

All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

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EDITORIAL

I've "upgraded" to Windows 10. I'm not entirely happy. First, I upgraded by accident – I must have had a wrist hair on the touch pad. Secondly despite all the assurances that you can revert to Windows 8 that particular feature is well hidden as I have not found it yet. So I suppose I'll have to persevere with "10". Thirdly using the scanner was considerably easier with 8 compared to 10. Now the screens are totally different and the "copy" option disappears just when you reach the stage when you want to copy something. Why must they change things for no good reason? Microsoft have forgotten about KISS! (Keep It Simple Stupid).

Rob Morgan brought an article by Peter Antill in the Society of Twentieth Century Wargames Journal to my attention. It was about the plans for the invasion of Japan in 1945. Forty two aircraft carriers, twenty four battleships and four hundred destroyers and frigates. Deception plans, decoy fleets to draw off the kamikazes etc. Rob asks if anyone has ever war-gamed this "what if". If so, what about a few words for AGB or Battlefleet?

On Friday 12th February I posted, 2nd class, a cheque to Navwar for the British and German Great War Starter Packs. I thought that it would be 7 to 10 days before anything arrived so imagine my surprise when the Starter Packs arrived on Monday 15th Feb. Well done to Royal Mail and Navwar.

Welcome to new Members, Stewart Gibson, Hugh Tulloch and Phil Ireson.

Somewhere in the World, the Sun is over the yardarm.

Norman Bell

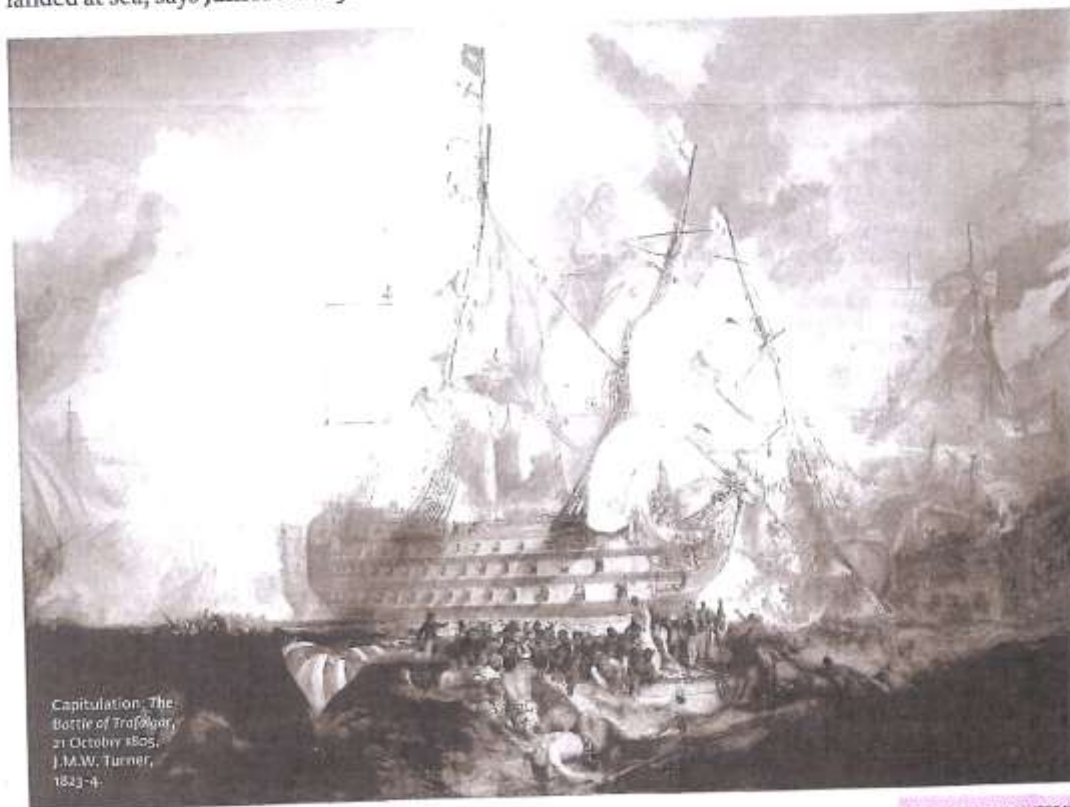
"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do, than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." - Mark Twain.

The Navy and the Napoleonic Wars

Though attention this year has been focused on the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo, the decisive blows that defeated Napoleon were landed at sea, says **James Davey**.

AT FIRST LIGHT on July 15th, 1815 the naval captain Frederick Lewis Maitland stood on the quarterdeck of HMS *Bellerophon* and watched a small French brig-of-war slowly approach. On any other day its appearance would have prompted him to prepare his ship for an easy capture, but today the guns stayed silent. As Maitland knew, the vessel contained a unique cargo: on board was Napoleon Bonaparte, until recently the Emperor of France and commander of its armies. One month earlier, Napoleon had fought and lost the Battle of Waterloo, after which he abdicated and retreated westwards to the port of Rochefort. Here he hoped to locate a ship to take him to America, but instead he found Maitland's *Bellerophon* blocking his escape; not for the first time, his plans were thwarted by the Royal Navy. 'Wherever wood can swim, there I am sure to find this flag of England', a despondent Napoleon commented. Desperately short of options, he decided to surrender to Captain Maitland.

Napoleon's capitulation is a fascinating and frequently overlooked coda to the Napoleonic Wars. Indeed, it was a deeply symbolic moment, for when he stepped on board *Bellerophon* the former French emperor yielded to the force that had offered the most constant and effective opposition to his mastery of the European continent. To those present, it was self-evident that the Royal Navy had played a crucial role in deciding the outcome of the war, but 200 years on, its role in the Napoleonic Wars has been overlooked, if



Capitulation: The Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805. J.M.W. Turner, 1823-4.

not entirely forgotten, with the terrestrial war receiving the lion's share of scholarly and popular attention. In 2015 the bicentenary of the end of the Napoleonic Wars has been almost solely concentrated on the Battle of Waterloo, which has been marked with a wide array of commemorative events and a vast outpouring of publications that covered the battle and its legacy.

Such is the power of the anniversary to focus contemporary attention on a key event from the past, it is understandable that politicians, historians and the public alike have highlighted Napoleon's final battlefield defeat as a moment worthy of special recognition. However, this focus is problematic as it neglects one of the most important and fascinating dimensions of the war; namely, that fought on the world's oceans. This was no sideshow: indeed, the conflict at sea was a vital theatre in which Napoleon's

Spanish navies, it did not end the war at sea; if anything it grew in scale and intensity in the subsequent years. Napoleon's dominance on land meant that the war would continue and he hastily began to rebuild his fleet, prompting a series of British raids and amphibious assaults calculated to undermine his maritime ambitions. Between 1806 and 1809 the Royal Navy conducted numerous operations to ensure that his fleets were either blockading in port or destroyed. It also went to great lengths to ensure that the fleets of other nations did not fall into his hands; operations that involved naval surveillance, daring enterprises and on one occasion, at Copenhagen in 1807, the pre-emptive bombardment of a neutral city.

Britannia rules the waves

Alongside these attacks, the navy conducted a tenacious blockade of the French Empire, while simultaneously protecting convoys of British merchant ships and attacking those of the enemy. Commerce continued to grow, creating wealth that was transformed into state revenues that not only helped to finance the war effort but also provided the vast subsidies that funded the armies of Russia, Austria and Prussia and the many coalitions against Napoleon. At the same time, the Royal Navy's blockade of Europe crippled the economy of France and its allies, bringing about the defeat of Napoleon's 'Continental System'. In some regions the navy oversaw vast smuggling operations that allowed conquered nations and vassal states around Europe to turn against Napoleonic rule and continue trading with Britain; in others, naval blockade forced Napoleon's allies to reconsider their allegiance. In 1812 economic pressure forced Russia to abandon its French alliance, prompting Napoleon's fateful march on Moscow, while two years later the navy's blockade of the North American coastline forced the hostile United States to come to terms.

Even amid the final land-based campaigns, the navy played a vital role. The navy's command of European waters allowed it to provide crucial logistical support as the coalition of nations fought to overthrow Napoleon. The Duke of Wellington, who commanded the British army's successful campaigns in Spain noted in 1813, 'If anyone wishes to know the history of this war, I will tell them that it is our maritime superiority [that] gives me the power of maintaining my army while the enemy is unable to do so.' Without the navy, the Peninsular War could not have been won.

This is not to disregard or denigrate the role of the British army or the other European military and guerrilla forces that contributed to Napoleon's defeat. However, it seems clear that the men of the navy played a vital role in ensuring allied victory. In 1803 Napoleon had entered the war with Britain confident that his dominance on land could be easily replicated at sea. By 1815, however, he was a defeated man, forced to sail into captivity within the wooden walls of a naval warship. After his long voyage, Napoleon arrived on the rocky island of St. Helena, where he confided to his surgeon that the Royal Navy was 'the real force and bulwark of England'. The long years of war had given him ample reason to believe this was the case: the navy was truly his most implacable enemy and, ultimately, his captor.

James Davey is Curator, National Maritime Museum and author of *In Nelson's Wake: The Navy and the Napoleonic Wars* (Yale University Press, 2015).



JOHN BULL PEEPING INTO BREST

Bullying Napoleon: John Bull Peeping into Brest by George Woodward, 1803.

ambitions were persistently and irretrievably crushed. From the outbreak of war in 1803 through to Napoleon's final surrender, the Royal Navy offered constant opposition to the French emperor as he strove to achieve complete dominance of continental Europe.

The navy's most important contribution was in the early years of the war, when it stood alone against the full might of Napoleonic France. For two years, a vast enemy army was camped in northern France, poised to invade Britain. The fear of invasion preoccupied public and politicians alike, but the Royal Navy thwarted all Napoleon's attempts to cross the Channel. Its unceasing blockade of France put a halt to any French sorties and ensured that Britain remained in the contest. From this, all else followed.

Amphibious assaults

The navy also fought a series of great battles to secure and maintain British maritime supremacy, the most famous of which was undoubtedly that fought off Cape Trafalgar on October 21st, 1805. The story of this notable event is well known: the battle was a triumph for the navy, one tempered only by the death of Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson at the moment of his greatest victory. However, the battle was not as decisive as some historians might claim. While Nelson's victory was certainly a powerful blow against the French and

JUTLAND 100 UPDATE

Jutland 100 on 31st May 2016! I would like to thank everybody who has volunteered so far.

1. **Players and Other Volunteers.** I am still looking for as many volunteers to help play the game and engage with the public etc. I am also looking for volunteers to help with the playtesting, including from those not able to attend the event itself.
2. **Ships.** David Manley and Tim Moore have said they can provide some ships but to do this properly we need every ship, including all 100 plus destroyers. I would be most grateful if anyone else can let me know what they are willing to contribute.
3. **Rules and Playtesting.** My first go at doing the rules has been round and thank you very much for the contributions which will make the event go more smoothly. We will be using General Quarters 2 with some limited modifications, some of which will speed up play, some will add a bit of complication to try and capture the command and control issues that the admirals fought with. Players will need to be willing to lose their traditional “gods eye” view in the interest of making the battle more believable. The RN Museum is keen that these challenges are borne out in our game. I would now like to see them play tested to ensure they survive contact with reality. Test day is 16th April, Callow End, near Worcester. This is also an opportunity for those who want to get involved in the event but can't make the day itself.

I look forward to hearing from you if you can attend either the playtest or the event itself.

Stuart Machin at stuart.machin@hotmail.co.uk

THE HUNT FOR THE BOLZANO by Vaio is just one of the good things in the next edition of “Battlefleet”. AGB and Battlefleet rely on NWS Members supplying articles of interest and you have not let us down yet. Stuart Fieldhouse is the new editor of Battlefleet. Help him to maintain the high standard of previous editions.

The archives have been raided by Rob Morgan again for the Sea Quiz.

Sea Quiz 49 answers.

The answer to Q5 is I suspect a standard ‘Board’ answer, but it did cause some discontent, over what calibre guns had to be fired to make one, and its duration too. Funny lot gunnery officers.

1. It began in 1870, when he replaced E. J. Reed as Admiralty Chief Constructor.
2. It was the Spanish Frigate *Numancia* under steam and sail between 1865 -68.
3. Now this was the paddle-steamer ‘Oberon’, for experimental purposes, and yes there was a debate over it!
4. HMS St. George (obviously!), and the Italian Cruiser San Giorgio, and the Austrian Cruiser Sankt Georg. I thought there would be more...
5. A Carronade is merely ‘*The continuance of fire of artillery.*’

SEA QUIZ 50.

Every so often, the compiler of this little quiz went from naval questions, over which so many argued, to broader maritime ones. I suspect he believed that all competent naval types should know a bit more about ships and the sea than they let on! This is definitely a non-naval set of questions.....

1. A tablet on the Victoria Embankment facing the Thames bears six names, Donald, Burns, Benbow, etc. Who were they and why is the tablet there?
2. The origin of the name Isle of Dogs?
3. What carried a cargo of Tyne coal, road-rail and pig lead?
4. What did Henry Winstanley build in 1698?
5. The largest shipbuilding yard in the world? (This was asked in 1953 of course).

CSS DAVID Torpedo Boat...

A very valuable article on what is still a very much neglected area in the naval warfare of the American Civil War has appeared in *'The Mariner's Mirror'* (Vol.101, no 4) journal of the Society for Nautical Research (pp410-425), *'Reconstructing the Design of CSS David'* written by John D. Littlefield of Texas, this is an evaluation of the small group of interesting semi-submersible torpedo boats used by the Confederacy. Much was expected of these vessels initially, so that the Yankees might be' *chased from our coast by submarine propellers.*'

It was *CSS David* which carried out the first successful torpedo attack, on the huge Union Ironclad *USS New Ironsides*, the huge warship was seriously damaged and Littlefield provides an interesting analysis of the boat's action and potential, which was, arguably, significant. There were several of them, and they differed a little in dimensions and in capability, some were given protection against small-arms fire, a big problem in the attack on *New Ironsides*, but not in armament or overall simplicity of design, at one point the author refers to the *'Midge'* on display at New York, as a *'David Class vessel'*, and hints that there was (where now I wonder?) a collection of photographs which were taken at the War's end, and he gives a specific number, of six torpedo boats, at Charleston, in 1865. They seem to have been simply abandoned at their jetties!

I found this article very useful, especially when read in conjunction with the Osprey *'New Vanguard'* *'Confederate Submarines and Torpedo Vessels'* title by Angus Konstam (a volume previously reviewed in *'Battlefleet'*) and it is an interesting sortie into a field of war which has more potential in wargames terms than those (sadly) one-sided dust ups between a single Confederate Ironclad ram with poor engines and a couple of Federal monitors!

In terms of wargame models of these delightful and dangerous men-o'-war, there are two sources of good sound models in 1/600th scale, first and at low cost, is the pack of four *'David's'* from 'Peter Pig', these are semi submerged, 'in cation' and only about 10-12mm of the hull shows, and the funnel can be altered slightly for different variants of the torpedo boats, two photos on pages 420 and 421 of Littlefield's article show that there was indeed a noticeable difference, the rest of the model's hidden beneath the waves, of course! A larger and far more imposing, but rather expensive *CSS David* is in the American company 'Thoroughbred's' list, again a pack of four. The hull sits higher in the water, the bow torpedo boom is complete and visible, there's just a little internal detail visible too, and the funnel is separate, so again this can be slightly altered for some variety. With a pack of each, all of them are sea-base mounted by the way, you have more or less the complete 'class'. Unfortunately, the other big 1/600th producer 'Bay Area Yards' doesn't seem to have ventured in this direction yet. Other readers may have other favoured sources of models.

The article ends with a long list of some forty references, most probably all of them well known to US readers, but barely known at all on this side of the pond. Titles

like the *'South Carolina Historical Magazine'*, *'Lippincott's Magazine'* and *'Confederate Veteran'* for example, part of a wealth of 'new' material which hopefully may become more widely known as Littlefield's research and publication progresses. I wondered if these boats were simply given numbers or even local names in service? *'Hunley'* was...

Rob Morgan.



The Jutland Memorial Park will be opened later this year, near Thyboron on the west coast of Denmark. 8,500 stone figures, one for each sailor lost will be clustered around granite pillars representing the ships lost. Danish sculptor Paul Cederdorff came up with the idea of a permanent memorial, which does not distinguish between nationalities. The Park has the backing of Nick Jellicoe and Rheinhard Scheer-Hennings, grandsons of the men who led the opposing fleets in 1916.





Badly damaged German battlecruiser SEYDLITZ bows down after action. The ship was hit by one torpedo, eight 15 inch shells (five of which hit below the waterline) and eight 12 inch shells. She was badly flooded, this being exacerbated by steaming too quickly, 5329 tons of water were taken on board causing a list of 8 degrees to port and the ship was nearly lost.

Thanks to Phil Dunn for info as follows:

A site of interest to naval and military enthusiasts could well be artorium military art.co.uk where fine oil paintings are on sale at affordable prices. Their resident artist Ken Fisher was a participant in early NWS games in south London and he has written and co-written several sets of naval rules and won many prizes for his participation games at conventions. One of his art works is currently on display in The Whitehouse no less. Of particular interest to NWS Members will be his excellent portrayal of Jutland showing Dreadnoughts under fire with the four major Commanders artistically shown within. Ken has a whole variety of military art to view on the site. Why not take a look at what is there – it may well catch your eye. (Ken also did a cover for AGB back in the nineties).

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Available from Wargame Vault at what I suggest is a reasonable price; a PDF download. The author is our very own David Manley (and no, I'm not on commission. Ed.)

<http://www.wargamevault.com/product/154102/Lord-of-the-Sea>

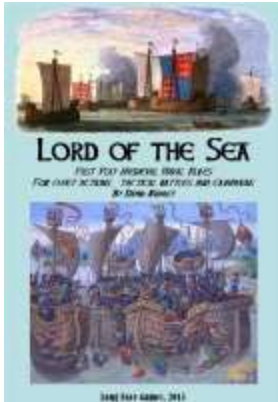
***Fast Play Medieval Naval Rules***

***For fleet actions, tactical battles and campaigns***

***By David Manley***



A collection of fast play rules covering individual ship actions, major battles and featuring an extended campaign system, "Lord of the Sea" is set primarily on naval actions in Northern European waters in the 13th to 15th centuries. The rules have been written with 1/1200 scale models in mind, their inspiration being the models designed by Outpost Wargaming Services and others.



Geoff Curran has produced a PDF of Ship and Game markers that you may also like to consider.

[http://www.wargamevault.com/product/156075/Naval-Warfare--Medieval-Ships--Lords-of-the-Sea-Counter-set?src=slider\\_view](http://www.wargamevault.com/product/156075/Naval-Warfare--Medieval-Ships--Lords-of-the-Sea-Counter-set?src=slider_view)

Simon has staged the participation wargame "The Yangtze Incident" at several shows and game days....

Before HMS AMYTHYST and the "Yangtze Incident..."

Japan's sinking of a US gunboat during its assault on Nanking heightened tensions between the two countries four years before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

On the morning of December 12, 1937, the US gunboat *Panay* was anchored in the middle of the Yangtze River 27 miles upriver from Nanking. On board was a crew of four officers, 49 enlisted men and assorted Chinese natives. Also aboard were a number of foreign nationals escaping the imminent Japanese onslaught on Nanking.

*The Panay had been patrolling the waters of the Yangtze for nine years, showing the flag and protecting American interests from the numerous Chinese bandits. Trouble was always brewing in China but now the situation was especially dangerous. The Japanese army was encircling the Chinese capital of Nanking forcing the Chinese government to flee. The Panay headed up river to escape the danger zone. With her were three American oil tankers.*

Suddenly, Japanese planes appeared overhead. Despite the American flag draped on top of the afterdeck and the ship's obvious markings, three waves of Japanese planes bombed and strafed the ship. The three oil tankers were also destroyed. Two American sailors and an American captain of one the oil tankers were killed.

The Japanese government apologized, called the incident a case of mistaken identity and made reparations of over \$2,000,000. The apology did not alleviate the suspicion that the act was deliberate and the incident added to the souring relationship between the two countries.

References: Perry, Hamilton, *The Panay Incident: Prelude to Pearl Harbor* (1969).



The USS *Panay* patrolling the Yangtze, 1928

<http://www.usspanay.org/attacked.shtml>

The “Panay Incident” is mentioned in the novel, “The Corps (Book 1) Semper Fi” by W.E.B. Griffin; which led me to look it up and find the above.

### **JOINING THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY**

If you have been lent this newsletter and would like to join the Naval Wargames Society, please follow this link to join our Society:

[www.navalwargamesociety.org](http://www.navalwargamesociety.org).

Membership secretary: [simonjohnstokes@aol.com](mailto:simonjohnstokes@aol.com)