

## Steam Pinnacle 199 – News Bulletin Christmas 2010



### **Sale by Tender - HMS Invincible**

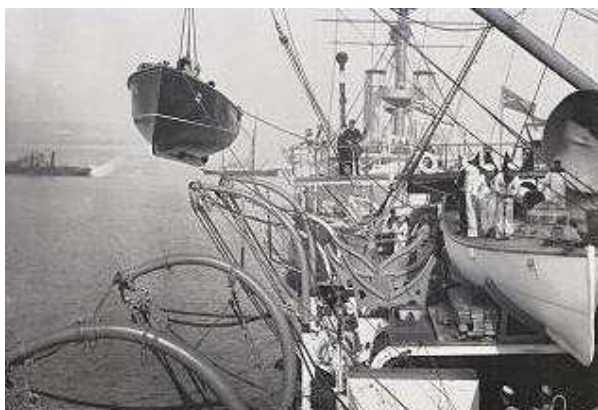
Need a late Christmas present/bigger boat? HMS Invincible is for sale by tender. Laid down 1973 at Vickers Shipbuilding, Barrow-in-Furness, she was completed in 1980. She is currently stable for tow, subject to buyer confirmation (*and a big tug!*).

**Displacement** – 17,000 Tonnes, estimated metal weight – 10,000 Tonnes, estimated 95% mild steel.

**Length** - OA 210m, W/L 193m. **Draught** - 5.2/5.8m

**Beam** - Extreme 35m, **Height** - 46m (estimated at current draught) **Engines** – Removed; **Generators and Pumps** - Generally unserviceable

**HMS Agamemnon** - An Imperial War Museum model of the battleship HMS Agamemnon in 1908 at 1/48 scale, restored by John R Haynes in 1981. A steam pinnacle is visible onboard. The model is over 9ft long!



### **HMS Royal Sovereign hoisting the steam pinnacle**

Photograph taken on board Royal Sovereign looking aft while at Spithead just before she left for the winter cruise of the Channel Squadron off the South West coast of Ireland. She is at anchor with another battleship of the Channel Squadron her sister ship, the Resolution, close astern. The picket-boat has already been hoisted in and secured, and the pinnacle is in the act of being swung inboard to be secured, under the direction of the Commander, who is on the after bridge.

- **London Boat Show 2011** - We have been asked to man the hammock display again - a nearer and better hotel for overnight accommodation has been agreed with the organisers. The display was voted by the public last year as the best stand! Ivan needs **volunteers for the period 7-16<sup>th</sup> January**. **Please let Ivan have your availability** a.s.a.p. so that he can arrange the watch bill.
- **The 2011 Season Plan – a summary** At the volunteer's meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec (full minutes will be circulated in due course) it was agreed to:
  - a. Run 199 on until end of June 2012 when the 10-year boiler certificate expires, this will include obtaining a new 12 month certificate and attending the Old Gaffers at Yarmouth in June. There are no Naval Base Steam Days in 2011.
  - b. Attempt to have her available on Jan 18<sup>th</sup> for a V.V.I.P. trip but subject to some main engine work. **Post meeting note** – a discussion between Ivan/Frank/Mike Williams has decided that this is not practical. **Trip has been cancelled.**
  - c. Commence a refit in the summer of 2012 to extend her operations for 10 years. This will take 12 months or so.
  - d. Arrange an annual dinner locally and a run ashore to HMS BELFAST

"D. S. B." -

A Short Story from Naval Occasions by Bartimeus (dated c 1915)

Note: D.S.B. = Duty Steam Boat

The Midshipman of the Second Picket Boat that is to say, the boat with the bell-mouthed funnel of burnished brass and vermilion paint inside her cowls (*by Editor - a research clue here?*) was standing under the electric light at the battery door reading the Commander's night order-book.

"Second Picket Boat to have steam by 5 A.M., and will perform duties of D. S. B. for the Second Division." He closed the book and stood meditatively looking out into the darkness beyond the quarter-deck rails. It was blowing fitfully, gusts of wind shaking the awning in a manner that threatened dirty weather on the morrow. "Why the deuce couldn't the other Picket boat . . . ? But she hadn't got a brass funnel - only a skimpy painted affair. Decidedly it was the fatal beauty of his boat that had influenced the Commander's decision. Still . . ." He yawned drearily, and opening the deck log, ran his finger down the barometer readings. "Glass low- beastly low - and steady. Wind 4-5, o.c.q.r. H'm'm." The cryptic quotations did not appear to add joy to the outlook. Ten o'clock had struck, and forward in the waist the boatswain's mate was "piping down," the shrill cadence of his pipe floating aft on the wind. Sorrowfully the Midshipman descended to the steerage flat, and crouching beneath the hammocks that hung from the overhead beams, reached his chest and noiselessly undressed, - noiselessly, because the sleeping occupant of the adjacent hammock had the morning watch, and was prone to be unreasonable when accidentally awakened.

In rather less than a minute he had undressed and donned his pyjamas; then, delving amid the mysterious contents of his sea-chest, produced a pair of sea-boots, an oilskin and sou'wester and a sweater. He made his preparations mechanically, propping the sea-boots where they would be handiest when he turned out. Lastly, he hung his cap over a police-light, because he knew from experience that the light caught his eyes when he was in his hammock, locked his chest, and, choosing a spot where two messmates (who were scuffling for the possession of a hammock-stretcher) would not fall over his feet, he unconcernedly knelt down and said his prayers. The corporal of the watch passed on his rounds: the sentry clicked to attention an instant, and resumed his beat above his head the ward room door opened to admit a new-comer, and the jangle of a piano drifted down the hatchway; then the door closed again, shutting out the sound, and the kneeling figure, in rather dilapidated pyjamas, rose to his feet. Steadying himself by a ringbolt overhead, he swung lightly into his hammock and wriggled down between the blankets. From the other side of the flat came a voice

"Freckles, you're D.S.B. to-morrow." The Midshipman of the Second Picket Boat grunted in reply and pulled the blanket close under his chin. Presently the voice sounded again

"Freckles, dear, aren't you glad you sold your little farm and came to sea?" But he who had sold a farm only snuggled his face against the pillow, sighed once, and was asleep.

Had you seen the sleeper in waking hours, nursing a cutter close-reefed through a squall, or handling a launch-load of uproarious libertymen, you might, passing by at this moment, have found food for meditation. For the vibration of the dynamo a deck below presently caused the cap to fall from the police light it had shielded, and the glare shone full in a face which (for all the valiant razor locked away in its owner's chest) was that of a very tired child.

"Orders for the Picket Boat, sir?" The Officer of the Morning Watch, who was staring through his binoculars into the darkness, turned and glanced at the small figure muffled in oilskins at his side. Many people would have smiled in something between amusement and compassion at the earnest tone of inquiry. But this is a trade in which men get out of the way of smiling at 5 A.M. he'd been through it all himself.

"Flagship's signalled some empty coal lighters broken adrift up to windward cruisin' independently. Go an' round 'em up before they drift down on the Fleet. Better man your boat from the boom and shove straight off. Smack it about! "

The small figure in oilskins - who, as a matter of fact, was none other than the Midshipman of the Second Picket Boat, brass funnel, vermilion -painted cowls and all - turned and scampered forward. It was pitch dark, and the wind that swept in rainy gusts along the battery caught the flaps of his oilskins and buffeted the sleep out of him. Overside the lights of the Fleet blinked in an indeterminate confusion through the rain, and for an instant a feeling of utter schoolboy woe, of longing for the security of his snug hammock, filled his being. Then the short years of his training told. Somewhere ahead, in that welter of rain and darkness, there was work to be done-to be accomplished, moreover, swiftly and well. It was an order.

Stumbling on to the forecastle, he slipped a life-belt over his shoulders, climbed the rail, and descended the ship's side by a steel ladder, until he reached the lower boom. It jutted out into the darkness, a round, dimly discerned spar, and secured to it by a boat rope at the farthest point of his vision, he saw his boat. The circular funnel - mouth ringed a smoky glow, and in the green glare of a side-light one of the bowmen was reaching for the ladder that hung from the boom. Very cautiously he felt his way out along it, steadied by a man-rope, breast high. Looking downward, he saw the steamboat fretting like a dog in leash; the neat instant she was lurching forward on the crest of a wave, and as suddenly dropped away again in a shower of spray. Releasing his grip with one hand he slipped astride of the boom, wriggled on his stomach till his feet touched the rungs of a Jacob's ladder, and so hung swaying a few feet above the tumbling water.

"'Arf a mo', sir," said a deep voice behind him. The boat's bows were plunging just below . . . the ladder tautened with a jerk.

"Now, sir I" said the voice. He relaxed his hold and dropped nimbly on to the triangular space in the bows. As he landed, the Jacob's ladder shot upwards into the darkness, as though snatched by an unseen hand.

Steadying himself by the rail along the engine-room casing he hurried to the wheel. A bearded petty officer moved aside as he came aft. This was his Coxswain, a morose man about the age of his father, who obeyed orders like an automaton, and had once (mellowed by strong waters) been known to smile.

"Cast off forward!" The engine - room bell rang twice, and the Midshipman gave a quick turn to the wheel. For an instant the boat plunged as if in uncertainty, then swung round on the slope of a slate-grey wave and slid off on her quest. Forward in the bows the bowmen were crouched, peering through the rain. Presently one of them hailed hoarsely.

"Port a bit, sir," supplemented the Coxswain. "That's them, there!" He pointed ahead to where indistinct shapes showed black against the troubled waters. The bell rang again in the tiny engine-room, and the Leading Stoker, scenting adventures, threw up the hatch and thrust a head and hairy chest into the cold air. His interest in the proceedings apparently soon waned, however, for he shut the hatch down again and busied himself mysteriously-always within reach of the throttle and reversing-lever - with an oil-can.

Going very slow, the boat crept alongside the foremost lighter, a huge derelict that, when loaded, carried fifty tons of coal. They had been moored alongside one another to the wharf, but, rocking in the swell, had chafed through their moorings and broken adrift.

Now to take in tow an unwieldy lighter in the dark with a heavy swell running, and to moor it safely in the spot whence it came, is a piece of work that requires no small judgment. However, one by one, the three truants were captured and secured, and then, with the grey dawn of a winter morning breaking overhead, the picket boat swung round on her return journey. On the way she passed another boat racing shoreward for the mails. The Midshipman at the wheel raised his hand with a little gesture of salutation, and she went by in a shower of spray. Half an hour later the Midshipman of the Second Picket Boat, garbed in the "rig of the day," was ladling sugar over his porridge with the abandon of one who is seventeen and master of his fate. A messenger appeared at the gunroom door

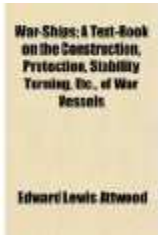
"Duty Steam Boat's called away - sir." Her Midshipman locked away his pet marmalade-pot (for there are limits even to the communism of a gunroom) and reached for his cap and dirk. "We ain't got much money," he observed grimly, "but we do see life!"

*(By editor – any similarities perceived to present day SP199 volunteers are purely coincidental ..... and rather amusing!)*

<http://www.shiply.com/transport/Ex-Royal-Navy-Pinnace-1915/408505/> Interesting! This is an online bid to deliver a "1915 ex-RN pinnace" from Shepperton to Southampton, but no craft details. More competition? Anyone know anything of the pinnace?

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year - Martin*

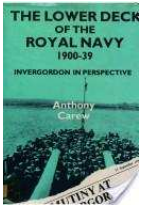
## Book List – Part 7



**War-Ships; A Text-Book on the Construction, Protection, Stability Turning, Etc., of War Vessels** by Edward Lewi Attwood (Paperback - 4 Jan 2010).

Reprint of a 1911 original by the MOD's then Head of the Battleship Section.

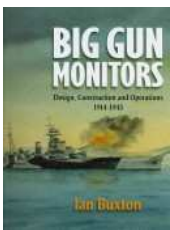
**From Fisher to the Falklands** by Vice Admiral Sir Louis Le Bailly  
Marine Management (Holdings) Ltd. for the Institute of Marine Engineers, 1991 - 227 pages



**The lower deck of the Royal Navy 1900-39: the Invergordon mutiny in perspective** by Anthony Carew

Manchester University Press ND, 1981 - 269 pages

**Charlie B: a biography of Admiral Lord Beresford of Metemneh and Curraghmore** by Geoffrey Martin Bennett, Dawnay, 1968 - 378 pages; (ISBN: 0330269356 / 0-330-26935-6  
A useful corrective to worship of his rival Fisher.

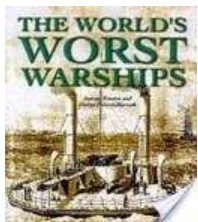


**Big Gun Monitors: Design, Construction and Operations, 1914-1945** by Ian Buxton, Naval Institute Press, 2008 - 256 pages

Monitors were virtually ignored by naval historians until Ian Buxton produced the first edition of this book in 1978. Although published privately, this became an established classic and copies of the first edition are now almost unobtainable, so this new edition will be welcomed by many.

**The eclipse of the big gun: the warship 1906-1945** by Robert Gardiner, David K. Brown; Conway Maritime, 2004 - 224 pages

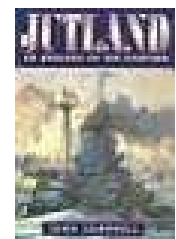
The Eclipse of the Big Gun covers the history of the warship from 1906 to 1945.



**The world's worst warships, Part 2** by Antony Preston and George Palocz-Horvath; Conway, 2002 - 192 pages; ISBN: 9780851777542;

A serious study of the reasons why some warships have achieved bad reputations. It covers the period from 1860 to the present day, and looks at a wide range of nationalities and ship-types. Some examples are the Russian Popoffkas; the French battleship 'Brennus'; and the British vessel 'Captain'.

**Jutland: An Analysis of the Fighting** by John Campbell, N. J. M. Campbell - 1998 - 448 pages. The authoritative work on the great sea battle of World War I (*by Editor – although some might argue that Gordon's "The Rules of the Game" holds this title.*)





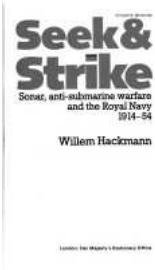


**Dreadnought gunnery and the Battle of Jutland: the question of fire control**  
 by John Brooks - 2005 - **321 pages**. This book provides new and revisionist accounts of the Dreyer/Pollen controversy, and of gunnery at Jutland. In fire control, as with other technologies, the Royal Navy had been open, though not uncritically, to innovations.

**THE GRAND FLEET 1914-16. Its creation, development and work.**  
 By Jellicoe of Scapa

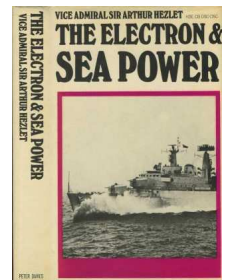


**The King's Ships Were at Sea: the War in the North Sea, August 1914-February 1915**  
 James Goldrick; ISBN: 9780870213342



**Seek & strike: sonar, anti-submarine warfare, and the Royal Navy, 1914-54**  
 by Willem Dirk Hackmann; H.M.S.O., 1984 - 487 pages

**The electron and sea power** by Vice Admiral Sir Arthur Richard Hezlet;  
 P. Davies, 1975; 318 pages  
 Naval applications of electricity



**Submarines at War 1914-18** by Richard Compton-Hall; MacMillan; 2004  
 With photographs from the Submarine Museum archives.

**Signal! A History of Signalling in the Royal Navy** by Barrie H. Kent  
 Hyden House; 2004; ISBN: 9781856230254  
 A history of signalling in the Royal Navy.



**Make a Signal** - Broome, Jack; Putnam, 1955  
 Very amusing anecdotes



**Make another signal** by Broome, Jack; Futura Publications  
 1977; ISBN: 0718301935 / 0-7183-0193-5;

