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APPENDIX I of the Book
'A Naval Schoolmaster Looks Back' (1989, ISBN: 1 85093 141 0) by Ivor D. Lawrence
(Recording the History of RN Schoolmasters)

SCHOOLMASTER R.N. – GESTATION AND BIRTH - SCHOOLMASTER R.N.

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In 1731 came the first printed regulations:

'No person shall be warranted to serve as Schoolmaster in any H.M. Ship who has not been first examined before the Master, Wardens, and Assistants of the Trinity House of Deptford Street and produced a certificate under their hands of his being well skilled in the theory and practice of navigation and qualified to teach youth therein, and another under the hands of known Persons of Credit, testifying the sobriety of his life and conversation.

'He is to employ his time on board in instructing the volunteers in writing and arithmetic and the study of navigation.

'He is likewise to teach the other youths of the ship according to such orders as he shall receive from the Captain, and with regard to their several capacities whether in reading, writing, or otherwise.

'He is to be early every morning at the place of teaching and to represent the names of such as are idle, or averse to learning, to the Commander, in order to his taking course for their correction.'

Chaplains also shared the duty of instructing 'Young Gentlemen'.

In March 1772, a Memorial over the signature of the Earl of Pembroke Lord High Admiral, was submitted to the Queen in the following terms:

'It being a very great consequence to the Nation that all possible care should be taken to instruct such Young Gentlemen who are, or shall hereafter be, appointed to serve as volunteers in H.M. Fleet, not only in theory, but practice of navigation, because from them the Navy will, in great measure, from time to time, be supplied with officers when those who are already so shall fall by death or otherwise. I do therefore humbly propose unto Her Majesty that, besides the pay of an ordinary midshipman there may be the allowance of £20 per annum made to such persons who shall for this end enter themselves on board H.M. Ships of the 3rd, 4th and 5th rate.'

A memorial of 1816 said:

'... the situation of Schoolmasters on board H.M. Ships is at present so ill-remunerated - namely at the same rate as the youngest midshipman's - that it is found impossible to obtain the persons of adequate requirements to undertake this duty. We however feel so strongly the importance of the subject of education of young persons in H.M. Navy, as well of the upper ranks as of the lower, that we have felt ourselves bound to propose an addition to the pay of the Schoolmasters of the Fleet.'

Chaplains who undertook teaching duties were denominated Chaplain and Naval Instructor and continued in that capacity until the early 1900s, after which no such appointments were made, the teaching devolved solely on the Instructor Branch.

In 1862 Naval Instructors and Schoolmasters (Warrant Rank) separated; Schoolmasters mainly for teaching Boy Ratings, his salary being that of a boy who might be no more than 14 years old, the midshipman, 24 shillings per month.

The main reason for the scheme's failure, however, lay in the obstructive attitude of the other officers who, themselves quite uneducated, objected to what they regarded as a high-faluting standard quite undesirable in their juniors. Even as

late as the early years of the present century, one of the commonest complaints of the Naval Instructor was that his pupils at sea, whenever they were supposed to be chasing 'X' with him, were always being sent for by the Commander or 'Number One' to perform some more strictly practical task.

(The above extracts of information have been kindly supplied by the NAVAL HISTORICAL LIBRARY).

My ladder of progress

1923 Warrant Officer.

21/2/35 Commissioned Warrant Officer (12 years; formerly 15 years).

1/9/38 Senior Master.

2/9/47 Instructor Lieutenant.