



All Guns Blazing!

Newsletter of the Naval Wargames Society

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EDITORIAL

NOSTALGIA. IT AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE.



The "Inshore Squadron" was formed in 1998 to help commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of the Nile at the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth. Since then their models and demonstration games at the Naval Wargames Society Wargames Weekends at "Explosion" Museum, Gosport have never failed to impress.

Surveillance drones inspired by dragonflies, laser weapons, mobile robots, autonomous ships and UVAs and virtual reality helmets to practice calling in simulated air strikes.



Using specialised headgear, our personnel could see simulated aircraft, enemy personnel and vehicles appearing on the real surrounding landscape, immersing and testing soldiers in complex joint forces situations.

[Crown Copyright]

These are the types of futuristic technology that along with other smart solutions are set to be backed by the government's new defence innovation initiative, which launched in August.

Model train enthusiasts overwhelmingly prefer steam locomotives for their layouts. Bullet Trains and Intercity 125s do not fly off the shelves in the same numbers as models of the Mallard and the Flying Scotsman. Change and improvement are unstoppable but there is something to be said for having the wind in your sails, putting your ship alongside your enemy and letting him or her have a broadside which can now only happen on the war-game table.

Cheers.

Norman Bell

'Peter Pig's 90 Day Gunboat-Review.

By Rob Morgan.

After a long halt in additions to their 1/600th ACW Naval Range, 'Pig' has issued a Federal '90 Day Gunboat', priced at £5.50 for a five part all-metal kit. A substantial model and one which will add a great deal to any US coastal or riverine fleet of the ACW. True 'Maids-of-all-work'.

The kit, and it is a kit, since it requires some building, has an unusual feature, the hull which when assembled is some 70mm long, and neatly detailed, comes in two parts, the stern is a separate 12mm piece which slots in and under the main hull, requiring a little filing for a neat fit in the case of my model. I strengthened mine with a strip of plasticard beneath the tongue. There's a 12mm high funnel with pilot bridge, and two tall schooner rigged masts, with furled sails, which look good. I think there's a jib too, as there's a positioned hole at the bow for it, but if so, mine was missing from the pack.

This is another well-detailed model from the manufacturer, and assembled looks fine, it needs ships boats on davits added, from the 'Pig' range, and that brings me to the deck armament. It's moulded, and so are the three guns, the heavy gun forward, and two light 24pdrs amidships. These gunboats carried a large Parrot RML, and an 11 in SB, with a range of smaller guns. Adding the second heavy gun from the 'Pig' add-on packs is no problem of course, but simply for conversion reasons, I'd have liked the guns as enclosed separate items not



mouldings. It's a splendid and workmanlike model when built, and has some potential elsewhere.

This was a large class of 690 ton warships, some 23 in all, with names like *USS's Huron, Ottawa, Seneca, and Cayuga*. Conway's lists them as the 'Unadilla' Class incidentally. They were as their nickname suggests quick-builds, and widely used from late 1861 onwards. Several were at Mobile Bay, and remarkably, only one *USS Sciota* was lost to a mine almost at the war's end in April 1865. They didn't survive long in US service after the South fell, most were sold off quickly, and the last had been sold by 1869. They may not have much value in a post war US Navy, but a further glance through Conway's 1860-1905 volume indicates that with some work, usually adding a mizzen mast and some deck houses, as well as altering the guns (filing off the big forward gun could be a problem) then the Royal Navy's 'Pigmy' or 'Albacore' gunboats could be options. Potentially, the German 'Wolf' and the Italian 'Provano' could be made with ease. There were rather similar types in the navies of Spain, and Portugal and Holland in the late nineteenth century, and the hull length fits them all.

In many ways a generic gunboat model, and a valuable addition to a growing range. It seems that some of the original '90 Day' boats became merchant vessels, and this of course is another option, in civilian mode the boat could linger long upon the seas. An unusual design, but worthwhile.

Rob Morgan.

Where do your tax dollars go? Following an Assessment Phase costing £150 Million, a £411 Million Contract with MBDA is in place for 4 years of design and development for the SPEAR 3 Missile. Based on the BRIMSTONE Missile but with a turbojet engine giving it a range of 60 miles, it will fit in the internal weapons bay of the F35-B Lightning. Fins and wings deploy after release.



Beauty and the Battleship

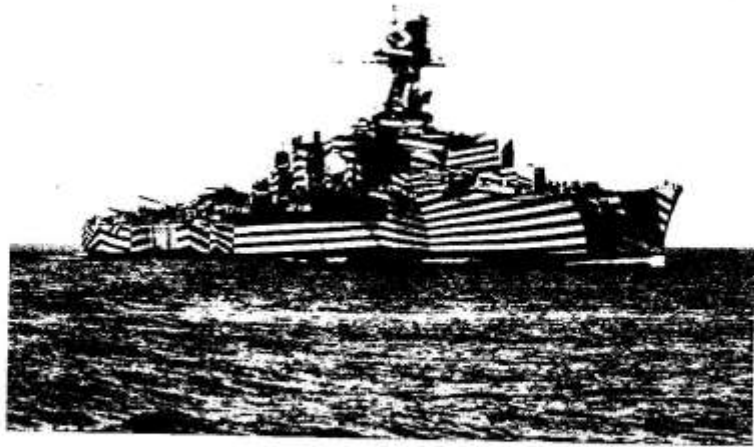
In the Great War British artists developed a new form of marine camouflage.

Margaret F.M. Walker

DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR, patterns of 'disruptive colouration' were applied directly to guns, trucks and tanks to disguise them from reconnaissance aircraft or spotters in enemy trenches. Given the historic strength of the Royal Navy, it followed logically that Britain would be the most innovative in developing the field of naval camouflage. For, while the human losses on the Western Front were staggering, it was the loss of merchant ships carrying troops, supplies and munitions that took the greatest economic toll. They became easy targets for torpedoes as soon as Germany announced its campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare in January 1917.

Dazzle is a development curious to the modern mind, which defines camouflage as something that blends an individual in with its surroundings. These striped ships, highly visible, seem more appropriate to the realm of art than combat and occupy a unique place in military history, as one of the few instances where the widespread use of professional artists was of considerable tactical value.

Norman Wilkinson, who developed the idea for dazzle camouflage and oversaw the operation, was an accomplished marine painter before the war. He submitted his camouflage idea to the Admiralty in spring of 1917 and was allowed a trial that August. Previous proposals, which attempted to paint or cover ships to blend them with the water and atmosphere, were unsuccessful due to the vagaries of weather at sea. However, the results of a trial convinced the Admiralty in October 1917 to recommend that all merchant ships receive Wilkinson's camouflage. Dazzle designs both dismantled the outline of the ship and created an optical illusion that deceived enemy eyes in submarines regarding the speed, size and direction



The art of war: a Royal Navy Dreadnought battleship in Dazzle livery, 1917.

of the painted ships. By November 1918, over 2,300 vessels were painted with unique schemes. The US navy also adopted the dazzle approach in 1917, along with four other camouflage methods.

All dazzle patterns were developed in a London studio by Wilkinson, five male designers and 11 female art students. They observed painted models, judging the effectiveness of deception using a periscope and turntable before sending them to the ports as templates. At the ports, men such as Vorticist artist Edward Wadsworth, who oversaw the painting of ships at Bristol and Liverpool, tailored the patterns to individual vessels. Generally, the designs consisted of angular, geometric shapes in no more than four colours. Shapes never aligned with a ship's edge but carried through to the other side or over the railing and onto the smokestacks. Port and starboard patterns were always different, too. Adopting a characteristic of modern art, the design very intentionally did not fit its canvas (the ship) but rather seemed to take on a shape of its own.

After a year, a committee met to determine the effectiveness of dazzle camouflage. Though the data was only marginally in its favour, the committee recommended the continuation of the project: it was inexpensive and efficient, since ships already needed regular painting, and contributed greatly to morale, due to both its perceived safety as well as its aesthetic appeal.

Dazzle ships became well known, appearing in British and US ports in the final two years of the war. These

striking, modernist designs – an aesthetic disliked by many before the war – became a pop culture phenomenon into the early 1920s. Writing for *The Art World* in January 1918, Lida Rose McCabe stated that 'New York harbor, these days, is ... a veritable floating salon of Cubist, Futurist and Vorticist color – feats significantly emphasizing the passage of the one-time derided culturists from theoretic into actual warfare.'

Dazzle ships were, as the British architect Frederick Etchells noted, a 'bright spot of the war', easily adaptable for mainstream life and commemorative purposes. This camouflage scheme played a small role in the overall conflict and was only marginally successful in its intended use, but it was so visually arresting that it continues to capture the imagination. In March 1919, the Chelsea Arts Club hosted a Dazzle Ball at the Royal Albert Hall and dazzle-striped designs were quickly commodified into curtain fabric and bathing costumes. Angular, cubist-looking designs begin to appear in the British decorative and poster arts of the postwar period, too.

Dazzle is a development so aesthetic that it seems out of place in wartime. In the early 20th century, the ships gave a wider group of people exposure to and appreciation for modernist art and design. Its wide use in centenary commemorations opens the eyes and minds of more people in the early 21st century to the history of this important conflict.

Margaret F.M. Walker is the assistant curator at the Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery in Nashville, Tennessee.

The article on dazzle camouflage, is brought to our attention by Rob Morgan. Can you identify the ship in the picture? If so, let me know and give yourself some Brownie points.

Sea Quiz 55 ...answers.

One or two difficult answers, but a couple were give-aways!

1. This was the Cruiser HMS Aurora (8th of that name.) A host of reasons were given by those who knew or thought they did!
2. This is slang for the English Channel, as you all know perfectly well!
3. This was the first flotilla of US warships to reach the UK in 1917, after Admiral Sims, C in C US Navy.
4. The guns of HMS Pegasus were landed and fought in German East Africa in WWI.
5. Easy this one...the veteran Submarine Depot Ship- Cyclops.

SEA QUIZ 56.

The compiler of the original quiz in the first years of the decade of the fifties had an odd sense of humour, but he did draw some excellent responses from those who did know their stuff! One of these is a bit obvious, but number 3's a beauty!

1. Who was known as 'The Ocean Swell.'?...and why?
2. Which Admiral was known as 'Old Close the Range!'?
3. What were known as number 7i's?
4. What were 'The Muckle Flugga Hussars'?
5. Last but not least....'The Holy of Holies'?

'A Splendid Failure.'...Confederate Ironclad Matters.

The Confederate Ironclad CSS Georgia bears this unfortunate title in a six page illustrated article by M. Blackburn in the September/October issue of the US produced journal "*Archaeology*" (pp. 44-49). The wreck of this warship has been found in Savannah harbour, in Georgia, and is in the process of examination. I found it very interesting, especially as the 1/1200th CSS Georgia, clad in old railroad iron, features in my ACW fleet. Never a great deal of use, she couldn't steam under her engines, apparently, and was scuttled by the Confederates to avoid capture in Sherman's great raid of 1864. The old Navwar model was described as an 'Ironclad Floating Battery', but a US illustration published in the article describes her as a 'Confederate Ironclad Ram'! The funnel on the vessel is shown by the illustration as

at one extreme end (stern?) of the superstructure, while that of the model is amidships.

She didn't go down very far when scuttled, and the wreck was used as a gunnery target in 1868, to break her up for scrap. The article is good ACW background, and an astonishing amount of equipment was left on board the Georgia when she was scuttled, about 170 projectiles, and it seems some seven guns, including two Dahlgrens, now all recovered. That seems surprising, given the dire straits in which the Confederacy found itself by 1864. In recent decades there's been a huge amount of work on recovering ACW wrecks, and this adds some valuable wargames information about a little used warship- in fact or on the table top!

The US ordnance journal *'The Artilleryman'* (Summer 2016) contains a sound six page article by Jack Bell on "Fort Powell & the Mobile Bay Campaign", pages 24-30. It deals with the encounter which led to the loss of the Ram CSS Tennessee. A good read, plenty of material for the Rebel table-top Admiral Buchanan, and some good illustrations, including a contemporary map. I think Tennessee was the only Confederate capture to be taken into the Federal navy list (she was sold for scrap in 1867) but I may be wrong.

Rob Morgan.

Wednesday 23rd August 2016.

North Korea has fired a ballistic missile from a submarine off its east coast, say the US and South Korea. The KN-11 missile was launched from waters near Sinpo and flew about 500km (300 miles) before falling into the Sea of Japan. Japan's PM said it fell inside Japan's Air Defence Identification Zone, calling it a "reckless act". It comes as South Korea and the US begin annual military drills, which routinely anger Pyongyang.

"Ulchi Freedom" involves about 80,000 US and South Korean troops in a largely computer-simulated defence of South Korea from a fictional North Korean invasion. North Korea, which sees these drills as a rehearsal for an invasion of the North, recently warned they were pushing the Korean peninsula towards the brink of a war and threatened a "pre-emptive nuclear strike" in retaliation.

North Korea is banned by the UN from any use of ballistic or nuclear technology. But in recent months it has carried out repeated missile launches, and is believed to be close to conducting its fifth test of a nuclear device. SLBMs are of particular concern because of the mobility of submarines and the ease with which launch preparation can remain undetected. The US State Department said it "strongly condemned" this, and previous missile tests, and would raise concerns at the UN.

One area of the World which provides Naval Gamers with "what if" possibilities.

SIGNAL PAD!

ANCHORAGE SUMMER SALE!

A large delivery of Hai models both finished and as kits have arrived. These range from ironclads to today's warships.

Our next shows are:

10th September Chatham Ship Show, The Historic Ship Yard
18th September Exeter Toy Fair West Point
25th September Bristol Toy Fair Abbeywood College

Visitors are very welcome. Please phone beforehand to check I'm at home. There is a public carpark in front of house.

Best regards

Stuart & Slavi

Welcome to new NWS Member Richard Bigg.

There is just time to send your articles to Stuart Fieldhouse, fintactica@googlemail.com for inclusion in the next "Battlefleet".

HMS Forth, the first of five new offshore patrol vessel has arrived in Scotstoun where it is being fitted out with complex combat systems before being handed over in 2017.

At the end of August, HMS Enterprise took part in the rescue of more than 6,000 migrants in one day in the southern Mediterranean as part of Operation Sophia. The ship saved 708 people from six 'rickety boats', and transported them to Southern Italy. The Italian Navy and Coastguard rescued over 5,000 men, women, children and babies from un-seaworthy vessels that the people traffickers fuel just enough to travel out of Libyan territorial waters. The number of people that set out from Libya and don't make it is not known.

Coming in October's AGB: The Sea Quiz, Naval Command Wargame Rules, plus lots more he says confidently.

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, 2016

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)
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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

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