

**Album of photographs of the Army Medical Staff mess, Hong Kong, with newspaper cuttings and a letter, 1894, re disadvantages of not having a mess**

**Publication/Creation**

c.1894

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Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
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A. M. S. MESS.  
HONGKONG.

736 | 2

12 Mona Terrace, interested in some further details of  
Douglas, (1. of Man) their history; so I am presenting the  
4<sup>th</sup> February, 1928. book to your Mess, if you would  
care to accept it. It shows the sort  
of difficulties we had to contend  
with before we were made into a  
Royal Corps.

To  
The Mess President,  
R. A. M. C. Mess.  
London.

Dear Sir,

Yesterday, while unpacking  
an old box which I had not seen for  
many years, I came across the enclosed  
views of the "A. M. S. Mess, Hong Kong."

As you have two notice  
boards from this Mess in the H. D. C.  
Mess, I thought that you might be  
interested

Yours faithfully,  
J. E. Nicholson.  
Lt-Colonel,  
late R. A. M. C.



Hong Kong.

14<sup>th</sup> March 1896.

My dear Nicholson,

Your letter from  
Amoy reached me safely & I write  
in speculation to the care of Holt  
& Co. that this will reach you  
about the time you arrive in  
India. I hope you have had a  
<sup>England</sup> pleasant voyage, but I can  
quite imagine you would  
have a cold & occasionally very  
shummy one at this time of the  
year. However, you are in the  
right direction, namely home-  
wards, so that you would not



*Handwritten signature and date*  
J. L. ...  
1910

mind it very much. I hope  
you will arrive very safe & happy.  
The money to your credit at the  
Bank was forwarded by last mail  
& amounted to \$371, about. I was  
able to get Colonel Barr to make  
out a Post-Office Certificate for you  
today & it will go by the same  
mail as this letter. He offered a  
few objections at first but  
gave in at last; I am in hopes  
it will reach you in good time.

I have no news of any  
importance to give you for we  
go along much in the same  
old way for your excitement

& activity of any kind. As you  
foretold, we have come down, in  
my opinion, very much in the  
social scale. There have been several  
dances & functions of sorts since  
you left, but we as a body  
have not been invited to any.  
We seem to have quite slipped  
out of the public ken & take a  
very back seat. I am quite con-  
vinced, more so than ever, that we  
will never get our proper position  
until we have Masses, officially  
recognized, in all the large  
cities. You will find on arrival

That your friend Hamilton has  
gone to the Cape, a great pity  
for you, for you would have  
liked a talk with him; but you  
will be rejoiced to hear that  
Supt. Samuel Peterson has been ordered  
to Aldershot. I am very glad  
in his account wish him  
success. The B. G. J. with the  
announcement of the failure  
of our mess has not yet  
arrived, but when it does I shall  
be interested to hear the remarks  
made. Write me when you  
get settled down & I shall be  
very glad to hear from you.  
With kind remembrances,

I remain, my dear  
Nicholson,  
Your sincere friend,  
L. R. Stewart.

1892

MEDICAL STAFF MESSSES.

We are indebted to a competent correspondent (I.V.R.C.) for some notes on the present condition of medical staff messes at a number of stations, and the following information will doubtless be of interest to many of our readers. As our correspondent remarks, these institutions bear largely on the social life of our medical officers, and have done much to relieve the monotony of their existence in large garrisons.

The following is a brief recapitulation of the messes already more or less established, or in process of formation.

1. *Netley*.—This is a lineal descendant of the old Fort Pitt mess, which was transferred to Netley in 1853. It is needless to say that it is as complete and sumptuous as the best mess of any corps in the service.

2. *Aden*.—Previous to 1880 the large number of medical officers in the camp and training school had no mess, and it is needless to describe their forlorn plight. But about that time Surgeon-Major Sandford Moore, the chief of the school, took the matter up with that energy, tact, and intelligence which enabled him to do so much for the department he loved and served so well. The mess is now a very admirable one, the War Office providing the fabric, but "no other allowances."

3. *Woolwich*.—The medical mess at this important station has had a chequered career. It was begun in 1852, and received the fostering care of Sir William Muir, the Director-General, and Sir John Aclay, then Surveyor-General of Ordnance, as well as financial assistance from Sir James Hanbury and Surgeon-Major-General Rudd. But the Government building, in which it was accommodated, being wanted in 1888 for the newly organised Army Service Corps, the medical officers were turned out, and the mess, which had flourished apace, had to be suspended. It is now to be revived in premises absolutely its own.

The important stations of Portsmouth and Dublin are still without medical messes, and apparently await "the time and the man." Abroad matters have also progressed; the following have been organised in India.

4. *Bombay*.—This was started in 1884 by the late Deputy Surgeon-General Wolsley, a brother of Lord Wolsley. The messhouse stands in the very centre of the cantonment, in an admirable compound, and is admitted to be the most pleasant in the station.

5. *Lucknow*.—This owes its origin to the well-known energy of Surgeon-Colonel J. B. Hamilton. It was much needed, has greatly flourished, and, situated in one of the finest houses in the cantonment, is in every way a success.

6. *Peshawar*.—The mess here received its impulse from Surgeon-Major-General Hoysted, is snug, well equipped, and in a sound financial position. It is largely frequented by the officers of infantry regiments.

7. *Quetta*.—The mess owes its origin to the self-sacrifice of Surgeon-Major Williamson and other officers; it is compact and well equipped, and owns a piano, which adds to its attractions in that distant station.

8. *Bangalore*.—Steps are, it is said, being taken to open a medical mess in this great station.

9. *Hong Kong*.—A very delightful mess exists, which has recently removed to a building which will enhance its attractiveness.

10. *Gibraltar*.—A very fairly equipped mess exists at the great hospital.

11. *Malta*.—We do not hear of a mess, which may be accounted for by the existence of an excellent club.

From the foregoing account it is evident much remains to be done, and it should be the endeavour of principal medical officers to foster the establishment of messes at all stations where practicable. It is also the clear duty of the War Office and Indian Government to extend the same financial support to medical as to other messes, and to refuse it is an injustice which cannot be defended. These messes not only protect the social, but strengthen the professional, life of officers; for organised social life is always part of their equipment. Of course, the much desired consolidation of the medical services into a corps would, with many other advantages, compel the authorities to extend the same recognition to medical as to messes in other branches.



Peak Railway

Government House

A.M.S. Mess. P.O. Mess.



← Queen's Gardens

← P.O. Mess.

Cathedral

City Hall

↑  
Hanging +  
Shanghai Bank

THE MEDICAL STAFF MESS AT HONG KONG.

We greatly regret to learn that this mess has collapsed. It had only been four years in existence, and quite recently, through no little trouble and expense on the part of its members, was both a military and a social success. It has failed, we fear, through want of official encouragement and support, as evinced by the following statement: In 1890 the Royal Engineers also instituted a mess at Hong Kong, and promptly received a grant of 750 dollars annually towards house rent; but although a similar grant was applied for by the Medical Staff, it was refused by the general officer commanding. The mess, nevertheless, was started, and conducted at the medical officers' own expense, and was located by a sort of cruel irony next door to the duly subsidised Royal Engineer mess. The difference accorded to the two bodies of officers is so glaring as hardly to be explained away by official quibbling. It cannot be because the medical are better paid than the Engineer officers, for they are not; the latter officers in various allowances and extra pay in some cases draw considerably more public money than the former. We by no means say the Engineer officers are overpaid; but as far as remuneration is concerned, if their system of total pay entitles them to mess allowance, then the sooner the totals of medical pay are calculated in a similar fashion the better. The invidious treatment of the Medical Staff in these matters is so pronounced, unfair, and absurd that the sooner it is brought before Parliament and the public the better.

*by J. E. M.*



*A. M. S. Mess. (Hong Kong)*

*A. E. Mess.*

*The Terrace, Lucca's Gardens.*



*The Anteroom. A.M.S. Mess.*



*The Anteroom.  
(another view.)*



*The Billiard Room.  
(Table by Burroughes & Watts)*



*Mass Plate.*  
*(all in solid silver)*

1882

THE MEDICAL MESS, HONG KONG.

On November 24th the principal medical officer and officers of the army medical staff in Hong Kong entertained the general and all the headquarters staff at dinner in their comfortable mess. The string band of the Shropshire Light Infantry was in attendance, and played during the evening. The mess building was formerly situated on the low level, and by the side of the harbour, but on August 1st, 1892, the mess was removed to its present picturesque situation in Queen's Gardens; it is now unanimously acknowledged to be the prettiest and best-furnished mess in the command, and the view from the ante-room and from the billiard room is unsurpassed for natural beauty. There is, moreover, direct telephonic communication between the mess building and the station hospital.

1883

A. M. S. MESS, HONGKONG.

On June 20th the P.M.O. and officers of the army medical staff in Hong-kong entertained His Excellency the Governor at dinner in their mess at Queen's Gardens. The principal naval and military officers of the station were invited to meet His Excellency, and the band of the Shropshire Light Infantry was in attendance.





*Officers' Mess Room*  
( N.B. Before being decorated )  
~~re~~ renovated.

Names of Shareholders. 3/1

Surgt. Colonel Peterson	2	(Very loyal.)
Surgt. Major Kishstrom	4	(Very loyal)
Surgt. Captain James	1	
Wickhoff	2	
Smart	2	(Very loyal.)
Konradshale	2	
Total.	16	Shares.

Names of Donors to Mess.

Surgt. Major Kishstrom (1 Horse Ornament.)  
 Kishstrom. (3 Pictures, Clock, Writing-table, &c. &c.)  
 Smart. (2 Pictures, & Silver Cigar-lighter.)  
 Konradshale. (1 Picture.)

Sept. 12, 1896

THE A.M.S. MESS (HONG KONG).

SINCE our remarks appeared last week on the disestablishment of the Quetta Mess, we hear that the A.M.S. Mess at Hong Kong was also done away with by the late P.M.O. there. In view of our comments on the Quetta mess last week, we should be glad to know if the report regarding Hong Kong is true. We mistake the present P.M.O. in China (Surgeon-Colonel Ewart) if he does not re-establish the mess, unless there are cogent reasons to the contrary. Surgeon-Colonel Ewart is an officer whose one aim is to maintain *esprit de corps*, and we know he is an advocate for a corps mess when practicable.

Only too true. (and to save his Subscription!)

ND MILITARY.

[Oct. 17, 1896.

THE A.M.S. MESS, HONG-KONG.

REFERRING to our remarks on this subject in September (BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, September 15th, 1896), a correspondent, who has received his information second-hand, states that "the mess died a natural death owing to the paucity of bachelor members." The fact is regrettable, and we trust there will be an opportunity of re-establishing the mess.

Sept. 12, 1896

# FINIS!

STARTED

1<sup>st</sup> Feb<sup>ry</sup> 1890

## AUCTIONS

### PUBLIC AUCTION.

**T**HE Undersigned has received instructions to Sell by  
**PUBLIC AUCTION.**  
**TO-DAY**  
(TUESDAY), the 30th day of JANUARY, 1894,  
at 2.30 P.M.

at No. 5, QUEEN'S GARDENS,  
THE HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE,  
BILLIARD TABLE, &c.

Comprising—

HANDSOMELY CARVED BLACK-  
WOOD FURNITURE, Consisting of  
TABLES, CHAIRS, STOOLS, WRITING  
TABLE, OVERMANTEL with SHELVES  
and STANDS.

CURIOS and ORNAMENTS,  
BEVELLED GLASS OVERMANTEL,  
PICTURES, CARPETS and RUGS.  
EXTENSION DINING TABLE, DIN-  
NER WAGGONS, and DINING ROOM  
CHAIRS.

CROCKERY, GLASS and PLATED  
WARE.

DOUBLE WARDROBE with Plate Glass  
Door, DRESSING TABLE and MARBLE-  
TOP WASHSTAND.

One Full-size 6 POCKETED BILLIARD  
TABLE, with BALLS, CUES &c., Complete,  
by Burroughes & Watts.

SUNDRY PLANTS in POTS,  
&c. &c. &c.

Catalogue will be issued.

TERMS OF SALE.—As Customary.

J. M. ARMSTRONG,

Auctioneer.

Hongkong, 22nd January, 1894

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DISSOLVED

31<sup>st</sup> Jan<sup>ry</sup> 1894.

## MEDICAL SERVICES.

THE BRITISH  
MEDICAL JOURNAL 1109

capture of Kinla (mentioned in despatches, medal with clasp). He was also with the Southern Afghanistan Field Force under Major-General Phayre in 1880, and received the Afghan medal. He went to India in December, 1881, and after serving some time at Sirhind was made Principal Medical Officer there, and was soon after transferred to the charge of the Belgam and Bangalore Districts, Madras, which post he occupied till his decease.

Deputy-Inspector-General HENRY DOWNES died at Tiverton on April 28th, aged 74. He was appointed Assistant-Surgeon November 1st, 1839; Surgeon, January 14th, 1842; Surgeon-Major, September 7th, 1855; and Honorary Deputy-Inspector-General, on retirement on half pay, August 7th, 1866. He served in the Crimea from November 20th, 1854, including the siege and fall of Sebastopol, and received the medal with clasp, the Turkish medal, and the fifth class of the order of the Medjidie. Assistant-Surgeon T. H. PICKERING died at Monte Carlo, February 12th last. His commission was dated March 31st, 1865; and he was placed on half pay May 20th, 1889.

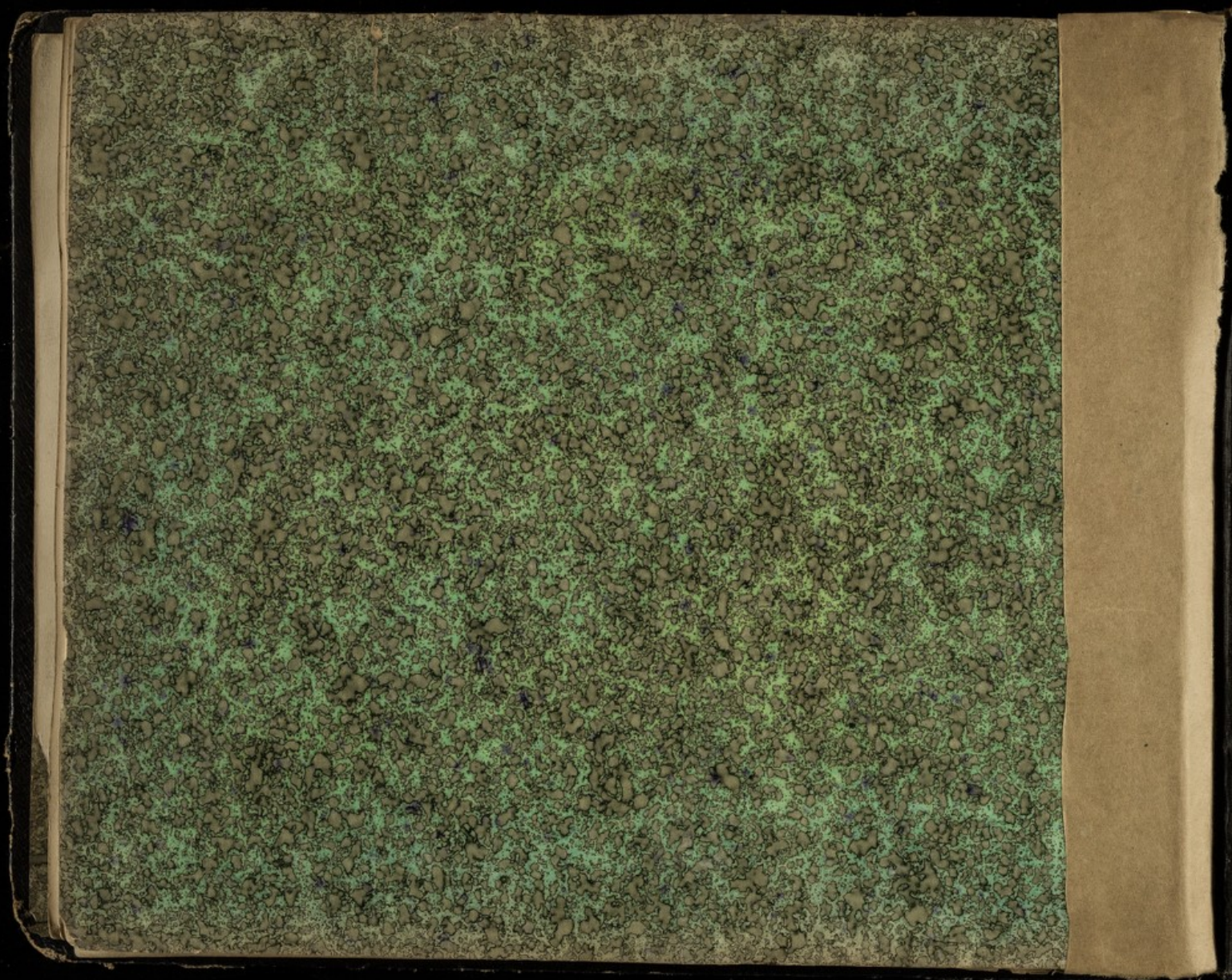
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*John Hill*





BIRD VIEW OF CENTRAL, SHOWING THE BANKS OF VICTORIA CITY, HONG KONG.





Bound by  
KELLY & WALSH, LD.  
HONG KONG.

