

## The Intelligence Service in May 1940

Since *Three Kings*, the British Secret Intelligence Service has improved its intelligence efforts in Occupied Europe, and a shake-up is imminent. For now, however, the investigators are still considered members of Section D, tasked with clandestine operations in enemy territory.

United States intelligence efforts have picked up since the British and French declarations of war on Nazi Germany in 1939, but are still relatively small scale and unfocussed. Members of G-2, the US War Department's Military Intelligence Division, may work with Section D on an informal basis.

During the last glaciation, millennia ago, global sea levels were much lower than today. As late as 6000BC, large stretches of what is now the North Sea were dry land, populated by Stone Age hunter-gatherers of the Maglemosian culture.

The Maglemosians found their coastal lands dotted with ancient, forbidding stones, which seemed to have been shaped by no human hand—temples and carvings of terrifying age. The men and women who set themselves as priests of these “temples” spoke of clammy, antediluvian horrors which still dwelled in the deeps, waiting for the day the sea would rise and claim their lost lands again.

Eight thousand years ago, a catastrophic inundation swamped the low-lying northern European coasts, sweeping away all traces of Maglemosian people. In the early twentieth century, fishing trawlers began to dredge up remains of these rich forests and hunting lands from the seabed, and people became aware of the great flood which had sunk these lands. And yet, no one could guess at the awful truth of what had caused the ancient waters to rise... or that it might happen again.

A member of Heinrich Himmler's personal staff and expert in the occult, Karl Friedrich Walpurgen (some-

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times known as “Himmler's Sorcerer”), has become obsessed with the “lost lands” beneath the North Sea, believing they hold the secret to a great prehistoric power

which can be harnessed by the Third Reich. Walpurgen has been assigned command of an SS “special group”—SS Sondergruppe KFW2—which he has dispatched to the area with his trusted minion, Frau Edeltraud Wassermeister.

In darker circles, Frau Wassermeister is known as the “Fishwitch” (“die Fischhexe”), infamous for her uncanny affinity with the deep. Her bulbous eyes, clammy pallid skin, and foul stench force all but the hardiest to recoil. The Fishwitch has seen the secrets beneath the waters off Dunkirk in her dreams...

Walpurgen and Wassermeister are united by their researches into what they believe is “astral projection”. They believe they have found a way to travel in time and space, and send their “astral selves” back to the prehistory of Earth—to the ancient Maglemosian period. The duo met there, and witnessed dreadful rituals propitiating hideous “dwellers beneath the sea” at a temple which now lies beneath the waves.

Since then, Walpurgen and Wassermeister have begun to realise the lands they have named “Maglemosian” are not in the deep past at all, but are in fact strange, dream-like lands, with a mysterious and often tenuous connection to the “waking world”. They have established a secret outpost there—the “Black House”—and have constructed an occult “portal” to Maglemosian through which they can travel without using their “astral bodies”. At the same time, they have found traces of the prehistoric Maglemosian culture—including the forbidding inhuman temple—off the Dunkirk coast, and evidence that it is still frequented by “dwellers beneath the sea”.

Their plan is simple: to forge a deadly alliance with this inhuman power. Using a u-boat assigned to the Sondergruppe, they aim to retrieve a hideous statue to a ghastly marine deity from the sunken temple, and transport it to a location south of Dunkirk, where they will perform a ritual to once again cause the seas to rise. This time, the flood will claim the lives of hundreds of thousands of Allied troops on the beaches at Dunkirk as a “sacrificial offering” to the dwellers beneath the sea, sealing with blood an unholy alliance between these unknown “deep ones” and the nascent occult powerbase within the Third Reich. They have dubbed this operation FALL NADEL—“Operation NEEDLE”.

Only the accidental discovery of their plan by an undercover agent of British intelligence stands in their way...



## FRAU EDELTRAUD WASSERMEISTER, AGE 45, "THE FISHWITCH"

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d12,  
Strength d6, Vigour d6

**Skills:** Dreaming d6, Fighting d6, Knowledge  
(Anthropology) d8, Knowledge (Mythos) d6,  
Knowledge (Occult) d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6,  
Swimming d12+1

**Languages Known:** English, German

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Charisma:** -8; **Toughness:** 7 (1);  
**Sanity:** 0 (Totally insane)

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Bloodthirsty, Delusional, Mean,  
Ugly

**Edges:** Brawny, Killer Instinct, Level Headed

**Gear:** Leather Greatcoat (+1), Luger PO8 pistol  
(12/24/48, 2d6-1, RoF 1, Shots 8, Semi Auto)

**Spells:** Bind Dreamer\*, Breath of the Deep\*, Contact  
Deep One, Gate of Oneirology (create gate to the  
Dreamlands), Maglemosian Ritual\*, Mesmerise  
(puppet), Nightmare\*, Raise Night Fog (obscure),  
Snare Dreamer\*, Wandering Soul\*, Wave of  
Oblivion\*, Wrack\*

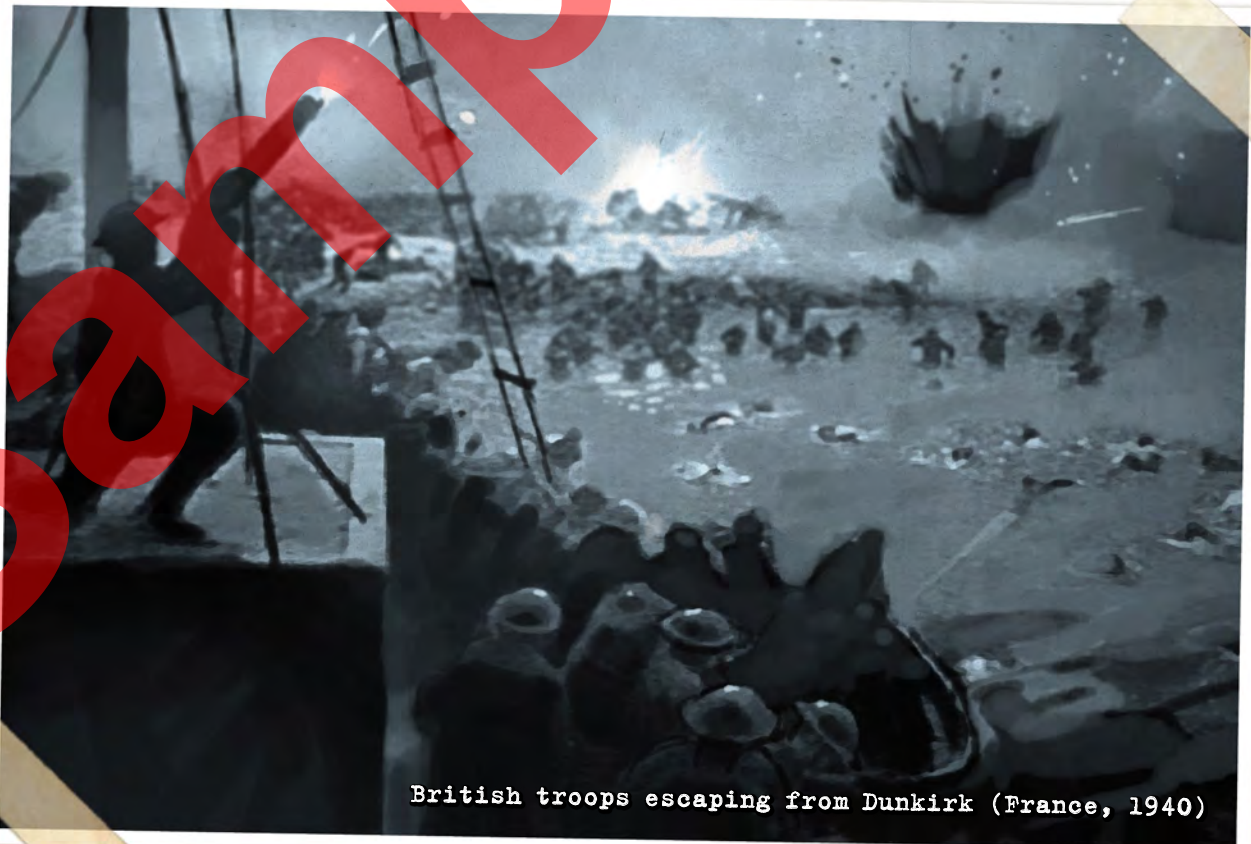
**Appearance:** Wassermmeister is a big woman given to massive leather greatcoats and startling hats; her round, pallid face houses bulging eyes and a loathsome sneer. Head of SS Sondergruppe KFW2 under Karl Friedrich Walpurgen, far from being a scientist, she is a deranged occult obsessive with a messianic streak, and a believer in Atlantis, astrology, divination, demon summoning, astral travel, and more. Dimly aware of the great inhuman forces in the universe, her affinity for the sea comforts her that she is part of something greater and more eternal than mere humanity. She believes it is her mission to establish worship of the true "gods" of the cosmos in the Third Reich, and will do anything for her cause—human life and suffering have no value when measured against such immense power. Naturally, Walpurgen thinks she's great...

\*These spells can be found on page 43.

## OPERATION DYNAMO

*Heroes of the Sea* takes place against the backdrop of Operation Dynamo, one of the biggest (if not the biggest) wartime troop evacuations in history. Following the German *Blitzkrieg* invasion of Belgium and France in May 1940, the combined forces of the British Expeditionary Force (the "BEF") and the French First

Image: Public Domain. From the 1943 US Army film "Divide and Conquer,"  
("Why We Fight #3"), directed by Frank Capra.



British troops escaping from Dunkirk (France, 1940)

## Timeline of Operation Dynamo

**10 May – Battle of France begins;** Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain.

**14 May – Plan Yellow (“FALL GELB”):** the German Wehrmacht begins its western offensive with an attack through the Ardennes forest and a strategic drive for the coast, cutting Allied supply lines—the infamous “Sickle Cut”.

**20 May – German advance reaches the coast,** separating the BEF, the French 1st Army, and the Belgian army from the main body of French troops.

**24 May – the “Halt Order”:** the Germans stop their advance on Dunkirk for 3 days and attack Arras. This gives Sondergruppe KFW2 a short window to carry out FALL NADEL. German armour is kept south of Dunkirk to attack BEF forces retreating before Army Group B. The British begin organising the evacuation of British and Allied troops from Dunkirk.

**26 May – the BEF and the French 1st Army are confined** in a shrinking corridor to the sea, about 60 miles long and 15-25 miles wide. Most of the British are around Lille, 40 miles from Dunkirk; the French are further south. German Army Group B is to the East; Army Group A to the West. Anthony Eden, British Secretary of State for war, tells General Lord Gort, commander of the British Expeditionary Force, to prepare to “fight back to the west”, ie. to evacuate.

**27 May – the Germans launch a full-scale attack** with three divisions south of Ypres. In forested and urban terrain, the Germans beat the British back, cutting telephone lines and taking advantage of poor British communications. The Allies fight back to the Dunkirk perimeter, arriving by the 30th of May.

**28 May – British counterattack** by 3rd Grenadier Guards battalion and 2nd North Staffordshires battalion reaches

the Kortekker River, disrupting the Germans and buying the evacuation time. This allows the investigators to push forwards to the last known position of Agent WOTAN, the village of Mesegen (page 17).

A confused battle rages along the perimeter, with Allied forces being gradually forced back.

**29 May – the Belgians surrender.** General Gort sends British troops to plug the gap created in Dunkirk’s semi-circular perimeter defence, including the docks at Nieuport.

**30 May – the perimeter holds.** Bad weather hinders airborne operations.

**31 May – the Germans nearly punch through at Nieuport.** Bad weather continues to hinder airborne operations. General von Kuchler assumes command of German forces at Dunkirk and plans an all-out assault for the following day.

**1st June – fine bright weather,** perfect for airborne operations. The French hold the line while the British evacuate, despite concentrated artillery, bombing, and strafing.

**2 June – the last British evacuate,** and French forces slowly fall back. The fortified town of Bergues falls to the Germans.

**3 June – Germans are 2 miles from Dunkirk.** This night is the final night of evacuations, and the last possible night for Wassermeister’s “Searise” ritual (page 36). If successful, tens of thousands of French and BEF troops on the beaches and ships offshore will be lost, and the British capacity to continue the war seriously—perhaps irrevocably—damaged.

**4 June, 10.20am – the Germans hoist the swastika over Dunkirk docks.**

Army found themselves surrounded on three sides and in danger of being driven into the sea—a potential loss of almost half a million men.

After trying unsuccessfully to break the encirclement, on the evening of Sunday, May the 26th, the British Admiralty gives the signal: “Operation DYNAMO is to commence”. Over the following week, under heavy attack, British naval vessels and a ragtag flotilla of small private vessels aim to pluck hundreds of thousands of troops from the beaches near the French port of Dunkirk

and ferry them to safety in England. In doing so, it is hoped, the British army can be saved to fight another day, and prevent the British Isles from falling under the Nazi jackboot. The timeline above lists the main events of this extraordinary operation, and the key episodes of *Heroes of the Sea*.





# The Dunkirk Environment

The Dunkirk area is low-lying, criss-crossed with drainage ditches, almost impassible to tanks and other heavy armour, which instead are forced to drive conspicuously along high raised roads, flanked by ditches. Throughout the adventure, the weather is poor, with torrential rain and thunderstorms hindering airborne operations, until the evening of the 1st of June, when the weather becomes fine and bright.

The area is occupied by the following groups:

## **The British Expeditionary Force**

Commanded by General Lord Gort, over 200,000 British troops are making their way under difficult conditions to the Dunkirk bridgehead for evacuation. Losses are heavy, and at every step troops are destroying their equipment to leave behind nothing for the German forces.

## **The French**

The French First Army under General Blanchard has been cut off from the main French forces by the "sickle cut", and is defending the Dunkirk bridgehead. Much of its action is around Lille to the south, holding back the Germans in a furious battle, and in the western half of the Dunkirk perimeter. Later in the evacuation, from

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the 1st of June, the French take positions behind the Bergues-Furnes Canal as the remaining BEF troops embark. While most troops the investigators encounter are British or German, they may encounter French units away from the main French force.

## **The Belgians**

The beleaguered Belgian army is under full attack from the Germans at the outset of the adventure, and morale is plummeting as many soldiers feel abandoned by their government. On the 28th of May, the Belgian army surrenders, leaving a 20-mile gap on the British eastern flank which General Gort struggles to fill.

