



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

No. 298 – AUGUST 2019

The Submarine Escape Training Tank, SETT, has dominated the Gosport skyline for almost 70 years. As the tower is a Grade 2 Listed Building it will be there for a while yet, despite submarine escape training moving to Faslane. Over 150,000 British and allied silent service personnel have practised the technique of ascending to the surface from the depths. Built following the loss of HMS THETIS, 79 boats during WWII, HMS TRUCULENT and HMS ARTIMIS, the Tower, if my memory is correct, featured briefly in the film, "Above Us The Waves" about the X Craft attack on The Tirpitz. In the 1960s, the peak of usage, 6,000 escapes were practised every year. Submariners from the RN, Australia, Turkey, Israel, Italy and the USA learning how not to panic and to continually breathe out during the ascent. (Rather them than me).

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

Norman Bell

6th August. International Naval Wargames Day.

Celebrate the birth of the father of naval wargaming, Fred T Jane, on the occasion of his birthday. Play games, solo or with friends, and post your action reports, on your blog or your favourite wargaming websites. Help raise the profile of naval wargaming by supporting INWarD 2019!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/378874356297933/>



HMNZS TE KAHA - F77. The two Anzac class frigates, HMNZS TE KAHA and HMNZS TE MANA, are the main fighting ships of the Royal New Zealand Navy. The frigates will reach the end of their service life in the mid-2020s.



Just some of Phil Broeders' Napoleonic 1:2400 fleet (from [Tumbling Dice](#)).

Italian air raid on Malta, Valletta Harbour. Mat of the harbour (from [Tiny Wargame Mats](#)), The Italians split their bombers, sending three after a destroyer and the other six after the large tanker.



1st Anglo Dutch War. English ships set one of the Dutch 3rd rates on fire! Picture from the Facebook [Naval Wargames Group](#).

Players of modern and near future conflicts are unfortunately not short of possible trouble spots. The Persian Gulf, South China Sea, Ukraine/Russia Sea of Azov and what about claims for a share of Antarctica to name but four. Perhaps you can write an AAR for inclusion in AGB or Battlefleet.

Fathom

The term *fathom* has roots in Dutch, Latin, and Old English words and is basically a unit of measurement, roughly six feet, taken when one stretches his or her arms wide, as if giving a hug. In fact, the Old English word *faethm*, means “to embrace.” It is now used as a nautical unit of measurement equal to exactly six feet.



HMAS ADELAIDE.



Class	Modified Town Class
Type	Cruiser
Nickname	HMAS Longdelayed
Motto	Ut Prosint Omnibus Coniuncti (United for the Common Weal)
Builder	HMA Naval Dockyard, Cockatoo Island, Sydney
Laid Down	20 November 1915
Launched	27 July 1918
Launched by	Lady Helen Munro Ferguson, wife of Governor-General
Commissioned	5 August 1922
Decommissioned	13 May 1946
Fate	Sold and broken up

“The Anglo-Saxon Navy of Alfred the Great”

Alfred was King of Wessex from 871AD, and became King of the Anglo-Saxons from 886-899AD. He was a King with a fleet. I recall, in an issue of ‘BATTLEFLEET’ some years back, that there was an article on the ships of what the ungodly call ‘The Dark Ages’ but we historians regard as the Early Medieval period. Unfortunately, I can’t remember the exact issue or who wrote the well-illustrated piece; it’s probably sitting in a box in my archives the attic!

I do possess a few 1/1200th scale ships of that era though, you know the ones I’m talking about.....Navwar’s 1/1200th Viking Longship and Saxon Ship (the latter a very decent model), and Triton’s 1/600th Longship with yard lowered and the German migration ship. These are less satisfactory of course, but can with a bit of effort be turned into companions for the 1/1200th’s.

I’m digressing, and should return to the subject...which is an article I’ve found in a 25 year old copy of ‘Miniature Wargames’ (No 131 for April 1994). Pages were Roman numbed then so VI to IX carried an article with this exact title by Peter Cameron (too much to hope for that he’s an NWS member and reading this?) It’s an excellent piece, dealing with the evidence for the King’s fleets, and providing a description of the late Anglo-Saxon ‘navy’: also provided is a selection of potential scenarios, with ‘land’ options too. The final section ‘Wargaming the Battle’ is a bit thin, given that models were around then, and there’s no hint at rules. These are best taken, in my opinion, from the Viking series which Russ at Kremlin produced. Very good indeed!

The last comment on Peter Cameron’s article is that he mentions a handful of books and articles as further reading and worth looking up. His own ‘*Saxons, Sea and Sail*’ in ‘The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology’ Nov. 1982 (pp 319-332) and a very old piece, by F. P. Magoun, ‘*King Alfred’s Naval and Beach Battle with the Danes in 896*’ pages 409-414 of ‘Modern Language Review’ Vol 27...1942 (yes that’s right-1942, and the MLR was a publication which not infrequently ventured to sea, and contained more than a few gems for the naval researcher). I do have a question which perhaps someone can help with...Saxon flags and banners. What could be flown (if anything) by Alfred’s ships? It would be interesting if anyone has found any information on sails too, plain? Or perhaps a simple cross? Or another religious symbol? Was there a household emblem possibly?

Rob Morgan.

A French Fleet in Mexico.c1840.

A Note by Rob Morgan.

One of my colleagues based in Normandy has sent me a copy of a French Navy Ship List dating from 1838 which in part answers some questions I had about that short but interesting naval war between Mexico and the Republic of Texas. I'll return to that conflict later, but this gives a list of what must have been the most powerful Squadron active anywhere in the Americas at that time. French troops had of course landed at Veracruz in 1838, and the US Navy did not interfere, in this post-Monroe Doctrine era. Even though six Mexican Brigs based at Veracruz had been deployed against the fledgling, vigorous Texan force of schooners, brigs and privateers. An interesting small naval campaign in itself.

These six brigs were immediately seized by the French, and though the following list doesn't indicate that any of the seven Brigs listed were the Mexican warships, it would be remarkable if the original expedition consisted of such a high proportion of Brigs compared to other vessels.

The French fleet in Mexico was commanded by Vice-Admiral Baudin, who flew his flag in the Frigate *Neriede* (52). Five frigates in all constituted the strength of the fleet, with a single Corvette, 7 Brigs, 4 bomb vessels, 2 auxiliaries, an armed transport and 3 armed steamers. A substantial force.

The Frigates were *Nereide* (52), *Iphegenie* (60), *Herminie* (60) *Gloire* (52) and *Medee* (46). The Corvette *Creole* (24) was commanded by the Prince de Joinville.

The Brigs were a mixed bunch, which perhaps indicates that some were Mexican captures re-named. *Alcibiade* (20), *Voltigeur* (20), *Cuirassier* (18), and the smaller *Eclipse* (10), *Dupetit-Thouars* (10), *Laurier* (10) and *Zebre* (10).

The four bomb vessels were *Cyclope*, *Volcan*, *Éclair* and *Vulcain*. The auxiliaries *Caravane* and *Fortune*, have no armament listed, nor has the transport *Saumon*. The three armed steamers were *Veloce* described as on a temporary mission to Mexico, and paddlers *Phaeton* and *Meteore*.

The list gives the date of service in Mexican waters, all from 1838 and the landings at Veracruz, but there are a few exceptions. The Frigate *Herminie* was present in June 1835, while the 20 gun Brig *Alcibiade* was there in January 1837, and so were the three small Brigs *Eclipse*, *Dupetit-Thouars*, and *Laurier*. The steamer *Meteore* is also listed as present off Mexico in late 1835.

All of these warships can be found as very reasonably priced attractive models in the 'Tumbling Dice' 1/2400th range. ASN6 and ASN 7 will provide the 60 and 52 gun Frigates, ASN12 the Corvette, ASN 16 the bombs, and ASN 13, 21 and 22 the Brigs. For the few 'gaps', especially the transport *Saumon*, I turned to the Magister Militum list, which has the 'Figurehead' range in 1/2400th, and these are very compatible with 'Tumbling Dice'. From this I used FM-1 large merchantman from the Napoleonic series, and for the steamers the same source, Fe-28 Screw/sail steamer for *Veloce*, and FE-27 for the two paddlers. The same 'Tumbling Dice' range will provide a small Texan naval force for commerce raiding, and for the 'commerce' 'Figurehead's' FM-3, coastal craft.

French reinforcements in the South Atlantic, as listed, if needed, would be the Frigate *Minerve* (58) at Brazil, under Rear-Admiral Leblanc, with the Frigate *Junon* (46) and the Corvettes *Sappho* (32), *Camille* (20) and *Perle* (18). Leblanc also had the Brigs *Alerte* (20), *Adonis* (20) along with *D'Assas* (20), and *Badine*, *Sylphe* and *Lutin* (10 guns each). This sizeable second French force also had the auxiliary *Bonite*, transports *Indienne* and *Expeditive* but no steamships.

In the Caribbean, the French navy maintained the Frigate *Astrees* (46) in the Antilles, under the command of Rear Admiral de Moges, who also had with him the Corvette *Thisbe* (32), Brigs *Bisson*, *Oreste*, *Cygne* (20 guns each) and *Inconstant* (16), and *Fabert* (10). Also in the Antilles were the 800 ton auxiliaries *Adour*, *Oise*, and *Aube*, the small transports *Lionne* and *Recherche*.

At Haiti the 24 gun Corvette *Naiade*, and Brig *Griffon* (20), and at Guadeloupe the small gunboat *Alsacienne* (4) completed a rather substantial French presence in American waters. Over fifty warships and auxiliaries not to mention three Admirals, in a small corner of the world, in the latter months of 1838.

There's the recipe for more than one wargames campaign in there *mes amis*.

Rob Morgan.

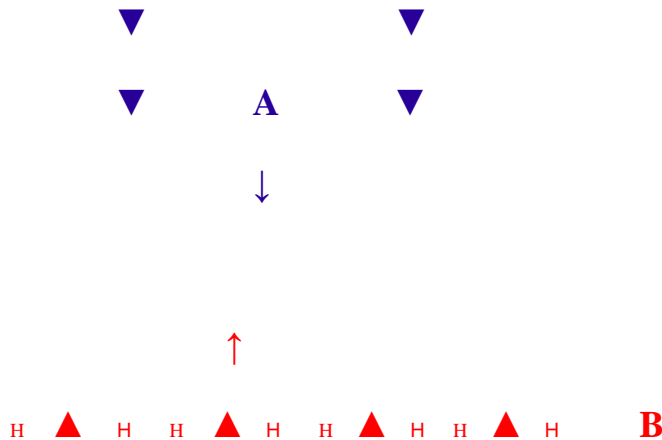
In answer to Rob Morgan's question about Harvey Torpedoes in last month's AGB. Andy Field supplied the following:

I *think* this is right: Other members may be more knowledgeable about Harvey Torpedoes. There are bits on to internet about them.

Harvey Torpedoes

Also known as Otter Torpedoes, possibly because they used an otter board to keep them from swinging into the deploying ship.

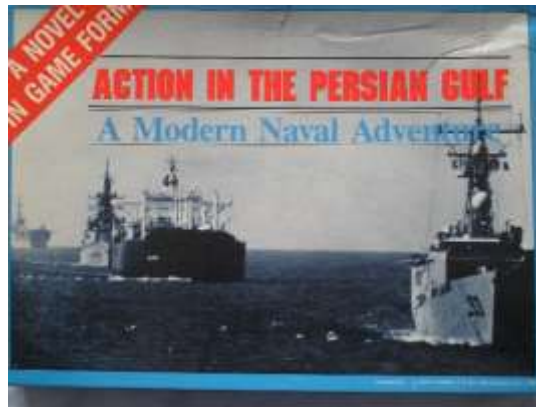
They were deployed either side of the ship, towed in a similar way to later paravanes. The idea was that they would explode on contact with enemy ships. At the time there was considerable differences of opinion as to naval tactics and Line Abreast of echelons were favoured, both opposing fleets approaching head on. The intention was to pass through each other's formation, exchanging fire from quick firing guns to clear decks of exposed personnel and cause damage to upper works, using the heavier, slower-firing main guns to deliver decisive blows against armour, hoping to sink or disable enemy ships. After perhaps two passes, ships would then attempt to ram cripples. Harvey torpedoes deployed between ships would extend the formation and make it more lethal when ships passed through each other's formation or attempted to ram. Battles were expected to be short and sharp encounters, about 20 minutes or so.



In this example, Fleet A is deployed in two columns and will pass between Fleet B in Line Abreast. Fleet B has Harvey Torpedoes deployed, (H) which Fleet A may run into when both fleets pass, trading broadsides. Alternatively, if Fleet B ships turn to ram, the Harvey Torpedoes will add to their offensive power.

Andy Field

“Action In The Persian Gulf” by Enola Games, covers the escort of Kuwaiti super-tankers by US Warships in 1987-89. Mines, suicide boats, hovercraft and Iranian F14 Tomcats all play a part. The convoy of tankers and escorts proceeds through the Gulf to the Straits of Hormuz on an area map (macroturns) and any action takes place on a suitable playing area (microturns). The USN Fox, Kidd and Crommelin all have helicopters. Can you escort the tankers through the danger area to safety without shooting down any passing commercial airliner in error? Recent events in the Gulf indicate a 2019 supplement is required.



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112), left, sails alongside Chilean replenishment ship CNS Araucano (AO-53) during a replenishment-at-sea as part of exercise Teamwork South 2019.

SIGNAL PAD!

Naval Wargames Weekend, October 5th/6th 2019

NWS NEWS

The Naval Wargames Society is holding the ninth annual weekend of naval wargaming. As last year the event will be at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton, so expect some games featuring the FAA and the RNAS!

The emphasis of the event is on games and getting together, and we have had a lovely selection in recent years. Although it is primarily a gaming event there may well be some trade stands attending too and traders are welcome to attend (be aware it is a small event). We are on the lookout for volunteers to run games at the event. If you'd like to put on a game on either or both days, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Plenty of space and tables are available and there should be room for upwards of ten tables available of varying sizes. There will be a small charge for participation – last year this was £5 for one day, £7.50 for both days.

The aim of the event is to provide a forum where naval (and other) gamers can come together to run and/or play in each others' games. Games can be as long or as short as you like, and the intention is to include a few participation games so that members of the public can join in too.

For more details, or to book a table for a game for all or part of the weekend please contact Dave Sharp. Contact details for the Fleet Air Arm Museum are at the link: <http://www.fleetairarm.com/find-fleet-air-arm-museum.aspx>

dave_sharp@talktalk.net dave(underscore)sharp@talktalk.net

The UK Inter-Service T20 competition was held at Lord's Cricket Ground but unfortunately the RN lost both matches against the Army and RAF. Batting second against the RAF and chasing 137, the Navy were looking good for the win up until the 15th over but needed 7 off the last two balls and ended up losing by 6 runs. In the last match of the day, the Army needed a win against the Navy to regain the trophy from the RAF. Batting first, the Army were in trouble at 29 for 5 in the fifth over but recovered to finish on 136 for 8. The Navy started well and were 38 without loss before a middle order collapse and were all out for 115.

The aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) pulled into Brisbane July 5th, while the Arleigh Burke Class guided-missile destroyer USS McCampbell (DDG 85) pulled into Townsville, Australia, July 4th. While in port, Ronald Reagan Strike Group personnel took the opportunity to go on tours and participated in several events with the local community prior to starting exercise Talisman Sabre 2019.

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.navalwargamessociety.org.

Membership secretary: simonjohnstokes@aol.com

NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2019

NWS Northern Fleet – Falkirk East Central Scotland

Kenny Thomson, 12 Craigs Way, Rumford Grange, Rumford, Stirlingshire, FK2 0EU

Tel: 01324 714248

e-mail: kenny.thomson@hotmail.com - *Website:* <http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/>

Falkirk Wargames Club meets each Monday night at 7pm with a variety of games running each evening. Naval games are popular with 2 or 3 run each month. Campaign games sometimes

feature in our monthly weekend sessions. Games tend to be organised week to week making a 3-month forecast here a waste of time. Please get in touch if you'd like to come along.

- Popular periods – Modern (Shipwreck), WW1 and 2 (GQ), WW2 Coastal (Action Stations), and Pre-dreadnought (P Dunn's rules)

Devon and the West Country

Naval Wargames afternoon/evening/all day on a regular basis.

Contact Stuart Barnes Watson to arrange the details.

stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com

3 Clovelly Apartments, Oxford Park, Ilfracombe, DEVON, EX34 9JS

Tel: 01271 866637

Uruguay, SCOW: Southern Cone Orientales Wargamers • Games erupt, inquire to set one off: Bill Owen US telephone is [217-619-0202](tel:217-619-0202), Uruguay 099 834 544 WmOwen@aol.com • If Spanish speaking, email & I will get someone who speaks it better. • Soca, Canelones or in Montevideo we can arrange a "Graf Spee 3 Gun Salvo": see her 5.9" gun, anchor & rangefinder salvaged from the ship resting in the harbor, a Real English Tour conducted by British expat staff who were associated with the British Ambassador who won the post-battle diplomacy and subterfuge plus, of course, a GQ3 refight of the battle (fees for features like museum & tour). • Most of the Salvo can even be done during a cruise ship stop in MVD from a Round Cape Horn itinerary between Santiago<->Buenos Aires.

- wargamecampaign.wordpress.com

THE NAVAL WARGAMES SOCIETY <http://www.navalwargamessociety.org>
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