**Training Ship Exmouth**

**Blue Ensign of TS Exmouth with shield of Metropolitan Asylums Board.**

by *Martin Grieve*, 6 September 2003

In 1875 the Metropolitan Asylums Board set up a Poor Law Training School in the 2nd rate ship of the line Exmouth, moored in the lower Thames off Grays in Essex. She replaced Goliath, another training ship that had been destroyed by fire. By the turn of the century she was unfit for further service and replaced by a new ship built of steel but similar in appearance to a ship of the line.

The first ensign of which I have found any record was granted by Admiralty Warrant on 6 January 1928. It was for a Blue Ensign defaced with the shield of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, blazoned, argent on a cross gules the rod of Aesculapius or, a bordure engrailed sable. A note added that it represented 'the red cross of medicine and ambulance work, and the golden staff of the heathen founder of the art of healing.'

The image shown here is derived solely from the description. Martin and I had originally decided that the shield would have been given a white outline, rather than a white circle, to separate the shield from the field of the ensign, but I then found http://www.pavitt4.fsnet.co.uk/training\_ship\_exmouth.htm and although the design of the badge is not distinguishable, it is obviously on a white circle, which would not seem necessary for the London County Council badge (below).

*David Prothero*

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