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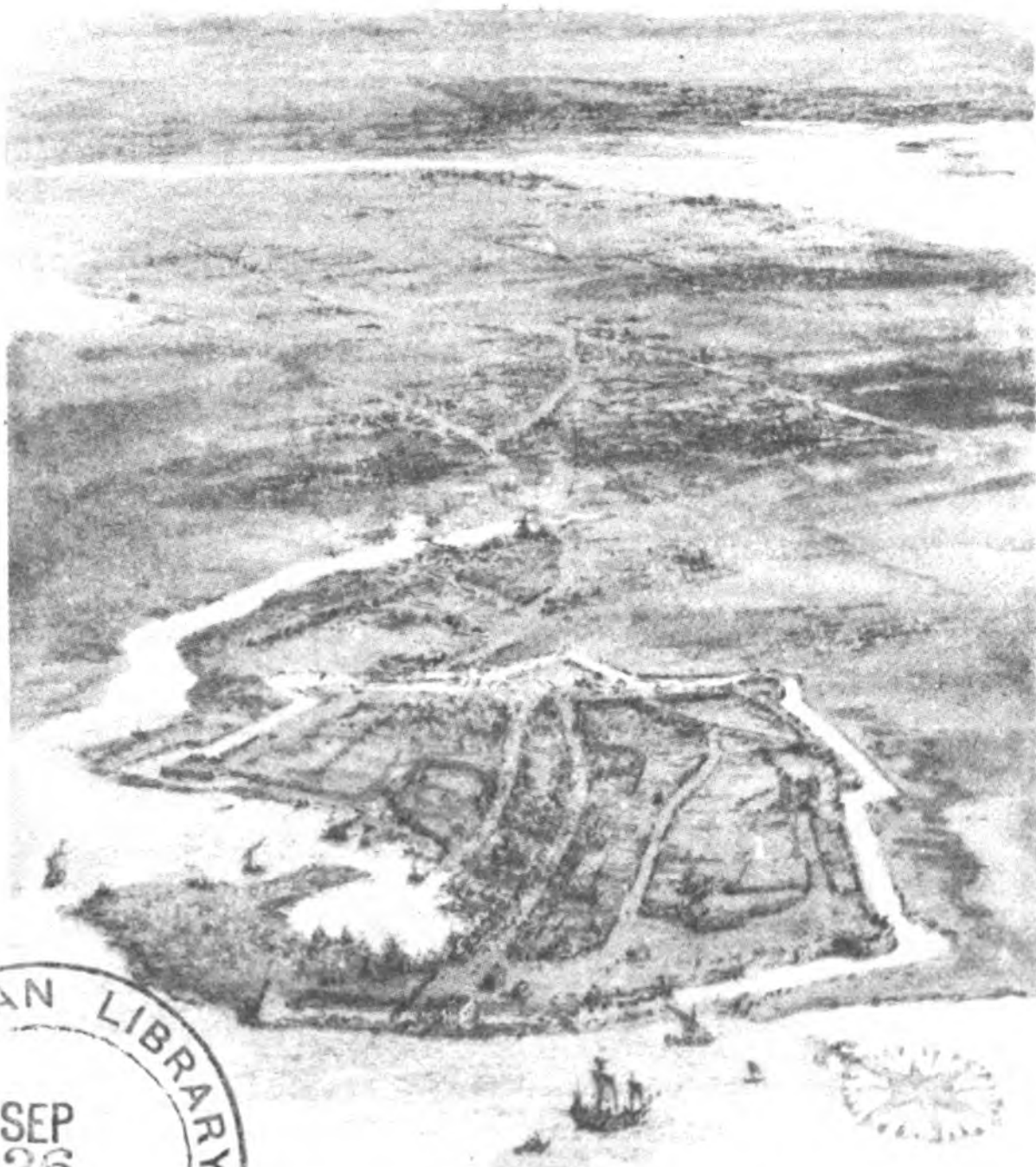
THE OLD PORTSMOUTH and THE NEW SOUTHSEA



G. A. Hants.

16.82

By W. L. WYLLIE, R.A



PORTSMOUTH
1540

1540

PORTSMOUTH IN 1540

On the opposite page is a picture of Portsmouth in the reign of Henry VIII. Though little more than a village, it was surrounded by a mud wall and a ditch, for the French had more than once burnt the town.

The Round Tower begun by Edward III stood on a long shingle bank. It was joined to the Square Tower by a palisade. Farther south was the saluting platform. All these stand to-day, almost unaltered. The long curtain and moat also give us an idea of the appearance of the old walled town.

A great pointed bastion, called Town Mount, stood where the tramways cross at Cambridge Junction, and the London Road ran through Landport Gate, in the recreation ground.

A creek flowed from the gun wharf almost to Guildhall Square, and Southsea was very swampy.

THE OLD PORTSMOUTH
and
THE NEW SOUTHSEA

*AS a citizen of no mean City,
William Lionel Wyllie, R.A.
was a marine artist of unique
distinction. The water colours in this
book were executed by this lovable
personality for the city in which he
lived, of which he knew so much, in
the quiet tower by the restless seas
that sweep into the harbour of
Portsmouth, and they were the last
he executed before his death on Easter
Monday, 1931.*

*The originals will form part of a permanent Wyllie Exhibit
in the Portsmouth Art Gallery*

THE OLD PORTSMOUTH
and
THE NEW SOUTHSEA

ILLUSTRATED AND WRITTEN
BY
W. L. WYLLIE, R.A.



THE BRITISH ART COMPANY, LTD.
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Plate I

**MAIN GATE
H.M. DOCKYARD**



Here is the main gate which superseded the old entrance in 1709. In the reign of Henry VIII the Dockyard had an area of little more than eight acres. During the Commonwealth two more acres were added. Charles II went one better, taking in eighteen. William III began what seems to have been the first reclamation of mud, adding ten and a half acres. Thirteen years after, George I extended the reclamation, and the demolition of the old fortifications permitted further extensions to the present boundary wall in 1711.

With the introduction of steam, five and a half acres were purchased and twelve and a half reclaimed.

In 1864 the great work known as the Dockyard Extension began. Ninety-three acres of mud were reclaimed and eighty-four acres of land. The mud was piled upon a tiny islet called Whaley by convict labour, and it is now called H.M.S. *Excellent*, or Whale Island.



13. 10. 1892

Plate II

**NELSON'S FLAGSHIP
H.M.S. *VICTORY***

When Nelson's Flagship *Victory* became too old to stand the strain of her moorings in the rushing tide, she was taken into a Charles II dry dock. There she underwent a complete rebuilding at the hands of the Society for Nautical Research, which, thanks to the liberality of Sir James Caird, was able to cut away all the unsightly additions added after the battle and give this famous ship the exact appearance she bore on the 21st October, 1805. From truck to keel every detail is perfect.

Safe in dock, this beautiful monument to Nelson and his old sailing navy is visited by thousands of our people and will be a source of inspiration for years to come. Alongside is a panorama of Trafalgar.

The Admiralty have also granted two old storehouses, which, when funds permit, will be converted into a *Victory* Museum, where the shot-riddled topsails and all the other relics of the great battle which won sea power for Britain may be displayed.



Plate III

THE CAMBER

The earliest known plan of Portsmouth, dating from about 1545, represents the Camber as a natural harbour formed by an L-shaped shingle bank called Point. There are no signs of any buildings on the spit, but a small jetty is shown just about where the Custom House now stands.

A later plan of 1668 shows two gates in the walls of the town, King James's Gate close to the sally port and Key Gate leading to the old jetty.

All Point is now covered with buildings, and a battery of guns is mounted in Bath Square.

The site of the present Dry Dock and Naval Gun Wharf is marked only by a vast expanse of mud.

Nowadays we have quays and a huge gantry capable of unloading coal in record time.



Plate IV

THE HARBOUR MOUTH

On the right of the picture is the round tower built in the reign of King Edward III. Alongside, the "mighty chayne of Yron" was hove taut to close the port in times of danger. The spot is still called Capstern Yard.

In the Great War thick wire hawsers carrying a net of steel were used at night for the same purpose.

Just beyond is Point, otherwise Spice Island, just outside the city gate. In 1716 it boasted forty-one public houses. A bull was baited every Shrove Tuesday, and the riotous scenes when ships were paid off have been handed down to us by Gilray and Cruikshank.

In the distance is the Royal Dockyard with the new Semaphore Tower, and on the left Fort Blockhouse, now the submarine base.

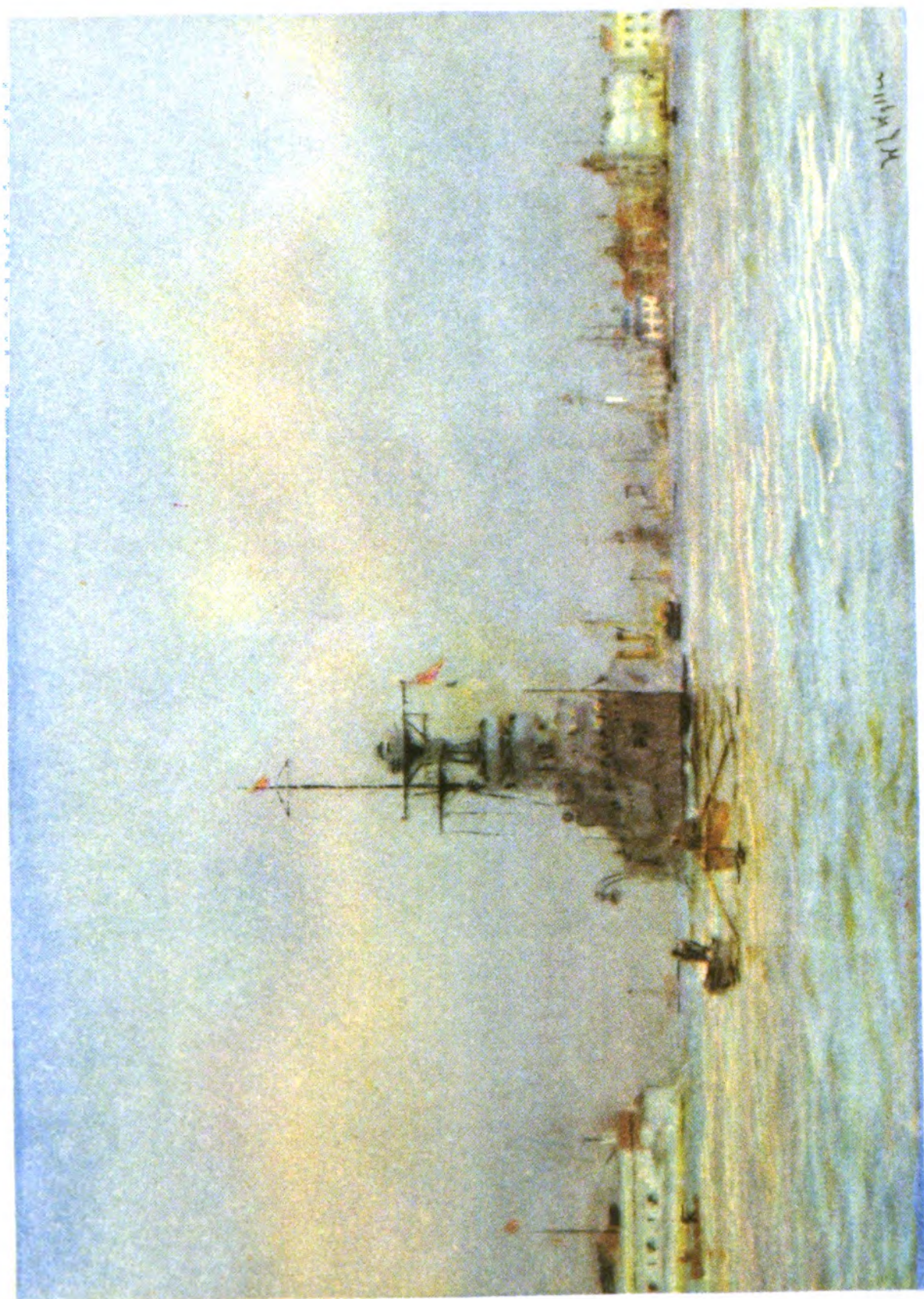


Plate V

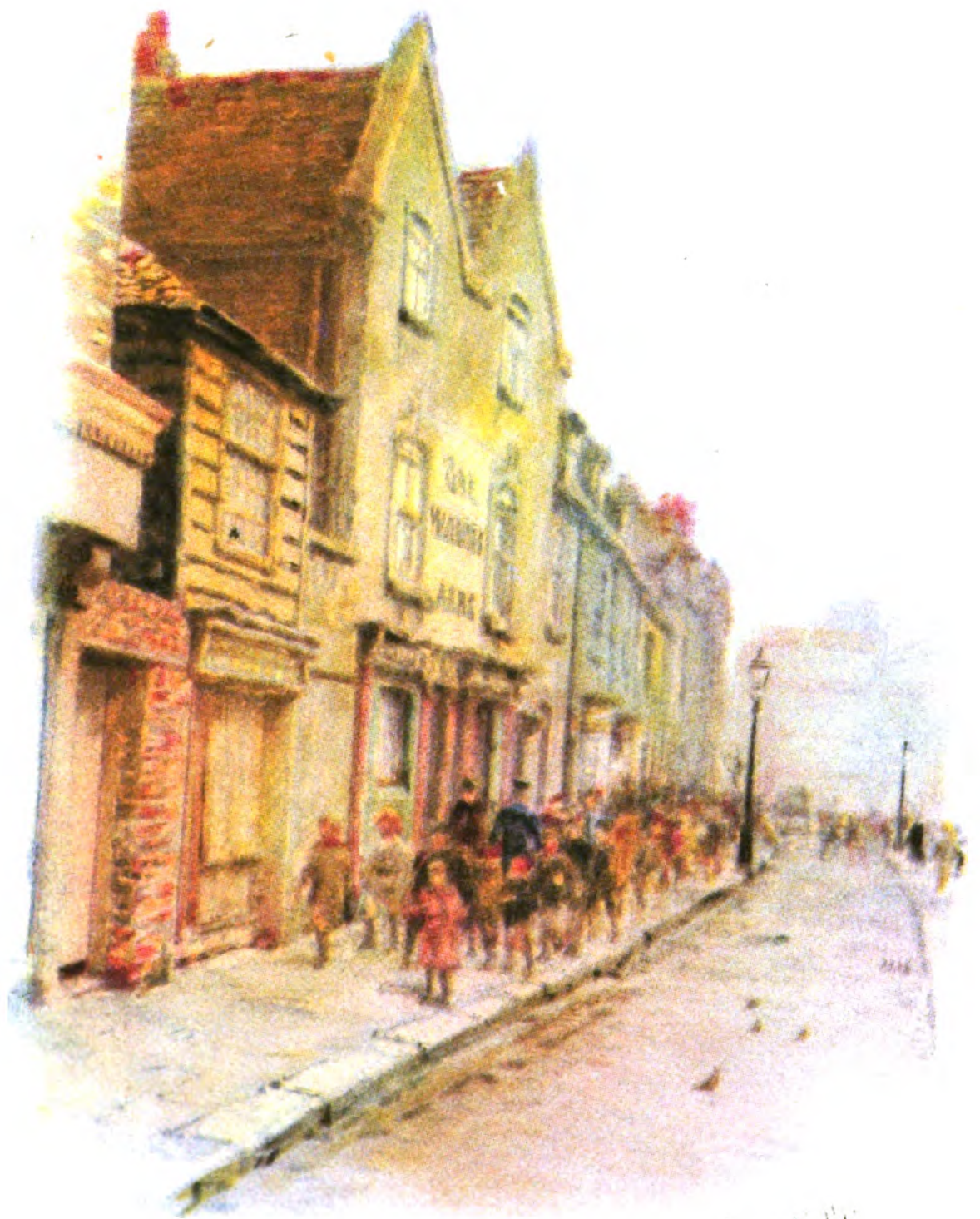
JOHN POUNDS' HOUSE

John Pounds, born in 1766, was at first a shipwright in the Dockyard. Unfortunately breaking his thigh and being crippled, he took to cobbling for a living. This brave spirit thought nothing of his own troubles. Though poor, he started to teach the gutter children around him. The ragged urchins were tempted to the bench where he worked all day surrounded by his birds. With no money to buy books, he taught from scraps of newspapers and bills, with slates and pencils.

Year after year the labour of love went on. Now and again a bronzed seaman, home from the war, would call to thank John Pounds for the education he had received years before.

At last, on the 1st January, 1839, the old cripple suddenly died. Frugal to the last, a mug of sprats was found upon the mantelshelf for the celebration of the New Year.

He was laid to rest in the little graveyard of the Unitarian Chapel in High Street.



W. H. W.

Plate VI

THE GUILDHALL

The Guildhall was opened in 1890 by the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VII.

In the centre is the Great Hall, 129 feet long, 70 feet wide, and 60 feet high, with floor space for 2,000 people. The building cost £140,000. There is a fine organ, and many interesting portraits hang upon the walls.

All the civic business is carried on within—the Lord Mayor's apartments, with the council chamber, committee rooms, and Courts. Below is accommodation for the Police, the Sanitary Authority, and the office of the Tramways.

The tower is 210 feet high. It has a peal of bells known all over the world as the Pompey Chimes.

The memorial to the men of Portsmouth killed in the Great War stands alongside.



Plate VII

THE CANOE LAKE

Southsea Common was a dismal spot in the old days. Footpads and cut-throats roamed at night, and a murderer hung in chains on the edge of the shingle.

Near Lumps Farm was a swamp called the Great Morass. Windmills stood in the flat landscape, and the jaw-bones of a stranded whale served as a gate to one of the fields.

A little public-house called "The Cricketers" was the forerunner of all the splendid hotels of modern Southsea. Grove House, Marmion Place, and Highland Cottage are shown quite isolated in a map of 1855, and the only semblance of a town clusters round Saint Paul's. Elm Grove was a country lane, leading towards the Jews' burial ground.

Here is a picture of a small corner of the Great Morass, now hollowed out and embanked to make a safe rowing pond for the children. Beyond are the South Parade Pier and Spithead, with a distant view of the Isle of Wight.

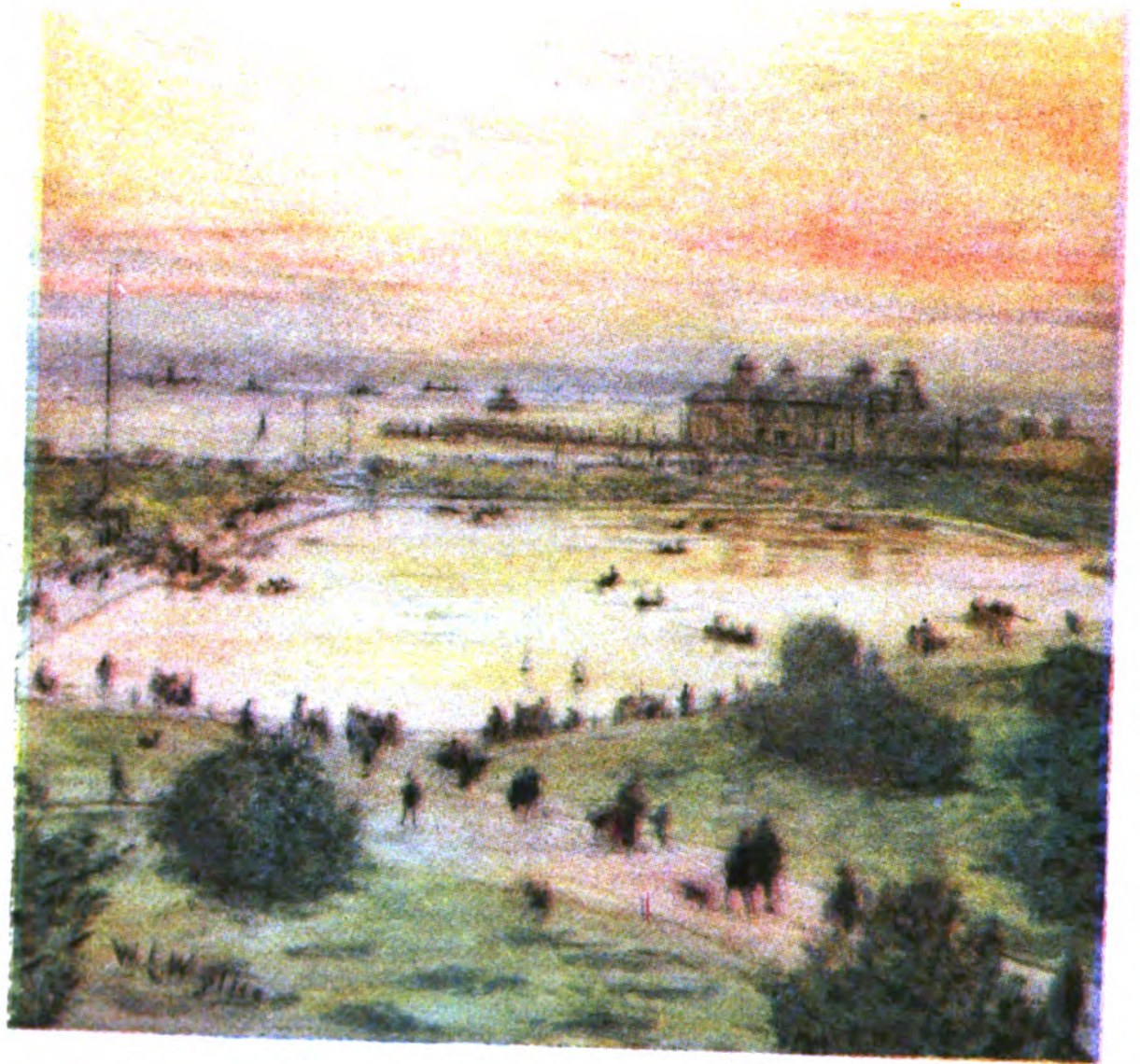


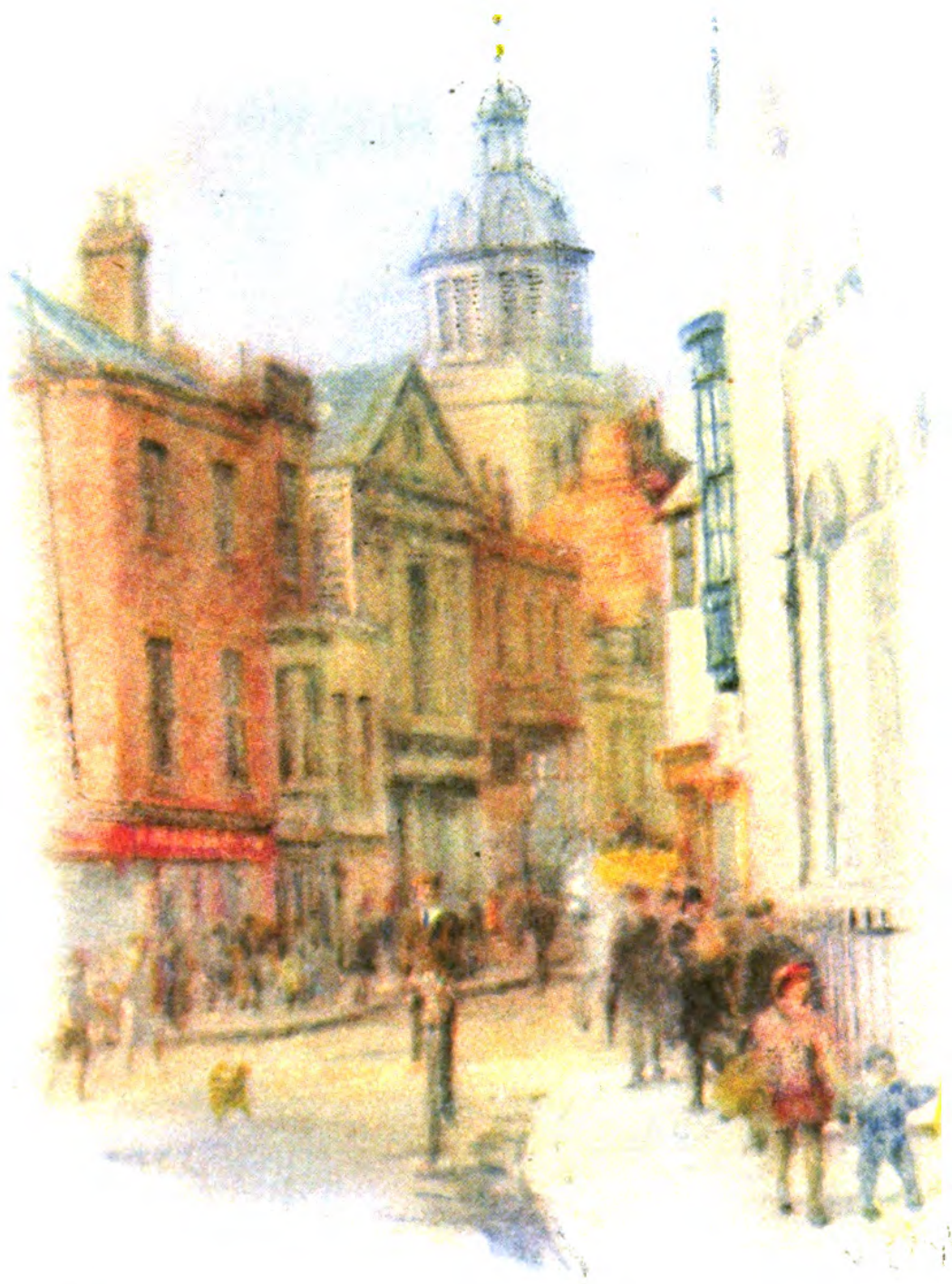
Plate VIII

ST. THOMAS'S CATHEDRAL

In the year 1180, John de Gisor, a shipowner, granted a piece of land called Sudweda, on Portsea Island, to God and the church of St. Mary of Southwick, to build thereon a chapel in honour of the glorious martyr Thomas of Canterbury.

The structure was cruciform with a central tower, demolished between 1683 and 1693, when the present square tower with its cupola of wood took its place. Eighty years passed and the nave was rebuilt. Luckily, funds did not permit of more restoration, for the old chancel and transepts are very fine specimens of Early English architecture.

Sir George Rooke brought the chime of bells from the old Roman Pharos in Dover Castle, and a bell bearing the Spanish arms is supposed to have been taken at Portobello in 1739.



SPIT FORT

The unprotected condition of the principal British dockyards and arsenals, coupled with the rapid rise to power of the French under Napoleon III, induced Lord Palmerston to ask Parliament to vote nine millions for local defences. In the Crimean war our wooden walls had tried conclusions with Russian forts, and as a result the granite tower standing in the midst of the sea was considered ideal.

Here is Spit Fort, built in support of what was called our spirited foreign policy, one of three round towers, all more or less alike, which guarded Portsmouth from attack by sea. Whilst it was under construction, borings were sunk into the bed of the sea, reaching the Bracklesham beds, which give a plentiful supply of fresh water.

The boats of the Portsmouth Sailing Club use the Spit mooring buoy for one of their marks.

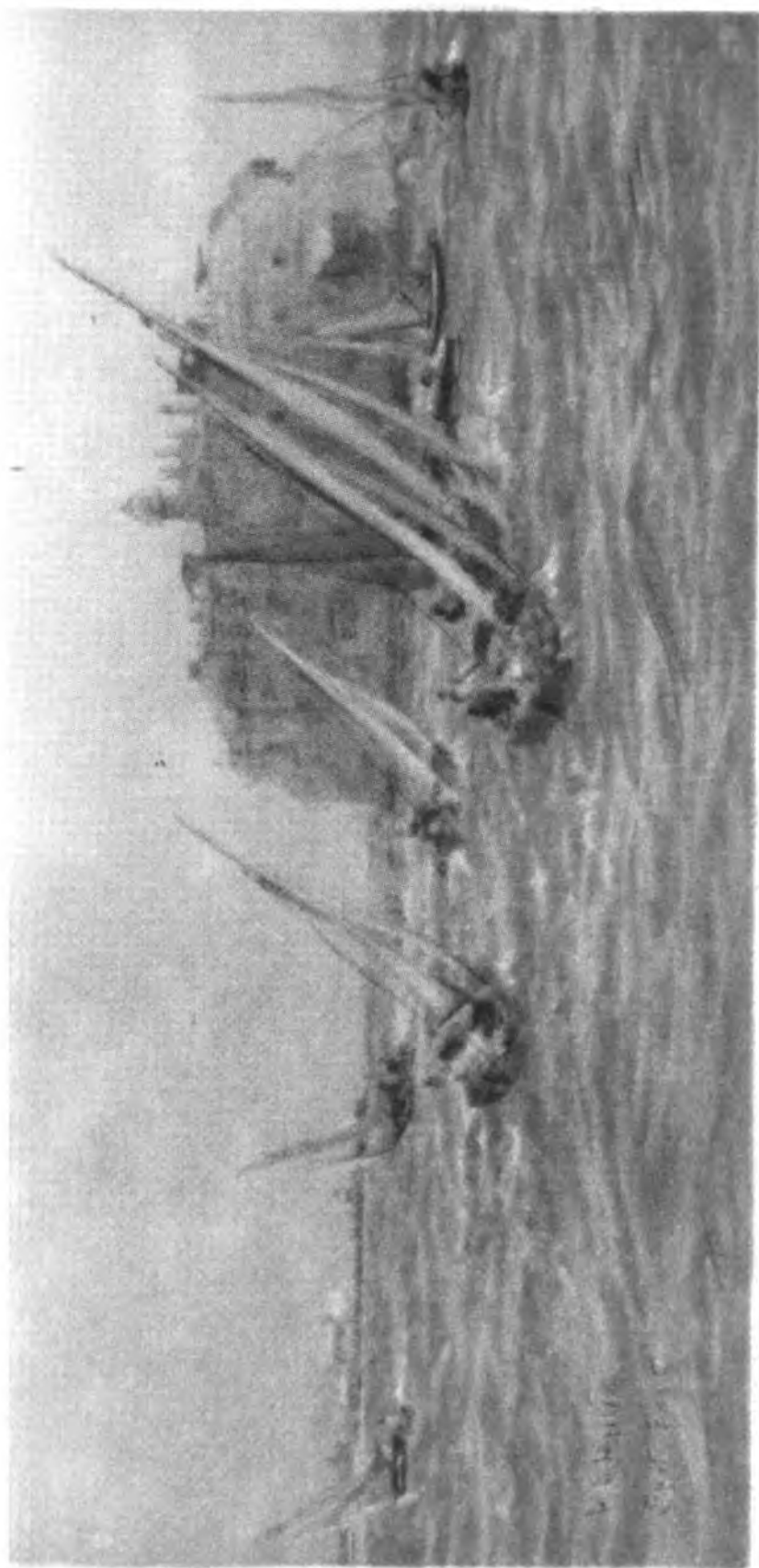


Plate X

BUCKINGHAM HOUSE

George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, came to Portsmouth in August, 1628, to fit out an expedition to relieve the Protestants of La Rochelle. The house he hired in High Street still stands. Here the handsome favourite of King Charles superintended the embarkation of his forces with Soubise and other French gentlemen.

On the 23rd the Duke was taking leave of Sir Thomas Fryer and other nobles when he was stabbed by Felton, a gloomy, dissatisfied soldier whose pay was in arrears.

Hearing the tumult, the Duchess, with the Countess of Anglesea, rushed to the head of the stairs and, seeing the lifeless body, added shrieks to the din.

The only unmoved man was Felton. He cried boldly, "I am the man. Here I am." Sir Thomas Martin placed him under a guard of musketeers.

The base of the gibbet where the murderer hung in chains on Southsea beach was seen in living memory.

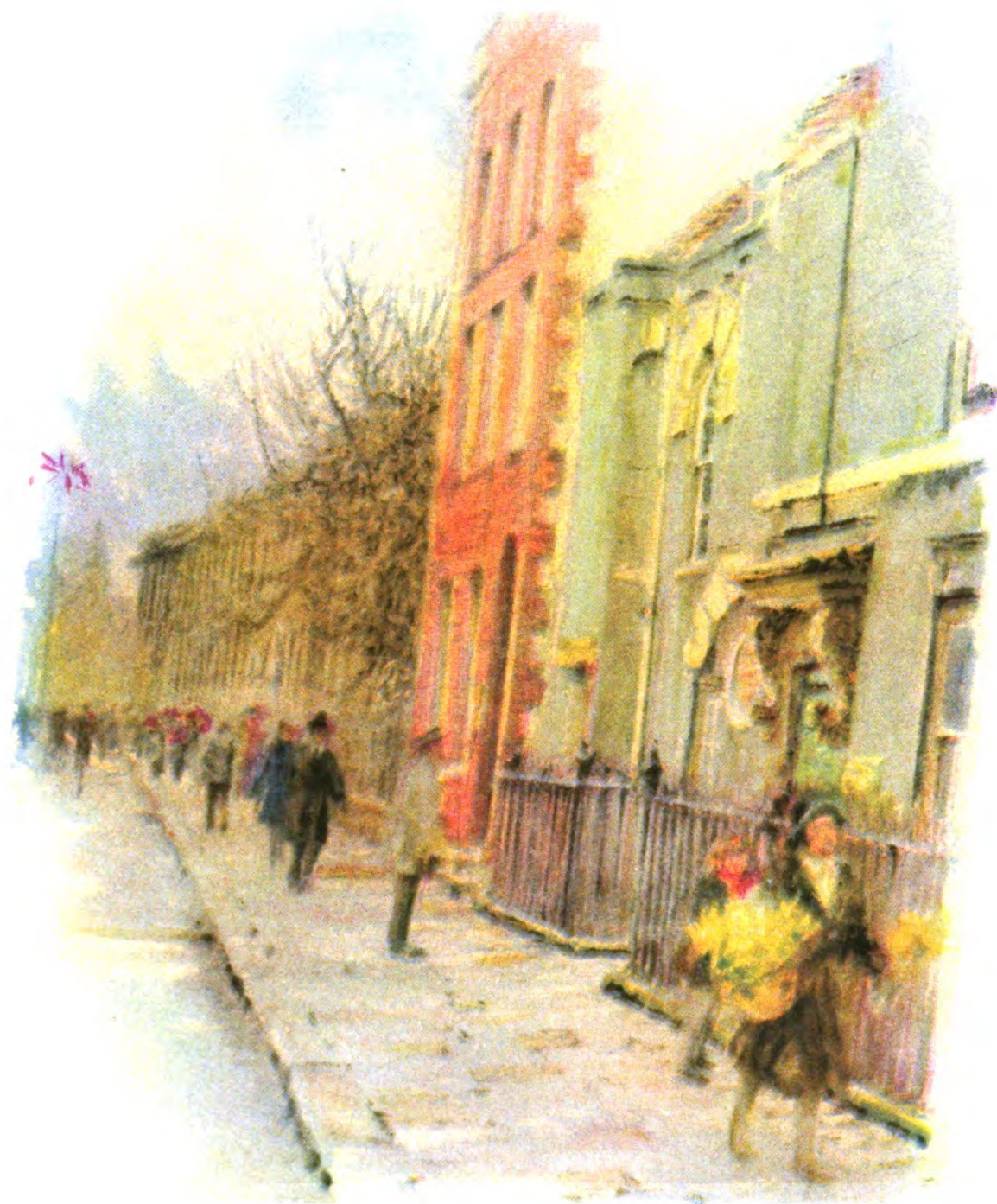


PLATE	TITLE	DATE VISITED
I	Main Gate, H.M. Dockyard ..	.....
II	Nelson's Flagship, H.M.S. <i>Victory</i> ..	.....
III	The Camber .. ..	.....
IV	The Harbour Mouth .. ..	.....
V	John Pounds' House .. ..	.....
VI	The Guildhall .. ..	.....
VII	The Canoe Lake .. ..	.....
VIII	St. Thomas's Cathedral .. ..	.....
IX	Spit Fort .. ..	.....
X	Buckingham House .. ..	.....

PORTSMOUTH IN 1762

Here is another picture of Portsmouth, from the air, over two hundred years later. The old mud walls have been replaced by stone and brick. The moat is wider and the bastion stronger. The shingle beach at Point is now covered with houses, and the Camber appears to be full of merchantmen ; a mill dam has been thrown across the old creek at its mouth, and a gun wharf has been built. Farther north, a pier and causeway stretch from the common before the town now called Portsea.

The Dockyard, which in Tudor times only covered a puny eight acres, has now spread to sixty-three acres and is surrounded by a high wall. Storehouses and docks have been erected. Basins and slipways, roperies and sail lofts have sprung up. Lines of battleships, frigates, and sloops throng the waterways and docks.

The tiny islet of Whaley is seen surrounded by mud flats, and a creek winds away to Porchester with its Roman walls and Norman keep.





PORTSMOUTH

1732

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