



22nd April
17/04/2009

Magazine (436, built in 1878/9 as a replacement for 'A' Magazine) to the Shell Filling Room (demolished) and finally this Shell Store of 1879 and Pier. After an explosion at the Shell Filling Room in 1883 it was decided to move this activity to outside the historic fortified boundaries of Priddy's Hard, and to distribute the activity among several small buildings. This store, however, continued to play a key role in the filling system as it developed on this site in the period up to the Dreadnought era of the early 1900s, it being situated close to the Shell Stores of 1896/7 (qv) and the Mine Store (qv) of the same date.

The magazines and related structures at Priddy's Hard date from the late 18th century. The site's expansion from the mid 19th century was closely related to the development of land and sea artillery and the navy's transition from the age of sail, powder and solid shot to the Dreadnought class of the early 1900s. Priddy's Hard retains the best-preserved range of structures that relate to this remarkable history of continual enlargement and adaptation, one that encompasses that of Britain's dominance as a sea power on a global scale.

For further historical details on this site, see the description for 'A' Magazine.

500743

PRIDDY'S HARD
Mines and Countermines Store
(Building 409)

GV

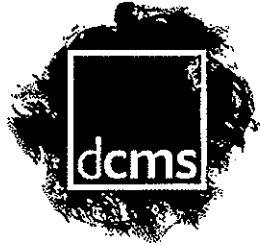
II

Mines and counter-mines store, with attached examining room. 1899/1900. Brick in English bond, slate roof on steel trusses.

Long narrow gabled building in 15 bays, internal size 45.7 x 11.4m, with small attached gabled examining room at SE corner. The long sides are boldly modelled with large square buttresses, with a tile-coped single offset, capped by a concrete pad, which is continued as a brick eaves band across the bays; a plinth with chamfered top is set back from the piers. Boiled rectangular steel plates and a projecting steel arm to each buttress at mid-window height relate to a crane rail within. Each bay has a 9-pane light to cambered brick head and Portland stone sill, set near eaves level. The S gable end has a pair of framed plank doors flanked by similar 9-pane lights, all to cambered brick arches, and end pilasters return as a gable verge course; smaller gable, right, is similarly detailed, with a pair of plank doors to a straight lintel, and this unit has a 2-bay return with buttresses and lights as for the long returns. The N gable end is similar to the S, but without the added unit. The eaves have a plain board and moulded cast-iron gutter, missing in part to the W side.

INTERIOR: a central tramway passes right through the building, and continuous crane-rails run at mid-window height.

HISTORY: This building of 1899/1900 was built in close proximity to the Shell Stores and Transfer Shed (qv), and in a similarly distinctive architectural style, as developed by the Admiralty architects after the take-over from the War Office in 1890. It forms part of an important group at the S end of this site, with the large Shell Store of 1879 and the Shell Stores and Transfer Shed (qv). It is the most impressive surviving structure associated with the storage of this key item of naval ordnance.



22nd Amdt
17/04/2009

Harbour defence mines had been the responsibility of the Royal Engineers until 1905, the Royal Navy only being concerned with offensive minelaying in enemy waters and the destruction of his devices by means of countermines; this building served that purpose, but by 1913 was being used as a guncotton store.

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499955

PRIDDY'S HARD
Proof House and Cook House
(Building 241)

GV

II

Cookhouse and attached proof house, converted in 1877 from part of a small arms factory of 1859. Brick in English bond, slate roof.

Long narrow gabled building entered through N end; the roof has two large glazed ridge lanterns. The N end has a central framed plank door to a cambered head flanked by tall sash openings, and below a square plain glazed light; the long E side has 3 + 2 similar openings, all to fine brick voussoirs and stooled stone sills, but all the openings blocked, presumably on 12-pane sashes. The roof lanterns are in 3 lights, glazed at sides and top.

HISTORY: After the 18th century example at Purfleet on the Essex coast and an early 19th century example at the Marsh Works in Faversham, this is the best surviving example of a Proof House for the testing of explosives. Half the building was a Cook House, and it was converted into a non-danger building in 1897. It also has special historical interest as it originated, like the much-altered range of buildings to the north, as a Small Arms Cartridge Factory in 1859. This followed the decision by the Secretary of State for War, Sidney Herbert, to lessen Britain's dependency on the great arsenals of the Thames. The magazines and related structures at Priddy's Hard date from the late 18th century. The site's expansion from the mid 19th century was closely related to the development of land and sea artillery and the navy's transition from the age of sail, powder and solid shot to the Dreadnought class of the early 1900s. Priddy's Hard retains the best-preserved range of structures that relate to this remarkable history of continual enlargement and adaptation, one that encompasses that of Britain's dominance as a sea power on a global scale.

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