

1900

HMS Angler



January 1st

Closing year of the 19th century. The closing year of the 19th century, although some say the first year of the 20th, which to me is an erroneous assumption.

January 7th

Church Collection. A special appeal was made today throughout the Church of England in aid of the widows and orphans of the soldiers and sailors engaged in the South African War. The collection in St Mary's realised over 40 pounds.

January 8th

Ladysmith. Everyone has been on tenterhooks since Saturday night owing to the grave news from South Africa. The last telegram then received was that Ladysmith was being vigorously attacked by the Boers and that General White and his garrison were very hard pressed. Everyone made sure that bad news was in store for us today, but to everyone's joy, a telegram came in the forenoon, announcing the Boer's, complete repulse with very great loss. This was indeed a great relief and called for great admiration for the gallant defenders of the long-besieged town.

January 9th

Masons – Jack's engagement. In the evening, by Jack's invitation, I attended the installation of the new WM of the Shakespeare Lodge. This is the first occasion on which I attended a masonic lodge in England. The new officers were elected, and I was glad to see Bert raised to office of Junior Deacon. I thought Jack's manner during dinner was a little strange, he was very quiet and afterwards he let me in on his thoughts which were that he intended proposing to his best girl at the function [*note - a wedding reception*]. He left dinner with my best wishes. On my return home, to my surprise I found he was not asleep (being unable to) and that he had 'done the deed' and had been accepted by Miss Harriet Harman of the Marble House, who is as far as I can judge 'one of the best', and Jack being the same who can say who to congratulate most.

January 15th

End of leave - returned to Chatham

January 16th to March 2nd

At sea for short periods

January 26th

War news. The news from the war is most distressing, Buller having been compelled to retire across the Tugels River again, in spite of having captured Spion Kop, a good position. He had to abandon it through lack of water. Many lives were lost in gaining it, so that is a great blow. It really seems as we were never going to pull through this dreadful business. At present, after nearly four months, we have accomplished nothing and our neighbours on the continent are enjoying our anxiety with much glee and apparently waiting for a favourable opportunity to have a rub at us.

February 16th

Relief of Kimberley. In the evening we received the joyful news that Kimberley had been relieved by General French after a siege of 122 days. His troops entered yesterday after a wonderful march. Cronje, who has been holding Magerfontein is said to be in full retreat with our men after him. This news is most gratifying and seems to put quite a different aspect on the war which hitherto has been so disastrous for us. There is great national rejoicing and congratulations to the venerable Lord Roberts who directed the operations and to General French who carried them off so efficiently.

February 23rd

War News. Received the cheerful news that Cronje and part of his retreating army had been completely surrounded by Lord Roberts and was now in a 'ring of iron' only a mile in diameter. He was being furiously bombarded, but refuses to surrender. His dogged

pluck and determination calls for much admiration, but at the same time opinion is unanimous that he ought to surrender, his position being quite helpless and thereby prevent the terrible loss of life that he is now suffering.

February 27th

Capture of Cronje. We read the joyful news that Cronje has surrendered unconditionally and that he was safely captured with 4000 Boers. The news is most comforting and we all hope will hasten the end of this hateful war. General satisfaction is felt that Cronje had given in and not sacrificed any more of his men in a hopeless cause. The whereabouts of his heavy guns, which he had at Magerfontein, is also a mystery.

March 1st

Relief of Ladysmith. As we were approaching the harbour (Sheerness) we received a signal from the Commander-in-Chief announcing the relief of Lady Smith, which was confirmed by the War Office. This was indeed the most joyous news we have received since the war began, in fact, expect excepting the relief of Kimberley the proceedings of Lord Roberts, is the only good news. From the papers it appears that the announcement was received throughout the country with the most extraordinary enthusiasm. In London, everyone went frantic with delight and rushed about flying banners and wearing rosettes, cheering and singing whilst in the country similar manifestations took place and bonfires were burnt etc. General Dundonald was the first to enter the beleaguered town and found the troops and inhabitants much emaciated from their privations. It is unlikely that they could have held out for much longer. The length of the siege was 118 days. There is not the slightest doubt that, had it not been for the timely arrival of the Blue Jackets and guns, when the siege began, that they could never have held out as they did.

March 7th to 12th

Short leave at Warwick

March 13th to 30th

Flotilla cruise. *[note - during the cruise the TBD flotilla visited Felixstowe, Southend, Greenhithe, Dover and Lowestoft.]*

March 31st to April 4th

Short leave - horse and carriages. Went home on leave for a few days. Found that the horse and carriages had been finally disposed of which, whilst seeming rather a pity considering mother's state of health, is perhaps for the best, as she does not care to use them. It means, of course, a great saving of expenditure, but this should not stand

in the way. The fact is, the Old Lady herself does not want them and considers that she will be happier for their disposal.

April 10th to 16th

Short leave to Warwick

April 11th

Boating disaster. In the morning papers appeared news of a terrible boating disaster of Brighton, where the Flotilla went yesterday. The 'Desperate's' gig capsized just as they were heading for the pier to land and seven of the men in her were drowned.

April 17th to 27th

Flotilla on 10 days manoeuvres

May 2nd to 6th

Short leave to Warwick

May 7th

The Naval Brigade in London. Today, the Naval Brigade of the 'Powerful', who did such excellent work in Ladysmith met with a glorious reception in London. Millions of people lined the streets to witness their march and the enthusiasm displayed showed how much the 'handy man' was appreciated. The men who provided with dinner at the Admiralty and tea at Lloyds, where each was also presented with a tobacco box (silver) and Captain Lambton with a gold cigarette case. From all accounts such scenes of exultation when never witnessed in London before, except perhaps at the Diamond Jubilee.

[note - In May 1900, HMS Powerful and its Naval Brigade returned to London after their service in the Second Boer War, including the Relief of Ladysmith. A celebratory march through the city was among the first events recorded on film. The march was filmed on May 7, 1900. The brigade's arrival and the reception in London were a testament to their heroic efforts in South Africa. However, despite the celebrations, the war was entering its third (guerrilla) phase, notorious for the disproportionately cruel response of the British.]



The march of the 'Heroes of Ladysmith' passing the gate of Buckingham Palace. Taken from the film of the procession (see this [link](#)).

May 18th

Relief of Mafeking. [note - the Flotilla was on a visit to King's Lynn]. After dinner, many speeches were made and toasts drunk, chiefly to the mayor, Officers of the Flotilla, volunteers, etc. In the middle of this or rather, just as the toasts were about to finish, the chief constable came in with a mysterious telegram for the Mayor. The Mayor upon opening it, in a short speech announced the glorious fact that 'MAFEKING WAS RELIEVED'. When this joyful intelligence was announced, everyone was up on chairs cheering and singing 'for he's a jolly good fellow' and bellowing for all they were worth. No news could have arrived at a more opportune moment. The police band, which had played outside the hall during dinner, struck up with 'Rule Britannia', etc, amidst more cheering. When order was restored, the health of Colonel Baden Powell and the gallant defenders was drunk, and also the 'women of Mafeking', and after more bellowing, the Mayor announced that a crowd had gathered outside and wanted him to make a speech, inviting us to accompany him. There was a surging mass of people outside to whom the mayor spoke, and there was prolonged cheering and noise which lasted until we had all lost our voices. The siege of Mafeking lasted 218 days, one of the longest periods a town has sustained siege in modern times. The hero of the day, Colonel Baden Powell, must have been a truly marvellous man, for with nothing but a handful of volunteers, assisted by the townsmen, he has kept the Boers at bay all this time although they expressed their determination to capture the place and brought their best

general at one time into requisition. The wonderful power of reason which 'BP' (as he is popularly called) brought forth is demonstrated by the fact that they practically made their own powder and projectiles for some time and their guns were of the most ancient description, adapted for present use. During the last months, the privations of the garrison must have been terrible, and we hear that they are latterly living on 'bran' made of ox and horse hides. It is a great relief to everyone in this country that the little town is relieved at last after such a gallant defence and it should prove the finishing blow to the Boers, who are just now hastily retreating on all sides before the advance of Lord Roberts' army. Everyone trusts that the prospect of an early peace settlement is before us.



Mafeking cadet corps, precursor to the Boy Scout Movement: Siege of Mafeking 14th October 1899 to 16th May 1900 in the Great Boer War

May 20th

Orders – melee in the flotilla. We have to leave today. It appears that a telegram arrived from the Admiralty to say that we are all to go to Portsmouth to assist in keeping a clear range for experiments which are to take place shortly on the old battleship 'Belleisle'. She is to be used as a target ship for the 'Majestic' to ascertain the effect of modern guns..... After she ('Mallard') joined us, we proceeded again, when a most extraordinary and disastrous occurrence took place. The 'Porcupine' was leader of the fleet, and Hickley (her commander) finding the course was wrong, altered without signal and steered very wildly, resulting in a serious collision with the 'Ariel's', which ran into the port side knocking the sides about badly and tearing off the blades of her port propeller. The 'Ariel's' bows was smashed in for about 10 feet and she was making water. The 'Haughty' very nearly ran into the 'Cheerful' and only avoided collision by going across the towing hawser between the two ships and marvellously escaped being caught by it whilst we were nearly ran into by the 'Bitten' and only averted a disastrous

collision by going full speed astern. All this trouble and melee was caused by some stupid error on board the 'Porcupine'

May 21st

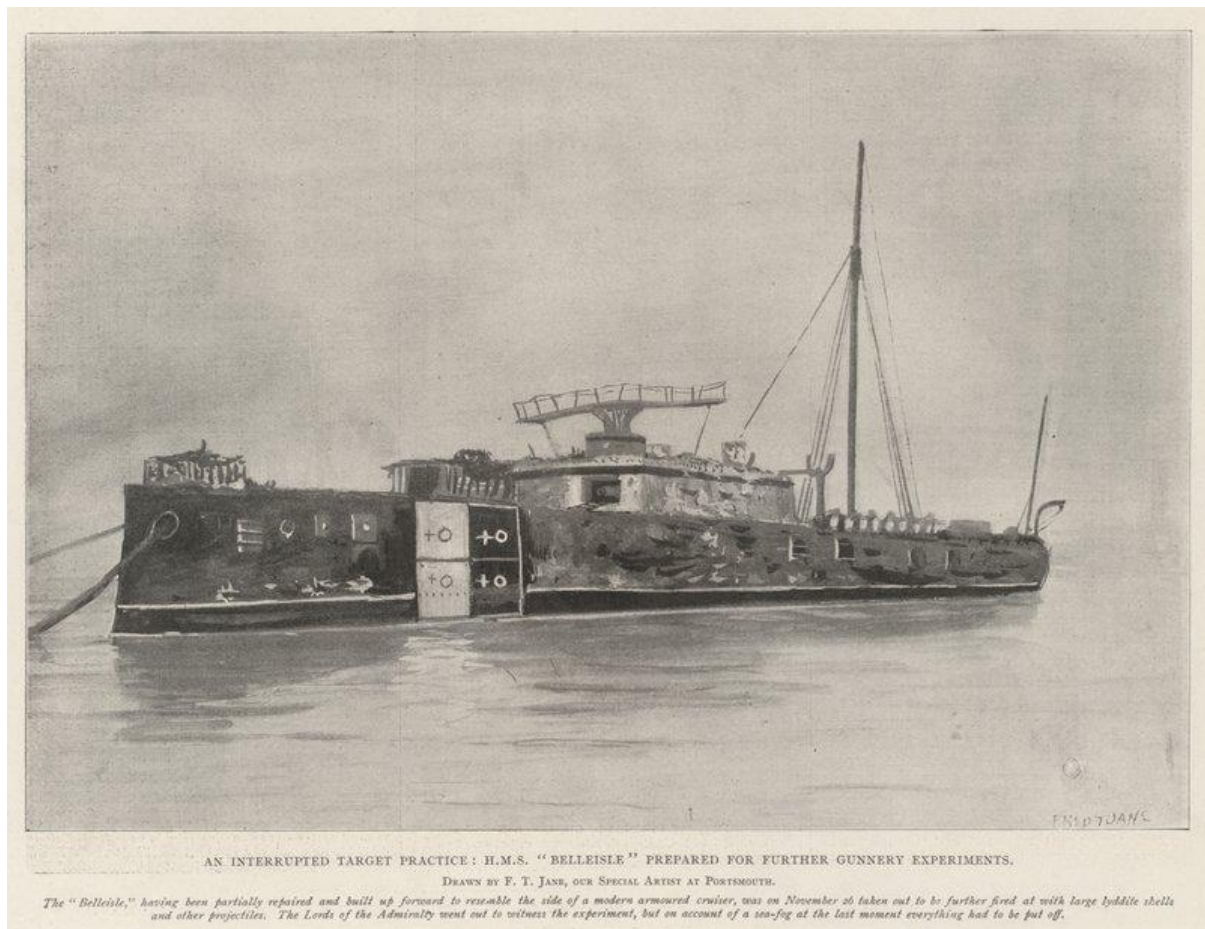
Arrived Portsmouth

May 24th

Queen's Birthday. The 81st birthday of our beloved Queen. The National Anthem and patriotic tunes were played by the Mercury Boys Band in honour of the occasion.

May 26th

Gunnery Trials. At 7:00 AM. We all preceded out of the harbour to our various beats allocated to us, for keeping the range clear for the firing at the old battleship 'Belleisle'. About 1:00 AM, I heard a furious cannonading taking place, this being the 'Majestic' firing at the 'Belleisle'. As soon as it was over, I made my way to the scene of the action. When we came up to her, she presented a sorry spectacle after the bombardment and it really looked as if she had been dragged forth for execution, the 'Majestic' and the other battleships looking for all the world as if they were gloating over their victim. I found an opportunity to go round to the damaged side and here the havoc created was appalling. Enormous holes were knocked in the sides at the unarmoured ends, the boats were in most cases, splintered into atoms, and the whole of the upper deck looked just like a scrap heap. Shortly after the firing was finished, she heeled over to port and sank on the bank. The old ship will be raised again and patched up for further series of experiments.



"An Interrupted Target Practice, HMS Belleisle prepared for further Gunnery Experiments"

May 28th

Returned to Chatham

May 30th

Johannesburg. Today, there is much rejoicing throughout the country, news having been received that Lord Roberts had entered Johannesburg without any opposition.

June 5th

Pretoria. Today the joyful intelligence was received in England of the entry of Lord Roberts into Pretoria. He appears to have met with little opposition, which is rather contrary to expectations, for most people thought that the Boers would make a stand there, especially as the town is strongly fortified. Kruger managed to effect his escape, leaving his wife behind and they also took away about 900 of our prisoners. Over 3000 however, were released. Although the war is by no means over yet, the fact that Pretoria now being in our hands, will, it is hoped, hasten its conclusion.

June 6th

Jack's wedding day. At 1:30 PM the service was timed to take place. I officiated as a pew opener, ie showed the people to their seats in the chancel. The church was very full and decorated for the occasion and fortunately the weather was fine. The streets of the town were hung with flags to celebrate the entry of Roberts into Pretoria and this display came in very appropriately. The church was prettily decorated with flowers, and there were many people present testifying to the popularity of the bride and the bridegroom. Arthur was the best man, and Mr. John Harman, eldest son of Mrs Harman, gave the bride away. There were seven bridesmaids, including Ida and Lucy Tibbits and Miss Lucy Harman. The ceremony was very impressive and an admirable address was given. After it was over a reception was given by Mrs Harman at the Marble House where the presents were displayed. The usual 'conflab' took place amongst the relations and others until it was time for the 'happy pair' to depart on their honeymoon, when we were all dispersed.

May 12th to 22nd

Flotilla cruise to the north *[note - the Flotilla visited Scarborough, Granton, Great Yarmouth and Sheerness.]*

May 19th

My 28th birthday

May 23rd to 26th

Visit to Brother Frank. Curate of All Saints, Bromsgrove.

May 28th

HMS Pembroke Ball. We *[note - with Ida and Lucy]* walked to the Recreation Ground to meet Mrs Crabtree, who is their chaperone tonight, and then returned to the Sun Hotel to get ready for the dance which takes place tonight. They dressed before dinner and look very radiant and we left for the dockyard at 9:00 PM. The arrangements for the dance were perfect, I thought. The upper deck of the 'Pembroke' was used exclusively for dancing and refreshments and was most beautifully decked with flags of all nations and small alcoves named after the different ships stationed at Chatham we used for sitting out and rendezvous. The band of the RMLI supplied the music which from this band is always excellent. The whole was lit by electric light. *[note – by 1900 there was electric lights in homes and streetlights but it must have still been uncommon enough to be noteworthy.]* The hatchways were converted into small artificial ponds surrounded by rock work and the water contained goldfish. The scene was most brilliant, the naval and military uniforms and ladies dresses with the many coloured flags and the bright light being most effectual. I got Ida and Lucy plenty of partners and they danced nearly

every dance, enjoying themselves thoroughly. Supper was laid on the upper deck of the 'R Adelaide'. The supper was magnificent, over 300 pounds being spent on it. We stayed to the bitter end of the ball, Ida, Lucy vowing that they had never enjoyed anything so much before or seen a dance to approach it. We drove back in the early hours of the foggy dawn and I was much gratified to note the looks of sadness on my dear sister's faces, as they left, which evidently showed that they had well appreciated the dance.

May 29th to July 5th

Short leave at Warwick

July 4th

Trouble in China. Terrible news comes from China lately. A Society of fanatics called the Boxers have vowed that they will exterminate all foreigners from the country and have started by murdering several missionaries. They are receiving large reinforcements and it is said that thier action is supported by the Queen Dowager and many mandarins and that the Imperial troops are in a state of apathy. Pekin (*sic*) is said to be attacked and the legations surrounded and the force with Admiral Seymour of allied troops have lost heavily in their attempt to reach Pekin to relieve the legations. The Powers are acting in concert, but jealousies exist which prevent immediate action being taken. The crisis is daily becoming worse.

July 11th to August 9th

Left Flotilla for cruise. [*note – visited Torbay, Dartmouth and Milford Haven.*]

July 17th

War with China. We received news today that China has declared war against Russia. This was a great surprise, but it has evidently been brewing for some time and the present trouble has brought things to a climax. The news of the legations at Pekin still continues to be of a terrible nature. It is said that all foreigners have been massacred, and yet from some messages and rumours it is still hoped that some are yet alive.

July 24th to August 2nd

Fleet manoeuvres

28th of July

Dog overboard. Soon after breakfast we had a little excitement. The cry of 'away dingy' made me think a man was overboard, especially as the engines were suddenly stopped. On going on deck, however, I found that my poor dog 'Terry' was about 300 yards astern swimming for the ship having fallen over the side. The dingy was soon away and by whistling, we encouraged the dog to make efforts. 'Jack', the ship's dog, also

barked fanatically which was a good thing. After being in the water about 5 minutes, he was brought on board none the worse. A great many seagulls which were following the ship swooped upon him several times which I think harassed him a little.

August 12th

Appointment to HMS Pembroke. I was very much upset on Sunday morning to hear that I was appointed to the depot ship 'Pembroke'. Although presumably only a temporary appointment, I had expected something better for depots are much looked down upon. In the evening, the Commodore dined with me and Cherry came also but I could not raise my spirits and felt very down in the dumps over my appointment.

August 14th to 20th

Short leave at Warwick

August 18th

Family photograph - relief of Peking. Ida and Lucy and myself had our photo taken in Japanese kimonos. News was received today of the 'Relief of Peking' by the allied forces, and much surprised was occasioned on hearing that Sir C MacDonald was safe and most of his legation also. They have had a very tough time of it but managed to hold out bravely. It is a great load off the public mind.

August 24th

Transfer to HMS Albatross. It having been decided that the 'Angler' would 'pay off' and the crew turn over to the 'Albatross', we were placed alongside her and started the tedious process of transferring all the gear from one ship to the other. The 'Albatross', one of the finest destroyers ever built. She was turned out by Thornycroft, the speed stipulated for being 32 knots, but on her trials they only succeeded in getting 31.5 out of her. Even then she is the fastest ship in the world, excepting the 'Viper', which is now undergoing trials of the new turbine engines. She realised the marvellous speed of something over 37 knots on her contractor's trials. The complement [*note - of the Albatross*] is 68 men and officers, her armaments one 12pdr, five 6pdrs QF and two torpedo tubes.



HMS Albatross

August 28th

Depart Chatham – steering gear. The Flotilla left Chatham today at 10:00 AM. My first introduction to the 'Albatross' underway was not pleasant for, as we were going down the Long Reach (Medway) the steering gear suddenly went wrong. We were going 16 knots at the time and it was only by going full speed astern that I prevented her from running up on the riverbank. The defect was soon put right.

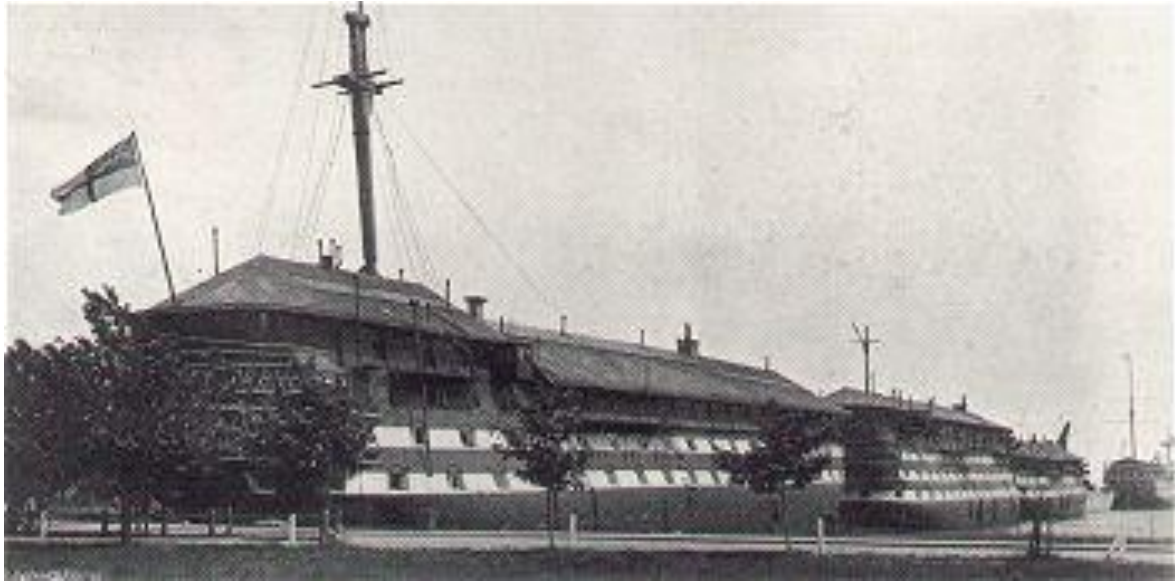
September 3rd

Depart for Dover

September 4th

Leave HMS Albatross. Returned on board for dinner having been invited by the officers. I was very touched by their kindness in thus giving me a send off and they all wished me the best of luck. Mr Fisher (mess caterer) had taken the trouble to form the menu from all the things I had ever mentioned a liking for. Later I took my leave and on going on deck was again most agreeably surprised to find the majority of the ship's company at the gangway to say goodbye and a boat's crew to pull me ashore consisting of the Coxswain, Chief Stoker, Senoir ERA Yeoman of Signals and Torpedo instructor (all the heads of departments). It was most gratifying to find that I had apparently given satisfaction in my methods of dealing with the men, and it was with much regret that I severed my connection with them, the ship and the Flotilla.

HMS Pembroke



September the 5th

Joined HMS Pembroke

September the 6th

The establishment. The establishment designated 'Pembroke' consists of two line-of-battle ships with 'Pembroke' and the 'Forte' and the three decker 'R Adelaide' also the 'Northumberland' (similar to 'Minotaur') which is used for training stokers and the 'Audacious' occasionally (used for overflow of men). The number of men of various ratings in the depot fluctuates but averages about 5000. With this large number of men, there is necessarily a great deal of organisation and routine required, so that as far as the officers are concerned, the billet is no sinecure.

[HMS Pembroke was the name given to the Royal Navy shore establishment at Chatham. The permanent shore base was under construction from 1897 and officially opened in 1903. It was a major training and support base for the Royal Navy]



HMS Pembroke, Chatham Dockyard

September 21st

War news. The news from South Africa is very encouraging. Lord Roberts reporting that the war is now practically over and with the exception of a few independent commandos, most of the Boer are fast surrendering. This is very comforting, everyone being heartily sick of this war which has cost so many valuable lives.

October 2nd to 22nd

Three weeks leave

October 2nd

Political speech. In the evening (at Warwick), the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain addressed an open meeting of the Corn Exchange to encourage voters to give preference to the Unionist Candidate (Honourable Alfred Littleton) in the election tomorrow. It was a most disorderly meeting as there were many radicals present, who continually interrupted his speech. However, after many sarcastic and biting remarks, he managed to turn the tables on the opponents and obtained a hearing. He impressed upon the hearers the necessity of voting for the present government in order to enable them to carry through the war and to conclude an honourable peace at the end of it.

October 3rd

General election. The result of the election was announced at the court-house about 10:00 PM, the results being a win for Lyttleton by a large majority than last time, giving intense satisfaction to the Unionists. It is a great disappointment for the Radicals who were very confident of success.

October 19th

Orders to return. On my return (home), I was very much annoyed to find a telegram waiting for me ordering my return on Monday to take part in some steam trials of the stoop 'Vestal'. This means that I am deprived of three days of my leave.

HMS Vestal



HMS Vestal photographed after conversion to a fire control training ship, circa 1908.

October 22nd

Joined HMS Vestal. After preparing some things to take with me, left for Sheerness with the 'Navigating party' for the 'Vestal' *[note - this ship is the same type as the ill-fated Condor which foundered in 1902 with not a single survivor. Added 6th of September 02 (by CT)]* consisting of about 100 men. These navigating parties are rather a trying experience. In this case, I was recalled from leave and taking only bare necessities and bundled into their ship, which is dirty (from being in dockyard hands) and everything damp and generally miserable. The messing is done through messmen of the 'Pembroke', mess traps being brought with us.

October 24th to 27th

First trial

October 31st to November 2nd

Second trial

November 3rd

Left HMS Vestal. Much to my satisfaction, I left the 'Vestal' in the forenoon, with the men for Chatham again, the trials being finished for the present. I was very glad to get away from the discomforts of 'Navigating Parties'.

November 5th

Returned to HMS Pembroke

November 8th

Reading. Spent part of the time reading a very gloomy book called 'For The Term Of His Natural Life' [note – by Marcus Clarke], which deals with the evils of transportation and illustrates the life of a convict under the corrupt system which existed about 70 years ago.

November 21st to 22nd

Escort duty. In the afternoon, I was suddenly informed that I was to escort to Liverpool tonight a party of 16 'recorded deserters' and others detailed for passage to the North American station. This is a very unpleasant job for the 'r.ds' are all 'bad hats' and men who have just come out of prison. I was told before starting that none of them intended going in the ship without an attempt to break away on the journey. A special carriage was brought into the dockyard and we left at 7:45 PM. I had an escort of two Warrant Officers, two Ship's Carpenters and two 1st Class POs to look after the 'r.ds'. They were rather unruly before starting, having been in the wet canteen, and at Chatham station they were somewhat noisy. At Victoria they were provided with refreshments in the carriage, for I would allow none to leave it, and had the doors locked. About 11:30 we were shunted off to Willesden and here were joined by a draft from Portsmouth. The NWR Company had arranged to run us through as a special after the Scotch Express. Soon after midnight she came flying through Willesden at a tremendous speed, with two engines going their hardest. We soon afterwards followed and the men by this time were quieter as they found no listeners to sympathise with them. 5:30 AM we arrived at the Alexanders Dock station, Liverpool, without event. Upon falling the men in I found them quite subdued. They marched quietly to the ship and gave us absolutely no trouble. A posse of police was in attendance at the gangway and so, having once got them onboard, I felt relieved of my responsibility.

October 23rd

Mr Kruger visit to France. Mr Kruger arrived in France day and received a great ovation. The old villain is trying to stir up Europeans to intervene in the Transvaal, but this is improbable, although the excitable French people have quite lost their heads over him and are, as usual, passing detrimental remarks against the British (whom Kruger called in his speech 'barbarians'). They will soon, however, probably get over their nonsense.

December 3rd

Kruger. The public are much satisfied to see by the papers that Mr Kruger has been refused an audience by the German Emperor. This misguided old man ought now to subside with this rebuff, if he has any sense, As long as he continues to stir up strife in the vain hope of intervention, so long will the Boers go on fighting for a lost cause and so continue the miserable war.



VANITY FAIR SPY CARTOON South African President Paul Kruger 'Oom Paul' 1900



President Paul Kruger of the South African Republic (Transvaal), 1900

[note - The Boers affectionately referred to Kruger (1825-1904) as 'Oom Paul' or 'Uncle Paul', and his large frame, baggy black suits, grey hair, whiskers, and top hat were often caricatured by British cartoonists. Nevertheless, he was a formidable opponent and became the internationally renowned face of the Boer resistance to the British Empire.]

December 8th

Theft of Nelson relics. Some sensation was caused this evening by the announcement that a robbery had taken place at Greenwich Naval College and a great many of Nelson's relics stolen. The thief had stripped the buttons off the coat in which Nelson was wounded, had stolen the hilts of presentation swords; his gold watch and many other things which were priceless from a sentimental point of view, although not very

valuable intrinsically. Some of these relics were presented by my uncle Nelson Ward. The general opinion is that the robbery was committed for spiteful reasons, perhaps by a foreigner, and there appears little hope that any other articles will ever be recovered.

December 15, 1900] THE SPHERE 302A

THE THEFT OF NELSON RELICS FROM GREENWICH HOSPITAL

Some of the Stolen Heirlooms of the Nation.

NELSON'S GOLD WATCH WITH SWORD AND SEAL.
Presented to Captain John Price in 1807 by the Hospital which was the place at the time he received the first wound on the battle of Trafalgar. It was presented to the nation by the Marquis of Westminster in 1857.

COAT WORN BY NELSON AT TRAFALGAR.
The coat is now preserved in the Museum of the Admiralty, and is the last coat worn by the hero on the day of his death.

MEDALS OF ST. VINCENT AND THE NILE.
These were the medals worn by Nelson on the day of his death at St. Vincent in February 1797, when he defeated the Spanish, and of the Nile, August 1, 1798, when he defeated the French.

A particularly despicable outrage on the nation has been perpetrated at Greenwich Hospital by the theft and mutilation of various relics connected with the immortal story of Lord Nelson. The relics were kept in the Painted Hall, where may be seen the story of England's prowess at sea on scores of canvases. The room is locked after by three old prisoners. It was locked up in the usual way on Saturday afternoon at 4 o'clock, the keys being deposited with the hospital police.

When the building was reopened at 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoon it was found that several of the glass cases in the right-hand corner of the room had been broken open and their contents removed. The thief was an ex-captain, but, simply a commonplace ruffian who had the melting pot in view, for he had ripped the gold off the necklaces, pinned the jewels from their settings, cut the buttons of valuable metal from the uniform worn by Nelson when he received his death wound, and then thrown the articles about the floor. Strange to say he left behind some relics which would have been easy to remove.

The thief is supposed to have secreted himself in the Painted Hall during the course of Saturday and waited until the rooms were closed at night. He made his escape through a window opening on to a flat roof adjoining the Painted Hall. The police and the authorities at the hospital are anxiously searching for him.

So far as is known eleven articles have been taken away or destroyed in the manner mentioned. Besides those illustrated on this page, all of which have been taken or mutilated, the nation has lost, perhaps for good—

An exact portrait of Lord Nelson in a gold chain presented by one of the sons of the Duke of Devonshire.

A gold ring of the Duke of Devonshire.

A medal of the victory of Trafalgar which was purchased by the Government for the nation in 1857.

The medal commemorating the restoration, by the act of 1805, of Lord Nelson's body to the House of Commons, the only relic being presented by Lord Bessborough to the nation in 1857.

GOLD SWORD-HILT.
Presented to Nelson by the nation in 1807.

OVAL GOLD RING.
This ring was presented to Nelson by the nation in 1807.

OVAL GOLD RING.
This ring was presented to Nelson by the nation in 1807.

Very special interest attached to the gold sword-hilt in the middle of this page, which was presented to Nelson by the captain of the fleet present at the Battle of the Nile, 1798. It was inscribed "The Captains of the Squadron under the Orders of Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson, K.B., desirous of testifying the high sense they entertain of his prompt decision and intrepid conduct in the attack of the French Fleet in Dogger Head off the Nile, the 1st of August, 1798, request his acceptance of a sword, and as a further proof of their (sic) esteem and regard, hope that he will permit his portrait to be taken and hung up in the room belonging to the Egyptian Club now established in commemoration of that glorious day. Dated on board of His Majesty's ship Orion, this 1st of Aug. 1798. Jas. Scamozzi, T. Troubridge, H. D. Dury, Thos. Lewis, I. Peyton, Aber. Jas. Ball, Saml. Hoyle, D. Gould, Th. Foley, R. Willett Miller, Ben Halliwell, E. Barry, T. M. Hardy." There is also inscribed on the guard: "Rear-Admiral Lord Nelson, Captain Sir E. Berry (Vanguard), Captain L. Troubridge (Minotaur), Captain R. W. Miller (Thetis), Captain Aber. P. Ball (Albatross), Captain Thos. Lewis (Albatross), Captain Sir T. B. Thompson (London), Captain R. Halliwell (Swallow), Captain Davidge Gould (Andromeda), Captain John Peyton (Defiance), Captain Sir Jas. Scamozzi (Orion), Captain Thos. Foley (Galatia), Captain C. R. Westcott (Magenta), Captain H. D. Dury (Zealous), Captain T. M. Hardy (Melpomene), Captain Saml. Hoyle (Zealous). (Presented by J. A. Mullens, Esq., of Fir Grove, Weybridge, 1807.)"

By not taking the coat and waistcoat worn by the national hero at his death the robbers left what was of least value to them, and perhaps the greatest relic of all to the nation.

At the time of writing there is no clue to the robber, but the police vouchsafe the suggestion they are "hopeful." In the meantime Mr. Balfour has announced in the House of Commons that a reward of £200 has been offered for the recovery of the stolen articles.

December 15th

War news. The South African war is not yet over and tonight we hear a very nasty reverse sustained by General Clements in Magaliesberg. It appears that a bad lookout was kept and we were taken by surprise in the night.

December 21st

10 days Christmas leave

December 25th

Christmas Day. Rather a quiet Christmas Day, owing chiefly to Mother's indifferent health. Harriet [*note - nee Harman*] came with Jack to dinner which we had in the middle of the day this year. The absentees were Frank (at Bromsgrove), Emily and Walter (in India) who were both who were duly toasted. This is my second Christmas at home running.

December 29th

War News. From the bad news we have had lately, it really does seem as if the war is going to be almost endless. We have had a succession of small reverses and disasters and the casualty list continues large. The soldiers too seem heartily sick of the war.

31st of December

War News - Bells. Gus Bullock called after dinner and we had a talk about South Africa. The War Office seemed to have treated him very shabbily, having made him pay his own passage home, and also the expenses of his conveyance from outside Mafeking to Bulawayo when wounded. This mismanagement (for such it is) is much complained about by volunteers in the war. At midnight the bells rang a good peel of triples to introduce the new century and Oliver and I paid a brief visit to the belfry for a short time. What with the gale, floods and extinguishing of the gas, the old century has been most effectually 'snuffed out' in Warwick, at any rate.