been launched, which was built at the rate of £7 15s. per ton. Her burden was 30 tons, and her whole cost £232. A longboat or launch was also built about the same time.

In the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* we again find the following: "Southampton, April 20, 1793. The *Santa Margarita*, 36 guns, will be launched

from Mr. Adams' yard, at Buckler's Hard, on Friday next at ten o'clock in the morning." She was originally a Spanish prize, captured in 1779 by the squadron commanded by Commodore Johnstone, off the coast of Portugal. She was a very beautiful frigate, and, under the command of Captain J. B. Martin, she recaptured the Spanish *San Francisco*, 14, off the Irish coast in the following year. In 1793 she came into Mr. Adams's hands for large repairs, at a cost of £18,500, being at the rate of £17 19s. 3d. on each of her 1,030 tons burden. She was in fact rebuilt by him.

The *Cerebus*, 32, was launched on September 14, 1794. She was of 796 tons burden, and was built at the rate of £12 10s. per ton, her total cost being £9,954 1s., of which £1,750 was paid down in advance. The beginning of the last century found her refitting at Plymouth, Captain J. McNamara in command.

A mooring lighter of 90 tons burden was launched in June, 1795. She cost £945, at the rate of £10 10s. per ton.

The *Bittern*, 16, was launched on April 7, 1796, and soon after sailed for the West Indies. Before 1807 she had captured several French and Spanish privateers, and in 1818 she formed one of the long line of ships laid up "in ordinary" in the Hamoaze

at Plymouth. She was rigged as a sloop, and cost £13 a ton to build, her total cost being £5,332 14s., of which £1,080 was paid in advance.

The *Boadicea*, 38 guns and 1,038 tons burden, was launched on April 12, 1797. She captured many French and Spanish privateers. On September 22, 1810, she retook the *Africaine* French frigate, formerly British, and in December, 1810, she had a share in the reduction of the *Isle of France*. In 1818 she was lying "in ordinary" in the Hamoaze, then rated as a 46-gun frigate. She was eighteen months on the stocks, and cost £16,885 to build, at the rate of £15 10s. per ton.

The *Snake*, 16, brigantine, of 380 tons burden, was also launched in 1797; she cost £11 17s. 6d. per ton. She was at Spithead in the year 1800.

The *Abundance* storeship, mounting 24 guns, was launched on September 30, 1799. She was of 673 tons burden, and cost £14 10s. per ton. The *Spencer*, 74, left the stocks on May 10, 1800. She had been two years and a half in building, was of 1,901 tons burden, and cost £38,021 1s. 3d. (of which £4,170 was paid in advance), at the rate of £20 per ton. She had a narrow escape from destruction in 1813, and was acting as one of the guardships at Plymouth in the year 1818.

*L'Aigle*, 36, was launched on September 23,

1801. She captured several French and Spanish privateers, and was present when the *Ville de Varsovie*, 84, *Tonnerre*, 74, *Aquilon*, 74, and *Calcutta*, 56 guns, were destroyed in Basque Roads on April 14, 1809, by Lord Gambier's fleet.

The *Euryalus*, 36, was built at Buckler's Hard, and launched on June 6, 1803. Need one say more of her than that she, with the *Agamemnon* and the *Swiftsure*, were the three Buckler's Hard ships which fought at Trafalgar, and that to the *Euryalus* was assigned the honourable task of watching the allied fleets of France and Spain in Cadiz Harbour; that she signalled their coming out to Nelson's fleet in the offing, and that after the battle she right gallantly took the *Royal Sovereign* in tow? She was fifteen months on the stocks, was of 943 tons burden, and cost £15,568 16s., at the rate of £16 10s. per ton, an advance being paid of £2,410.

The *Swiftsure*, 74, was launched in 1804, when a large number of spectators assembled to witness the launch, the day being very fine. Next year she was at Trafalgar, and on November 26, 1813, her boats captured off Corsica the French privateer schooner *Charlemagne*, 8 guns and 93 men. She took thirty months to build, her tonnage was 1,702, and her cost was £35,787 17s. 9d., at the rate of £21 10s. per ton, the advance paid being £4,170.

The *Starling*, *Snipe*, and *Vixen* gun-vessels, mounting 16 guns, or, according to another account, 14 carronades, were launched in 1802. They were of 184 tons burden, and were built at a cost of £18 per ton, £800 being paid in advance. On January 31, 1801, there were 4,163 tons of shipping in progress of building at Buckler's Hard, at the contracted price of £75,637 13s. 4d., on which advances of £11,130 had been already paid. In 1806 the *Columbine*, 18, and another 14-gun brig of the same name were laid down. The *Hussar*, 38, had already been two years upon the stocks, and the *Sabrina*, 16, half that period. The *Victorious*, 74, had also been laid down in 1804; and in June, 1806, Mr. Adams was building a 74-gun ship, not as yet named, in addition to the above-mentioned ships, so that business was going on apace. The new ship was soon after named the *Hannibal*. The *Sabrina*, 16, was launched in 1806, rigged as a sloop, and the *Hussar*, 38, in the early part of 1807. The *Victorious*, 74, was launched in 1808, and the *Hannibal* in 1810. The *Sabrina*, the *Hussar*, and the *Victorious* were all engaged in the ill-fated Walcheren Expedition in 1809, as was also the *Euryalus*, 36. The *Vengeur*, 74, the first of her name in the British Navy, was launched in 1810. She was probably the last 74 built at Buckler's Hard.

In 1812 the *Victorious*, 74, and the 18-gun brig *Weasel* captured the French 80-gun ship *Rivoli* in the Atlantic. For this action Captain Talbot was knighted, and received a gold medal from the Admiralty. The *Victorious* was on the North American Station in 1813, as was also the *Vengeur*, 74. No ships of war appear to have been building on the Beaulieu River in 1813. After the peace of 1815 more than 300 ships were either broken up or sold out of the service. Amongst them was the *Victorious*, 74, which was broken up in 1814, after only six years' service. The Admiralty now decided not to build any more ships in private yards, and probably the *Repulse* Revenue cutter, built about 1818, was the last Government vessel built at Buckler's Hard. On March 8, 1818, there were an immense number of ships laid up "in ordinary" in the Hamoaze at Plymouth. Amongst them were our old friends the *Bittern*, 16, the *Columbine*, 18, and the *Hannibal*, 74, whose work was done for ever; whilst the *Spencer*, 74, was doing her last duty as one of the guardships, and the *Sabrina*, 16, was being offered for sale.

Amongst the numerous merchant vessels built at Buckler's Hard were the *Columbus* West Indiaman, of 338 tons burden, launched in September, 1795. She cost £2,873, at the rate of £8 10s. per ton.

The *Princess Mary* East Indiaman, launched in 1796, of 465 tons burden, cost £13 10s. per ton, or £7,606 in all. The *Heart of Oak*, for coasting trade; the *Endeavour* and *Active* timber-ships, both built in 1800, the latter being of 111 tons burden; the *Neptune* (she was only a small vessel); and the *Hard Privateer*, were launched into the Beaulieu River.

The *Mary Ann* and *Henry* brigs were built here at a later period. The *Nelson*, a fine ship, was constructed here, and took out to Australia a number of donkeys, the embarkation of which is said to have caused great merriment at Buckler's Hard. The *Australia*, a large three-masted vessel, which traded with the country after which she was named, was the last large ship built and fitted out, and some of her crew were still resident within the memory of living man in the neighbourhood.

The *Bee*, of unknown tonnage, and the *Lady Hannah Ellis*, 400 tons, West Indiaman, were launched in 1812.

Mr. Henry Adams, the builder of so many gallant ships, attained the good old age of ninety-two years, and died in 1805, as appears by a tablet in Beaulieu Church. As to the time required by him for the construction of his vessels, a 74-gun ship was usually at least thirty months upon the stocks. As

to the amount of materials used, a ship of 1,300 tons burden required the felling of more than 2,000 average oaks to supply 2,000 loads of timber, and 100 tons of wrought iron and 30 tons of copper were also needed. When a ship-launch was imminent, every vehicle and saddle-horse within miles around was in motion. In default of chaises, many persons came in tumbrils and in waggons. Scaffolds and booths were erected for the spectators, who on special occasions are said to have numbered 10,000, and who frequently waited patiently for many long hours till the top of the tide came. And launchings in those days seem to have been well managed, although no hydraulic jacks or electrical machinery were available. For instance, when the *Superb*, 74, was launched at Pitcher's Yard, Northfleet, in 1795, it is recorded that more than 200 persons stood under her when the dog-shores were knocked away.

Mr. Henry Adams was succeeded by his son Robert, who afterwards went into the Navy as a purser, and died holding that rank in 1811 at Portsmouth, being described in the *Naval Chronicle* of that date as "having been formerly many years an eminent shipbuilder at Buckler's Hard." He was followed by Edward and Balthazar (locally called "Balty") Adams, two brothers, who, finding trade prosperous, undertook to build four men-of-war at

one and the same time. The strain upon their resources proved too great, and failure to deliver the ships in due time was the cause of a fine, and of ill-advised litigation against the Government, with disastrous consequences. Government officials in those days seem to have treated their contractors in much the same way as they do to-day.

The house nearest the river on the north side of the old street, the home of the Adamases, still stands at Buckler's Hard, and the curious visitor may still tread the floor of the room where in old days high festival was held before, during, and after a launch. When the *Illustrious* was launched in 1789, we read in the local journal of that time: "A great concourse of very genteel people assembled on the occasion, about 150 of whom stayed to dinner, and the day was spent with great conviviality." It must have been a fine sight to see, with the band playing "God save the King" and "Off She Goes," as hats were taken off amidst ringing cheers, ships like Nelson's *Agamemnon* take the water. Close by and just above Buckler's Hard still stands the bathing cottage of the noble Duke John. To this day it is still called "Bath Cottage," and a depression, now almost filled up by mud and weed, marks the place where the "bath" was.

There are many legends about the old place

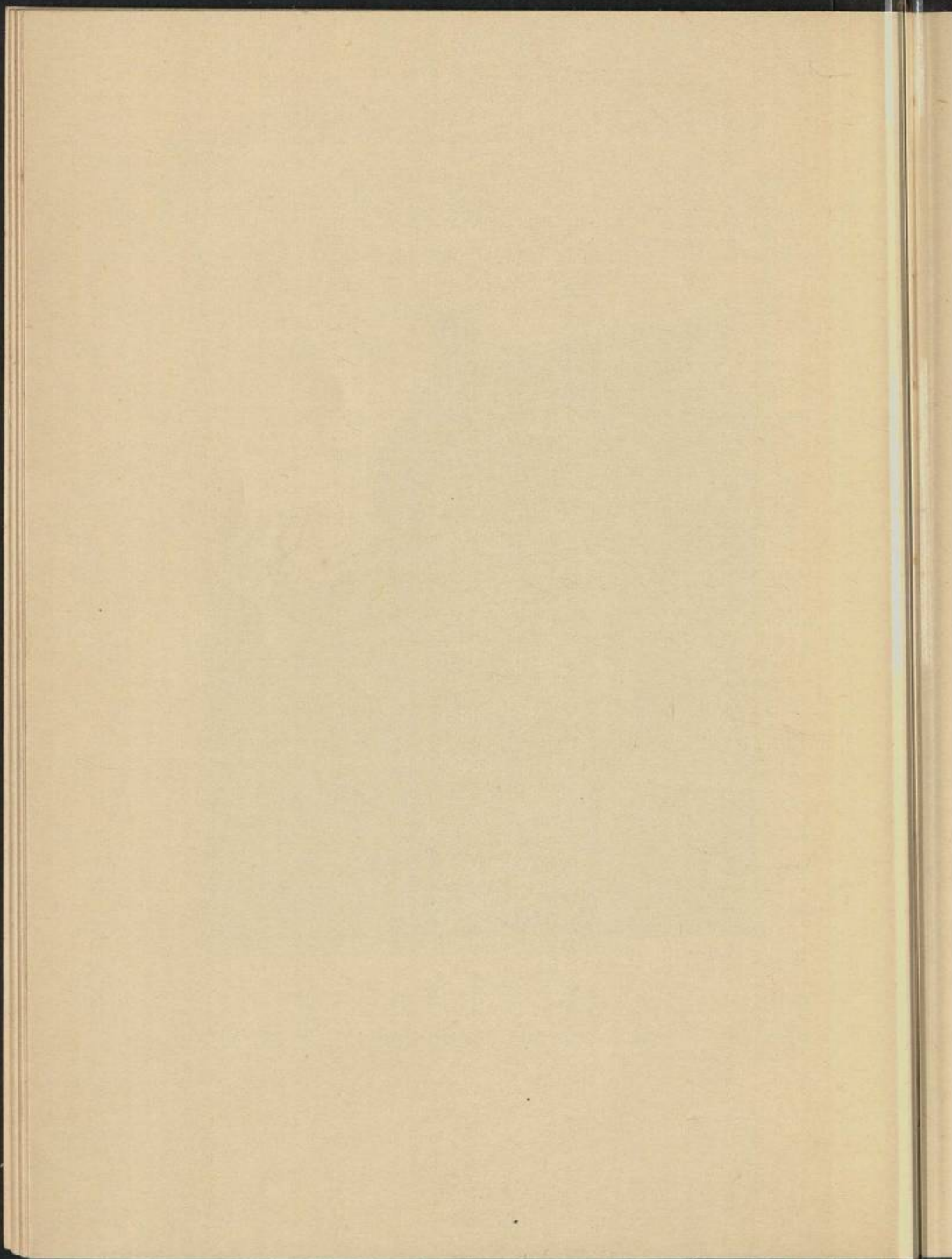
There is one about Joseph Purse, a very strong man, who used to haul down the timber which, stacked in mighty piles, lay in the village street, the said street being made unusually wide for its reception. He was remarkable for his great but quiet power over his horses. "There was never no hollering" at them. Many cottages, now no longer needed, and falling to pieces, have had to be pulled down, and closed is the inn kept once by Mr. Hemmons, where the shipwrights and caulkers were paid; as is also the New Inn, with its traditions of a "Smugglers' Hole," kept till much later times by Mr. Wort, who was succeeded by his son Joseph. James Bown, probably the ancestor of the Bound family to-day, no longer fires the kiln, and only hollows in a meadow and by the waterside tell where the "top and bottom sawyers" laboured. The site of the mould-loft in the lower yard can still be pointed out. The blacksmith's shop, part of which existed in the writer's time, and which only ceased operations about 1885, is no more. The last of the Buckles went away with its disappearance, to settle down again as a repairer of agricultural implements and traction-engines beyond Lymington.

Some three miles by land and five by water, away up the wooded estuary lie the shipwrights and caulkers resting in the peaceful churchyard of Beaulieu Abbey,



THE OLD HOUSE OF THE MASTER-BUILDER ADAMS.

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side by side with the last Hampshire iron-founders from Sowley Pond.

The only actual link with the past which has been known to me personally was an old copper riveter, named Glasby, whom I remember quite well, and with whom I often conversed, who died at the ripe age of ninety-one. He could well remember working at the ships in his youth, and was proud to talk about his memories of the time when oak, not iron, ruled the waves.

Where the caulking-hammer resounded is now a peaceful meadow, and wild-fowl and herons haunt the once busy banks. Who knows that Portsmouth may not, as aerial navigation progresses—and progress it will—lose a great part of its glory? The oak gave way to metal. Shall the dominion of the seas be overshadowed by the dominion of the air? It may be. But if so, the Mistress of the Seas must also be the Mistress of the Air.

Thus Time brings its changes, and the sails and wooden walls give place to steel armour and steam-turbines. But the spirit of the brave Englishmen who fought by flood and ebb, by shore and on open sea, remains. Will it be powerful enough to resist the insidious enervation of a luxurious and self-indulgent age?

Time alone can give the answer.

## SHIPS LAUNCHED AT BUCKLER'S HARD.

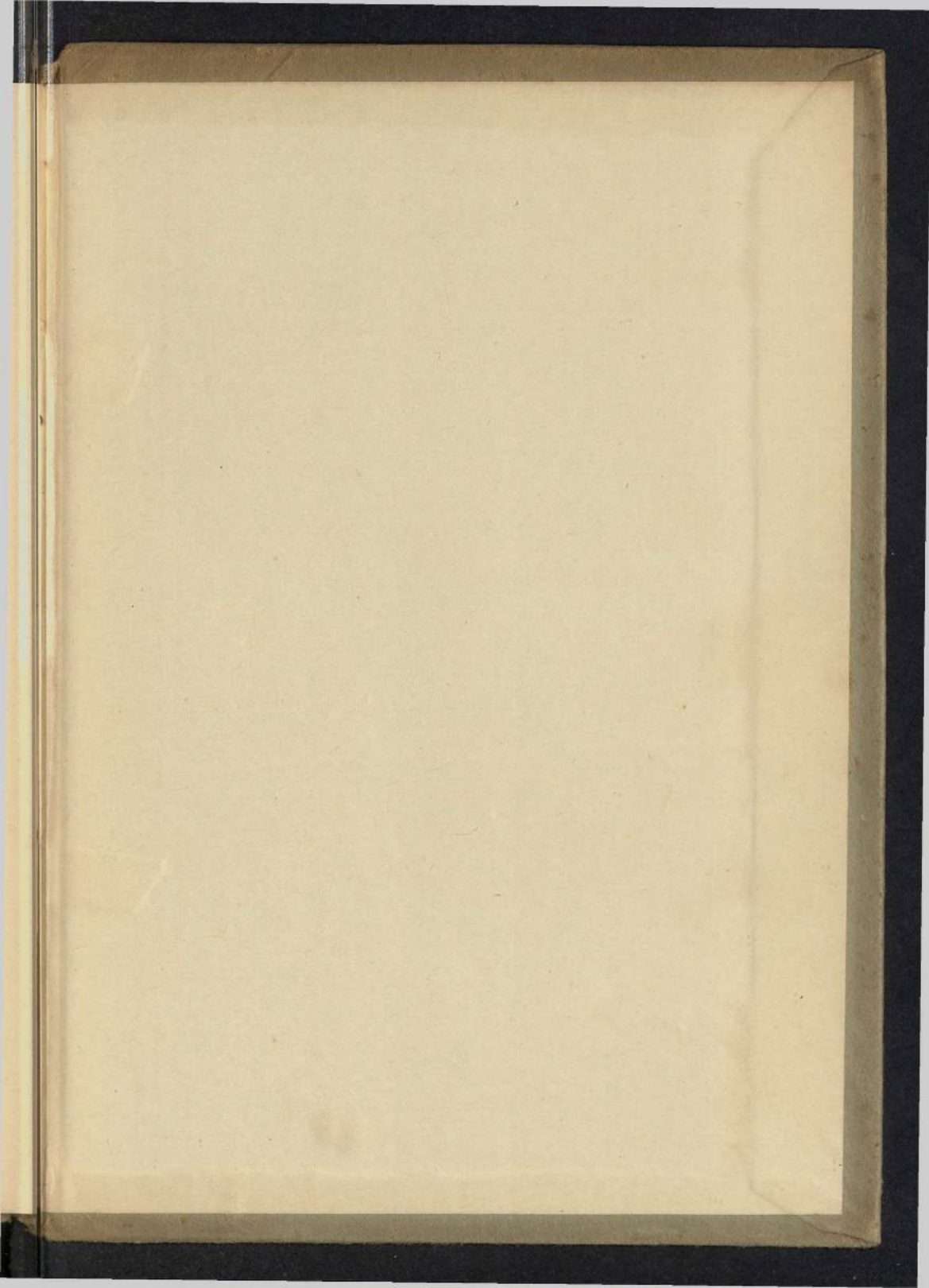
Ship.	Date of Launching.	Builder.	Guns.
Surprise ... ..	1745	Wyatt and Co.	24
Scorpion ... ..	1746	"	18
Woolwich ... ..	1749	"	44
Mermaid ... ..	1749	Henry Adams	24
Lion (transport) ... ..	1753	"	4
Gibraltar ... ..	1756	"	20
Sailing lighter of 56 tons	1757	"	—
Coventry ... ..	1757	"	28
Thames ... ..	1758	—	32
Levant ... ..	1758	(Designed by Sir Thos. Slade)	28
Hannibal I. ... ..	1759	—	—
Gayling Hoy ... ..	1760	H. Adams	4
Europe ... ..	1764	(Built at Lepe)	64
Hannibal II. ... ..	1772	H. Adams	—
Greyhound ... ..	July, 1773	"	28
Triton ... ..	Oct., 1773	"	28
Thetis ... ..	Nov., 1773	"	32
Experiment ... ..	Aug., 1774	"	50
Vigilant ... ..	Oct., 1774	—	64
Hound ... ..	Mar., 1776	—	18
Pelican ... ..	April, 1777	—	24
Romulus ... ..	Dec., 1777	—	44
Hydra ... ..	April, 1778	—	24
Garland ... ..	Jan., 1779	—	28
Pandora ... ..	May, 1779	—	24
Brilliant ... ..	May, 1779	—	28
Zephyr ... ..	May, 1779	—	14
Agamemnon ... ..	April, 1781	—	64
Gladiator ... ..	1782	—	44
Heroine ... ..	April, 1783	—	32
Indefatigable ... ..	Nov., 1783	—	64
Sheerness ... ..	July, 1787	—	44
Illustrious ... ..	July, 1789	—	74
Sailing lighter of 119 tons	Dec., 1789	—	—
Beaulieu ... ..	May, 1790	—	36
Santa Margarita ... ..	April, 1793	—	36
Cerebus ... ..	Sept., 1794	—	32

SHIPS LAUNCHED AT BUCKLER'S HARD—*Continued.*

Ship.	Date of Launching.	Builder.	Guns.
Mooring lighter of 90 tons	June, 1795	H. Adams	—
Bittern ... ..	April, 1796	—	16
Boadicea ... ..	April, 1797	—	38
Snake (brigantine) ...	1797	—	16
Abundance (storeship)	Sept., 1799	—	24
Spencer ... ..	May, 1800	—	74
L'Aigle ... ..	Sept., 1801	—	36
Starling } Snipe } gun-vessels ...	1802	—	16
Vixen }			
Euryalus ... ..	June, 1803	—	36
Swiftsure ... ..	1804	—	74
Sabrina ... ..	1806	—	16
Hussar ... ..	1807	—	38
Victorious ... ..	1808	—	74
Hannibal III. ... ..	1810	—	74
Vengeur ... ..	1810	—	74
Repulse (Revenue cutter)	1818	(Probably last Government vessel built at Buckler's Hard)	—

Merchant Vessels.	Date of Launching.	Tonnage.
Columbus (West Indiaman) ...	Sept., 1795	338
Princess Mary (East Indiaman) ...	1796	465
Heart of Oak (coaster) ... ..	1800	—
Endeavour ... ..	1800	—
Active ... ..	1800	—
Neptune ... ..	—	—
Hard Privateer ... ..	—	—
Mary Ann ... ..	—	—
Henry ... ..	—	—
Nelson ... ..	—	—
Bee ... ..	—	—
Lady Hannah Ellis (West Indiaman)	1812	400

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