

# HMS Agamemnon

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The warship *HMS Agamemnon* was built in 1777 at Henry Adams shipyard next to Portsmouth. She was built in accordance with the plans of naval architect Sir Tomas Slade, who created the *Ardent* ship type whose plans are keep in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. The *HMS Agamemnon* is the third in a seven-ship succession, whose last survivor is the *Victory* (Deane 1998).

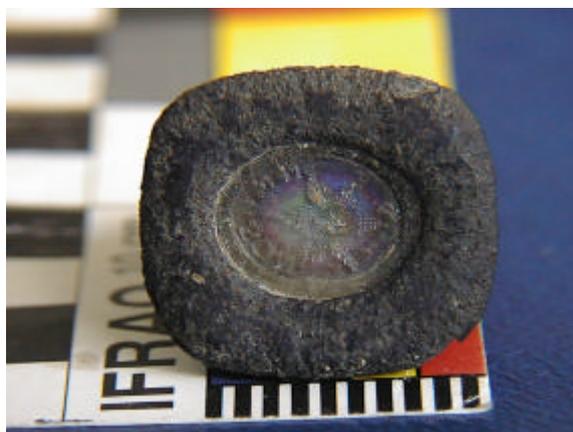
The ship carried 64 cannons and was regarded as third line rank because of the place it occupied in battle according to an admiralty order of 1653 (Bound 1995; Deane 1998). *The HMS Agamemnon* took part in 11 battles between 1781 and 1807, among these the Trafalgar battle. She was commanded between 1793 until 1796 by Captain Horatio Nelson. Her last military commission was in 1808 to be a part of the Royal Navy in the South Atlantic based in Rio de Janeiro. In 1808 she make her first journey to River Plate, arriving in June 1809. During this time the hull of *HMS Agamemnon* was damaged and she sank north of Gorriti Island in Maldonado Bay on June 16 th 1809. After two days the Captain of *HMS Agamemnon*, John Rose, ordered the most important objects of the ship to be recovered, among those the cannons.

Since 1993, the shipwreck has been explored and many artefacts have been recorded. The first research was made by Dr. Mensun Bound of the MARE (Maritime Archaeological Research) of the Oxford University (Bound 1995; Lezama 1987). During the last years of survey, several items were recovered. The most important is a seal with a star and the name “*Nelson*”. (Figure 1 and 2).

**Figure 1** The bronze iron seal



**Figure 2** Detail of star and the word *Nelson*



The iron cannon (Figure 3) is another important item recovered from the shipwreck. The 24-pound iron cannon weighs 2400 kg and is 3.10 m long. The H.M.S. *Agamemnon* had 13 iron cannon of this calibre on each side of the ship. The cannon was placed in a special tank and treated with controlled electrolysis during one year (Nasti 2000). After this treatment, its surface was covered with a polyurethane coat. (Hamilton 1997, 1998; Pearson 1987). Lately along with the MARE Institute have working in a plane of the wreck and recovered important objects.

**Figure 3.** This cannon of the *HMS Agamemnon* was used in Trafalgar battle on October 21 1805.



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