

BRINY EN GARDE!

***Being in the Main a Game of the Life of a Gentleman
Seeking Fame & Fortune in the Royal Navy at the Time of
the Napoleonic Wars, and his Several Companions***

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"with a heave, and a ho, and a rumbelow ...!" The Dudley Park Shanty Singers

-----JUNE----

In his room in the left corner of the Admiralty's top floor, the First Sea Lord wiped his brow. The date was June 2nd and it was only a little before ten o'clock in the morning, but the summer heat wave which meteorologists had confidently predicted to arrive in the middle of August (if at all) had struck London late in May instead. Since then, temperatures had rarely dropped below a hundred and ten, even in the shade. And there was no shade in his office, not with that new-fangled glass dome his predecessor had had constructed "... in order to see which way the wind's blowing, my dear chap!". But even the sweat trickling down his cheeks could not suppress his good humour. The First Sea Lord smashed a fist into his palm. They had done it, by Jove! Every ship and outpost of the Royal Navy had received its orders and this year's summer campaign would be run with clockwork-like precision. Now, for the first time in months, the great court below him would become empty and the building itself would fall silent. But first ... the First Lord smiled, and looked at the clock. Any time now ... and he kept smiling as a new kind of sound took hold. Voices rose and fell. Cupboard and cabinet doors were slammed open and shut. Porters carrying sea chests, portmanteaus and heavy bags began to stream down into the court and out into the street. So did their owners, calling out their destination to each other. Bath, Blackpool, Bognor-on-Sea, Brighton ...the Admiralty was going on holiday!!

A few days later, the First Sea Lord sat in a deck chair on the Pier at Brighton, enjoying the sea breeze and a glass of champagne. He had brought a book, too. The First Sea Lord glanced at the title ("The Story of Crawford Duncan or How Good Things Happen to Bad People"), took another sip and started to read: "Crawford yawned, scratched, and then opened his eyes. He wanted to savour this moment of triumph. He had finally persuaded his father to cut off his elder brother James with the proverbial shilling and leave the house (and incidentally the business) to Crawford alone. But that was not it. With his brother gone, he had sacked Old John Stewart on the spot – Old John who had always sided with James and been a thorn in Crawford's side. But that was not it either. Having lost his job, John Stewart sr. would no longer be able to pay the fees of the posh Edinburgh school and his son, Young John Stewart, would have to leave it in search of gainful employment. Served him right, the sod, and it would stop him from making Crawford look bad in front of the girls with his quick wit and ready smile next term. But that was not it either. It was the fact that John's pretty sister, Jenny Stewart, was in the hayloft with him, searching for her drawers while she was scrabbling for the coppers Crawford had negligently tossed in her direction.

Chewing a straw and luxuriating in his various victories, Crawford started to doze. He was still dozing when he heard somebody climb up into the hayloft, although he woke up rapidly enough when he recognized the voice of his brother. Too late – being several years younger, Crawford had never been a match for James and now he found himself kicked brutally down the stairs and dragged out into the street. The straw was still in his mouth after James had closed the gate behind him and thrown him a small bundle over the wall.

Slowly, Crawford picked himself up and took stock of his situation. What to do now? The clergy was out, as they were too poor and too militant for his liking.. The Army was another non-starter, since he disliked horses even more than he despised walking, but the Navy seemed a good idea. He liked boats and was judged to be

something of a talent at the regatta's on the Forth and besides, how much walking could one do on a ship fifty yards long ..." The First Sea Lord stopped reading. Something had broken his concentration. Looking around, he saw people running about a lot, shouting and pointing seawards. But the sea seemed its usual self, wave after wave rolling up and retreating in good order. But wait – wasn't there a tiny speck on the horizon? A dark cloud? A sort of black squall? The First Sea Lord kept watching it ... saw it grow until a black wall crested with white foam rose out of the water right in front of him and slammed with unimaginable ferocity into Brighton Pier and the beach and promenade behind it. R.I.P.

The "Old Ship" in Brighton had been a king's refuge and a pirate's lair in its time, occupations in which its sturdy walls and spacious yet dry cellars had come in useful. It had withstood the Tsunami's attack as well – an honour shared with the old Norman church halfway up the hill – and it now served as the new First Sea Lords HQ. Soon reports of damages began to stream in, mixed with the first news of the ships sent out to deal with the Dons. The Admiralty itself had taken a horrible beating. Apart from the old First Sea Lord, the Tsunami had killed Admiral of the White N3 (out boating with friends), Vice Admiral of the Red N7 (lolling on the beach) and Rear Admirals N2 and N3 of the Red and the Blue Squadron respectively (engaged in a contest of building sand castles, with the latter half a portcullis and several feet of outer wall ahead). Clearly, promotions to fill the gaps and to build new confidence were the order of the day and thus Vice Admirals N3 and N8 of the White and the Blue Squadron respectively found themselves made full Admirals with little delay and less ceremony, while former Rear Admiral N5 of the White was made Vice Admiral of that squadron with even more speed. Being the most junior Admiral present he was also put in charge of sorting the mail once the Admiralty cutter had dropped it at the "Old Ship". One morning an extremely fat package caught his attention. On closer inspection it proved to contain a number of letters, all addressed to the First Sea Lord. Vice Admiral N5 opened the first one and read: *"HMS Indomitable, at sea; My Lord, I have the honour to acquaint you that pursuant to your orders the squadron proceeded to the Caribbean and took up stations athwart the Florida Straits. During our stay there we fell in with La Pembrocata, a Spanish slaver of 18 guns and captured her. I have the honour to name Major N8 of the Royal Marines for his excellent command of the Spanish language and Midshipman WKM for gulping down 3 gallons of exceedingly sweet Oloroso sherry without any apparent ill effects! I would also like to recommend to your Lordship the captain and the crew of HMS Berwickshire, who set about cutting out another ship from under the guns of the Florida Keys establishment and did so in a most determined fashion, only to have their plans spoiled by a sudden veer in the direction the wind was blowing ...! As for HMS Halcyon, I very much regret to inform your Lordship that she got separated from us during the first night and hasn't rejoined us until recently. Her captain speaks of being fired on by a Spanish man-of-war (and the state she is in seems to bear him out) and of having to touch at Nicholl's Town in order to effect repairs, but some of her people were heard muttering that the ship touched there in order to allow its officers to sell some of the ship's stores to the regiment stationed there and a note to the Victualling Board to that effect might be advisable. I have the honour to remain your Lordship's most humble and obedient servant, N7, Post Captain HMS Indomitable".* Nice one, Vice Admiral N5 thought, and made a few notes in the margin: *HMS Indomitable* : Post Captain N7 promoted to Rear Admiral of the White and given 150 Guineas; Lieutenants to divide 550 Guineas between them, 5th Lieutenant promoted to Master & Commander; *HMS Berwickshire* : Captain promoted to *HMS Indomitable*, MiD 3, 1300 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant N2 promoted to Master & Commander, 100 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant PP promoted to Master & Commander *HMS Salisbury*; 3rd Lieutenant MiD 2, Major RM 1400 Guineas.

He was about to reach for the next letter when he found the PS : *Also included is a report from HMS Ferocious, who went ahead of us to look into the Yucatan Channel. Having reached her station, she at once fell in with a Spanish SOL of 96 guns, the El Matador. Despite the fact that his the ship's company was only two thirds of the full complement, Captain JS nevertheless decided to engage the enemy as closely as the variable winds would allow, rather than enter into a long-range gunnery duel in which the Spaniard's superiority in the number of guns would have put HMS Ferocious at a severe disadvantage. In this opinion he was wholeheartedly supported by his officers and crew, notably DD and WS. Battle was joined at half past five p.m. precisely, the wind blowing from SSW and changing to SW later on, but in variable and unreliable strength. The ship's officers and crew as well as her Marines did everything that was in their power and laid a strong fire upon the enemy (which he didn't make any reply to) prior to sending boats over to take her. The reason why El Matador's guns had remained silent became clear as soon as our boats came into musket range, when her side suddenly bristled with soldiers who began to fire one murderous volley after the other and managed to kill off half the boats' company within five minutes! At this point in the battle Captain JS had no choice but to call off the attempt, and as soon as the boats had returned HMS Ferocious hauled her wind and made for the rest of the squadron in the Florida straits, which she reached three days later. Captain JS regrets to inform your Lordship that the ship's complement is now under half strength and he begs to return to England to remedy this deplorable situation. He also regrets to inform your Lordship that 2nd Lieutenant DD went overboard later that day while he was trying to rig a spanker to the spritsail-topsail, and plunged right*

into the jaws of a great white shark. **R.I.P.**” And the more glory to you, Vice Admiral N5 thought, Arise, Sir Jack, and write a letter to your tailor because your uniform coat and trousers will need bigger pockets! And he made the appropriate notes: HMS *Ferocious* : Captain JS (refused promotion) titled, MiD 1 + 6, 350 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant Sir N9 150 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant DD MiD 6, 250 Guineas, discharged dead.

Then he looked at the clock on the mantelpiece. A quarter past ten already, a good morning's work done. On the other hand, he still had at least half an hour in hand before "Elevenes" and he might as well finish this lot. Vice Admiral N5 sighted, wiped an imaginary speck of dust from his uniform coat, and reached for the next letter: *"HMS Sheik Yassouf, at sea; My Lord, I have the honour to acquaint you that pursuant to your orders the squadron proceeded to the Caribbean in order to take up stations athwart the Windward Passage. Soon after we had passed the Eastern tip of Great Inagua island the lookouts reported two sails fine on the larboard beam and I ordered the squadron to come round to a course which would take it towards these unknown ships, who turned out to be two Spanish SOLs, to wit Salamanca of 98 guns and El Morillo of 86 guns. At first, both Spaniards made as to close the distance between us as rapidly as possible, but when they had come about halfway Salamanca suddenly signalled to decline the engagement and turned round, the wind standing fair for Port de la Paix. Unfortunately for her, El Morillo seemed to have some slight problem concerning her rudder and was forced to continue in a straight line towards the squadron. By the time she had her rudder working again she was practically on top of us and in view of our far superior strength she had no choice but to surrender at once. As the senior officer I asked her captain and his officers to come aboard HMS Sheik Yassouf and surrender their swords to me. From information received I quickly gathered that these ships had been the advance guard of a larger group of ships, and I detached HMS Waakzaamheit (our swiftest sailer since she's Dutch built) to try and prevent Salamanca from reaching her destination, or to blockade Port de la Paix if the Spaniard got there first. At the same time, I ordered HMS Alexander to take a look at Matthew's Town while I proceeded with HMS Glenmoranie, HMS Salisbury and HMS Sauve Qui Peut to blockade Port de la Paix. In all this, I have the honour and the happiness to name the most gallant Major MAD of the Royal Marines to your Lordship for the way he handled the formalities and even prevented the Spaniards from destroying their secret signals!! At the same time, I have the honour to mention to your Lordship the Captain and crew of HMS Salisbury for cutting out a merchantman laden with quicksilver from right under the harbour's guns. However, I regret to inform your Lordship that a similar attempt by HMS Sauve Qui Peut was thwarted by an unsuspected current in the channel leading to where a number of smaller ships were moored outside the harbour, which threatened to push the ship upon a sandbank nearby. The next week went by without any further action since the Spaniards steadfastly refused to come out, but on the 15th HMS Glenmoranie (which had gone reconnoitring at daybreak against my orders) got caught in a current similar to that which nearly proved the undoing of HMS Sauve Qui Peut and got stuck on a sandbank where she was attacked by a number of gun boats and sustained heavy damage as well as the loss of her captain. On the 28th the lookout of HMS Alexander reported a number of sails, which turned out to be HMS Waakzaamheit and HMS Alexander with three prizes in tow. I am extremely happy to draw your Lordship's attention to the most exemplary conduct of gallant Captain Andrew Goodmann (HMS Waakzaamheit), who had in fact captured Salamanca at the entrance to the harbour of Port de la Paix after a brief but exceedingly furious battle, and to the equally splendid conduct of Sir N8 (HMS Alexander) who had sailed into Matthews Town in full daylight (using the secret signals captured earlier) and had even invited himself to dine with the Spanish governor and his very pretty daughter before making off with the small merchantmen anchored in the road. I must further draw your Lordship's attention to the very seamanlike conduct of both officers and men aboard HMS Salisbury and HMS Sauve Qui Peut (whose captain received a nasty chest wound upon the occasion), who did everything in their power to ensure the success of this campaign. I wish I could say the same about Mr. Tyler Brock, whose behaviour sometimes make one wonder whether he really has the guts for a determined fight, but his officers and crew seem satisfied that he's a good 'un and I'm content to let the matter rest there. I have the honour to remain your Lordship's most humble and obedient servant, N7, Post Captain HMS Sheik Yassouf".* Slowly Vice Admiral N5 shook his head. He, too, had heard rumours about Captain Tyler Brock and this letter made him wonder ... on the other hand, HMS *Berwickshire* desperately needed a new captain! But there was no hesitation as he set about making the appropriate notes in the margin: HMS *Sheik Yassouf* : Post Captain N7 promoted to Rear Admiral Blue and 700 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant 1600 Guineas; 3rd Lieutenant 800 Guineas, MAD (RM) MiD 2. HMS *Waakzaamheit* : Captain AG promoted to HMS *Sheik Yassouf* and 900 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant JWK 400 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant MW 500 Guineas. HMS *Glenmoranie* : 3rd Lieutenant DOR promoted to brevet Master & Commander; HMS *Sauve Qui Peut*. HMS *Alexander* : 1st Lieutenant 100 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant 250 Guineas; JA (Captain RM) 250 Guineas. HMS *Salisbury* : TB promoted to HMS *Berwickshire* and 2500 Guineas. HMS *Sauve Qui Peut* : Master & Commander Sir N7 MID 3.

---JULY---

In his room in the left corner of the Admiralty's top floor, the First Sea Lord wiped his brow. The date was July 4th and the time 8.30 a.m.. On the other side of the Atlantic, their American cousins were probably still asleep, dreaming of rib roast BBQs and fireworks to celebrate Independence Day. But although he had just returned to London two days ago, his clerks had returned from their summer hols a week earlier and his large desk was already swamped with papers, the topmost being a letter written in the bold, almost masculine hand of Queen Victoria Zephyra, thanking him for his work as chairman of the TRC (Tsunami Relief Committee). The letter announced that the King would bestow upon him the honour of being made a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath. In addition, both he and his deputy chairman (Admiral N8 of the Blue Squadron) were to receive a gratuity of 900 Guineas, with a promotion for the TRC secretary (Rear Admiral N7 of the Blue Squadron) thrown in for good measure. Say what you like, the First Sea Lord mused, chairing a quango is always good for your career. Too bad about Sir Louis Beanpole, who had been the committee's treasurer and died of an heart attack only last week – not at his desk, but in the bed of the leading light among Brighton's ladies of negotiable affection. **R.I.P.** On the other hand, the First Sea Lord thought, there are worse ways to die. Yesterdays Times had carried a leader about the difficulty to maintain a military presence in the Caribbean in spite of the sickly climate. The author pointed out that several regiments - among them the 76th (Prince of Whale's Own) – were down to a third of their nominal strength after seven months down there ... and the situation was definitively not improved by the supplies that reached them! On several occasions their quartermasters had been forced to buy supplies at extortionate process from ships putting into harbour, and while merchantmen usually could be relied on to provide goods fit for human consumption this was not always the case with the Navy! Despite all this, the First Sea Lord noticed, the campaign seemed to go well, if one could believe the reports reaching him. He had already selected several for the next issue of the Gazette, but it wouldn't hurt to check one more time, thus he sat down and read: *"HMS Indomitable, at sea; My Lord, I have the honour to acquaint you that pursuant to your orders the squadron continued to blockade the Florida Straits, where we fell in with a convoy of Spanish and Portuguese merchantmen. I am happy to inform your Lordship that the officers and crews of the ships under my command showed a most seamanlike attitude and the one enemy able to escape us initially was soon brought back by HMS Berkshire who cut it out at Florida Keys. It seems that the ship's company had been right in their assessment of Captain Tyler Brock after all. I have the honour to remain your Lordship's most humble and obedient servant, Sir N10, Post Captain HMS Indomitable"*. That convoy, the First Sea Lord knew, had been destined for Havana, with a cargo of military supplies – muskets, powder and balls as well as a number of guns. The notes in the margin read: HMS *Indomitable* : Captain MiD 4, 1000 Guineas, titled; 1st Lieutenant N2 MiD 4; 2nd Lieutenant N5 promoted; 3rd Lieutenant N5 promoted and 900 Guineas; Midshipman WKM promoted to 2nd Lieutenant. HMS *Berwickshire* : Captain TB MiD 6, 900 Guineas, titled; 3rd Lieutenant N4 100 Guineas. HMS *Halcyon* : Captain N7 100 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant N5 450 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant N7 100 Guineas.

Reading the bare boned and terse communication once more, the First Sea Lord could not suppress a little smile. He and N10 (as he then was) had been midshipmen together aboard HMS Tricorn, wrecked upon the Cornish coast during a winter gale these twenty years ago, and N10 had been as economical with words (and with the truth, sometimes) even then. An outstanding example of the more scientific kind of naval officer, he lacked not the ability but the connection to make his way in the service. Well, this might help to get him up another rung of the ladder, the First Sea Lord thought, when a knock on the door interrupted him. He called "Enter" and the door swung open, revealing the form of a messenger standing on the threshold. "A letter for you, Mylord, from HMS *Ferocious*" – "Give it here. I guess I better attend to it immediately. Thank you James". And attend to it he did, opening the cover and reading: *"HMS Ferocious, at sea; My Lord, I have the honour to acquaint you that pursuant to your orders the ship I have the honour to command returned to the Yucatan Channel after rendering some slight assistance to the White Squadron, and proceeded towards the Cayman Islands, when we fell in with a Spanish SOL of 104 guns named La Habanera. I would have declined the engagement because of the bad weather (strong gusty wind from the SW and a choppy sea) as well as the poor state of my crew (a very bad run of dysentery due to rotten food) but the Spaniards deliberately set about us and fired a shot across our bow. I immediately tacked and took up a position on their lee side, which prevented them from firing their biggest guns. Nevertheless they seemed determined to try a running engagement, with both ships firing at each other for what they're worth, only I fooled them by hauling my wind and crossing right under their stern with perhaps half a biscuit toss to spare, whereupon we fired a rolling broadside straight into her unprotected rear and so down the length of the gun deck while my Marines in the tops peppered her quarter deck! They had clearly not considered this possibility but once they saw what I was doing they tried to turn the ship around so that I would fetch up against her weather side. However, I had foreseen this very eventuality and with the wind steady I was able to tack again and resume my old course, watching the Spaniard's stern turn obligingly towards us and waiting to give her another broadside. Which we did, firing on the up roll, and something must have ripped through the fear nought screen of her hanging*

magazine, because the next thing we knew was a sort of rumbling and the Dons beginning to jump overboard like lemmings! She finally blew up not three hundred yards distant from us and I dared not send out boats looking for survivors – I'm afraid the sharks got them all, Mylord. I have the honour to sign myself your Lordships most humble and obedient servant, Sir Jack Sandwich, Captain HMS Ferocious". Now there's an officer who might go far in the service, the First Sea Lord mused. Not afraid of taking risks, and not afraid to speak his mind. If only he could acquire some manners soon, it would help him about as much as his titles. In the margin he wrote: HMS *Ferocious* : Captain Sir Jack Sandwich 450 Guineas and titled; 1st Lieutenant Sir N9 promoted to Master & Commander. 4th Lieutenant N6 400 Guineas. Brevet Master's Mate WS 300 Guineas. Lt.Colonel N6 (RM) MiD 4 and 300 Guineas.

It must be about noon, the First Sea Lord thought, but somehow he didn't seem able to work up an appetite and decided to work through lunch time and finish this lot off instead. He took another letter and read: "*HMS Sheik Yassouf, at sea; My Lord, I have the honour to acquaint you that pursuant to your orders the squadron I have the honour to command proceeded to Jamaica and blockaded the approaches to the harbour and city of Kingston, where we captured several merchantmen and two small Spanish frigates, La Spezia of 36 guns and Dona Muria of 34 guns. In addition, HMS Alexander (on detached duty again) re-captured HMS Gulfstream, a 22 gun Sloop with dispatches for the Bermuda station. Apart from the obvious observation that possessing the secret code was a great help in this endeavour I would draw your Lordships attention to the uniformly good and most seamanlike behaviour shown by both the officers and crews of the ships under my command. I have the honour to remain your Lordships most humble and obedient servant, Andrew Goodman, Post Captain HMS Sheik Yassouf*". Not a bad start for a new captain, the First Sea Lord thought, picked up his pen and wrote in the margin: HMS *Sheik Yassouf* : Captain AG 1200 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant N5 promoted to Master & Commander HMS *Gulfstream*, MiD 2 and 1200 Guineas; 3rd Lieutenant N6 MiD 1 and 1600 Guineas; 4th Lieutenant N4 promoted to Master & Commander; MAD (Major RM) 2 x MID 1 and 1600 Guineas. HMS *Waakzaamheit* : (acting) Captain JWK promoted to HMS *Salisbury*, titled; Master's Mate RP promoted to midshipman; Able Seaman TOM 1100 Guineas. HMS *Alexander* : Captain N8 400 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant N2 promoted to Master & Commander; 2nd Lieutenant N5 promoted to Master & Commander and 300 Guineas; Midshipman SAM 300 Guineas. HMS *Salisbury* : Captain PP promoted to HMS *Glenmoranie* and 1700 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant MiD 5 and 1400 Guineas. HMS *Sauve Qui Peut* : Captain DOR promoted to Master & Commander and MiD 4; 1st Lieutenant N2 promoted to Master & Commander.

---AUGUST---

Dreams may be sacred, but some of them may also be considered an occupational hazard and this one was a beaut. In his bedroom on the 1st floor of his Georgian town house, the First Sea Lord dreamed that he was standing on the quarterdeck of a small sloop and watching the broadsides of no less than three French SOLs roll over him (thank God the French never seemed to learn how to fire on the down roll). Bathed in sweat and trembling all over, he woke up, but this didn't stop the noise, which seemed to come from downstairs. Recalling that his wife was still in Scotland with her parents and that he had given the servants leave to attend the Whitechapel summer fair, the First Sea Lord pulled on a dressing gown and slippers and went downstairs to open the front door himself. Outside stood a soldier in the full regalia of the Welsh Guards, saluting smartly with one hand while the other proffered a letter. The first Sea Lord broke the seal and read: "*Buckingham Palace, August 29th 1792; I'll be at the Admiralty at half past eight and look forward to see you there. (signed) Albert George III. of Hannover-Pumpernickel, by the grace of God King of Great Britain, etc. etc.. PS. Splendid bit of work – would you mind becoming the first Baron of Breakwater Hill?*". It never rains but it pours, the First Sea Lord thought as he hurried back upstairs. Things had gone smoothly during the past weeks and as far as he knew nobody had put a foot wrong or blotted his copybooks. And now, out of the blue, a royal visit. He looked at the clock. Half past six, which meant that he could be at the Admiralty at eight. Time to alert his colleagues, put himself in the picture, have a bit of breakfast ...!

In his room in the left corner of the Admiralty's top floor, the First Sea Lord wiped his sweat-drenched brow. He had completely overlooked the fact that the kingdom was still on Daylight Saving Time and that the morning rush hour would begin at seven (and last until half past eight). Not a problem, really, when you're King (and have the roads cleared for you) but the First Sea Lord had in fact abandoned his coach and run the last quarter mile to the Admiralty in order to be on time. He wondered how his colleagues had fared. To calm his

nerves, he took a pinch of snuff, settled down in his chair and reached for the topmost letter: *"HMS Ferocious, at sea; My Lord, I have the honour to acquaint you that pursuant to your orders the squadron assembled at 25°N and 28°W prior to our return to England. I regret to inform your Lordship that a slight hiatus ensued as the ships of the Blue Squadron and its auxiliaries were delayed by unfavourable winds. This, however, turned out to be a blessing in disguise since it allowed us to fall in with convoy of Spanish merchantmen coming from Spain with a heavy escort of eight ships of the line, which we encountered about the halfway mark of our journey (and would have missed otherwise). Upon sighting us, the Spanish commander threw out a signal for the merchantmen to disperse and for his battleships to form up in his wake and head straight towards us (probably with the intention of forming a line of battle right across our course). However, knowing the meaning of his signals we were able to devise a counter-plan and as the most senior officer present I ordered our two heaviest ships (HMS Indomitable and HMS Ferocious) to slightly reduce sail until the Spaniards had formed their battle line, when they would make a dash for the two hindmost Spanish ships. To the others I assigned one merchantman each, confident that even the smallest of them could outsail and outfight such an opponent. As your Lordship knows, the success of even the best plan depends upon the quality of those who have to execute it and I am happy to inform your Lordship that the officers and crews of His Majesty's Navy showed upon this occasion a brilliant example of flawless perfection and immaculate seamanship. I have the honour to remain your Lordship's most humble and obedient servant, Sir N10, Post Captain HMS Indomitable"*. Another monumental understatement, the First Sea Lord thought, but at least he's thawing a bit. In the margin he wrote: *HMS Indomitable* : 2nd Lieutenant WKM refused promotion, MID 4 + 5, titled; 3rd Lieutenant N6 MiD 6; 5th Lieutenant N5 600 Guineas; Major (RM) N8 MiD 4 and 300 Guineas. *HMS Berwickshire* : Captain TB MiD 4 and 1900 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant N4 promoted to Master & Commander and 2900 Guineas. Captain (RM) N6 2000 Guineas. *HMS Halcyon* : Captain Sir N7 titled; 2nd Lieutenant N7 promoted Master & Commander, 300 Guineas, discharged dead. *HMS Ferocious* : Captain JS (refused promotion) titled; 4th Lieutenant N6 promoted Master & Commander; 5th Lieutenant N5 promoted Master & Commander and 150 Guineas; Captain (RM) N6 MiD 4. *HMS Sheik Yassouf* : Captain AG (refused promotion) MiD 6, 100 Guineas, titled. 3rd Lieutenant N6 promoted Master & Commander; 5th Lieutenant N4 600 Guineas; Major (RM) MAD (refused promotion) MiD 6 + 4, titled. *HMS Waakzaamheit* : acting captain MW 200 Guineas; Midshipman RP promoted brevet Lieutenant and 1700 Guineas; Able Seaman TOM 600 Guineas; Able Seaman WC promoted brevet Master's Mate and 900 Guineas. *HMS Glenmoranie* : Captain PP 1200 Guineas; 2nd Lieutenant JF promoted full Lieutenant and 1000 Guineas; Able Seaman AB 1000 Guineas. *HMS Alexander* : Captain Sir N8 200 Guineas; 1st Lieutenant N2 200 Guineas, discharged dead; 2nd Lieutenant N5 300 Guineas; Midshipman SAM promoted to 2nd Lieutenant and 350 Guineas. *HMS Salisbury* : Captain JWK promoted Captain HMS *Waakzaamheit*, MiD 6, titled; 2nd Lieutenant N6 MiD 1 and 600 Guineas. *HMS Sauve Qui Peut* : Captain DOR MiD 1 and 1800 Guineas.

In his room in the left corner of the Admiralty's top floor, the First Sea Lord wiped his hand on a towel and looked out into the courtyard. The date was August 31st and the time was seven-thirty p.m.; Time to call it a day, then. His mind went back too the royal visit a few days earlier. His Majesty had been pleased to be gracious, dispensing honours and small fortunes among the assembled Admirals, but out of the blue had come the unexpected thunderbolt in the form of a simple question: "And how do things look for the Honourable Company? Your report doesn't mention them at all". A good thing, The First Sea Lord thought., that His Majesty hadn't asked the question until the reception had been over and they were once more standing in his own office. Else he wouldn't have been able to locate the EIC ledger and show the entries to His Majesty:

-----JUNE---

EIC *La Poubelle* completed the first leg of her return voyage (Bombay – Capetown) without anything happening. EIC *Shangri-La* completed the first outbound leg of her journey (London – Canary Islands) , meeting nothing more dangerous than a few Portuguese fishing boats returning from the Newfoundland banks and short of water and provisions, which her 2nd Lieutenant was soon able to rectify ... at some slight profit to himself.

---JULY---

EIC *La Poubelle* completed the second leg of her return journey (Capetown – Canary Islands), again with anything happening. RTM had spent most time in the tops, hoping to catch a glimpse of their sister ship on the opposite track, but the weather remained hot and overcast, with poor visibility. EIC *Shangri-La* didn't spot *La Poubelle* either, but this might have been because she stopped at Cabinda to refresh her water and sell some glass beads to the natives, which earned her 2nd Lieutenant 1000 Guineas and PC (who had been tasked with supervising the watering) a broken arm. Upon arrival in London he was immediately sent to the seamen's hospital in Greenwich, where his messmates visit him whenever they can.

---AUGUST---

EIC *La Poubelle* completed the third and final leg of her return journey (Canary Islands – London) in the company of the returning squadrons, which she met near Tenerife. Nothing happened except that her 2nd Lieutenant died from eating too many oysters (and in a month without « R » too !). RTM spent most of his time visiting other ships but none of the captains seemed to be to his liking. EIC *Shangri-La* completed the third leg of her outbound voyage (Capetown – Bombay) with her captain and several officers playing cards for high stakes. The captain won 1.200 Guineas in one of the first sessions and prudently retired at once. His 2nd Lieutenant sought to “even the odds a little” and won about a thousand Guineas, but had to retire from the game even more abruptly than the captain, due to a knife sticking in his back! PC refused to emulate him and won only 700 Guineas.

-----FIN-----

London Gazette

1st Anniversary issue

Issue 15

Your Reporter – T.

London seems very quiet this month, all His majesty's naval officers and crew are at sea on some sort of secret operation. The only military seen about this month has been the Johnnies from the Army and they were not in the clubs.

Jock was seen about but he was moaning that he had been left behind by John, on the pretence of looking after Diana. But he seemed even more down hearted than usual with his usual moan being "*They're all doomed I tell ya, doomed*"

Certainly there has been no real news to reach the offices of the Gazette yet, which maybe a good thing or not!! Certainly the Southside has been awful quiet and the girls have been seen doing the washing for locals to bring in the money whilst the foot pads appear to have taken to burglary as the constabulary report increase in house break-ins, no doubt this will change when the Navy get back?

That's all the news for now as soon as any thing breaks we will inform you in a News Extra.

News Extra

Rumours are reaching us of a host of parties in the coming month, seems they were not "*all doomed*" after all.

The Ladies

	SL	Attributes	Current Suitor
<i>Lady</i> Isabella de Courcy	18	B I	
Rosemary Stilton-Major	17	W	
Prudence Petterson	16		
<i>Lady</i> Elizabeth Doolittle	16	B I	JS
Muriel Merryweather	15		
Caroline Cadger	15	W	
Jennifer Usher	14	I	TB
Victoria Watson-Holmes	14		
Flora de Bries	13	B W	
Harriet Hilfinger	13		
Ophelia Goolies	12	B	
Pamela Huntingdown-Jones	12	W I	
Rebecca Morrison	11		WKM
Alice Wonderland	11		PP
Joan Fullins	10	B	
Doris Open	10		
Sophia Williams	9	B	JWK
Diana Villiers	9	B	JOG
Rebecca Dorrit	8		JA
Betty Grapples	8		
Moll Flanders	7		RTM
Sue Briquette	7		WS
Emma Woodhouse	6	B	
Gwendolyn Hotspur	5		
Mary Lamb	5		
Sara Pati	4		
Agnes Nutter	3		

The Guilty Parties

ID	Name	Abb.	Weal.	SL	NA	SP	Club	App.	Rank
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012 <i>Baron</i> Jack Sandwich	JS	Comfy	11	8++	S	Dolph	-	Post Captain HMS <i>Ferocious</i>		
009 <i>Sir</i> Tyler Brock	TB	Wealthy	11	8++	S	-	-	Captain HMS <i>Berwickshire</i>		
002 <i>Baron</i> Andrew Goodman	AG	Rich	11+	10	S	Lloyd's	-	Post Captain HMS <i>Sheik Yassouf</i>		
013 <i>Baron</i> Josiah W. Kerr	JWK	Comfy	11+	10+	S	Lloyd's	-	Captain HMS <i>Waakzamheit</i>		
001 <i>Sir</i> Wayne Kin-Madley	WKM	Comfy	10+	7++	S	Pit	-	Lieutenant HMS <i>Indomitable</i>		
016 <i>Sir</i> Miles Attenborough-Davies	MAD	Poor	10+	8	S	-	-	Major RM, HMS <i>Sheik Yassouf</i>		
021	Pavel Pipovitch		PP	Comfy	8	6	S	Lloyd's	-	Captain HMS <i>Glenmoranie</i>
011	John O'Groats		JOG	Comfy	8	6+	S	Lloyd's	-	Lieutenant HMS <i>Glenmoranie</i>
006	Dae Dastardly		DD	-	7	7	RIP	-	-	---
020	Robin Timothy Marlowe		RTM	Comfy	6	6++	E	-	-	Lieutenant EIC <i>La Poubelle</i>
010	Jonah Albytross		JA	Comfy	6	7+	S	Red C.	-	Captain RM, HMS <i>Waakzamheit</i>
022	Wesley Silver		WS	Poor	6	8++ +	S	Lloyd's	-	Brevet Master's Mate HMS <i>Ferocious</i>
000	Matthew Walker		MW	Comfy	5	5	S	-	-	Brevet Lieutenant HMS <i>Waakzamheit</i>
023	Roger Pugwasher		RP	Comfy	5	6+	S	Pit	-	Brevet Lieutenant HMS <i>Waakzamheit</i>
006	X06		X06	Poor	5	5	new	-	-	---
030	X30		X30	Poor	5	3	new	-	-	---
018	Thomas O'Malley		TOM	Comfy	4	10	S	Pit	-	Sailor HMS <i>Waakzamheit</i>
025	Duncan O'Riordan		DOR	Comfy	4	7+	S	Pit	-	Master & Commander HMS <i>Sauve Qui Peut</i>
027	William Cooke		WC	Ok	4	3	S	-	-	Brevet Master's Mate HMS <i>Waakzamheit</i>
029	X29		X29	Poor	4	5	new	-	-	---
019	Jervis Fregate		JF	Comfy	3	9++	S	Pit	-	Brevet Lieutenant HMS <i>Glenmoranie</i>
017	Pete Cuning		PC	Comfy	3	10+	6	Pit	-	Midshipman EIC <i>Shangri-La</i>
024	Samuel Augustus Marvell		SAM	Ok	3	8++	S	-	-	Midshipman HMS <i>Alexander</i>
026	Ashby Bower		AB	Comfy	3	6+	S	-	-	Sailor HMS <i>Glenmoranie</i>
028	X28		X28	Poor	3	5	new	-	-	---

Wealth Level: poor= 0-250 Guineas, ok up to 1.000, comfy up to 5.000, wealthy up to 10.000, rich up to 25.000 and filthy is 25.000+
SP: S = at sea, E = east India ship, F = floated,

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Government

The King	Albert George III. of Hannover-Pumpnickel	
The Queen	Victoria Zephyra	
The Crown Prince	Charles William	
Prime Minister	Sir Havelock Brindle, Earl of Doomsday, KCB	NA 7
Chancellor of the Exchequer	---	
Minister of Justice	---	
Minister of War	---	
Commissioner of Public Safety	Sir Julian Parselmouth, KCB NA 1	

The Admiralty

The First Sea Lord		
Baron N7		
Admiral	Admiral	Admiral
White Squadron	Red Squadron	Blue Squadron
N3	Sir N9	
-		
Vice Admiral	Vice Admiral	Vice Admiral
N7	N7	
-		
Rear Admiral	Rear Admiral	Rear Admiral
N8	-	
	-	

The Ships

White Squadron

	Droits de l’Homme SoL 1 st Class	Indomitable (I) SoL 2 nd Class	Berwickshire (C) SoL 4 th Class	Halcyon (F) SoL 5 th Class
Post Captain	N4 Sir N10 TB Baron N7			
1 st Lieutenant	N6	N2 (BR=4)		N5
2 nd Lieutenant	N3	WKM		
3 rd Lieutenant	N1 N6			***
4 th Lieutenant	N1	***		***
5 th Lieutenant		N5 ***		***
Midshipman				

Master's Mate				
Crew				

Red Squadron

Ferocious (F) SoL 1st Class Fiddler's Green SoL 2 nd Class	Bellerophone SoL 4 th Class	Belle Poule SoL 5 th Class	
(Post) Captain	JS	N4	N3
1 st Lieutenant		N5*	N3
2 nd Lieutenant			
3 rd Lieutenant			***
4 th Lieutenant		***	***
5 th Lieutenant		***	***
Midshipman			
Master's Mate	WS		
Crew	WS		

Blue Squadron

Sheik Yassouf (B) SoL 2nd Class	Waakzaamheit (B) SoL 3rd Class	Glenmoranie (B) SoL 5th Class	Alexander (F) SoL 5th Class
Captain	AG	JWK PP	Sir N8
1 st Lieutenant	N6	MW	JOG N5
2 nd Lieutenant	N4 RP	JF	
3 rd Lieutenant	N4 N3		***
4 th Lieutenant	N6 ***	***	
5 th Lieutenant	***	***	***
Midshipman		MW, RP	SAM
Master's Mate			

Crew		TOM, WC AB	
<i>Blockade Squadron</i>			
Salisbury (C) Sloop	Sauve Qui Peut (C) Sloop		
Master&Commander		DOR	
1 st Lieutenant	N1 N3		
2 nd Lieutenant N6			
Midshipman			
Master's Mate			
Crew			

*=Ship's Adj.

Character in *italic* have a commission on another ship.

Bold = at sea.

The Royal Marines

General	N8
Lt-General N5	
Brigade General N5	

Colonel (DH) : N6		
Lieutenant-Colonel (FE) : N6	Major (SY): MAD	Major (IN): N8
Captain (FG): N2	Captain (WA): JA	Captain (BS): N6
Captain (BE) : N5	Lieutenant (HA):	
Lieutenant (GL):		
Lieutenant (BP):	Lieutenant (AL):	
Subalterns :		
Privates :		

*= Reg.Adj.

Bold = at sea.

The Honourable Company

Chairman East India Company	Sir William Weatherwax	
Directors East India Company	Sir Guthrie Featherstone Mr. Peshawar Cannings Mr. John Mortimer	

La Poubelle (LP) Captain: N4
(sailed March 1 st 1792)
1st Lt.: RTM

(expected back August 31 st 1792)	2nd Lt.:
	3rd Lt.:
	Mids:
	Crew:

Shangri-La	Captain: N5
(sailed June 1 st 1792)	1st Lt.:
(expected back December 31 st 1792)	
2nd Lt.:	
3rd Lt.: N5	
	Mids: PC
Crew:	

Fedorov	Captain: N5
(will sail September 1 st 1792)	
1st Lt.: N2	
2nd Lt.: N6	
3rd Lt.: N4	
	Mids: N5
Crew:	

The Patriotic Fund

Chairman Patriotic Fund	The Right Honourable Sir Ezram Blazentoe	
Committee Mem. Patriotic Fund	---	

The Politicoes

Naval Estimates Spokesman	---	
Chairman Impress Service	---	
Naval Yards Supervisor	---	
Ordnance Board Supervisor	---	
Victualling Board Supervisor		

Port Admiral London	---	
Port Admiral Portsmouth	---	

The Blue Peter

June (Summer campaign)	September
<i>HMS</i> Ferocious (F)	
<i>HMS</i> Droits de l Homme (B)	
<i>HMS</i> Sheik Yassouf (B)	
<i>HMS</i> Indomitable (I)	
<i>HMS</i> Waakzaamheit (B)	
<i>HMS</i> Berwickshire (C)	
<i>HMS</i> Glenmoranie (B)	
<i>HMS</i> Halcyon (F)	
<i>HMS</i> Alexander (F)	
Blockade Squadron (C)	

(Force Deployment in brackets)

Who's Who

ID	Name	E-Mail			
030	James Hamblin	james.hamblin@btinternet.com X30	X30		
029	Guy	GN.II5A@netscape.net X29	X29		
028	Harry de Vries	harald.devrries@homecall.co.uk X28	X28		
027	Michael Hammer	mrhamm1967@yahoo.com WC	Willian Cooke		
026	Tim Koscheski	timko@airmail.net AB	Ashby Bower		
025	Guzman Lopez Miguel	duncanorio@yahoo.es DOR	Duncan O'Riordan		

024	Allan Wort	alan.wort@btconnect.com SAM	Samuel Augustus Marvell		
023	David Olliver	david.olliver@bnter.net m	RP	Roger Pugwasher	
022	Thomas Rösler	belrain@lycos.de	WS	Wesley Silver	
021	Michael Struck	faithnightwish@web.de	PP	Pavel Pipovitch	
020	Stefan Rösler	churasis@t-online.de	RTM	Robin Timothy Marlowe	
019	Mark Robinson	mark@portwaygames.co.uk JF	Jervis Fregate		
018	Undine Johnke	cineUnni@t-online.de TOM	Thomas O'Malley		
017	Thomas Johnke	TorfkoppTJ@web.de	PC	Pete Cunning	
016	Jürgen Hossfeld	J.Hossfeld@gmx.de MAD	Miles Attenborough-Davis		
013	Toby Whitty	yaledor@yahoo.com JWK	Josiah W. Kerr		
012	Greg F.	onasilverwind@yahoo.com JS	Jack Sandwich		

011	Terry Crook	webmaster@brinyengarde.co.uk	JOG	John O’Groats	
010	John Cosgrave	JACKAL@jcosgrave.freeserve.co.uk	Jonah Albytross		
009	Christian Schotmann	Christian@Schotmann.de	TB	Tyler Brock	
006	Neil Kendrick	HuwJorgens@aol.com	Dae Dastardly		
005	James Campbell	grevara@apexmail.com			
002	Matthias Nitz	Mattias.nitz@helimail.de	AG	Andrew Goodman	
001	Tony Brooks	tony@brookst25.fsnet.co.uk	WKM	Wayne Kin-Madley	
000	”Red”HaJo Schlosser	RedHaJo@web.de	Matthew Walker		

Court martial

None

Duels

None

Announcements

None

Letters

Letter to Tyler Brock, Captain of HMS Sauve Qui Peut.

Most Honoured Sir,

You would do me the greatest honour to read the enclosed letter of recommendation from the Captain of the Paracelsus and consider my application for the post of Lieutenant.

I believe my skills are a close match for those required on such an honourable ship and I have every faith that my personal qualities of discipline, steadfastness and courage (as attested to in the letter) would complement those of your existing crew.

Having recently completed my Lieutenants Board, I wish to join the service at the first available opportunity and provide a full measure of loyalty to the Crown. The upcoming campaign season is an ideal set of circumstances for this and I beg your indulgence at my youthful impetuosity in this approach.

I have taken a room at the quay side hostel opposite your berth and await your response.

I am, Sir, your most obedient and expectant servant,

Samuel Augustus Marvell

Enclosed:

Letter to Whom It May Concern.

Most Honoured Sir,

It gives me the greatest of pleasure to recommend to your use the services of Samuel Marvell. In my capacity as captain of the merchant ship Paracelsus

I have relied upon the skills of this most excellent young man to my undoubted benefit for the last four years.

He came to me upon completing his schooling at a most respectable establishment and immediately made the most favourable impression; his

astronomical skills were good, accurate and comprehensive, his physical bearing both sturdy and keen and his attitude struck me then, as it does

even more so now, as most responsive and disciplined.

I understand from his father that he spent a good deal of his childhood, when not at his schooling, developing his sailing skills on small craft around the Solent and I have had the opportunity since of seeing every demonstration of this confirmed.

He joined the ship as a midshipman on a commercial voyage to Singapore; throughout this most arduous trip he gained considerable stature among the crew for his excellent seamanship and their respect for his discipline and decision-making. This was most ably demonstrated upon the instance of being assailed by Chinese pirates; after a brief gun battle, he repulsed a most committed boarding assault by galvanising the gun crews and skewering the opposing first mate through the gullet. I had the pleasure of promoting him to lieutenant for this success.

He accompanied me, upon our return to Blighty, on my next voyage to the Caribbean and distinguished himself again; despite terrible privations of stores, he was singularly responsible for effecting rapid repairs at sea once we were dismasted after a particularly heavy storm and then led a cutter-party ashore to secure much needed provisions from some recalcitrant natives.

I have found Samuel to be a particularly skilful sailor, a committed and steadfast companion and a most assiduous crew member; I shall be sorry to

lose his services but I am well apprised of his strong desire to join His Majesties Naval Service.

Use him well for he will repay the loyalty tenfold.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

Rufus T, Firefly

Dear Mr. Marvell,

Honestly I was on the verge of throwing your application right out of my cabin window when I read that you consider HMS *Sauve Qui Peut* an "honourable ship" and see anything positive in the bunch of cutthroats that make up her crew. This kind of statement can only mean that you are either totally naive or a flatterer. Neither of which are qualities I appreciate in my officers.

So I stopped reading and added your two letters to the small stack of used newspapers and fleet circulars I am in the habit of using for hygienic purposes.

Who can describe my surprise as, when I was sitting out on the log and rummaging through those papers to find some relaxation after a heavy dinner, I happened to read your letter of recommendation and found word about your trip to Singapore and back! Now those are some serious credentials. As it happens I was there a couple of times myself, while my father was doing the good ol' opium trail between Canton, Indochina and India.

What a helluva place, I bet you also visited Lisa Chow's and the Red Jade Palace and had some Mai Tais with the girls!

So for the sake of sharing some stories with you in the war to come I hereby appoint you First Lieutenant and whatever other appointments

or titles you might seek and I have the power to give. I will even go further: If I get lucky one day and receive a promotion to a real warship, I will place advance orders to take you with me.

Nothing I won't do for a friend of Lisas.

By the way, it is an ancient custom on my ship which I just make up for you that new officers have to bring 8 crates of Rum (8 being the Chinese lucky number) and the same number of bags of tobacco.

See ya mate,

Tyler Brock

M&C HMS SQP

Letter to Matthew Walker, Brevet Lieutenant HMS *Waakzaamheit*.

Dear Sir,

Most profuse apologies for this unusual and impersonal approach are due to you, Sir, however I find myself with but little time to effect wholly necessary preparations. To explain, I am committed upon a course of joining the Naval service and find that my funds are insufficient to purchase the desired post aboard the *Alexander*.

Your name was mentioned to me as one who might look kindly upon such a request as I make now. I offer my heartfelt testimonial that any loan you could make to smooth the chosen path would be repaid as requested and would, furthermore, place my humble self in a position of eternal gratitude such that I would strive mightily to absolve the stain.

The sum of 180 guineas is the shortfall I find myself under. I have taken a room at the hostel opposite the berth of the *Alexander* should you find it in your heart to advance the sum mentioned above.

I am your humble and respectful servant,

Samuel Augustus Marvell

Invitation for September!

Baron Andrew Goodman invites all members of the London society for a "We sunk the enemy! Rule Britannia!" – party in his club in the third week of September. All drinks will be paid and there will be a lot to eat. All are welcome!

Sir Andrew Goodman

Dear Mr. Marvell,

I have perused your letter several times, yet I must confess myself baffled by it. If you have committed yourself upon a course of action you can ill afford, surely it would be better to renounce that course rather than to persist in it?

Since you fail to shed any light upon the matter of your commitment, I'll assume that you either got a girl into trouble, had an argument with your parent, or fell foul of the shylocks. Any of these may be considered sufficient reason to join the Navy (rather than the Army) and each shows you to be a man of dubious character and questionable motives, with a poor understanding of how the world moves thrown in for good measure. On top of that, you obviously share the average landlubber's belief that sailors have nothing better to do with their money than to hand it over - on the flimsiest pretext whatever - to some poor soul who has lost both his masts and his anchors and finds himself drifting inexorably towards the lee shore of Life.

Yet you seem to think that you're made from the stuff that the Navy is looking for and I can but marvel... er, wonder at your temerity to aspire to a place aboard one of Her Majesty's ships. I would have consigned your missive to the scrap basket at once, but for the fact that a couple of days ago we were discussing a similar case in the officer's mess and one of the participants (a physician and member of the Royal Society named Henry O'Higgins) suggested that a man's mind can be forced into a more generous mould by continuous mental and physical exercise. He claimed that the Service would be the ideal place for this and I have decided to take him up on this. I've shown him your letter and we have struck a bargain, i.e. that I should lend you the money you're asking for and that he will reimburse me should you fail to prosper in the service. Accordingly, I have told my bank (Hoare's) to make the sum of 200 guineas available to you upon the condition that this be a loan to be repaid six months from now. Herein neither you nor Dr. Higgins shall fail, or answer to the contrary at your peril (pistols at dawn is the customary way to resolve these matters, I believe). I have the honour to remain

your not very humble but decidedly amused servant

Matthew Walker, Lt.(brev.) HMS Waakzaamheit

GM Waffle (Part One):

A warm welcome to all the new players! Have fun and enjoy the game!

GM Waffle (Part Two):

There is a time in the affairs of men – or at least of this particular man – when things just keep going wrong. Starting with spending the weekends boning up for the meetings of the workers' council and ending with a fortnight's hiatus because of moving some furniture about my flat, nothing broke right and the result were endless delays and what not. Apologies for any inconvenience you may have encountered while holding your

breath and/or hopping impatiently from one foot to the other while waiting for the next installment of the salty Saga. Since there is, alas, no resident GP at the Admiralty and the Sick and Hurt Board (or was it the Apothecary Association) is still a figment of my imagination, all I can offer you is a couple of hundred Guineas and perhaps a MiD or a title on top ... and since several of you seem to have availed themselves of these options already, I trust to find you all in at least middling good health. I'd also like to welcome our new players, among them the author of "How Bad Things Happen to Bad People". Few things make a GM more happy that players taking the trouble of giving their characters some background and making them come alive. Thank you all for your input, it makes my work much easier.

DEADLINE: May 13th, 2005