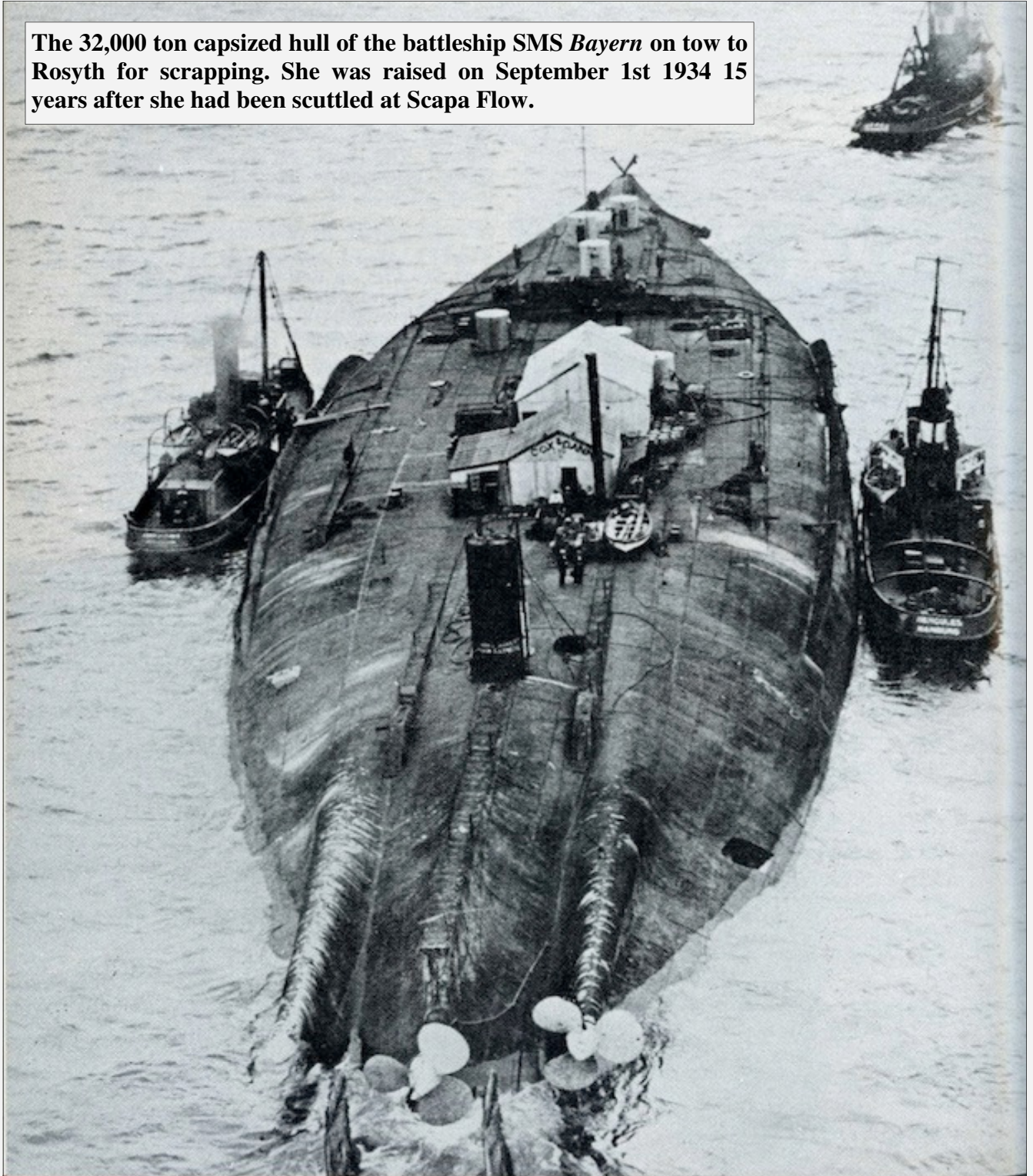


HMS *Cumberland* Association

The Cumberlander

The 32,000 ton capsized hull of the battleship SMS *Bayern* on tow to Rosyth for scrapping. She was raised on September 1st 1934 15 years after she had been scuttled at Scapa Flow.



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The Chairman's bit

With sincere regret I have to tell you that our Secretary Walter Nelson died on February 2nd. At the end of last year I had made several attempts to contact him, initially by e-mail, then by phone, my calls went unanswered. Becoming concerned, I was able to locate and to speak with a fellow member of the Merseyside Cricket Umpires Association, he told me that Walter had been into hospital at the end of the year and had been taken in again in January. He promised to call me back when he had any information on Walter's condition. Early in February I received a telephone call from a friend of Walter, Anne Griffin, she told me of the very sad news of his death. Subsequently, with other friends of Walter, together they drafted an obituary notice and sent it to me to add the HMS *Cumberland* Association detail and his link with the Association. The final notice was completed which you will see on page 3. All of you in the Association who have been able to attend our annual reunions of recent times will have met Walter, spoken with him and enjoyed being in his company. He was a delightful man to speak with and would listen most diligently to anyone with whom he spoke, he was also a most wise counsel on a broad range of topics, it was he who suggested changes necessary to our Constitution and the structure of our finances that were subsequently brought together two years ago, presented to the Committee and approved. My one regret is that I failed to establish the history of Walter's father during the period that he was serving in the Royal Navy during the Second World War and in particular, when he joined HMS *Cumberland*. I am hopeful that, in the fullness of time, sufficient material may come to light related to his father and of Walter himself. Alan and Barbara Thomas were able to attend and to represent the HMS *Cumberland* Association at Walter's funeral in Skelmersdale on February 23rd. We mourn the passing of a delightful man, a source of great knowledge and experience and for me a very dear friend, I personally will miss him very much indeed, he will be a very difficult act to follow.

My sincere regards to you all at this time of great loss to our Association, his family, his many friends and to his colleagues of the Merseyside Cricket Umpires Association.

Sam Watson

Walter Nelson. FCA.

Secretary of the HMS *Cumberland* Association.

Walter passed away on February 2nd 2018.

Walter John Nelson was born in the West Derby area of Liverpool on October 20th 1939. In his early years, like most children of that time, he was brought up by his mother, Elizabeth, while his father Thomas was serving on HMS *Cumberland* during the war years.

His childhood playground games in his local area developed into a lifetime passion for sport. He was a staunch Liverpool supporter and followed the team all over the world. His second and later primary love was for cricket. Walter was a Merseyside Cricket umpire for many years and up to his death, was President of Merseyside Cricket Umpires Association, making good friends wherever he travelled, far and wide. St Edwards College, Liverpool, gave Walter a sound educational grounding and to his parents' joy, after leaving school, he was trained and articled as a Chartered Accountant. His middle and later working life was spent as Financial Controller and Company Secretary of Radio City, where he spent many happy years from November 1975 until February 1991.

Upon retirement at the grand old age of 51, Walter continued to travel all over the world supporting both Football and Cricket. He had the misfortune to be amongst the spectators at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels before the start of the 1985 European Cup Final between Juventus of Italy and Liverpool. 39 people, mostly Italians and Juventus fans, were killed and 600 were injured in a confrontation and a subsequent wall collapse. Walter and a young compan-

ion were miraculously pulled out from the horrific crush.

His father's stories of his time at sea enthralled Walter who subsequently became a member of the HMS *Cumberland* Association.

Walter was a member of the Association for fifteen years, two years ago he was appointed Association Secretary and was instrumental in revising the Association Constitution.

Walter regularly attended the annual reunion weekends of the Association.

Those of us who were able to attend recent reunions will remember Walter with great fondness, he was delightful company, a good friend and a very wise counsel.

Of a strong and unique character, Walter was dearly loved and respected by all who knew him as a gentleman of integrity, wisdom, kindness, loyalty, generosity and compassion.

Although he chose to be single and free to follow his own sporting agendas, he also loved sharing in the family lives of his friends and was known as "Uncle Walter" to many little ones who are now grown up.

The funeral service took place on Friday 23 February at St Richards Church,
Skelmersdale.

As was his wish, Walter was interred with his parents at Yew Tree Cemetery, Walton, Liverpool.

Walter will be sadly missed and never forgotten by his loving family Debbie, Alan and Sam, Anne and Derek and his dear friends.

The Sequel to the Battle of the River Plate (see *The Cumberland* N° 59 page 3)

I received the following e-mail from one of our members John Taylor-Hudson.

John was serving as a Paymaster Cadet in *Cumberland* in December 1939 one of his responsibilities was that of coding and de-coding naval signals received in the ship. John wrote:

Dear Sam

May I congratulate you on your article in the December Edition of THE CUMBERLANDER.

You may recall that I was in *Cumberland* at the time. We had spent 91 days at sea in the River Plate area with no sight of land and so were in Stanley, Falkland Islands for boiler cleaning with at least 2 boilers cold at the critical time. Our Telegraphists were still reading the appropriate broadcasts and I as the most practised Cypher decoder was keeping the "Morning Watch" each day.

There suddenly appeared alongside me the Chief Telegraphist.

"I think you should have this "Most Immediate Operational, Sir. I am afraid its rather corrupt and as you know my lads are desperately tired so I have done the best I could"

What I could see quite clearly that he too was desperately tired having had no sleep that night so I set about the matter and soon realised that it was part 2 of a damage report from HMS *Exeter* whose Telegraphists were shell shocked.

As soon as I had managed all that was possible about the message (about 0600) I went straight to the Captain who was in the Admirals Sleeping cabin'

"I think you should read this at once, Sir" "Come in Boy switch the lights on and hand me my spectacles"
I waited.

"Hudson ask the Commander. the Commander (E) and the CPO Telegraphist to see me immediately"

Thus without breaking wireless silence we sailed and were about 6 hours en-route when we received orders to join the British force in the Plate area. I had managed to de-cypher part 1 (equally corrupt) by then.

I can say that although I actually saw Graf Spee blow up I was kept pretty occupied de-cyphering all the Naval and Inter-departmental messages that our Telegraphists intercepted despite their fatigue.

May I just add that the noise and rattle of the ship going at the speed noted in the "box" on page 4 of *Cumberland* (31.28 knots) was "alarming" I believe the Commander (E) advised the Captain that if an "A" bracket* came adrift it may well sink us. We encountered the usual fog and were aware that *Exeter* was on a reciprocal course. Happily no bracket came adrift and we did not collide despite there being no point in having a lookout tight up in the bows. So this 19 year old "Paymaster Cadet" survived.

***A technical note about "A" Brackets for the non-clankies.**

The "A" brackets, one for each propeller shaft, support the shaft between the stern gland and the propeller. In the event of the failure of an "A" bracket the shaft, unsupported, turning at high revolutions, would start to "whip" and could severely damage the stern gland, flooding may occur up through the shaft tunnel into the ship. In addition, the unsupported propeller and shaft may well hit the adjacent propeller shaft running in parallel.

In 1941 this occurred when *Prince of Wales* was hit by a torpedo on the port side, the torpedo bent the shaft which was under full power, seriously damaging the stern gland causing extensive flooding forward into critical machinery spaces. In addition, a torpedo on the starboard side bent one shaft that caused the two starboard shafts to become twisted together.

On a personal note whilst serving on HMS *Cumberland*, the ship was passing through the Bay of Biscay when a "Plummer Block within the ship, supporting one of the propeller shafts, broke away from its seating causing the shaft to whip. Fortunately the engineer officer on watch heard the noise and felt the vibration and shut the engine down very quickly before any serious damage occurred. When we arrived in Gibraltar, temporary timber shores were fitted between the deck head the Plummer Block and it's seating.

Captain Georg Ludwig Ritter von Trapp. 4th April 1880-30th May 1947.

Captain Georg von Trapp was born on 4th April 1880 to August von Trapp and Hedwig Werner. Georg always showed an interest in the navy and showed a fascination with submarines and was determined to start a new, but dangerous career in the Austrian Navy.

It was at the naming ceremony of one of these submarines that Georg met Agathe, by a remarkable coincidence, she was the grand-daughter of the Englishman Robert Whitehead, inventor of the torpedo. They married and went on to have seven children. When the third child arrived in 1914, no personal telegrams were allowed, so Agathe and Georg had agreed on a code beforehand.....a message to Georg was sent saying:
"SMS Maria arrived".

(SMS *Seiner Majestät Schiff*) as the Royal Navy.

Whilst serving in the Austro-Hungarian Navy Captain von Trapp was awarded the Cross of the Empress Maria Theresa – the highest award that could be given to an Austrian in wartime. He was given the medal for becoming "*The Dread of the Adriatic*". Of all the medals, this one was his favourite and the only one he was able to smuggle out of Austria. This military order entitled him to add 'Ritter' and 'von' to his name. He could then also use the title 'Baron'. He has been described as an officer that commanded his boat with 'paternal charisma' and as a 'true Catholic gentleman'. Like many officers who served during conflict, he struggled with the horrors of modern warfare.

He wrote:

"So that's what war looks like! There behind me hundreds of seamen have drowned, men who have done me no harm,

men who did their duty as I myself have done, against whom I have nothing personally; with whom, on the contrary, I have felt a bond through sharing the same profession".

In 1922, after contracting scarlet fever, his wife Agathe died. Georg found this a very difficult time in his life, he had two loves - the sea and Agathe. After the Great War, Austria no longer needed a Navy and so Captain von Trapp lost his profession, as well as his wife.

"My father's life was the navy. He was very uncomfortable doing anything else. He was simply lost" wrote Johannes von Trapp.

In 1924 the family moved to Aigen in Salzburg and made it their family home. The beautiful house has since been converted into a hotel, known as the Trapp Villa. Captain von Trapp was a good father to his children, apparently unlike the cold person that was portrayed in the film *The Sound of Music*. He was always found playing with his children and encouraging them in their interests of music and the arts. It distressed the real von Trapp family greatly when they saw the stern character in the *Sound of Music*. The real Maria von Trapp even tried to make the producers of the film change the movie character of the Captain into a kinder, less authoritarian figure.

Captain von Trapp was far quieter than his movie character but



in real life he really did use a whistle to call his children to come to him. The grounds of their family home were so vast that it was impossible to call the children and in consequence he used a whistle.

"Their house was so big he would have to whistle for them because he was the Captain of a submarine so it came naturally to him. He was the strong, fatherly figure who all the kids looked up to and respected. He really was the rock of the family wrote Sophia, great grand-daughter of Georg von Trapp.

Baron von Trapp later employed Maria, a nun from the local Abbey, to help teach one of his children who was too weak to go to school. When Maria met Georg for the first time, she said of him:

"Half his life had died with the navy. Of the other half, most

seemed to be buried with Agathe"

However Georg fell in love with Maria and they married on November 26th 1927. They then had three more children. Georg and Maria had been married for ten years before the Anschluss, when Germany 'invaded' Austria. The *Anschluss* refers to the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany on 12 March 1938. *The German spelling, until the German orthography reform of 1996, was Anschluß and also known as the Anschluss Österreichs.*

Adolf Hitler was forcing men like Captain von Trapp to fight in the German Military. Georg did not like what the Nazis were doing and turned down several requests made by Hitler. Georg decided to resist the evil of the Nazis and stand up for what he believed in. He did the most heroic and courageous act of all, taking the opportunity to leave his beloved homeland and go to America in 1938 to start a new life with his family.

Sophia wrote:

"It's an honour to know who my great-grandparents were and how my great-grandfather

stood up against something that was so wrong. Every time I go on tour, I am so amazed at how so many people know our family history through The Sound of Music. It represents so many other people who went through the same thing

Georg purchased a farmhouse and with the help of the family turned it into a very successful business. It is still operating as a hotel and ski resort today and is known as The von Trapp Lodge.

Biographical note:

'*To The Last Salute*' was a book written by Georg von Trapp about life on a U-boat in World War One from a military aspect not from a personal one. This book is highly recommended to those interested in the von Trapp family, the musical *The Sound of Music*, World War One from an Austro-Hungarian viewpoint and U-boats.

It was originally published in Austria in 1935 and later translated into English by a grand-



daughter, Elizabeth Campbell, who wanted other people to know her Grandfather's story.

Elizabeth wrote: "*My husband read this book and found it a fascinating account of his time in the submarines*".

Captain von Trapp lived to see the Nazis defeated in 1945, but on May 30th 1947, Georg died from lung cancer, contracted from the toxic fumes from submarine engines during his service in during World War One. The von Trapp family decided to stay in America, but it was only after Georg's death that the story of him and his family became famous worldwide through the making of the film **The Sound of Music**. He was a remarkable man indeed.

The **Austro-Hungarian Navy** was the naval force of the Austria-Hungarian Empire. Its official name in German was *kaiserliche und königliche Kriegsmarine* (Imperial and Royal War Navy), abbreviated as *K.U.K. Kriegsmarine*, and in Hungarian *Császári és Királyi Haditengerészet*, abbreviated as *Cs. és Kir. Haditengerészet*. The navy existed under this name after the formation of the Dual Monarchy in 1867 and continued in service until the end of the First World War in 1918. Prior to 1867, the empire's naval forces were those of the Austrian Empire. Their role was that of protecting the Adriatic.

During the First World War their Fleet comprised: 4 Dreadnought battleships, 3 Semi-Dreadnoughts, 6 Pre-Dreadnoughts, 4 Coastal defence ships, 3 Armoured cruisers, 2 Protected cruisers, 7 Light cruisers, 30 Destroyers, 27 submarines. A considerable naval force. By 1915 a total of 33,735 naval personnel were serving in the K.U.K. Kriegsmarine.

After the First World War, both Austria and Hungary were deprived of their coasts and their ships confiscated by the victorious Allied powers. Their former ports on the Adriatic Sea, Trieste, Pola, Fiume, and Ragusa, became parts of Italy and Yugoslavia. After the break-up of Yugoslavia, the former Adriatic coast was divided between Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Montenegro.

The London Gazette Friday August 26th 1966.
The Queen has been graciously pleased to approve the award of
The George Medal to
Lieutenant Alan Leigh Tarver. FAA. Royal Navy.

Lieutenant Tarver was the pilot of a Sea Vixen aircraft returning to H.M.S. *Ark Royal* from an operational patrol over the sea. Halfway home one of his two engines stopped through a mechanical failure and the aircraft, already low on fuel, began to lose more fuel from the damaged engine.

A Scimitar tanker aircraft from the carrier closed Tarver's disabled aircraft and while endeavouring to take fuel from the tanker in mid-air, the Sea Vixen's other engine cut out at a height of approximately 12,000 feet and the now powerless aircraft began to fall towards the sea.

In the Sea Vixen aircraft the two aircrew sit strapped in ejector seats in separate cockpits in the forward half of the fuselage a closed hatch overhead securing the Observer's escape route, they are not in direct visual communication with one another. Lieutenant Tarver coolly remained in his cockpit, retaining control as best he could as the aircraft fell he initiated a countdown for himself and his Observer to eject at a height of 6,000 feet. He was in continuous radio communication both with the ship and with the pilot of the Scimitar tanker above him at this stage and both have testified that he reported the sequence of events to them in a calm voice.

At 6,000 feet, when the countdown reached zero, the Observer initiated the firing of his ejector seat but the cartridge did not fire and he began to attempt to bale out manually. Although it was now clear that every moment that delayed his own ejection reduced Lieutenant Tarver's already limited chances of survival, he elected to remain in his cockpit to further the Observer's escape as best he could. He first inverted the aircraft in the hope of assisting the Observer's manual escape. With the hatch cover jetti-

soned there was hope that this manoeuvre might be successful, although in doing so, precious height and speed were lost and the time remaining before the inevitable crash into the sea was diminished.

Twice Lieutenant Tarver carried out this manoeuvre, but to no avail, his Observer, having got himself half out of his access hatch appeared to lose consciousness and it is likely that his harness became caught up in the airframe.

With all reasonable chance of his own survival now gone, Lieutenant Tarver still took no action to clear before the aircraft hit the sea. This was also fruitless.

The Scimitar pilot watching the Vixen from above reported that as the Sea Vixen rolled over on its final plunge into the sea the body of Lieutenant Tarver was seen ejecting from the pilot's cockpit, hitting the sea before his parachute had time to deploy within the splash circle of the aircraft crash. An air-sea rescue helicopter had been flown off from the ship, but in the opinion of the Scimitar pilot, who was the only eye-witness to the crash, there could be no chance of Lieutenant Tarver having survived and he reported this on his recall on board. In the event, Lieutenant Tarver did survive and the helicopter rescued him from the sea and brought him back on board the carrier. That he was unsuccessful in saving his Observer's life in no way diminishes the quality of his own bravery and by making his first concern the survival of his fellow aircrew.

Lieutenant Tarver acted in the highest traditions of the Service by remaining for several minutes in the crashing aircraft so forfeiting his own chances of escape beyond the point where he could reasonably expect to live, he exhibited most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger.

The de Havilland DH.110 Sea Vixen was a British twin-engine, twin boom-tailed, two-seat jet fighter flown by the Fleet Air Arm during the 1950s through to the early 1970s. The Sea Vixen was designed by the de Havilland Aircraft Company during the late 1940s at Hatfield, Hertfordshire. On 26 September 1951, an initial prototype was completed and conducted its maiden flight from the Hatfield Aerodrome flown by their test pilot John Cunningham. Early flight tests of the prototype demonstrated that the aircraft's performance exceeded expectations. By the following year, the prototype was regularly flying in excess of the speed of sound. However, on September 6th 1952, tragedy struck while the DH 110 was being flown at the Farnborough Airshow. Following a demonstration of its ability to break the sound barrier during low level flight, the aircraft disintegrated in mid-air. One of the engines and debris landed in the midst of spectators and killed 31 people. The test pilot John Derry and his assistant, Tony Richards were killed. Initially produced by de Havilland, the aircraft was later designated the Hawker Siddeley Sea Vixen when the de Havilland Company was absorbed by the Hawker Siddeley Corporation in 1960.



Operating from British aircraft carriers, the Sea Vixen was used in combat over Tanganyika and The Yemen during the Aden Emergency. The Sea Vixen was equipped with modern radar and air-to-air weapons to perform its primary mission.

The original DH.110 design as offered to the RAF had carried an armament of four cannons later removed and an all-missile armament fitted, on entering service, it was the first British aircraft to be solely armed with missiles, rockets and bombs; it was also the first fighter aircraft operated by the Fleet Air Arm not equipped with guns of any form. The Sea Vixen FAW.1 was armed with four de Havilland Firestreak air-to-air missiles, the later Sea Vixen FAW.2 was additionally equipped with the more capable Red Top missile. The Sea Vixen FAW.2's ability to use its complement of air-to-air missiles was greatly enhanced by the presence of the AI18 radar, operated by a dedicated observer located below and to the right of the pilot.

In addition to its principal fleet defence role, the Sea Vixen could also perform ground attack missions for this purpose, it was armed with two Microcell unguided two-inch rocket packs, Bullpup air-to-ground missiles and four 500 lb or two 1,000 lb bombs. The Sea Vixen was fitted with a refuelling probe which enabled the aircraft to refuel from a tanker aircraft extending the range of the aircraft. In addition, equipment was developed for the Sea Vixen that allowed it to be used as a tanker for the purpose of refuelling other aircraft.

The aircraft was powered by two Rolls-Royce Avon 208 turbo-jet engines and could reach a maximum speed of 690 mph and a range of up to 600 miles. The twin-boom tail configuration was used to accommodate both fuel and electronic equipment. The twin-boom tail reduced the length and height of the aircraft, both crucial factors to enable stowage of the aircraft for carrier operation. The Sea Vixen had a crew of two, a pilot and a radar operator/observer, the pilot's canopy was offset to the left-hand side of the fuselage, the observer sat within the fuselage to the right of the pilot (**see photograph**), he gained access to his position, nicknamed the "Coal Hole". through a flush-fitting top hatch, The observer's position was darkened and located deeper down into the fuselage to improve the visibility of the radar screens. Both positions were fitted with fully automated height adjustable Martin-Baker Mk.4 ejector seats which were capable of being deployed under a range of conditions and circumstances, including the aircraft being submerged in water. Each crew member had a single centralised service connector comprising circuits that served ventilated g-suits as well as controls for humidity and temperature for crew comfort. On the type FAW.1 aircraft, in an emergency, the normal sequence was for the observer to pull a protective screen down in front of his face and through a safety interlock, cause the hatch to be automatically jettisoned, which in turn allowed the ejector seat to be fired. If the hatch failed to jettison the ejector seat could not be fired.

On May 18th 1966 Flight Lieutenant Alan Traver and his observer, Flight Lieutenant John Stutchbury, airborne over the Indian Ocean in an FAW 2 Sea Vixen XJ-3520 of 890 Squadron had been catapulted from the carrier *Ark Royal*. In the afternoon, it was clear from radio traffic with the aircraft that the aircraft was in trouble, Lieutenant Traver had reported a major loss of fuel, a failure of a gearbox led to a fuel leak and power loss from the port engine followed by the failure of starboard engine. A stand-by Scimitar aircraft, equipped for in-flight re-fuelling, was airborne within minutes and headed toward the stricken aircraft, communication between the two aircraft confirmed that both engines had failed. Lieutenant Traver did his best to pick up the basket on the end of the fuelling hose but failed. The powerless aircraft was literally falling from the sky. Lieutenant Traver ordered Lieutenant Stutchbury to bale out, but his ejector seat failed to operate. He then told his observer to jettison the canopy and in a superb piece of flying, rolled the aircraft inverted in the hope that Lieutenant Stutchbury, still in his seat, would drop free, this failed. He rolled the aircraft a second time but all to no avail Lieutenant Stutchbury remained trapped.

Lieutenant Traver stayed with the aircraft until it hit the sea, his seat threw him horizontally away from the aircraft, he was picked up by the search and rescue helicopter from the ship and although injured, he survived. John Stutchbury was lost with the aircraft, his body was never found. An additional account at the time confirmed this detail. John Stutchbury lost his life as a result of a safety interlock failing. He manually jettisoned the hatch but could not fire the ejector seat.

The subsequent court of enquiry concluded that it was the hatch jettison system that was at fault, not the ejector seat. All Sea Vixens were modified to include a **frangible** (easily fragmented) fibreglass hatch over the observer's cockpit.

When fired, the ejector seat plus observer would be shot straight through the hatch cover..

The loss of HMS *Ardent*. The Falklands War May 22nd 1982

HMS *Ardent* (F 184) was a 2,750 ton General Purpose Type 21 frigate built for the Royal Navy by Yarrow Shipbuilders Ltd, Glasgow, Scotland.

She was completed in 1977 and was the seventh ship of the eight Type 21's.

Her sister ships of the class were: F 169 *Amazon* F 170, **Antelope*, F171 *Active*, F172 *Ambuscade*, F 173 *Arrow*, F174 *Alacrity*, F185 *Avenger*.

*HMS *Antelope* was sunk on May 24th by Argentinian aircraft.

The Type 21's were the first class of ships to be designed from the onset and fitted with two Combined Gas turbine and Gas turbine (COGAG) propulsion systems each driving a propeller shaft and a variable pitch propeller. The COGAG combined the power output from two gas turbine engines, a gearbox and clutches that allowed either of the gas turbines to drive the shaft or both gas turbines to be combined in the "sprint mode" if necessary. Note: Very expensive on fuel!

Using one or two gas turbines had the advantage of combining two engines of different performance, the Type 21 was fitted with two Rolls Royce Olympus gas turbine engines for high speed, developing 25,000 shaft horse power at 30 knots (plus) with a range of 1,200 miles and two Rolls Royce Tyne RMIC gas turbines provided 10,000 shaft horse power at 18 knots for economical cruising, with a range of 4,000 miles.

The 21's armament comprised:

A single 4.5 inch Mark 8 automatic turret, four 20 mm Oerlikon anti-aircraft weapons, four Exocet MM 48 missile launchers, A single Seacat (GWS 4) missile launchers, a single Lynx helicopter and two A/S torpedo tubes.

Ardent was built by Yarrow's at Glasgow and was launched on May 9th 1975 and commissioned

at Devonport on October 14th 1977, she joined the 6th frigate flotilla. She then deployed to the Baltic, Red Sea and Persian Gulf.

In 1981 she joined the 4th frigate flotilla. With the exception of *Amazon*, all the ships of the class took part in the 1982 Falklands War as the 4th Frigate Squadron.

They were much involved on extensive shore-bombardment and providing anti-submarine and anti-aircraft duties for the task force.

Ardent led the amphibious group into Falkland Sound arriving in style at 30 knots taking up station during the morning of the 21st May 1982.

The bulk of the air strikes began at 17:40 Z. on May 20th. *Ardent* had been ordered to proceed west of North West Island in company with the type 12 frigate *Yarmouth* to "split air attacks from the south". A group of three aircraft, either Skyhawks or IAI Daggers crossed the Falklands Sound from the west and then turned to their left to attack from the north east. Cannon fire and three bombs struck home as the Argentine aircraft pressed their attack from the port side. The only defensive weapons which reacted properly were two 20 mm Oerlikons.

The Seacat anti-aircraft missile system failed to lock onto the attackers, they out-maneuvred the 4.5" gun by carrying out their run out of its arc of fire. Two bombs exploded in the hangar area, destroying the Westland Lynx helicopter, the Flight Commander, the Observer, two Lynx

maintainers and the ship's Supply Officer, who was doubling up as Flight Deck Officer, were either killed or wounded. The Sea Cat launcher was blown 80 feet into the air before it crashed back down onto the flight deck, the third bomb crashed through the after auxiliary machinery space but failed to explode. The after electrical switchboard was severely damaged causing loss of power for some critical systems such as the 4.5 mounting.

The hangar was left in flames the crew suffered a number of casualties.

Still in full control of her engines and steering, but virtually defenceless, *Ardent* was instructed to head north toward Port San Carlos but at 18:00Z five Skyhawks approached the frigate and dropped numerous free-fall and retard bombs. A pattern of two to four bombs exploded on the port quarter (aft), while an undetermined number of others which failed to explode penetrated into the ship. Some of the remaining bombs exploded in the water nearby, battering the ship and causing minor flooding in the forward auxiliary machinery room.

The dining area was shattered, communications between the bridge and the ship control centre were cut off and the ship lost steering. This attack caused many casualties, especially among the damage-control teams working in the hangar. Two 800 Squadron Harrier aircraft intercepted and shot down three of the attacking

Argentinian aircraft. *Ardent* came to rest in the shallow waters of Grantham Sound, the fires in her stern now out of control. With the ship listing heavily, Commander Alan West decided to abandon the ship. The type 12 frigate *Yarmouth* came alongside to take off survivors they were transferred to *SS Canberra*. At that time it was known that 22 men had lost their lives. *Ardent* sank at 0200 the following morning. Two Distinguished Service Crosses, one George Medal and four Mentioned in Dispatches citations were awarded to members of the ship's company. The last man to leave the ship was her Commanding Officer, Commander Alan West, he was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Commander West served as First Sea Lord from 2002–2006.

Within days naval divers removed *Ardent's* light AA weapons for fitting to other ships, her foremast was used as a navigational warning and datum by her sister ship *Arrow* whilst she bombarded Goose Green.

According to the Argentine Air Force official website, *Ardent* was the subject of two attacks from FAA aircraft:

14:00 Argentine time (UTC-3) by a lone A-4B Skyhawk of 5th Air Group. Four A-4B took off from Rio Gallegos at 11:30 UTC-3.

After experiencing problems during the air-to-air refuelling, two aircraft were forced to abort and fly back to their base. Once over the Falklands Sound, the remaining Skyhawks chanced upon an unidentified transport ship – she was apparently the abandoned Argentine cargo vessel *Río Carcaraña* – which was attacked by one of the aircraft.

The other aircraft, piloted by the flight commander, Captain Pablo Carballo, dropped one 1,000 lb bomb on a frigate he found at Grantham Sound. He reported heavy anti-aircraft fire but returned safely.

The bomb exploded on the stern. Carballo went on to attack *Broadsword* a few days later.

14:40 UTC-3 by IAI Daggers of 6th Air Group. A flight of two Daggers, led by Captain Mir González, was joined by a third Dagger returning from an aborted sortie.

They headed together towards San Carlos, but were intercepted by a patrol of Sea Harriers vectored by the type 22 frigate *Brilliant*, one aircraft was shot down over West Falkland. The pilot ejected and was recovered later.

The two original Daggers successfully outran the British air patrol and entered Falklands Sound from the south. They discovered a frigate and dropped two 1,000 lb bombs on her stern. They also hit the craft with their 30 mm cannon. According to this report, the warship responded to the attack by firing anti-aircraft missiles.

Navy aircraft sortie. 15:01 UTC-3 three Argentine Navy A-4Q Skyhawks of 3rd Fighter and Attack Naval Squadron, hit *Ardent* with at least two bombs on the stern, a number of unexploded bombs which ripped into the hull and several near-misses. These fighters usually operated off the carrier *ARA Veinticinco de Mayo*, but this mission was carried out from a land base at Rio Grande. Navy aircraft used a dozen 500 lb retarding tail bombs during the attack.

During their escape they were shot down by Sea Harriers.

The pilot who made the final run, Lt. Gustavo Marcelo Márquez was killed in action after his A-4Q was hit by 30 mm fire and exploded.

Lt. Philippi, shot down by an AIM-9L Sidewinder missile, ejected safely he was sheltered by local farmer Tony Blake during the night and re-joined Argentine forces.

Lt. Arca, with his A-4Q also struck by 30 mm rounds, bailed out safely after an unsuccessful attempt to land at Stanley.

Arca ejected at Cape Pembroke, two miles from Stanley airstrip he was rescued from the water by the Argentine Army Huey UH-1H of Captain Svendsen.

HMS *Ardent's* casualties
 ARMSTRONG, Derek, Able Seaman (Sonar), D171126C
 BANFIELD, Richard W, Lieutenant Commander, C019615Y
 BARR, Andrew R, Able Seaman (Sonar), D171207C
 BROUARD, Peter I H, Engineer Mechanic, D089826M
 DUNKERLEY, Richard J S, Cook, D155376N
 FOOTE, Michael P, Act/Leading Cook, D150936G
 FORD, Stephen N, Marine Engineering Mechanic, D189624P
 HANSON, Shaun, Act/Steward, D191828F
 HAYWARD, Sean K, Able Seaman (Sonar), D190628Y
 HEYES, Stephen, Weapon Engineering Mechanic, D166439B
 LAWSON, Simon J, Weapon Engineering Mechanic, D1833557S
 LEIGHTON, Alistar R, Marine Engineering Mechanic, D187927E
 MCAULAY, Allan, Air Engineering Mechanic, D065361N
 MULLEN, Michael S, Act/Leading Seaman, D140637W
 MURPHY, Brian, Lieutenant, C022353P
 NELSON, Gary T, Leading Physical Training Instructor, D141680P
 PALMER, Andrew K, Act/Petty Officer Weapon Engineering Mechanic, D134200P
 ROBERTS, John R, Cook, D138481K
 SEPHTON, John M, Lieutenant Commander, C021253B
 WHITE, Stephen J, Act/Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic, D177273B
 WHITFORD, Garry, Act/Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic, D152859L
 WILLIAMS, Gilbert S, Marine Engineering Mechanic, D169265K

The loss of *Ardent's* sister ship *Antelope*, also bombed and sunk a few days later, will be the subject of an article in the June issue of *Cumberlander*.

Peter Heywood (6 June 1772 – 10 February 1831)

He was a British naval officer who was on board HMS *Bounty* during the mutiny of 28 April 1789. He was later captured in Tahiti, tried and condemned to death as a mutineer but subsequently pardoned. He resumed his naval career and eventually retired with the rank of post-captain after 29 years of honourable service.

The son of a prominent Isle of Man family with strong naval connections, Heywood joined *Bounty* under Lieutenant William Bligh at the age of 15 and was given the privileges of a junior officer. *Bounty* left England in 1787 on a mission to collect and transport breadfruit from the Pacific and arrived in Tahiti late in 1788.

Bounty reached Cape Town on 24 May 1788. Here, Heywood wrote a long letter to his family describing the voyage to date, with vivid descriptions of life at sea. Initially, Heywood relates, sailing had been *"in the most pleasurable weather imaginable"*. In describing the attempts to round Cape Horn he writes: *"I suppose there never were seas, in any part of the known world, to compare with those we met ... for height, and length of swell; the oldest seamen on board never saw anything to equal that ..."* Bligh's decision to turn east was, Heywood records, *"to the great joy of everyone on board"*. *Bounty* sailed from Cape Town on 1 July, reached Tasmania on 19 August and arrived at Matavai Bay, Tahiti, on 26 October. The latter stages of this voyage, however, saw signs of trouble between Bligh and his officers and crew; rows and disagreements grew steadily more frequent.

On arrival, Heywood and Fletcher Christian were assigned to a shore camp which would act as a nursery for the breadfruit plants. On 5 April 1789 *Bounty* finally weighed anchor and made for the open sea.

For three weeks, *Bounty* sailed westward and early on 28 April was lying off the island of Tofua in the Friendly Islands (Tonga). Shortly after 5:15 am Bligh was seized and brought on deck, naked from the waist down, wearing only his nightshirt and with his hands bound. There followed hours of confusion as the majority of the crew sought to grasp the situation and decide how they should react. Finally, at about 10 am, Bligh and 18 loyalists were placed in the ship's 23-foot open boat, with minimal supplies and navigation instruments and cast adrift. Heywood was among those who remained on board.

Not all the 25 men who remained on *Bounty* were mutineers; Bligh's launch was overloaded, and some who stayed with the ship did so under duress. *"Never fear, lads, I'll do you justice if ever I reach England"*, Bligh is reported as saying. After the departure of Bligh's boat, Christian turned *Bounty* eastward in search of a remote haven on which he and the mutineers could settle. He had in mind the island of Tubuai, 300 miles south of Tahiti, partly mapped by Cook. Christian intended to pick up women, male servants and livestock from Tahiti, to help establish the settlement. Meanwhile, as *Bounty* sailed slowly towards Tubuai, Bligh's launch made its way steadily towards civilisation and reached Coupang (now Kupang), on Timor on 14 June 1789. Here Bligh gave his first report of the mutiny.

A month of sailing brought *Bounty* to Tubuai on 28 May 1789.

On 18 September Heywood and 15 others now decided that they would remain in Tahiti and risk the consequences of discovery, while Christian, with eight mutineers and a number of Tahitian men and women, took off in *Bounty* for an unrevealed destination. Before departing, Christian left messages for his family with Heywood, recounting the story of the mutiny and emphasising that he alone was responsible.

On Tahiti Heywood and his companions set about organising their lives. The largest group, led by James Morrison, began building a schooner, to be named *Resolution* after Cook's ship. Matthew Thompson and former master-at-arms Charles Churchill chose to lead drunken and generally dissolute lives which ended in the violent deaths of both. Heywood preferred quiet domesticity in a small house with a Tahitian wife, studying the Tahitian language and fathering a daughter. Over a period of 18 months he gradually adopted native manners of dress and was heavily tattooed around the body. Heywood later explained: *"I was tattooed not to gratify my own desires, but theirs"*, adding *"that in Tahiti a man without tattoos was an outcast. I always made it a maxim when I was in Rome to act as Rome did."*

On 23 March 1791, with the arrival of the search ship HMS *Pandora*. Heywood's first reaction to the ship's appearance was, he later wrote, *"the utmost joy"*. As the ship anchored he rode out in a canoe to identify himself. However, his reception, like that of the others who came aboard voluntarily, was frosty. Captain Edward Edwards, *Pandora*'s commander, made no distinctions among the former *Bounty* men; all became prisoners, and were manacled and taken below.

Within a few days all the 14 surviving fugitives in Tahiti had surrendered or been captured. Among *Pandora*'s officers was former *Bounty* midshipman Thomas Hayward. Heywood's hopes that his former shipmate would verify his innocence were quickly dashed. Hayward, received us very coolly and pretended ignorance of our affairs. *Pandora* remained at Tahiti for five weeks while Captain Edwards tried without success to obtain information on *Bounty*'s whereabouts. A cell was built on *Pandora*'s quarterdeck, a structure known as "Pandora's Box" where the prisoners, legs in irons and wrists in handcuffs, were to be confined for almost five months. Heywood wrote: *"The heat ... was so intense that the sweat frequently ran in streams to the scuppers and produced maggots in a short time ... and the two necessary tubs which were constantly kept in place helped to render our situation truly disagreeable."*

Pandora left Tahiti on 8 May 1791 to search for Christian and the *Bounty* among the thousands of southern Pacific islands but no traces of the ship could be found. Physical



attacks from natives were frequent; early in August Edwards abandoned the search and headed for the Dutch East Indies via the Torres Strait. Knowledge of these waters and the surrounding reefs was minimal; on 29 August the ship ran aground on the outer Great Barrier Reef and began to fill with water. Three of the prisoners in "Pandora's Box" were let out and ordered to assist the crew at the pumps. In the subsequent struggle to save the ship the rest of the men in "Pandora's Box" were ignored as the regular crew went about their efforts to prevent the ship from foundering. At dawn it was clear that their efforts were in vain; the officers agreed that the vessel could not be saved and orders were then given to abandon ship. The armourer was ordered into the "box" to knock off the remaining prisoners' leg irons and shackles; however, the ship sank before he had finished. Heywood, stripped naked, was one of the last to get out of the cell; four prisoners, including Heywood's best friend George Stewart, were drowned, as were 31 of the regular crew. The 99 survivors, including ten prisoners, recovered on a nearby island where they stayed for two nights before embarking on an open-boat journey which largely followed Bligh's course of two years earlier. The prisoners were mostly kept bound hand and foot on the slow passage to Coupang, which they reached on 17 September 1791.

On 25 December 1791 they were taken aboard a Dutch ship, *Vreedenberg*, for passage to Europe via Cape Town. Still in the charge of Captain Edwards, the prisoners were kept in irons for most of the way. At the Cape they were eventually transferred to a British warship, HMS *Gorgon*, which set sail for England on 5 April 1792.

On 19 June the ship arrived in Portsmouth where the prisoners were moved to the guardship HMS *Hector*.

The court martial opened on 12 September 1792 aboard HMS *Duke* in Portsmouth Harbour. Accused with Heywood were Joseph Coleman, Thomas McIntosh and Charles Norman, all of whom had been exonerated in Bligh's account and could confidently expect acquittal, as could Michael Byrne, the nearly blind ship's fiddler. The other accused were James Morrison, Thomas Burkitt, Thomas Ellison, John Millward and William Muspratt.

The court martial board was and Heywood's relative by marriage, Albemarle Bertie.

Heywood opened his defence on 17 September with a long prepared statement read by one of his lawyers. It began with a frank acknowledgement of his predicament: to be even accused of mutiny was to "*appear at once the object of unpardonable guilt and exemplary vengeance*".

Under further questioning, Cole confirmed his belief that Heywood had been detained against his will. William Peckover, *Bounty's* gunnery officer, affirmed that if he had stayed aboard the ship in the hope of retaking her, he would have looked to Heywood for assistance. Witnesses from the *Pandora* attested that Heywood had surrendered himself voluntarily and that he had been fully cooperative in providing information. Heywood concluded his defence with what Alexander terms an "audacious" assertion that had Bligh been present in court he would have "exculpated me from the least disrespect". On 18 September Lord Hood announced the court's verdicts. As expected, Coleman, McIntosh, Norman and Byrne were acquitted. Heywood and the other five were found guilty of the charge of mutiny and were ordered to suffer death by hanging. Lord Hood added that "*in considera-*

tion of various circumstances, the court did humbly and most earnestly recommend the said Peter Heywood and James Morrison to His Majesty's Royal Mercy."

On October 26th on *Hector's* quarterdeck, the Pardon was formally read to Heywood and Morrison by Captain Montagu. Heywood responded with a short statement that ended:

"I receive with gratitude my Sovereign's mercy, for which my future life will be faithfully devoted to his service."

Three days later, aboard HMS *Brunswick*, Millward, Burkitt and Ellison were hanged from the yardarms.

On the specific recommendation of Lord Hood, who had offered the young man his personal patronage, Heywood resumed his naval career as a midshipman aboard his uncle Thomas Pasley's ship HMS *Bellerophon*. In September 1793 he was summoned by Lord Howe, commander of the Channel Fleet, to serve on HMS *Queen Charlotte*, the fleet's flagship.

Heywood served on *Queen Charlotte* until March 1795 and was aboard her when the French fleet was defeated at Ushant on 1 June 1794, the occasion known as the "Glorious First of June". In August 1794 he was promoted acting lieutenant. In March 1795, doubts about his eligibility as a convicted mutineer for further promotion were set aside and his advancement to full lieutenant's rank was approved, despite his lacking the stated minimum of six years' service at sea. Among those who supported the promotion was Captain Hugh Cloberry Christian, ironically a relative of Fletcher Christian.

In January 1796 Heywood was appointed third lieutenant to HMS *Fox* and sailed with her to the East Indies. He was to remain in this station for nine years. By the end of 1796 he was *Fox's* first lieutenant and remained so until mid-1798 when he transferred to HMS *Suffolk*. On 17 May 1799 Heywood was given his first command, HMS *Amboyne*, a brig-of-war. In August 1800 Heywood was appointed commander of a bomb ship, the *Vulcan*, in which he visited Coupang where he had been held prisoner eight years earlier. At this time he began the hydrographic work that would mark the remainder of his naval career.

In 1803, after a succession of commands, Heywood was promoted to post-captain. In command of HMS *Leopard*, Heywood conducted a series of surveys of the eastern coasts of Ceylon and India, areas that had not been studied previously, he produced what Alexander describes as "*beautifully drafted charts*". In later years he was to produce similar charts for the north coast of Morocco, the River Plate area of South America, parts of the coasts of Sumatra, north-west Australia and other channels and coastlines.

Heywood's last command was HMS *Montagu* in which he acted as escort to King Louis XVIII on the return of the King to France in May 1814. He remained with *Montagu* for the rest of his naval service. On 16 July 1816 *Montagu* was paid off in Chatham and Heywood finally retired from the sea. Two weeks later he married Frances Joliffe, a widow whom he had met ten years earlier, he settled with her at Highgate near London. The couple had no children but, apart from his daughter in Tahiti, there is a suggestion in a will which he signed in 1810 that Heywood had also fathered a British child—the will makes provision for one Mary Gray, "*an infant under my care and protection*". In February 1831 Peter Heywood died after suffering a stroke, he was 58.

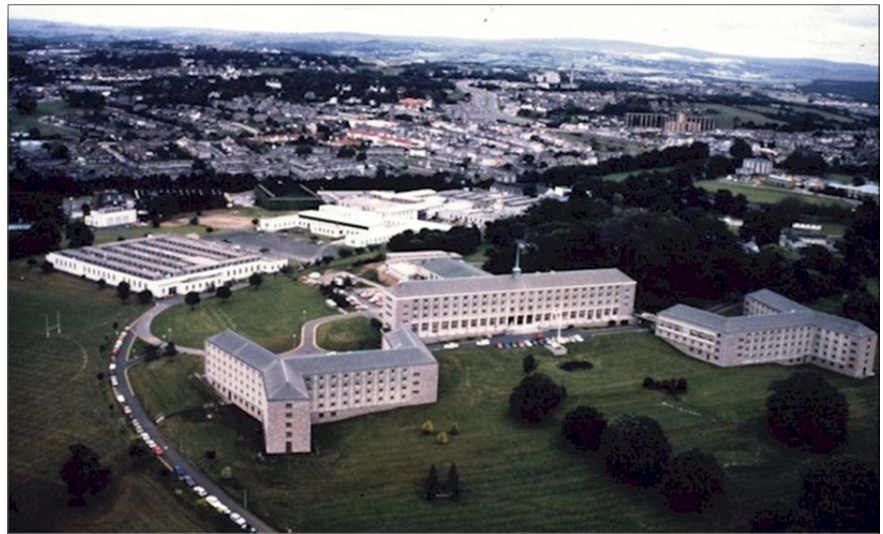
Royal Naval Colleges Keyham and HMS *Thunderer*.

Construction of Keyham College on the dockside in the Keyham suburb of Plymouth started in February 1879 at a cost of £30,000 and opened in July 1880 as Training Schools for Engineer Students, replacing the hulk of HMS *Marlborough* which had been used as accommodation for engineering students since 1877. Students spent five years living at the college and undergoing training in workshops around the dockyard, before spending a further two years at Greenwich college and then assigned to ships as Assistant Engineers.

The college originally only contained accommodation, replacing that provided by *Marlborough*, but an additional building was later constructed containing lecture theatres, a laboratory and a gymnasium which was subsequently converted to a test engineering shop. The two buildings were connected by a bridge. Later, further workshops were added, and a covered parade ground. An extension to provide accommodation for an additional 50 students was built in 1895-1897.

The Selborne-Fisher scheme of 1903 meant that engineering and deck officers received the same basic training and led the closure of the college in 1910. However it reopened in July 1913 and on the outbreak of the First World War the following year the students were sent off to serve on warships and the college turned over to special entry cadet training.

After the First World War, the college reverted to engineer



training.

Plans were announced in 1937 to move the college to Manadon near Plymouth, the new college opened in May 1940 at the manor house and expanded rapidly during the Second World War.

By 1945 there were several new, permanent and temporary buildings on the site, the original manor house was being used for staff accommodation. In December 1946 the Royal Naval Engineering College RNEC Manadon had been renamed HMS *Thunderer*.

Further permanent building work took place following the end of the war, with a recreation block completed in 1947 and the instructional block, boiler house and factory workshop completed in 1951.

The old Keyham College closed in 1958 and was converted to the Dockyard Technical College, reopening in November 1959. The buildings were demolished in 1985.

HMS *Thunderer* produced around 150 Royal Navy engineer officers each year. In addition, a small number of seaman

branch officers, reading for undergraduate arts degrees at the college. This continued until 1995 with the final Manadon students completing their 3rd year of B-Eng or BA degrees at Plymouth University in 1996. In parallel, in-service first degree education was transferred to the University of Southampton from 1994. Postgraduate application training that had previously been conducted at RNEC Manadon was transferred to HMS *Sultan* (marine and air engineering) and HMS *Collingwood* (weapon engineering).

Associated establishments for specialist training.

HMS *Excellent* Whale Island.

Training site that prepare personnel for life at sea or deployed operations, the Defence Diving School, HMS *Bristol* and the Phoenix Damage Repair Instructional Unit.

HMS *Temeraire*. Naval physical development.

HMS *Raleigh* at Torpoint. New entry training, specialist training in seamanship and submarine operations.

Royal Marines at Longmoor Wokingham. Assault training.

Horsea Island. Portsmouth Defence Diving School. All Navy clearance divers and Army divers basic training.

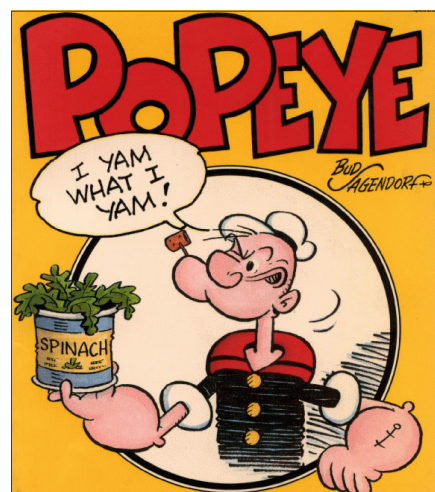
Scran* at Sea in the 17th century

Scran is a Geordie term for 'food' hence the existence of '*Scran Vans*' outside football stadiums and fairs.

Nobody ran away to sea to eat well. Salt beef was part of the standard diet in the days of sail and was often served up in a very poor condition. On visiting a naval stores on Ascension Island in 1839, Captain Dalrymple Hay found that the beef stored there had been salted 30 years earlier in 1809. It was apparently still edible, though best boiled and grated with a nutmeg grater. Pork did not last so well but the biscuit had provided home for generations of weevils and maggots, so it was obviously sustaining. In fact, the local sailors had an interesting tactic for getting the best out of their biscuits. They filled a sack with the biscuit and then left a fish on the top, so that the maggots came out of the biscuit and infested the fish which could then be thrown away. Each sack needed several fish. It is a pity nobody thought of eating the fish and throwing the biscuit away. The sailors had their own distinctive names for their food - not quite *haute cuisine* but very much to the point. Thus salt beef was *salt "oss"*, and was served twice a week at dinner. In the 1870's the navy was still using meat from casks packed in the year that Nelson fell at Trafalgar, in 1805. One piece of beef was so tough that a sailor carved it into the shape of a frigate, sand-papered it, varnished it and then glued it to a low beam. It was as hard as mahogany as many a cracked skull bore witness in after years. It was the kind of flavour you would expect an Egyptian mummy to give off if it was boiled. Yet for all the complaints it was a better diet than was enjoyed by soldiers in the army. Admittedly no ships carried cooks - and there was no real attempt to design a balanced diet - but

the sailors got the 4,000 calories or so that were needed by men involved in heavy manual labour. The main problem was that long periods at sea denied men access to fresh fruit and vegetables. This was sometimes overcome by ingenuity in the culinary arts - Sir Sidney Smith, among his many eccentricities, establishing a fad for cooked rats, claiming rat was better than duck. To furnish his table baited hooks were let down into the provisions hold and a number of rodents thus acquired. If the sailor's food was rarely injurious to his health, his drinking water was usually bad and sometimes lethal. In 1845 the warship *America* was becalmed off the coast of South America. Water became short and the men's ration was reduced to half a pint a day, yet the captain always found enough to water his personal livestock and chickens which supplied his table. His men were flogged for drinking his bath water and when a petty officer used a sponge to gather moisture he was broken down to able seaman. Natives from a nearby island offered to sell them water but the captain refused and the men saw no fresh water for a further 97 days. On his return to England the captain was court-martialled and severely reprimanded for returning home without orders.

At no stage was the subject of the crew's water supply mentioned. If the water was bad the rum was worse - it just seemed better. The issue of this powerful spirit was quite deliberate. A sailor's life was so hard and so brutal that it was better if the men were at least partially drunk most of the time. Before going into action it was usually the case that the crew of even the best ordered English men-of



-war were roaring drunk. Battle usually had a sobering effect and the mechanics of gunnery had been so beaten into the men that they hardly needed to think about it all. This was for the best thinking was bad for a sailor naturally, many men suffered from liver disorders as a result of excessive rum consumption while others went mad through alcohol poisoning. A ration of half a pint of rum was enough to keep even the most ardent spirits subdued. The name "hard tack" derives from the British sailor slang for food, "tack". It is known by other names such as "brewis" originally "brose" made with oatmeal, cabin bread, pilot bread, sea biscuit, "soda crackers" sea bread ship's biscuit, or ship biscuit, or as "*dog biscuits*".

The American saltine cracker challenge is a food challenge or competition in which a person has 60 seconds in which to eat six saltine soda crackers without drinking anything. Although the challenge may sound trivial, it is actually very difficult because the crackers quickly exhaust the saliva in the mouth. Even though six saltines can fit in one's mouth at the same time and a minute is plenty of time to chew, the resulting mass of crumbs is still difficult to swallow with a dry mouth.

The song Tom Bowling (also known as The Sailors Epitaph)

The origin English tune was written by Charles Dibdin (1740-1814) (right) on the death of his eldest brother Thomas Dibdin. Before his death in 1814 he became one of the most celebrated songwriters in Britain. Although his music is not currently highly regarded, the patriotism and sentiment embodied in his songs reflect his times at least as well as history books. It first appeared in *The Oddities* which was performed at The Lyceum theatre in 1789, the song is also known as the *Sailor's Epitaph*. Charles was the eighteenth son of a poor silver-maker. He was born in Southampton in 1740, in 1778 he became resident composer at Covent Garden in London. In 1803 the British government paid him to write a series of songs to "*Keep alive the national feelings against the French.*"



Thomas Dibdin was twenty-nine years older than Charles, a father-figure as well as brother he was also a sea captain of a ship in the East India trade, he had died at sea.

Dibdin's songs were said to be worth ten thousand sailors to the cause of England. His songs were also popular in Canada and America before and during the American Revolution and during the War of 1812. The song is a splendid piece of lyrical and at the same time melancholic writing. The music to accompany a solo voice was arranged by Benjamin Britten but is also traditionally played by a solo cello in the orchestra at the last night of the Proms when the orchestra play *The Fantasia on British Sea Songs*. The *Fantasia on British Sea Songs* was arranged by Sir Henry Wood and first performed by him and the Queen's Hall Orchestra at a Promenade Concert on 21 October 1905. It comprises nine parts which follow the course of the Battle of Trafalgar from the point of view of a British sailor, starting with the call to arms, progressing through the death of a comrade, thoughts of home and ending with a victorious return and the assertion that Britain will continue to 'Rule the Waves':

Here a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broach'd him to:
His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft.
Faithful, below, he did his duty,
And now he's gone aloft,
And now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare,
His friends were many, and true-hearted,
His Poll was kind and fair:
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly -

Ah! many's the Time and oft -
But mirth is turn'd to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft,
For Tom is gone aloft.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
The word to pipe all hands:
Thus death, who Kings and tars dispatches,
In vain Tom's life has doff'd,
For though his body's under hatches,
His soul has gone aloft,
His soul has gone aloft.

The Fantasia on British Sea Songs. The Bugle Calls.

The opening series of six naval bugle calls and their responses are taken from the calls traditionally used to convey orders on a naval warship. The first call is *Admiral's salute*, followed by *Action*, *General Assembly*, *Landing Party*, *Prepare to Ram* and finally *Quick, Double, Extend and Close*.

The Sea Songs.

The Anchor's Weighed
The Saucy Arethusa
Tom Bowling
Jack's The Lad (Hornpipe)
Farewell and Adieu, Ye Spanish Ladies
Home, Sweet Home
See, the Conqu'ring Hero Comes
Rule, Britannia!

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Michael Le Fanu GCB, DSC.



Admiral of the Fleet Sir Michael Le Fanu fought in the Second World War as gunnery officer in the 5,270 cruiser *Aurora* operating in the Home Fleet during the Norwegian Campaign, the several battles of the Mediterranean and then as gunnery officer in the 35,000 ton battleship *Howe* operating in the Eastern Fleet. He was later appointed liaison officer between the British Pacific Fleet and the United States Third Fleet. After the War he joined the Experimental Department of the Gunnery School HMS *Excellent* on Whale Island.

His various appointments were as Executive Officer of the 8,800 ton *Swiftsure* class cruiser *Superb*, Commanding Officer of the 2,700 ton type 15 frigate *Relentless*, Commanding Officer HMS *Ganges* the boys training establishment at Shotley and Commanding Officer of the aircraft carrier *Eagle*. He served as First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff in the late 1960s. In that role, in the face of economic difficulties, he worked hard to re-

shape the Navy as an anti-submarine force operating primarily in the Atlantic Ocean.

Michael Le Fanu was the son of Captain Hugh Barrington Le Fanu RN (of Huguenot descent) and Georgiana Harriott Le Fanu (née Kingscote). He was educated at Bedford School then joined the Royal Navy as a Cadet age 13 in 1926 at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. His first sea-going ship was the 10,000 ton County class cruiser *Dorsetshire* in the Atlantic Fleet before being promoted to Midshipman on September 1st 1931 he then joined the 8,250 ton cruiser *York* sister ship of *Exeter*. On May 1st 1934 he was promoted to Sub-Lieutenant and appointed to the 1,500 ton W-class destroyer *Whitshed* in the Mediterranean Fleet in March of the following year. On June 1st 1935 he was promoted to Lieutenant.

Late in 1936 Michael Le Fanu joined the 1,360 ton B class destroyer *Bulldog* then part of the Home Fleet in September. He subsequently trained as a gunnery specialist during 1938 and joined the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean Fleet in Malta.

In December 1939 Michael Le Fanu was appointed Gunnery Officer in the 5,270 ton *Arethusa* class cruiser *Aurora* operating with the Home Fleet. While aboard *Aurora*, he was mentioned in despatches for his services during the Norwegian Campaign in the spring of 1940. Between July and August 1941, as part of Force K with the Home Fleet,

Aurora was involved in operations to Spitzbergen and Bear Island (Operation Gauntlet) a Combined Operations raid by Canadian troops, with British Army logistics support and Free Norwegian Forces servicemen on the Norwegian island of Spitsbergen, 600 miles south of the North Pole, from 25 August to 3 September 1941. The objective was to destroy the rich coal mines there together with associated equipment and stores, which it was correctly assumed the Germans intended to make use. These mines on Norwegian territory were owned and operated by Norway (at Longyearbyen) and by the Soviet Union (at Barentsburg) and both governments agreed to their destruction and the evacuation of their nationals. After one of these sorties, in company with the 8,525 ton cruiser *Nigeria*, she intercepted a German troop convoy off Northern Norway, the German ship SMS *Bremse* was sunk. *Bremse* (in English Horse fly) was built as an artillery training ship for Germany's Kriegsmarine with a secondary function as a testbed for new marine diesel engines later installed in German panzerschiffs (battle ships)

In the autumn *Aurora* was transferred to the Mediterranean and arrived in Malta on 21 October 1941 to join the new Force K.

Aurora was much involved in the actions against the Italian Fleet in the

Mediterranean during 1941, on November 9th she led Force K in company with HM Ships *Penelope*, *Lance* and *Lively*, she was involved in the destruction of the Duisburg Convoy, also known in Italy as Battle of the *Beta* Convoy. This engagement was fought on the night of 8/9 November 1941 between an Italian convoy carrying supplies for the Italian Army and civilian authorities and the Afrika Corps in Libya.

In the resulting battle an Italian destroyer *Fulmine* was sunk, the German transports *Duisburg* and *San Marco* and the Italian transports *Maria*, *Sagitta* and *Rina Corrado* and the Italian ships *Conte di Misurata* and *Minatitlan* were sunk The Italian destroyers were damaged.

On November 24th Force K, comprising *Aurora* and *Penelope* and the destroyers *Lance* and *Lively*, intercepted an Axis convoy about 100 nautical miles west of Crete en-route from the Aegean to Benghazi. The two German transports in the convoy, *Maritza* and *Procida* were both sunk by *Penelope* and *Lively* despite the presence of the Italian torpedo boats *Lupo* and *Cassiopea*.

Michael Le Fanu was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his part in the action.

On December 1st 1941 Force K with HMS *Penelope* and HMS *Lively*

attacked the Mantovani Convoy, the Italian destroyer *Alvise Da Mosto* and the sole cargo ship *Mantovani* were sunk. *Aurora* also participated in the First Battle of Sirte on December 17th 1941.

On December 19th their luck changed, while steaming off Tripoli *Aurora* ran into an uncharted minefield HM Ships *Neptune* and *Kandahar* were sunk, *Aurora* was seriously damaged. She struck a mine on her port side forward, abreast B turret causing flooding and severe structural damage. Her list was corrected by counter flooding and she returned to Malta escorted by the destroyers *Lance* and *Havock* and taken in hand for repair by HM Dockyard Malta. Whilst under temporary repair to allow permanent repair in UK she sustained further damage in dry dock during air raids.

In March 1942 she was escorted to Gibraltar by the destroyer *Avondale* undamaged despite air attacks off Sardinia. In April she arrived in Liverpool and was taken in hand for repair at a commercial shipyard on arrival.

Lieutenant Le Fanu was promoted to Lieutenant Commander on June 1st 1942 and joined the gunnery staff at HMS *Excellent* on Whale Island, there he initially lectured young RNVR officers attending the Long Gunnery Course. He remained on Whale Island until January 1943. Later in the year Michael Le Fanu joined the Home Fleet as Assistant to the Fleet Gunnery Officer and the staff responsibility for the working-up of ships joining the Fleet. HMS *Duke of York* became Flagship of the Home Fleet in May. Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser was appointed Commander-in-Chief.

At the end of the year on December 18th 1943 at Soberton Church in the Meon Valley Hampshire Michael married Prudence Morgan a young lady Michael had first met in 1938. On their wedding day, Pru came up the church aisle on elbow crutches supported by her father to join Michael, she handed her crutches to a bridesmaid, he supported Pru for the whole of the remainder of the wedding service.

To digress slightly, in 1939 Pru had been taken ill, initially thought to have been flu but was later diagnosed as polio, her right leg was badly affected for the remainder of her life. More than three years elapsed before she met Michael again.

Toward the end of 1943 Michael was appointed Gunnery Officer on the

35,000 ton *King George V* class battleship HMS *Howe* the newest and most advanced ship in the Fleet.

Howe left Plymouth in early 1944 for an intensive work-up programme based at Scapa Flow. In mid-June she left Scapa en-route to the Eastern Fleet base at Tricomalee in Ceylon, she arrived during the first week in August. On November 22nd, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser hoisted his flag in *Howe* as Commander-in-Chief the British Pacific Fleet.

The ship left for Sydney Australia to establish the C-in-C's headquarters.

Lieutenant Commander Le Fanu was promoted to Commander on December 31st 1944 and appointed liaison officer between the British Pacific Fleet and the United States Fifth Fleet. In January 1945 he left *Howe* to join the American Flagship the heavy cruiser USS *Indianapolis* flagship of Admiral Raymond Spruance in 1943 and 1944.

On August 15th 1945 the Japanese surrendered.

Michael Le Fanu and his opposie number, a young American Lieutenant Commander were told by Admiral Halsey:

"I hear from the President we've gotta fix this surrender. You two had better go of and do it."

Michael wrote:

"You know, it was most amusing for one young Commander and one young Lieutenant Commander to be told to go and fix the Surrender of the Japanese Empire. So we just sat down and I said: well, the first thing we want is a table and some chairs. I provided the chairs from the battleship King George V, nice wooden ones instead of these American metal ones. The table came from KGV as well, this proved to be too small so we found an American one."

On September 2nd 1945 Commander M Le Fanu attended the signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender on the American Battleship USS *Missouri*.

Michael wrote: *"I had a grandstand view only twelve feet from Uncle Doug (MacArthur)"*

In December, Michael Le Fanu was awarded the American Order of Merit for his work with the Third and Fifth American Fleets in the Pacific.

After the War Michael Le Fanu served on the experimental staff at HMS *Excellent* and in 1948 he became Executive Officer in the 8,700 ton *Swiftsure* class cruiser HMS *Superb*, known to her Company as "Super B"

On June 30th 1949 he was promoted to the rank of Captain, he subsequently left

the ship and was appointed Naval Assistant to the First Sea Lord at the Admiralty. In October 1951 Captain Le Fanu was given command of the newly converted type 15 frigate HMS *Relentless*, she was Captain (F) of the Third Training Squadron. A year later he returned to the Admiralty to join the staff of the Chief Scientist. He attended the Imperial Defence College in 1953 and became Commanding Officer of the boys training establishment HMS *Ganges* at Shotley in December 1954. His career progressed at a very fast pace, three years later in February 1957 he was appointed Commanding Officer of the 36,800 ton aircraft carrier *Eagle*. On July 7th 1958 Michael Le Fanu was promoted to Rear Admiral on appointment as Director-General (Weapons) at the Admiralty. He was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath in the 1960 Birthday Honours. He became Flag Officer Second in Command Far East Fleet in July 1960 and was promoted to Vice Admiral on October 25th 1961 on appointment as Controller of the Navy.

Advanced to Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath in the 1963 Birthday Honours and promoted to Admiral of the Fleet on September 29th 1965, he became Commander-in-Chief, Middle East in December 1965. In that role he served as Joint Commander of the three services in the Middle East during the evacuation of British Nationals during the Aden Emergency.

Advanced to Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath in the 1968 New Year Honours, Sir Michael LeFanu became First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff in August. In the face of economic difficulties he worked hard to reshape the Navy as an anti-submarine force operating primarily in the Atlantic Ocean. He was nominated for the post of Chief of the Defence Staff but never held the office because he was suddenly diagnosed to be terminally ill. He was promoted to Admiral of the Fleet on July 3rd 1970 on his retirement. Admiral Michael Le Fanu died in London on November 28th 1970.

Michael Le Fanu's biography "Dry Ginger" by Richard Baker. The book includes many entertaining anecdotes. Richard Baker tells the story of Sir Michael's naval career and of a family life which was hardly less remarkable. His wife Pru had contracted polio as a schoolgirl and had to spend much of her time in a wheel-chair, but she shared her husband's zest for living to the full together with their three children. The family motto was Cultivate Courage

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Scapa Flow on June 21st 1919 the German Fleet was scuttled.

On Thursday November 21st 1918, two weeks after the end of the First World War, more than seventy battleships, battle cruisers and destroyers of the German High Seas Fleet left their home ports and steamed in line ahead out into the North Sea.

Ahead, out of the morning mist steamed an even mightier fleet, two parallel lines of over one hundred British warships, their guns cleared for action.

It was a meeting of the two most powerful fleets in the world. As they drew abreast, the two lines of the British Royal Navy Grand Fleet turned about to steam on each side of the Imperial German High Seas Fleet, brought to internment by their crews.

Arriving in the Firth of Forth, the German ships dropped anchor where they were boarded by the Royal Navy.

Before leaving their ports in Germany, the Commander-in-Chief Admiral Sir David Beatty had ordered the landing of all ammunition, the gun breech blocks be removed or the guns otherwise rendered useless.

Between 25th and 27th November the fleet was then moved to Scapa Flow; the destroyers to Gutter Sound and the battleships and cruisers to the north and west of the island of Cava. Eventually, a total of 74 ships were interned there, *König* and *Dresden* arrived on 6th December accompanied by the destroyer *V129*, which replaced the sunken *V30*. The last ship to arrive was the 32,200 ton battleship *Baden* on 9th January 1919. Initially, the interned ships were guarded by the Battle Cruiser Force later reduced to the Battle Cruiser Squadron, commanded in succession by Vice-Admiral Pakenham, Rear-Admiral Oliver and Rear-Admiral Keyes. Vice-Admiral Leveson. The Second Battle Squadron of the Atlantic Fleet took over guard duties and were succeeded on 18th May by Vice-Admiral Sir Sydney

Fremantle and the First Battle Squadron.

A year later on June 21st 1919 around 10.00 in the forenoon, the German Fleet Commander Admiral Ludwick von Reuter sent a flag signal to all of the interned ships ordering them to stand by for a pre-arranged signal to scuttle their ships.

At about 11:20 the flag signal was sent:

"To all Commanding Officers and the Leader of the Torpedo Boats. Paragraph Eleven of today's date.

Acknowledge.

Chief of the Interned Squadron"

The signal was repeated by semaphore and searchlights. Scuttling began immediately, seacocks and flood valves were opened and internal water pipes smashed. Portholes had already been loosened, watertight doors and condenser covers left open and in some ships holes had been drilled through bulkheads, all to facilitate the spread of water once scuttling began. One German ship's commander recorded that prior to June 21st seacocks had been set on a hair turning and heavily lubricated, while large hammers had been placed alongside

valves.

There was no noticeable effect until noon when all the ships hoisted the Imperial German Ensign at their mainmasts and the 29,700 ton battleship *Friedrich der Grosse* began to list heavily to starboard. The German crews began to abandon their ships. The British naval forces remaining at Scapa Flow comprised three destroyers, one of which was under repair, seven trawlers and a number of drifters. Vice-Admiral Fremantle received news of the scuttling at 12:20, he cancelled his squadron's exercise at 12:35 and steamed at full speed back to Scapa Flow. He and a division of ships arrived at 14:30 in time to see only the large ships still afloat. He had radioed ahead to order all available craft to prevent the German ships sinking or to try to beach them. The last German ship to sink was the 31,200 ton battlecruiser *Hindenburg* at 17:00, by which time fifteen capital ships had sunk, only the 31,700 ton Battleship *Baden* remained afloat, she was subsequently beached by the Royal Navy.

Four light cruisers and thirty-two destroyers were sunk.

Von Reuter and a number of his officers were brought onto the

quarterdeck of HMS *Revenge*, where Admiral Fremantle – through an interpreter – denounced their actions as dishonourable while von Reuter and his men looked on "with expressionless faces." Admiral Fremantle subsequently remarked privately,

"I could not resist feeling some sympathy for von Reuter, who had preserved his dignity when placed against his will in a highly unpleasant and invidious position."

When it became obvious to the Royal Navy guard force that ships were sinking and crews were taking to their boats, they were forcibly driven back with rifle and pistol fire.

Kapitan Walter Schuman the Commanding Officer of the battleship *Markgraf*, a Warrant Engineer and 7 other men were killed others were wounded before order was restored.

During the afternoon after the ships had been scuttled or beached, 1,774 German officers and men were rounded up and

assembled on board HM Ships *Revenge*, *Royal Oak* and *Resolution*.

Admiral Fremantle had sent out a general order declaring that the German Officers and men were to be treated as prisoners-of-war for having broken the armistice. Initially they were transported to Invergorden on the Cromarty Firth then subsequently to Park Hall P.O.W camp at Oswestry, Shropshire. Finally they were moved to Donington Hall near Nottingham. All were repatriated back to Germany on January 20th 1920.

Initially two salvage companies were employed to raise and salvage the sunken ships they were Cox & Danks and Metal Industries. Salvage work on the sunken ships started in 1924 and continued through to 1938, Cox & Danks had acquired 250,000 tons of sunken ships. A total of 64 ships were raised or otherwise recovered, most were scrapped a few were transferred to the Allied navies.

Raising the heavy ships from the sea bed was a huge and unprecedented task, primarily that of closing or sealing all of the many underwater openings in the hull then pumping out thousands of tons of water. As a vessel gained buoyancy and began to clear the sea bed, control and support of the massive hull, still partially filled with water, became extremely difficult and dangerous. Several of the heavy ships that were scuttled were impossible to raise from the sea bed because of technical difficulties primarily involved in divers gaining access into the hull of the ship to seal openings and to attach lifting gear. Ships that had capsized were somewhat easier to re-float because the hitherto underwater openings were uppermost and more easily sealed. The un-salvaged ships are at depths from 100 to 130 feet will remain in Scapa Flow for posterity. Today they can be accessed by experienced SCUBA divers.

Of the German High Seas Fleet:

Battleships (11)	10 were scuttled and sank. 1 was beached. 7 were subsequently raised and scrapped. 1 was transferred to the Royal Navy and sunk as a target. 3 remain where they sank. (<i>Konig, Kronprinz-Wilhelm and Margraf</i>)
Battle Cruisers (5)	5 were scuttled. All 5 were raised and scrapped.
Cruisers (8)	5 were scuttled, 2 were beached, 1 did not sink. 4 were salvaged and were transferred to the French, Americans and British respectively. 4 remain where they sank. (<i>Brummer, Coln, Dresden and Karlsruhe</i>)
Destroyers (50)	32 were scuttled, 18 were beached. 28 were salvaged 18 transferred to the British, French, American and Japanese, 4 foundered after being raised or en-route to the scrap yard.

HMS *Ocean* enters Plymouth for last time under the White Ensign.

Royal Navy web site

On February 2nd 2018 HMS *Ocean*, the Royal Navy's flagship, entered Plymouth for the last time in Royal Navy service, welcomed by well-wishers and flanked by landing craft and tugs firing water hoses high into the air. The amphibious helicopter and commando carrier sailed into Devonport Naval Base with her decks lined by the crew in dress uniforms, and with the traditional 667 feet decommissioning pennant flying. She



was decommissioned from the Royal Navy at a ceremony in Devonport Dockyard on 27th March. The final entry, heralded by a 21-gun salute, was an emotional one for some of the ship's company who described it as a bitter-sweet moment but stressed the need to celebrate the ship's achievements while looking forward with optimism to the future of the Navy. The commanding officer of HMS *Ocean*, Captain Robert Pedre, said: "My ship's company and I are immensely proud to serve in HMS *Ocean*, the Fleet Flagship of the Royal Navy, as I am sure the people of Plymouth are proud their city has been home to the ship for nearly two decades. Our final entry into Devonport will understandably be tinged with sadness, as we reflect on a truly remarkable operational period for HMS *Ocean* and the many significant achievements we have accomplished together on this great warship. HMS *Ocean*'s decommissioning pennant pays testament to her extraordinary operational record spanning two decades of Royal Navy service, proudly serving as a safeguard for our nation's interests globally." In her 20 years of service, HMS *Ocean* has been involved in operations off Sierra Leone (2000), off Iraq (2003), off Libya (2011) and most recently, humanitarian operations in the Caribbean.

The return to Plymouth was especially meaningful for six of the crew who were at the beginning of the ship's career 20 years ago.

The most senior, senior-rating on board, Executive **Warrant Officer Carl Steedman** of Sussex, served on board HMS *Ocean* for three years at the beginning of his career including before the ship actually entered service in 1998 and then joined again 15 years later. He said: "It's fantastic to be serving on board and see the ship coming home for the last time more than 20 years after I joined her while she was in-build and to take her into service – I saw her hull from red undercoat to battleship grey. "The highlight of my career was the lead-up to Op Ruman Caribbean hurricane relief – when the ship turned round from the NATO deployment to be re-tasked to humanitarian relief and we stored at Gibraltar. "The whole ship pulled together in an amazing way, whether it was carrying planks of wood on board or operating heavy vehicles to prepare for emergency relief – all in 36 high-octane hours. "I have always felt privileged to be part of HMS *Ocean* and I must admit I'm a bit sad now she won't be in action again for the Royal Navy and the UK." The ship has conducted the evacuation of British nationals and other entitled personnel from numerous areas of con-

flict around the world and delivered humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to thousands in need, to name, but a few of her operational highlights.

Commander Nick Wood, second-in-command of HMS *Ocean*, said: "This is a bitter-sweet moment, but we should not let emotion cloud our view of the future, this is an illustration of great progress with the Royal Navy. "HMS *Ocean* might be known as the 'Mighty O', but new ships such as the *Prince Of Wales* are much larger and can carry out a similar role on a larger scale "She is a unique and awesome ship. We have looked after her for twenty years and she has looked after the country. Plymouth has given us a warm welcome as ever, the people of Plymouth will miss her large presence on the horizon. I am a bit sad, but this is the right way to celebrate her career."

Engineering Technician Jessica King, 28, of Plymouth, said HMS *Ocean* was her first ship. "This is a fantastic homecoming. My family are very proud of me and it's great to see them and others on Plymouth Hoe welcoming us in for the last time. "It's disappointing it is the end of the ship's career. I've made lots of new bonds on board - it's like having another family, but in the Navy. "It's sad for us all to go our separate ways. But I'm hoping to go to another ship."

Last year HMS *Ocean* completed the last three months of a seven-month operational deployment to the Middle East as Flagship of the normally US-led Combined Task Force 50 and deployed as a NATO flagship in the summer. On arriving in the Eastern Mediterranean in August 2017 she rapidly responded in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, steaming 4,500 nautical miles across the Atlantic to deliver urgent humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to four Caribbean territories over a fortnight of operations. She completed the year as the flagship to Commander Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 on operations in the Mediterranean. She was also honoured to represent the United Kingdom at the Portuguese 700th Fleet Review in Lisbon before finally returning home before Christmas. HMS *Ocean* has made a significant contribution to UK Defence over the years, both operationally and in the realm of Defence Engagement through tasks such as hosting the Prime Minister during the Gulf Cooperation Council meetings in Bahrain in 2016 or conducting high profile visits to Beirut, Turkey and Israel in 2017, supporting the UK's national interests. It is fitting that one of HMS *Ocean's* final operations mirrored that of her first; the role of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Earlier, in 1999 HMS *Ocean* was deployed at short notice to render assistance to Honduras and Nicaragua in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch; some 18 years later she did the same across four separate



A Merlin AW101 (EH101) aboard *Ocean*.

island chains in the Caribbean as part of the largest UK overseas military operation at that time.

HMS *Ocean* has a crew of 400 personnel, including 9 Assault Squadron Royal Marines, who operate the four Mk5 Landing Craft Vehicle and Personnel, providing the projection of fighting capability ashore. Having served admirably with the Royal Navy since 1998, the long-planned decision to take HMS *Ocean* out of service in 2018 when she reached the end of her planned service life, was made as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) 2015. No final decisions on a disposal have been made, but the revenue she generates will be reinvested in defence. The new *Queen Elizabeth*-class aircraft carriers will eventually take on the role as the nation's new flagships.

As a Landing Platform, Helicopter (LPH) *Ocean* was designed to lift troops quickly onto a beachhead usually in parallel with troops carried by landing craft from the Landing Platform Dock (LPD) HMS *Bulwark* or *Albion*. As well as her 285 crew, she has accommodation for an embarked military force numbering approximately 500 personnel, or up to 800 for short periods in austere conditions. Primarily designed as a helicopter landing ship, she is able to supplement the LPDs with her own small landing craft and some extra vehicle stowage. She has a small vehicle deck and 4 LCVP Mk5 landing craft able to transport around 35

fully armed troops. A small stern ramp and pontoon allow vehicle and personnel access to landing craft or using mexeflotes. The helicopter hangar has space for up to 18 aircraft, depending on their type. Over her lifetime she has embarked RN, RAF and Army helicopters including Lynx, Sea King, Merlin, Chinook and Apaches. US Blackhawk's and V-22 Osprey have also operated from her deck. The Royal Navy's rather underrated amphibious capabilities, offered the government a very flexible tool. Amphibious assault has the advantage of being able to threaten or attack at a point and time of ones choosing. The ships

are also ideal platforms for humanitarian relief operations, transport and general sealift or evacuation. Without the Harriers and HMS *Ark Royal*, during the Libya operations of 2011 the RN employed HMS *Ocean* as a poor man's 'strike carrier' using Apache attack helicopters. Never designed for anti-submarine operations like her *Invincible* class half-sisters, in July 2016 she was flagship for anti-submarine exercise Deep Blue II. *Ocean* embarked 7 ASW helicopters and hunted submarines around the clock, working up skills that will be required for the protection of HMS *Queen Elizabeth* when she comes into service.

Captain Robert Pedre Royal Navy has been a member of the Association since 2010, he was appointed HMS *Cumberland's* Executive Officer at the time. He has served in nine of HM Ships: *Cattistock* (Hunt class minesweeper), *Southampton*, (Type 42 destroyer), *Edinburgh*, (Type 42 destroyer), *Cottesmore* (Hunt class minesweeper as CO), *Northumberland*, (Type 23 frigate), *Illustrious*, *Cumberland* (type 22 frigate as XO), *Richmond* (Type 23 frigate as CO) and HMS *Ocean* (Landing Platform Helicopter as CO)



The capture of U-570 August 27th 1941.

U-570 was commissioned into the *Kriegsmarine* on May 15th 1941. After a series of short testing and commissioning sorties in the Baltic, she moved to Norway where she carried out short training voyages and fired practice torpedoes. By July 25th she had moved to the German U-boat base at Lofjord, part of Trondheimsfjord, 7 nautical miles north of Trondheim.

In late August 1941, B-Dienst, the German naval codebreaking organisation, became aware of a large concentration of Allied merchant ships in the region of the North Atlantic south of Iceland. Admiral Karl Dönitz ordered 16 U-boats to the area. *U-570* was to be one of these and on the morning of August 24th she put to sea on her first war patrol. Her planned mission was to patrol the area south of Iceland before proceeding to the U-boat base at La Pallice, France.

She carried provisions for four weeks at sea.

On August 27th 1941, *U-570* spent much of the morning submerged, she had been four days at sea, being submerged was to give respite to a crew that was suffering acutely from seasickness, several men had been incapacitated. Earlier that morning, a Lockheed Hudson bomber of 269 Squadron, flown by Sergeant Mitchell and operating from Kaldaðarnes, Iceland, had attacked her. The attack failed when the Hudson's bomb-racks failed to release her depth charges.

U-570 surfaced at position 62°15'N 18°35'W at around 10:50 am, immediately below a second 269 Squadron Hudson, flown by Squadron Leader James Thompson. Thompson was patrolling the area after Mitchell summoned him by radio.

U-570's Commanding Officer Kapitanleutnant Hans-Johachim Rahmlow had climbed onto the bridge, heard the approaching Hudson's engines and ordered a crash-dive. Thompson's aircraft reached *U-570* before she was fully submerged and dropped four 250-pound depth charges, one detonated just 30 feet from the boat.

U-570 quickly resurfaced and 10 or more of her crew appeared. The Hudson fired on them with machine guns, but ceased when the U-boat crew displayed a white sheet. The captured crewmembers later recounted to British naval intelligence interrogators what had happened—the depth charge explosions had almost rolled the boat over, disrupted all electrical power, smashed instruments, caused water leaks and contaminated the air in the boat. The inexperienced crew believed the air contamination to be chlorine caused by acid from leaking battery cells mixing with seawater, the engine room crew fled forward to escape the gas. Restoring electrical power for the electric propulsion motors and for lighting would have been straightforward, yet there was nobody remaining in the engine compartment to do this. The submarine was dead in the water and in darkness. Rahmlow believed the chlorine would be fatal to submerge so he resurfaced. The sea was too rough for the crew to man their anti-aircraft gun so they displayed a white flag to forestall another, probably fatal, depth charge attack from the Hudson. Most of the crew remained on the deck of the submarine as Thompson circled above them, his aircraft now joined by a second Hudson that had been en-route from Scotland to Iceland and had broken off its journey to lend assistance. A Consolidated Catalina flying boat of 209 Squadron was scrambled at Reykjavik; the aircraft reached

the scene three hours later. The German crew radioed their situation to the German naval high-command, destroyed the radio, smashed the Enigma machine and dumped parts overboard including classified documents. Admiral Dönitz later noted in his war diary that he ordered U-boats in the area to go to *U-570's* assistance after receiving this report; *U-82* responded, but Allied air patrols prevented *U-82* from reaching *U-570*.

U-570's transmission, in plain language, was intercepted by British intelligence. Admiral Percy Noble, commander of Western Approaches Command, immediately ordered several ships to the scene. By early afternoon, fuel levels had forced the Hudsons to return to Iceland. The Catalina, a very long-range aircraft, was ordered to watch the submarine until Allied ships arrived. If none came before sunset, the aircraft was to warn *U-570's* crew to take to the water, then sink her. The first vessel to reach *U-570*, the anti-submarine trawler HMT *Northern Chief*, arrived around 10pm guided to the scene by flares the Catalina had dropped. The Catalina returned to Iceland having circled *U-570* for 13 hours.

The German crew remained on board *U-570* overnight; they made no attempt to scuttle their boat, *Northern Chief* had signalled she would open fire and not rescue survivors from the water if they attempted to scuttle. *Northern Chief's* captain, N.L. Knight, had been ordered to prevent the submarine from being scuttled by any means. During the night, five more Allied vessels reached the scene: the armed trawler *Kingston Agate*, two anti-submarine whalers, the Royal Navy destroyer HMS *Burwell*, and the Canadian destroyer HMCS *Niagara*. At daybreak, the Allies and Germans exchanged signal lamp messages, with the Germans repeatedly requesting to be taken off as they were unable to stay afloat, the Royal Navy refused to evacuate them until her crew had secured the submarine to prevent it from sinking. The situation became more confused when a small float-plane, (a Northrop N-3PB of 330 (Norwegian) Squadron), appeared. Unaware of the surrender, it attacked *U-570* with small bombs and fired on *Northern Chief*, which fired back. No damage was done and *Burwell* ordered the aircraft away by radio. The weather worsened; several attempts to attach a tow to *U-570* were unsuccessful. Believing the Germans were being obstructive, *Burwell's* captain, S.R.J. Woods ordered a machine gunner to fire warning shots, shots that accidentally hit and slightly wounded five of the German crew. With much difficulty, an officer and three crew in a Carley float from *Kingston Agate* reached the submarine. After a quick search failed to find the U-boat's Enigma machine, they attached a tow then transferred five wounded men and the submarine's officers to *Kingston Agate*. The remaining crew were taken on board HMCS *Niagara*, which by this time had come alongside *U-570*.

The ships began the slow passage to Iceland with *U-570* under tow with a relay of Hudsons and Catalinas constantly patrolling overhead. They arrived at dawn on August 29th at Þorlákshöfn. There, they beached *U-570* as she had been taking on water and was thought to be in danger of sinking. Two days after *U-570's* arrival, British submarine commander *Lieutenant George Colvin DSO, DSC together with a team of engineering warrant officers and civilian technical

experts, arrived at Þorlákshöfn from Britain. They then carried out the initial examination and salvage of *U-570*.

Colvin's team was able to restore lighting and improve her buoyancy, *U-570* was towed around the coast to the British naval base at Hvalfjörður. There *U-570* was docked alongside the depot ship *HMS Hecla* for repair with the aim that *U-570* could make the voyage to Britain under her own power.

The Royal Navy team discovered that the depth charge damage to the U-boat was not critical, there were leaks in some of the ballast tanks and a small leak in a fuel tank. Around one third of the battery cells were cracked and the bow had been buckled. Water had leaked in through a valve that had been unsealed by the explosions and through glass gauges that had broken; other damage was minor and no evidence of chlorine gas found. In his report, Lieutenant Colvin stated that in his opinion there was no evidence of any damage control had been undertaken and that an experienced submarine crew would have been able to improvise repairs, stay submerged and likely evade another air-attack. After their surrender, the German crew had attempted to destroy instruments and fittings, but, with the exception of the wrecked radio and the damaged torpedo firing computer, the attempt appeared half-hearted and the damage was not significant. Also, useful papers had missed destruction. Copies of encrypted signals and their corresponding, plain-language, German texts were found—material of use to the British Enigma code breaking effort. A significant discovery was the U-boat commander's handbook, which provided context and background information for decrypted messages. The British, unfamiliar with German naval procedures, abbreviations and jargon, had oft-times found German naval traffic hard to understand even when decrypted.

On September 29th the submarine set out for the UK, manned by a Royal Navy prize crew under the command of Lieutenant Colvin escorted by the S class destroyer *HMS Saladin* and *HMS Kingston Agate*. *U-570* remained on the surface as her hydroplanes had been damaged by the beaching at Þorlákshöfn. *U-570* was dry-docked at the Vickers shipyard in Barrow. Her repair was complicated by depth-charge damage to her bow local plating had been buckled, trapping four electrically powered torpedoes in their tubes. Two officers from the Royal Navy's Department of Torpedoes and Mines Investigations had the task of retrieving them for examination. The dock was evacuated while a volunteer shipyard worker cut the armed torpedoes free with an oxyacetylene cutter under the officers' supervision. One of the officers, Lieutenant Martin Johnson, then removed the magnetic pistols from the torpedoes and made the pistols safe. For this act he was awarded the George Medal on December 8th 1942.

Initially, the German naval high command knew of *U-570*'s situation from her radio message, indicating that she was under air-attack and unable to submerge. They were concerned for the security of their communications; *Vizeadmiral* Erhard Maertens, the head of German Naval communications, was ordered to report on this. He concluded that in the worst-case scenario, if the British had secured *U-570*'s codebooks and Rahmlow had revealed to them his memorised secret keyword, communications would be compromised until a new list of Enigma machine settings came into force in November. However, he believed this worst case to be unlikely and that *U-570*'s crew would have almost certainly destroyed their secret material. Even if they had not, the addi-

tional security of the commander's secret keyword would defeat British cryptanalysis. In fact, the British code-breakers at Bletchley Park found the extra security of the keyword procedure to be simply of "nuisance value" only. *U-570*'s crew had indeed destroyed their Enigma machine and code-books but the Germans were unaware of the Royal Navy's earlier capture of *U-110*'s secret material, the British had been breaking German naval cyphers since June 1941. British code-breaking was not seriously impeded until February 1942, when a new naval Enigma cypher remained unbroken for 10 months—the so-called "Shark Blackout". On 1st February 1942 the German Navy introduced M4, a version of the *Enigma* with a rotatable Umkehrwalze (reversing-roller) and a set of eight rotors, three of which were fitted. After a *blackout* of ten months, the naval section at Bletchley Park telephoned the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre to report the break into *SHARK* cypher.

Apart from Rahmlow, *U-570*'s officers were taken to an officers' prisoner-of-war camp at Grizedale Hall in Cumbria. This was called the *U-boat Hotel* by the British. During the early part of the war, the majority of prisoners were naval officers picked up from sunken U-boats. There, a "Court of Honour" convened by other German prisoners, including captured U-boat ace Otto Kretschmer, tried Rahmlow, *in absentia* and *U-570*'s other officers. Rahmlow and his second-in-command, Oberleutnant-zur-See Bernhard Berndt, were found "guilty of cowardice"; the other two officers were "acquitted". On the night of 18/19 October, Berndt escaped from the camp. A detachment of the Home Guard apprehended him, shooting him dead when he tried to escape.

According to some sources, he had escaped from the camp with the stated intention of redeeming himself by making his way to the dockyard at Barrow and *U-570*, a distance of only 22 miles and somehow destroying her. Another source states he was forced to make an escape attempt by a group of senior German prisoners who enforced a brutal regime of punishing those who held anti-Nazi views or who co-operated with the British and that Berndt only broke away and ran from the Home Guard when he realised they were returning him to Grizedale Hall; after firing warning shots they shot him dead. The authorities placed Kapitänleutnant Rahmlow in a POW camp with German Army and Air Force prisoners to avoid further incidents of this kind.

The German high command recognised *U-570*'s loss could be partially blamed on the crew's lack of training and experience. During the early part of the war U-boat training had been reduced to two months, in addition with the mounting U-boat losses, including many boats sunk on their first patrol, prompted the Kriegsmarine to put more resources into training. In addition, existing veteran crews were broken up and dispersed amongst the U-boat fleet to provide crews of newly commissioned boats a core of experienced, long-serving U-boat veterans. Months later, the German command was still trying to discover the fate of *U-570*'s codebooks. A system of coded messages, hidden in the text of apparently ordinary, personal letters, were used to order Otto Kretschmer to report on this. They were unaware that the Allies had discovered this channel of communication with German prisoners of war.

* Lieutenant Commander George Colvin DSO, DSC was the Commanding Officer of HM Submarine *Tigris* lost with all hands on February 27th 1943 in action with *UJ-2210* off Capri.

HMS Ardent

