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# All Guns Blazing!

## Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

### No. 239 – SEPTEMBER 2014

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#### EDITORIAL

As I sit here at the Desktop PC compiling AGB, with my laptop to one side, my mobile 'phone (which contains more computing power than was on board Apollo 11) in my pocket, a TV in the corner with who knows how many channels, a toaster in the kitchen that contains a microchip, I thought about this little snippet of a story I came across the other week.

"On 12 August 1981, the IBM PC 5150 was unveiled at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. You would have had to shell out \$1,565 to get your hands on one, but that wasn't bad when you think that 20 years earlier, a computer would have cost you \$9m. That's assuming you had somewhere big enough to put it".

IBM had asked Microsoft to write the software and the rest, as they say, is history. Also what would \$9m and \$1,565 equal now adjusted for inflation?

Welcome to new NWS Members, L Rohrbaugh, J Briggs and M Hill.

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

Norman Bell

Thanks to Rob Morgan for info on these two lectures which are coming soon.

Allan Villiers Memorial Lecture.

This will be held in Oxford, at the University on Wednesday 1st October, and its title...."The German Submarine War 1914-1918", the key lecturer will be N.A.M. Rodger and entry to lectures which start at 14.00 and end late afternoon is free. To register contact [avmipurser@ntlworld.com](mailto:avmipurser@ntlworld.com)

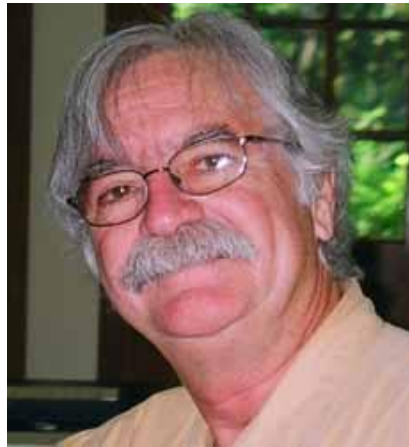
In the British Maritime History Series held in London at the Institute for Historical Research, on 18th November at 17.15 Dr Oliver Cox of Oxford University presents a free lecture entitled 'Ruling the Waves: King Alfred as a Naval Hero.' To book a place contact [research@rmg.co.uk](mailto:research@rmg.co.uk)

“Jack Greene” has come to my notice twice, quite independently in quick succession recently.

Part 1 of the “HOOD Analysis” was seen by Ken Ball and mentioned in AGB for April 2014. The second and final part of the “What happened to the Hood” analysis is at <http://theboardgamingway.com/happened-hood-replays/>. Also there are two wargame replays using “Jack Greene’s The Royal Navy” and Minden’s “Battleship Captain” rules. It is worth a look. Does anyone have Jack Greene’s Game? Could you write a short review for AGB? Jack also designed Avalon Hill’s “Bismarck 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition”, “Destroyer Captain”, and “Norway 1940”, among others. Minden’s website says that Battleship Captain will shortly be re-issued – Edition three.

## Guest of Honor

Jack Greene



NAVCON, Wisconsin in October was mentioned in July’s AGB. NAVCON’s special guest for 2014 is Jack Greene. Jack is a graduate of Whitman College with a BA in History. A native of California, he has written on a wide range of naval, military and wargaming subjects for over a dozen magazines including *Warship International*, *The Mariner’s Mirror*, *Strategy & Tactics* and *Command* and has designed 12 published wargames. He has worked with three game companies including The Avalon Hill Game Company, was a partner in Paper Wars and founded Quarterdeck Games.

Jack’s game design *IRONBOTTOM SOUND* won a Charles Roberts award in 1982. He has self-published two pamphlets, *Handbook on the Italian Army in World War II* (1988) and *Mare Nostrum* (1990). He and Alessandro Massignani have co-authored five books. A 1990 inductee into the Charles S. Roberts Hall of Fame, he also speaks on military, political and environmental topics at conventions and local service clubs and on local radio, including a long running 4th of July radio program.

Jack will be presenting in the NAVCON war college as well as demonstrating the game *Fleet Admiral II: The Battle of Jutland* at NAVCON.



My girlfriend's son recently had to go to Boston and San Francisco on a work related trip. (It's a hard life for some). The USA appears to have no trouble preserving Ships as museums / visitor attractions. It's a shame that the UK is not so good; the City of Edinburgh has been thinking of preserving Type 42 Destroyer HMS EDINBURGH for about a year now without a decision one way or the other and HMS ILLUSTRIOUS is waiting for her fate to be decided. These pictures are from San Francisco. That's a liberty ship in the background.





USS Missouri 1946

Since ancient times, the narrow bodies of water that make up the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles via the Sea of Marmara have held enormous strategic importance – both militarily and in terms of trade. The only way the Soviet navy can get from its Black Sea ports to the Mediterranean and the wider world is through the straits.

In 1936, the Soviet Union, along with several other regional and world powers, signed the Montreux Convention. It agreed that only ships from countries bordering the Black Sea could use the straits and it was up to neutral Turkey to police it. This, however, wasn't enough of a guarantee.

With the Second World War out of the way, Soviet deputy premier Lavrentiy Beria declared that eastern Turkey close to the Black Sea belonged to Georgia, then part of the Soviet Union. It had been stolen, he said, by the Turks during the days of the Ottoman Empire. Moscow also complained that ships not from the Black Sea had been allowed to pass through the straits in violation of the convention.

For the Americans, this confirmed their worst fears of Soviet expansionism. President Truman decided that the Soviet Union had to be contained, leading to the Truman Doctrine. In April 1946, the huge American battleship USS Missouri arrived in the straits, conveniently bearing the ashes of the deceased Turkish ambassador. The Soviet Union smelt a rat.

The crisis reached a head on 7 August 1946, when the Soviet Union handed Turkey a note stating that it had breached the Montreux Convention and a new treaty was needed. A Soviet military build-up followed. Fearing Soviet designs on the straits, Britain and the United States declared their support for Turkey and a naval taskforce was dispatched to the region. Moscow backed down, and under protest, withdrew its demands for a re-negotiation of the convention.

Turkey abandoned its policy of neutrality in accepting aid from the United States, and in 1952, joined NATO. With the death of Joseph Stalin the following year, the Soviet Union dropped its territorial claims and relations with Turkey began to thaw.

Possibilities for a “what if” wargame?

### Quiz Number 35 Answers.

Apart from question 4, these were, for 'The Navy' quite a difficult set of questions I thought.

1. The three French Cruisers were De Grasse, Guichen and Chateaurenault.
2. It was Brazil.
3. This was an interesting one, I'd never have got it, but it didn't raise a spark of interest among the readership, which is a pity. It was the Monitor USS Cheyenne (formerly USS Wyoming). She was broken up as late as 1939.
4. HMS Frobisher was the Cadet Training Cruiser of course.
5. Turkey, 'lately' because she joined the allied cause a matter of months before the end of the war.
6. They were lost off Korea 'with heavy loss of life'.

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### SEA QUIZ 36.

The letters, it might be better termed the 'complaints' page of 'The Navy' often poured scorn on the material divulged in a question or answer, rather than the choice of question. Number one brought an interesting series of why choose a valuable (*that's arguable!*) Royal Naval warship to become merely a 'gaudy fairground attraction' responses from readers.....

1. Which Royal Navy vessel was the 'Festival of Britain' ship?
2. Which US warship was the last sea command of Admiral Mahan?
3. 'Crocodile', 'Euphrates', 'Jumna' and 'Malabar' were vessels known as what in nineteenth century service?
4. What was their intended wartime role?
5. Name the only US Coast Guard vessel to be lost to enemy action in WWI.
6. Which Dutch warship had a defective 5.9" gun, and required 'special priority' from the Admiralty for repairs to enable her to take part in 'Overlord' in 1944?

A bit of a mixed bag this month, gentlemen.....

Good Luck, Rob Morgan.

### 'Catapults' at Sea?

I've recently reviewed *'The Catapult: A History'* by Tracey Rihll ( Pub: Westholme, Pennsylvania 2007) for another publication. It's almost entirely related to the world of Antiquity in the Mediterranean; but it contains a number of comments on the use of throwing engines aboard classical warships.

Hannibal it seems used stone throwing engines aboard his warships to throw pots of poisonous snakes onto the decks of his enemies, the allies of Rome c207BC; while the Romans on at least one occasion found themselves on the receiving end of pots containing '*stinging insects*'. The use of thrown incendiaries against Antony's largest warships at Actium's well known.

Antony's largest vessels, well armed with throwing engines, were intended to be used in sieges against the coastal cities of Italy, and ship to shore bombardment was common enough- at least where the fleets of Rome were concerned. Rihll elaborates on the use of these engines against the Britons lining the shore to oppose Caesar's landing in 55 BC, they must have been very effective as they gave the Legionaries space to manoeuvre and disembark. In that most interesting year of AD 69, Otho and Vitellius, squabbling for the throne, fought an encounter in which 'catapults' in the prows of warships sent packing a force of cavalry.

Some of the devices thrown by the engines ( the writer sometimes fails to differentiate between the bolt throwers and stone throwers) were big! Iron headed bolts some 3.5 metres ( 11 ½ feet) long were used to clear enemy decks. While Agrippa devised a harpoon for catching ships which was used in the great clash between Pompey and Octavian off Sicily. A 7 ½ feet ( 2.5m) long iron banded pole with an iron claw at the business end was shot from a bolt thrower in the bows of a warship, when it struck and caught the enemy vessel was reeled in by windlass and boarded. The Romans afloat clearly didn't lack imagination!

Rob Morgan.

### A 'Fleet in Being'???

The pages of *'The Navy'* provide much more than just the questions and answers, some of the latter vigorously disputed, there are often opinions and points of view, and queries of interest to a wargamer. This is one.

In September 1954, Captain G. F. Dale of Virginia USA wrote to ask about the final disposition (disposal) of the Russian Squadron which reached Bizerte in September 1921 as 'refugees from the Bolsheviks'. There were, as he states around thirty ships in all, including a fairly new dreadnought, an old pre-dreadnought, some cruisers, a handful of

The Editor of the monthly responded initially by referring to Brassey's Naval Annual 1921-22. Listing the Russian warships, previously under General Wrangel's control in the Black Sea as the 'Alexander III' the battleship completed as late as 1917, which the Editor refers to as the 'General Alexeieff' and the Pre-dreadnought 'Georgi Pobiedonosetz'. Two cruisers, one the 'Almaz' and 'Ochakov' (renamed 'General Kornilov' by Wrangel), nine destroyers four submarines and 'some auxiliaries'.

He goes on to say that the Pre-dreadnought, the cruisers, six of the destroyers and 'a small number' of submarines continued to be shown in Brassey's list of the Russian Fleet as '*under French protection*' until 1937. After this date, he writes, 'they disappeared completely, and there is no further mention of them.' Conway's 1906-1921 volume considerably post-dating this issue of '*The Navy*' suggests the larger ships as 'sold' in 1922 and 1924 in the case of the 'Imperator Alexander III', to which Conway's gives the post-revolutionary name 'Volya', and merely says of her '*broken up by the French in 1936.*'

Captain Dale had asked some specific questions, he believes that a War Correspondent reported that some of the Russian ships taken to Bizerte '*were still lying in a backwater there after our forces entered*'. A few of the others he suggests were used as blockships for the harbour by the Germans. One of his more interesting comments is this.....

*"....it is rather unusual for a Battleship of fairly recent vintage, even if rather antiquated design, to drop completely from the lists of the world's warships without leaving so much as a ripple behind"*

The thrice-named battleship was of course merely four or five years old when she left Russian waters and some at least of the first class destroyers listed were decent. Italy bought two of the auxiliary gunboats in 1923, according to Conway's, but there are a lot of 'what if's' and possibilities for the other ships in wargames terms at least. The battleship could have been sold, and might have added something to a South American fleet or a Scandinavian one perhaps. The Baltic States, and Finland all newly independent, might have had a claim on some of the Russian vessels, and the smaller ones would have been quite useful in Baltic waters. Kept as a fleet-in-being of little value to anyone, but these ships could have been divided between the victorious allies like the Austrian warships were. Italy and France both had ex-Austrian cruisers in service in the mid-1930's.

The idea that there were numbers of the Russian ships still around in 1943 provides some other possibilities, as guardships in German, or Vichy hands, even as escorts in the larger campaign. In tabletop terms, this far from useless group of warships might find itself spearheading a new, probably doomed 'White Russian' campaign, perhaps with allies? I like the idea of a second Far Eastern Fleet, in the 1920's. A risky voyage like that of Rozhdestvensky twenty years before, but to a Chinese port. North China was full of white émigrés, and would be a suitable place for a base after 1924. Few Soviet opponents in the east, but there was always Japan. Mind you even if the Dreadnought's broken up, 12 x 12in guns make an awesome coastal defence battery.

Rob Morgan.

August 2014.

LUTZOW....PETROPAVLOVSK

The September 2014 issue of 'History Today' contains another excellent naval article worth looking out for. 'Under Two Flags' by Roger Moorhouse (pages 10- 15) is an account of the transfer from the Kriegsmarine to the Red Fleet of the heavy cruiser Lutzow in May 1940. The transferred warship was, of course, partly completed, with just two turrets, and given the Kriegsmarine's shortage of heavy units (Moorhouse describes Lutzow as one of 'only seven capital ships' at Hitler's disposal in 1940) it was a strange decision attributed to the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939. It seems that Stalin also wanted Prinz Eugen and the uncompleted Seydlitz, as well as the plans of the Bismarck to be sold to him.

Potential for a 'what-if?' or 'maybe?' wargame there perhaps? In reality, 'Lutzow' ended her days sunk, bows first in the waters of Leningrad's harbour. After firing around 700 shells from her two completed Krupp turrets she was demolished by 53 rounds from German heavy guns. A sound article, politically written naturally, but with excellent naval background. The few photos of 'Lutzow' will be known to most readers, I suspect.

Rob Morgan.

August 2014



## USS Fuschia-Model of the Month!

By Rob Morgan.

‘Peter Pig’s 1/600<sup>th</sup> ACW ‘Hammerin’ Iron’ Range seems to have stopped dead in the water in recent years, though lots of us are still hoping for a few more models to pad out a few very obvious gaps. However, more than one of the models has a number of splendid options for conversion, or simply repainting.

USS Fuschia, Number 17 in the Union Ship List, costs, as I write £3, and is a delight. Only 5.5cm long, and 15mm wide, the ship represents a rather typical workhorse of the Federal fleet. A steam tug armed with a 20pdr Parrot rifle and 2-24pdrs, later increased by two more 24pdrs and a 12pdr rifle; she had an ordinary war, frequently exchanging fire with Confederate shore units on river patrols. That’s the information from Tony Gibbons *‘Warships and Naval Battles of the Civil War’*, which provides a drab colour scheme for the little warship, grey, grey and more grey.

However, the splendid dumpy hull of this maid-of-all-work provides many opportunities for conversion and service far from the muddy waters of the Potomac River. She comes as an all metal hull, with a long funnel. Actually ‘Peter Pig’ produces several funnel lengths, and for the standard USS Fuschia one around 15mm long will do, but you can ask for a longer funnel of course! There are ‘davit’ holes on each side, and a single light gun forward. These come

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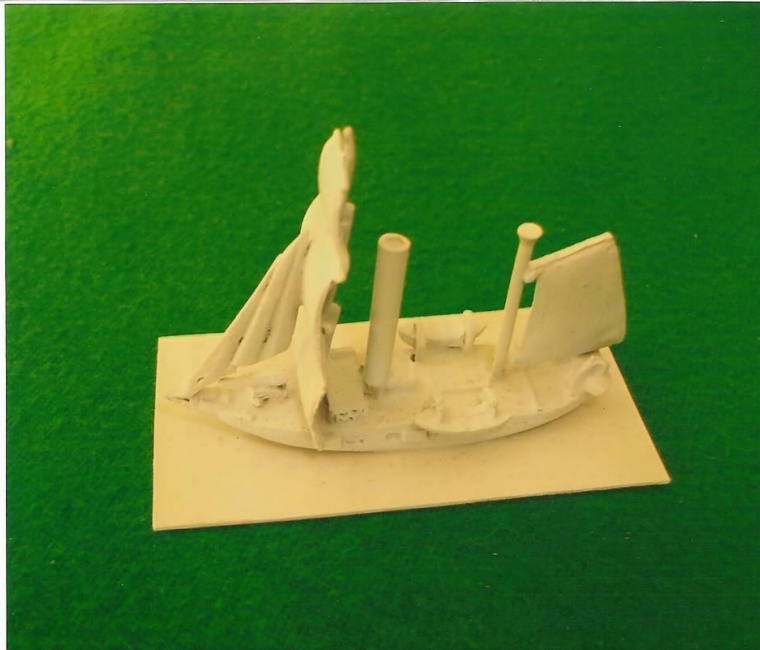
in add-on packs in the same range by the way. No masts, but you can drill a hole for a light pole mast forward of the bridge. Unchanged, this model could serve as a war-service auxiliary, a tug, or a light patrol vessel in most European and many other navies of the post 1860 period across the world. You might mount a second light gun aft, or a small ship’s boat over the hatch, a small deck house aft, whatever, and you’ll need to drill and add a jack staff anyway of course. The hull shows large gun ports open, three a broadside. So a deck gun’s not essential. All you need is an appropriate colours scheme, a little ‘differentiation’ and you could have a ‘Class’ of Fuschias!

As examples, there were similar armed small ships in the fleets of Uruguay, Liberia, Brazil, and tiny Sarawak owned a similar, originally schooner rigged gunboat called ‘Lorna Doone’ carrying ‘2 small guns.’

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But.....there are other later options. I looked into the excellent 'Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1860-1904' and found that Spain kept a couple of dozen small gunboats in service in Cuba and the Philippines, all of them fell into American hands after the disastrous war of 1898 of course, and a score of them continued in the same role as before, with the same name. Of comparable size to the USS Fuschia ( which didn't last beyond 1865-sold out service to be a tug again) were '*Pampanga*' '*Callao*', '*Samar*', and '*Paragua*'. The Spanish patrol boats were usually armed with 1, 2 or 3-3pdrs, sometimes 1-6pdr, and a couple of 1 pdrs. Eight to ten knots would be considered a good speed. Other options? Well, the great rivers of Russia, maybe lingering to the Civil Wars, or China?

Going back in time, this hull will do nicely for an earlier nineteenth century small gunboat. All you need to do is use the longer funnel, more appropriate, say 25mm or even 28mm above the deck, straight up of course, though the later versions can be 'raked' slightly- won't make them any faster though! Many of the 1/1200<sup>th</sup> Napoleonic ranges make bare masts and spars, or those with furled sails, and all you need is one of those for the foremast, and with boats and gun added that's it. A pole mizzen maybe with a furled, lowered boom and sail aft? If you want a really early armed steamship, then LEGO make in their pirates range a long plastic bell-mouthed musket- they sell them for about 10-12p each, cut down to the stock it provides a bell topped 28mm long funnel the right size for Fuschia in the 1820's.



Since everyone in Europe, every Colonial agency and trading Company kept almost experimental steamships for military purposes, form anti-piracy patrols to troop carrying, it can serve anywhere. The Tumbling Dice 1/600<sup>th</sup> small boats will provide you with a basic steam launch or a rowing boat for close actions.

The photograph isn't a 1/600<sup>th</sup> scale model of course. No, this is my 1/450<sup>th</sup> version of an early steam warship intended to complement my handful of Peter Pig Pirate ships, and it works!

First the sailing ships, from 'Pig's' 1/450<sup>th</sup> Pieces of Eight range, use Number 6, the Sloop, Number 7 the Schooner, both of suitable hull size- they look right! They sell at a very reasonable £4 each by the way. You can get away with using ship model Number 8, the 'Brigantine' as it's called, at \$4.50, just. What you will need for the steamer conversion is a pack of the 1/450<sup>th</sup> light deck guns, maybe a pack of the deck crew, and for close in operations a pack of Number 5, rowing boats, there are a couple of 'floating survivors' bases; these I use with a scrap of rigging and a sliver of mast as wrecks or sunk counters.

The steamer conversion's easy enough. A tall funnel, a mast and rigging, mine was an ancient 'Fleetline' 1/1200<sup>th</sup> ( I think, it had been a while in the spares box) mast forward , a pin mast aft, with a spanker from a 1/1200<sup>th</sup> added, and I put a third boat on davits over the stern. You could file off the stumpy bowsprit and replace it with a proper one, and any other detail as you please. There's your 1820's Squadron, again useful almost anywhere in the world.

Rob Morgan.

The SNR quarterly, 'The Mariner's Mirror' for August 2014 ( Vol 100:3) this case pages 335-349 deal with '*Commerce Warfare in the East Central Atlantic during the First World War: U-Boats around the Canary Islands 1916-1918*' by Javier Ponce. It's a sound article which provides an often overlooked scenario for using subs in the Great War. In this case the Canaries was the 'hunting ground' not only of the ocean going attack boats such as *U-47*, but of the UC II minelayers, carrying in the latter stages 18 mines and a 105 mm gun with 120 rounds. There were also examples of the U-Cruiser transport types, effectively blockade runners (there is a whole game in that!).

Spain of course couldn't control her own waters, her fleet had not recovered from the disasters of 1898, and Spain was forced to rely on Allied protective measures.

It's an interesting and unusual article, and contains a surprising number of very useful references for the WWI naval wargamer who can get away from those rows of steaming ironclads.

The other article in this issue which I'd recommend, though it isn't obviously and directly a wargaming piece is '*Duelling in the Royal Navy*' by Mark Barton, pages 282-307. It's a fascinating piece, Sidney Smith actually 'called out' Bonaparte at Acre, but the little Corsican ducked the challenge, and the last duel in, or on behalf of, the Navy was fought by the Royal Marines in 1845, when a Marine officer shot dead an Hussar Captain at Gosport. I did enjoy this one. You will too.

Rob Morgan.  
August 2014

**Aug. 29, 1916** - *USS Memphis* (ACR 10), Captain Edward L. Beach, was wrecked by a tidal wave at Santo Domingo, in the Dominican Republic. Forty of her crewmen are killed and 204 injured. Never under estimate the power of the sea.



## Battle of Zante Island August 1914

### After Action Report

By Simon Stokes

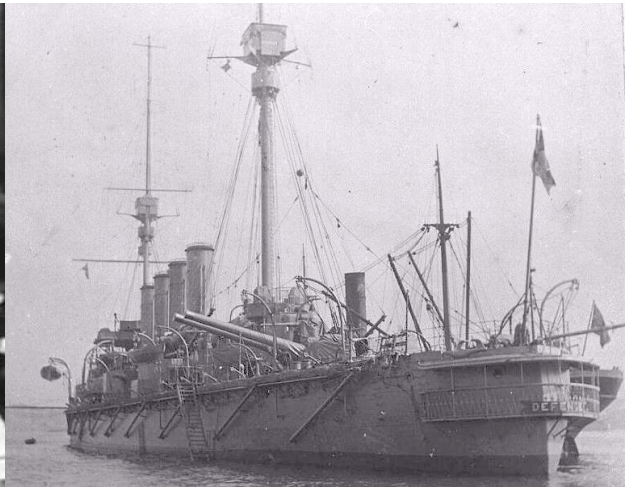
#### **Introduction**

It's the "what if" battle that's been fought out by naval wargamers many times before, though not it has to be said by our little group. However given it was the centenary almost to the day of the battle that never was that could have changed the course of the Great War and the fall out from which had such an influence on the outcome of the battle of Coronel a few months later, we decided it would be a good moment to see if we could draw any conclusions about whether Rear Admiral Troubridge with his four armoured cruisers had been right to decline an engagement with the battle cruiser *Goeben* as she headed towards Constantinople in August 1914.





*Admiral Wilhelm Souchon and SMS Goeben*



*Rear Admiral Ernest Troubridge and HMS Defence*

## The Game

We set the game up with the chance that Troubridge could, as was his original intention, intercept *Goeben* just before dawn. Consequently the game started at 20 minutes before dawn on 7<sup>th</sup> August, *Goeben* and the light cruiser *Breslau* were in the centre of the table, shadowed off the port quarter at 5000 yards (maximum night time visibility) by the light cruiser HMS *Gloucester*. Troubridge and the 1<sup>st</sup> Cruiser squadron (the armoured cruisers *Defence*, *Warrior*, *Duke of Edinburgh* and *Black Prince*) were off table and approaching from the east. The light cruiser *Dublin* in company with the destroyers *Bulldog* and *Beagle* were off table approaching from the south.

Turn length was initially 2 minutes, so every turn each of the off board British forces rolled 2D6 to determine whether they affected an interception. The first roll needed double 6, second double 5 or double 6 and so on until any double would do. There after just a 6 on 1D6 was needed. If an interception was affected it would be at the maximum visibility at that point, and the force would have to roll an off set (opposed D12) to see how far to port or starboard the models had to be moved.

At dawn the visibility range increased by 1000 yards every 2 minutes, with anything framed against the eastern horizon regarded as being illuminated due to it being silhouetted. Daytime visibility was initially set at 10,000 yards due to early morning mist.

The only other variable was the state of *Goeben*'s boilers which were in dire need of an overhaul. We represented this by a chance (double 1 on 2D6) that when travelling at over 20 knots that they would develop a mechanical problem causing her speed to drop to 10 knots until another double 4, 5 or 6 was rolled.

Dave Sharp took command of the Germans, Jeff Crane the British 1<sup>st</sup> CS and myself, the light cruisers and destroyers.

The first couple of turns were uneventful, but on turn 3 *Dublin*, *Bulldog* and *Beagle* appeared out of the dark ahead and to starboard of *Goeben*. She immediately called for increased revolutions and turned sharply to port whilst *Breslau* turned towards the new adversaries in an attempt to drive them away. This sudden change of course and speed also meant that *Gloucester* momentarily lost contact with *Goeben*. For her part *Dublin* was now in an uncomfortable situation within 5000 yards of *Goeben*'s full starboard broadside which had the potential to disable her in short order. She turned to starboard to open the range between her and *Goeben* and started to take evasive action. Meanwhile

*Bulldog* and *Beagle* surged ahead in *Goeben*'s wake hoping for an opportunity to get into a good position to launch their torpedoes at her. However their first good torpedo target that presented herself was *Breslau* approaching on an opposing course off their port bow. Their orders were clear however; *Goeben* was the target, so they let the opportunity pass and contented themselves with lighting her up with *Bulldog*'s searchlight and putting a few 4" shells into *Breslau* as she passed.

*Breslau* for her part was more concerned with directing her fire at the *Dublin* which returned fire in turn, *Breslau* suffering more than *Dublin* and was seen to head off in a south easterly direction with fires raging above decks and a slight list to port though still making 20 knots.

Meanwhile *Gloucester* had increased speed in an attempt to regain contact with *Goeben*. This she did but to her dismay now found that *Goeben* had turned across her bow and had her under her full port broadside. She too started to take evasive action to throw off *Goeben*'s gunners whilst she worked her way to a position off *Goeben*'s port quarter again. She never made it, a single hit from an 11" shell in *Goeben*'s first salvo followed by three 11" shells and a couple of 5.9" shells from her second salvo left *Gloucester* dead in the water, her boilers and machinery wrecked and with her quarter deck ablaze.



*Gloucester ablaze and dead in the water.*

In reply *Gloucester* hit *Goeben* several times with her forward 6" guns but the shells detonated harmlessly on *Goeben*'s belt armour.

Things were not looking good for the British at this point, *Gloucester* was hors combat, *Breslau* had disappeared from view to the south and *Goeben* had put on maximum revolutions and outdistanced *Dublin* disappearing into the darkness to the north. Dawn was near however so there was every prospect of re-establishing contact with the *Goeben*.

It was now, just a couple of minutes before dawn that the 1<sup>st</sup> CS arrived on the scene. Strung out in line of bearing and steaming to the sound of the guns and guided by the blazing beacon that was the *Gloucester* (*Breslau* had put out her flames). From port to starboard Troubridge's cruisers were Duke of Edinburgh, Warrior, Defence, and Black Prince.

Both Warrior and Duke of Edinburgh were in sight of *Breslau* but only Black Prince was in sight of *Goeben*.

*Warrior* and *Black Prince* turned to starboard to engage *Goeben* whilst *Warrior* and *Duke of Edinburgh* turned to port to take on *Breslau*. *Dublin* too adjusted her course and managed to regain contact with *Goeben* as did *Bulldog* and *Beagle*.

The action now split into two quickly separating fights, the first an unequal contest between *Breslau* and the two British armoured cruisers, the second a stern chase between *Goeben* and the rest of the British ships pursuing her.



*Warrior closes with Breslau.*

The first action was only ever going to go one way, but Breslau put up a good fight using her torpedoes to good effect in preventing the British from closing with her, though as the 9.2", 7.5" and 6" shells rained down on her she was battered to a standstill with only 3 of her 4.1" guns still firing and ablaze above and below decks. A final salvo from Duke of Edinburgh administered the coup de grace as a 9.2" shell penetrated her thin armour and detonated the main magazine.



*Breslau explodes*

The British armoured cruisers had not come away unscathed however and both had damage including knocked down funnels, minor hull damage and fires on deck. They were still operational and their fires were soon brought under control, but their already inferior speed compared with the *Goeben* was now slowed by a few knots more. They were effectively out of the fight unless *Goeben* could be slowed down to allow them to catch up.

Meanwhile in the stern chase things were once more going *Goeben's* way. She was now doing 27 knots a speed that the British destroyers alone could match and only the steadily improving dawn light meant that both *Black Prince* and *Defence* were now firing salvos at her.

Whilst the British armoured cruisers, and the *Dublin*, were hitting the *Goeben*, their shells appeared to have little effect on her, most detonating on thick armour which easily defeated the British 9.2" and smaller shells. In contrast *Black Prince*, which was the initial focus of *Goeben's* gunners, was soon ablaze from stem to stern, her secondary 6" batteries having been completely gutted and her 6" magazines both having gone up in two huge explosions doing tremendous damage to her innards. Her speed was dropping off and she would soon be out of the fight.





*Black Prince ablaze as Defence comes up in support*

Just then as *Goeben* looked like she was on the verge of disappearing into the early morning mist, a British 9.2" shell struck below the waterline at *Goeben*'s stern, damaging two of her prop shafts. Her speed dropped to 20 knots. Suddenly the British were back in with a chance.

*Defence* now overtook the wounded *Black Prince* and her salvoes scored many hits on the *Goeben*. None of these shells matched the effect of the previous lucky hit however and most exploded harmlessly on *Goeben*'s 10.7" thick armoured belt or caused only minor damage to her superstructure. *Goeben*'s shooting against *Defence* proved just as effective as it had done against the *Black Prince* and soon it was *Defence*'s turn to begin to slow through the effect of knocked down funnels and waterline hits.

When *Goeben* inevitably outdistanced *Defence* we drew stumps on the game and started the debate as to the outcome.

## Conclusions

The game proved a much closer affair than either my fellow gamers or I had anticipated. Early on it was apparent that Dave was quite prepared to sacrifice *Breslau* so that *Goeben* could escape. As for the British, *Breslau* proved too much of a distraction for their armoured cruisers. With hindsight, dispatching *Breslau* with torpedoes when I had the chance with my destroyers or assigning just *Duke of Edinburgh* to chase her down would have been better courses of action. Hindsight is a luxury not afforded to our historical counterparts either and they would have had even less time to make their decisions than we did so it's likely that they would have made similar if not identical mistakes meaning that the outcome was probably a realistic one.

Whilst the *Breslau* was the only ship actually sunk during the game, the British could not claim the battle as a victory. The objective was to stop the *Goeben* from reaching Constantinople either by sinking her or slowing her sufficiently to allow Admiral Milne's Battle Cruisers, that had set sail from Malta the previous evening in pursuit (at 12 knots!), to catch her and in this objective they failed. Besides both *Gloucester* and *Black Prince* were so heavily damaged that they would likely have been written off as constructive losses.

That wasn't the whole story however, there was probably enough damage done to the Germans, both in terms of sinking the *Breslau* and the damage done to the *Goeben*, to avoid the public sentiments of shock and shame that resulted from Troubridge's historical decision to decline the engagement, and whilst this is unlikely to have significantly affected the diplomatic efforts to bring Turkey into the war on the side of Germany, it may well have been enough to allow Craddock sufficient scope in interpretation of his orders to avoid the disaster that befell his squadron at Coronel later that same year. Food for thought.....



Thanks to Jeff Crane for the following article.

## ***The Impressive Italian 17-inch Heroes***

by laststandonzombieisland

Here at LSOZI, we are going to take out every Wednesday for a look at the old steam/diesel navies of the 1859-1946 time period and will profile a different ship each week.

- Christopher Eger

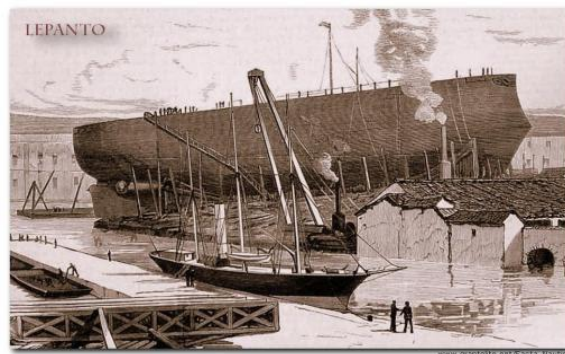
Warship Wednesday August 20 The Impressive Italian 17-inch Heroes

Here we see the giant and remarkable for the time Italia-class battlewagon *Lepanto*. Designed by the famous Benedetto Brin in the 1870s to bring peace and tranquillity to the Med-- under the Italian tri-colour-- the two-ship *Italia*-class was the pride and joy of the *Regia Marina*.

Tipping the scales at over 15,000-tons, these 409-foot steel-hulled brawlers could make impressive 18.4-knots on their 15,797 shp plant. What is truly remarkable about these ships is that they had a brace of four **17-inch** (432 mm) naval guns. That's not a misprint-- we are talking about 17-inch rifled cannon in 1876. Of course they were black powder and only some 26-calibres long, but you have to admit that is impressive.



Due to their length and weight, these guns were set up *en echelon* amidships in a single, large, diagonal, oval barbette, with one pair of guns on a turntable to port and the other to starboard.

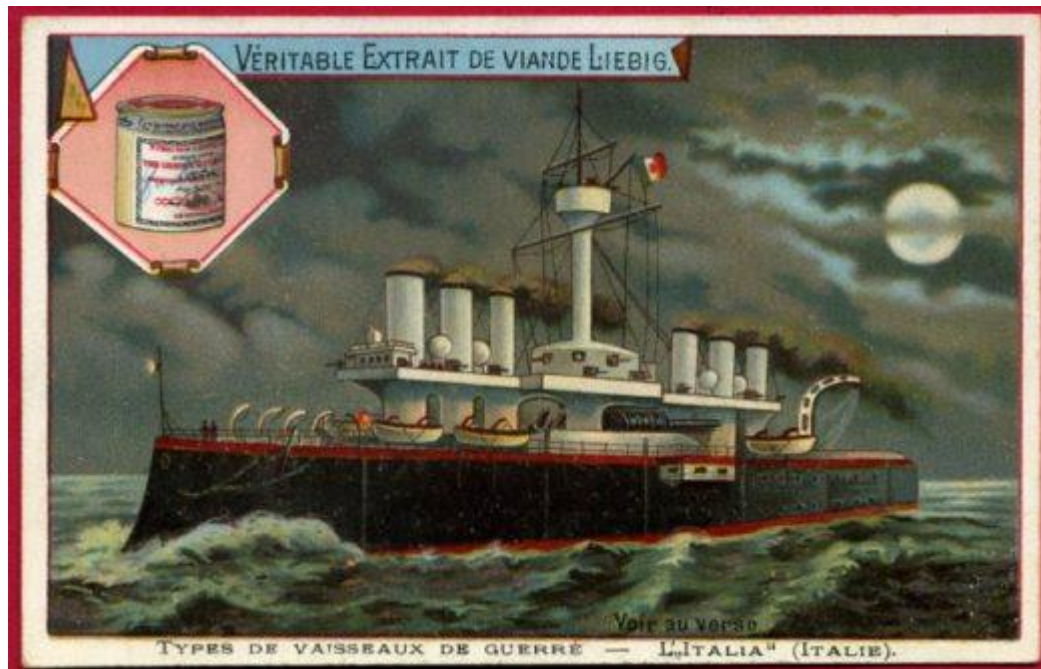


Notice how deep the hull is. You have to put 10,000 troops somewhere!

*Italia* was laid down in 1876 at *Castellammare* Naval Shipyard while *Lepanto* began construction at Orlando in Livorno at the same time. However, these ships were so new for the time; I mean think about it, the U.S. Civil War had just ended a decade before, that they languished on the builders' ways until after 1885, nearly a decade later when they were commissioned.



These were huge, deep ships for the time. Besides the massive main armament and a dozen secondary 6-inch and 4.7-inch guns, each could carry a full 10,000-man infantry division in a pinch. Now that is power projection.

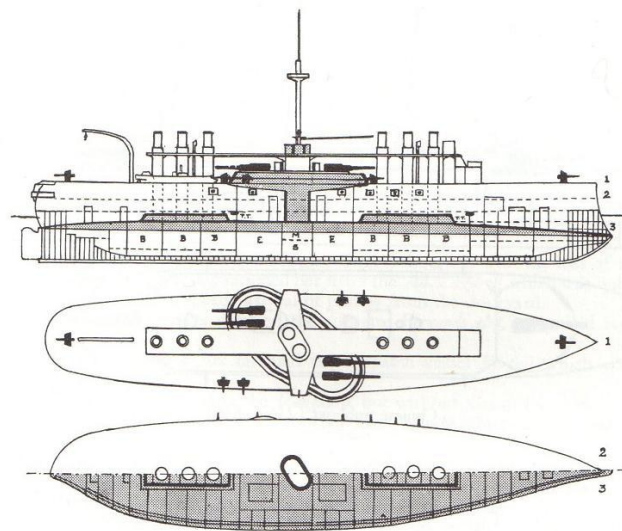


These gentle giants, with their distinctive six-funnel profile (*Lepanto* always just had four though), cruised the Med for a generation but saw little active use. By 1902 *Lepanto* was placed in reduced service as a gunnery training ship and then a non-functional depot vessel within the decade.

Sistership *Italia* lasted a bit longer, earning a refit in 1905 then serving as a torpedo training ship and floating harbour defence craft in World War One. While *Lepanto* was sold for scrapping on 27 March 1915, *Italia* suffered an even worse fate. Disarmed after the war, she was used to carry grain to Italian troops in North Africa until being finally stricken 16 November 1921 and subsequently scrapped.

No known memorial exists to these interesting 17-inch Roman battlewagons.

**Specs:**



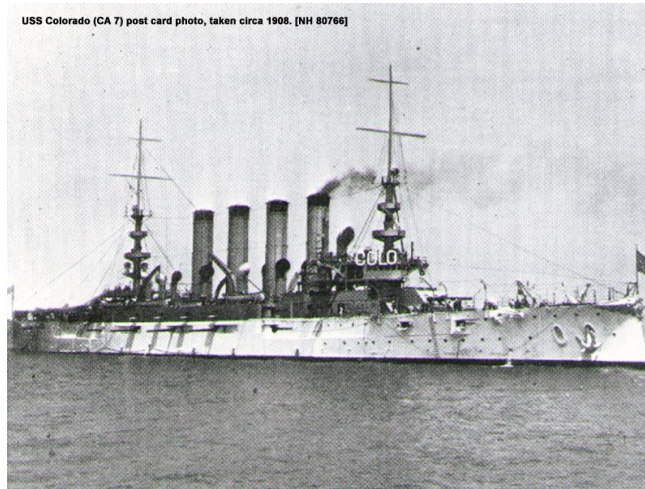
Italian battleship *ITALIA*

Displacement: 13,336 long tons (13,550 t) normal  
15,649 long tons (15,900 t) full load  
Length: 400 ft 3 in (122.0 m) between perpendiculars  
409 ft 1 in (124.7 m) length overall  
Beam: 73 ft 4 in (22.4 m)  
Draft: 30 ft 9 in (9.4 m)  
Installed power: 15,797 ihp (11,780 kW)  
Propulsion: 4 shafts, vertical compound engines, 8 oval and 16 cylindrical boilers  
Speed: 18.4 knots (21.2 mph; 34.1 km/h)  
Range: ca. 5,000 nautical miles (9,260 km) at 10 knots (19 km/h; 12 mph)  
Troops: Up to 10,000  
Complement: 669, later 701  
Armament: As built:  
\*4 × 17-inch (432 mm)/26 guns  
\*8 × 6-inch (152 mm)/32 guns  
\*4 × 4.7-inch (119 mm)/32 guns  
\*4 × 14-inch (356 mm) torpedo tubes  
Added later:  
\*2 × 75mm guns  
\*12 × 57mm quick-firing guns  
\*12 × 37mm revolvers  
\*2 × machine guns  
From 1902:  
\*4 × 17-inch (432 mm)/26 guns  
\*4 × 4.7-inch (119 mm)/32 guns  
9 × 57mm guns  
6 × 37mm/25 revolvers  
2 × machine guns  
Torpedo tubes removed after 1902  
Armour: Steel armour  
Belt and side: None  
Deck: 4 in (101.6 mm)  
Citadel: 19 in (483 mm)  
Funnel base: 16 in (406 mm)  
Conning tower: 4 in (102 mm)

If you liked this article, please consider joining the International Naval Research Organization (INRO)

They are possibly one of the best sources of naval lore <http://www.warship.org/naval.htm>

The International Naval Research Organization is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the encouragement of the study of naval vessels and their histories, principally in the era of iron and steel warships (about 1860 to date). Its purpose is to provide information and a means of contact for those interested in warships.



**Sep. 5, 1912** - A battalion of 323 seamen and Marines landed at Corinto from the armoured cruiser *USS Colorado* (ACR 7), which raised the strength of the forces available to Colonel Pendelton in western Nicaragua to approximately 2,000 men. He deployed them to take control of the railway from Corinto through Managua to Granada, which was, in effect, the artery of the revolution.

### **SIGNAL PAD!**

Coming in October. The plucky USS *Perch*. The Airfix Mary Rose kit in 1:400 scale. Also a "special Nelson Quiz".

### **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](http://www.navalwargamessociety.org).

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

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## **NWS Events and Regional Contacts, 2014**

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### **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](mailto:kenny.thomson@hotmail.com) - Website: <http://falkirkwargamesclub.org.uk/>

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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

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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)

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### **NWS North Hants [Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday]**

Jeff Crane 31 Park Gardens, Black Dam, Basingstoke, Hants, 01256 427906

*e-mail:* [gf.crane@ntlworld.com](mailto:gf.crane@ntlworld.com)

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### **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](mailto:stuart_barnes_watson@hotmail.com)

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

Tel: 01271 866637

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