



22nd Amolt  
17/04/2009

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.

500735

PRIDDY'S HARD  
Shell Store approximately 5m SE  
of Shell Stores and Transfer Shed  
(Building 303)

GV

II

Shell store. 1879, extended 1892. Brick in English bond, slate roof on metal trusses. A long freestanding gabled structure, built in 8 + 4 bays; the trusses carried on internal brick piers. The gable ends have a central framed plank door to brick segmental head, flanked by high-level arched windows in 12 large panes to voussoirs and stone sills, a similar central light with louvred lower section, and a small oculus at the gable peak. The long sides have seven pairs of evenly spaced 6-pane lights to segmental heads, and each pair to a continuous stone sill. All openings have three rows of brick headers as voussoirs, and all lights appear to have an inner armature or second window in small-pane format. The long E side has a central pair of doors and similar pair in the first bay from the S, with corresponding openings to the W (but one of these now blocked). The ridge carries 5 evenly spaced steel vents, added in the early C20.

INTERIOR: the original transit cranes have been removed, leaving only the metal trusses. The 1892 plan, at the time that the northernmost four bays were added, shows the rail transit system, which was in-situ at least until 1899.

HISTORY: This shell store was built in 1879, and enlarged to the north in 1892. Its construction related to a great expansion in the requirements of the British navy for shells, a type of ordnance which had a radical effect on the development of naval ships and fortifications. It is a solid and substantial building, the most significant surviving example of this key building type in any of the ordnance yards and whose plan and form clearly relate to its intended function in relationship to the site's transit system. The development of complex shell-filling systems at once differentiated Priddy's Hard from the other Depots, and the survival of such a complete complex is unique in a national context. An increasing amount of buildings (sited around the Camber) were required to house the store of empty cases in which shells were individually packed and supplied to the ships: there are seven of these stores, ranging from 1859 to the 1890s. The further redevelopment of Priddy's Hard began in 1860 with the construction of 'C' Magazine (Building 435). This was originally intended for the receipt of ammunition from ships, and formed the terminus of a transport system, linked to the Laboratory, that was to play a key role in the development in the 1860s of a shell-filling complex. This eventually necessitated the demolition of the east ranges of the Laboratory, converted for shell-filling purposes in the 1860s but without the capacity to meet the demand as shells replaced solid shot as the standard naval ordnance. Tramways connected the Powder Pier and new E



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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.