

JUNE 1968

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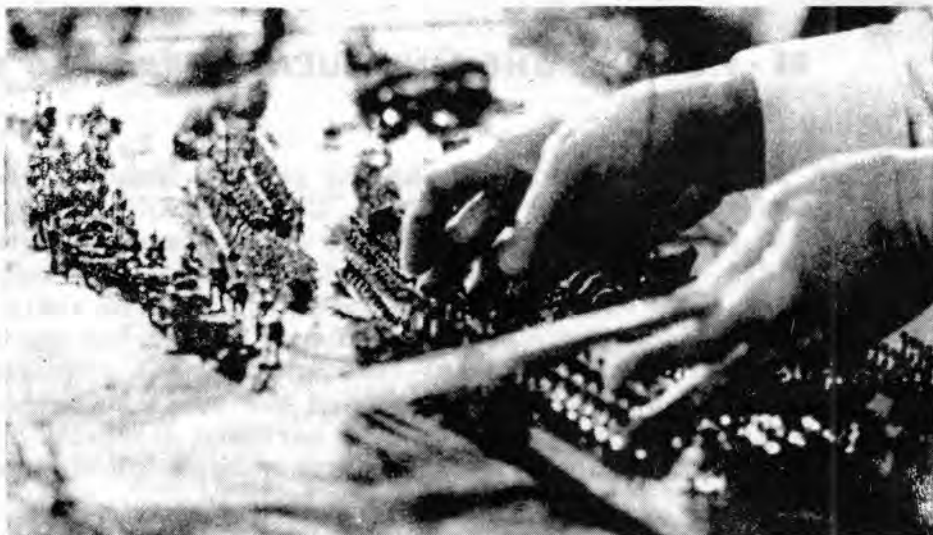
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# WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER

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## EDITORIAL



This is the space where the Editor leads off at some aspect of his magazine's subject which he considers to be either beneficial or detrimental. It is the red light that can warn of danger ahead or it is the bush from which the laurel leaves are cut to make the crown of praise.

This month, oddly enough, no one seems to have done anything that requires praise or castigation, there are no dangers lurking by the roadside to bring the hobby into despair or disrepute - at least, none that have not existed for long enough to have become known to the wide awake wargamers.

So, having to fill the space somehow, I am forced (or inclined) to remark upon minor, but not mundane, matters. I can comment upon the surprisingly high numbers of youngsters and the not inconsiderable numbers of adults, who are taking up wargaming. They are gravitating into groups, forming clubs and looser organizations, pooling ideas and armies and, I have no hesitation in saying, arguing bitterly about rules!

I can also remark upon the noticeable upsurge of public interest in military matters, such as the large displays of ornamental cannon and replicas of antique weapons displayed for sale in leading London stores. Books, films and television series dealing with wars, both modern and historical are rising to popular heights. All this notwithstanding the fact that we have a Government fast stripping us of present potentialities and past traditions of military greatness.

Optimists claim that wargaming will soon outstrip model railway and model car racing. This I doubt if only because of the moving mechanical attraction of these two pursuits. On the other hand for the man who wishes to really exercise his mind and to open a door leading to relatively boundless fields, wargaming can claim to be vastly superior to these other pursuits, both in a practical sense and as a thinking pastime that needs intelligence, basic knowledge and a quick mind. A car race or a circuit of a model railway track bears a similarity to others that have gone before - except for basic facets, no two wargames are alike!



DON FEATHERSTONE.



27th September 1810

Dominating the country around it, the Busaco ridge extends north from the Mondego River for ten miles. Completely blocking the northern road from Almeida to Coimbra, Wellington had concentrated his army along the summit of the ridge and if the French wished to advance they had to push 49,000 Allied infantry (half British, and half Portugese) from their positions. Sixty artillery pieces, strategically placed, supported the Allies. Being more susceptible to attack in its northern than its southern half, Wellington had concentrated a third of his army on the southern three-fifths of his front, and the remaining 34,000 held the northern six miles. A lateral communications road behind the crest allowed the easy movement of troops from one point to another.

The French, under Massena, made five column attacks between 5.45 a.m. and 9.00 a.m., the early ones under cover of a thick grey fog. All went in over the area stretching north from the Palmeiros road to just north of the Mortagoa road. Each French column was screened by tirailleurs and their artillery attempted to accompany them up the steep and broken hillside. Reynier's first attack, at 5.45 was made by 11 battalions in 3 regimental formations, each with the front of a single company so that each column was between 35 and 40 men wide and 45/60 ranks deep. Attacking to the south, Reynier's columns made four separate attempts but only in his first thrust were the voltigeurs able to break through the Allied skirmishers only to be thrown back by volley fire and close-range grape and canister from two 6pdrs.

The French never fought more bravely but Busaco was a supreme example of Wellington's line superiority over the French column. Although they did not fight behind static field fortifications, the Allied infantry were protected and even concealed by the terrain. The French artillery and cavalry accomplished nothing and the tirailleurs who were supposed to disorder the Allied line could not even defend their own columns. Ney's attacks in the north were greatly handicapped by the inability of his tirailleurs to push back Craufurd's and Pack's riflemen. It was a case of lines of fresh British and Portugese infantry opposed to tired or amped columns, regardless of where the French attacked - Wellington's defensive positions always allowing him to retain his initial superiority by giving him a rapid and continuous flow of reinforcements to all threatened points. The training and amalgamation of British and Portugese units produced Allied divisions whose quality was essentially equal to an all-British force of the same size.

In direct contradiction to Napoleonic theory, Wellington avoided any massive concentration of artillery fire, preferring to employ his guns in small numbers at effective range right in line with his infantry.

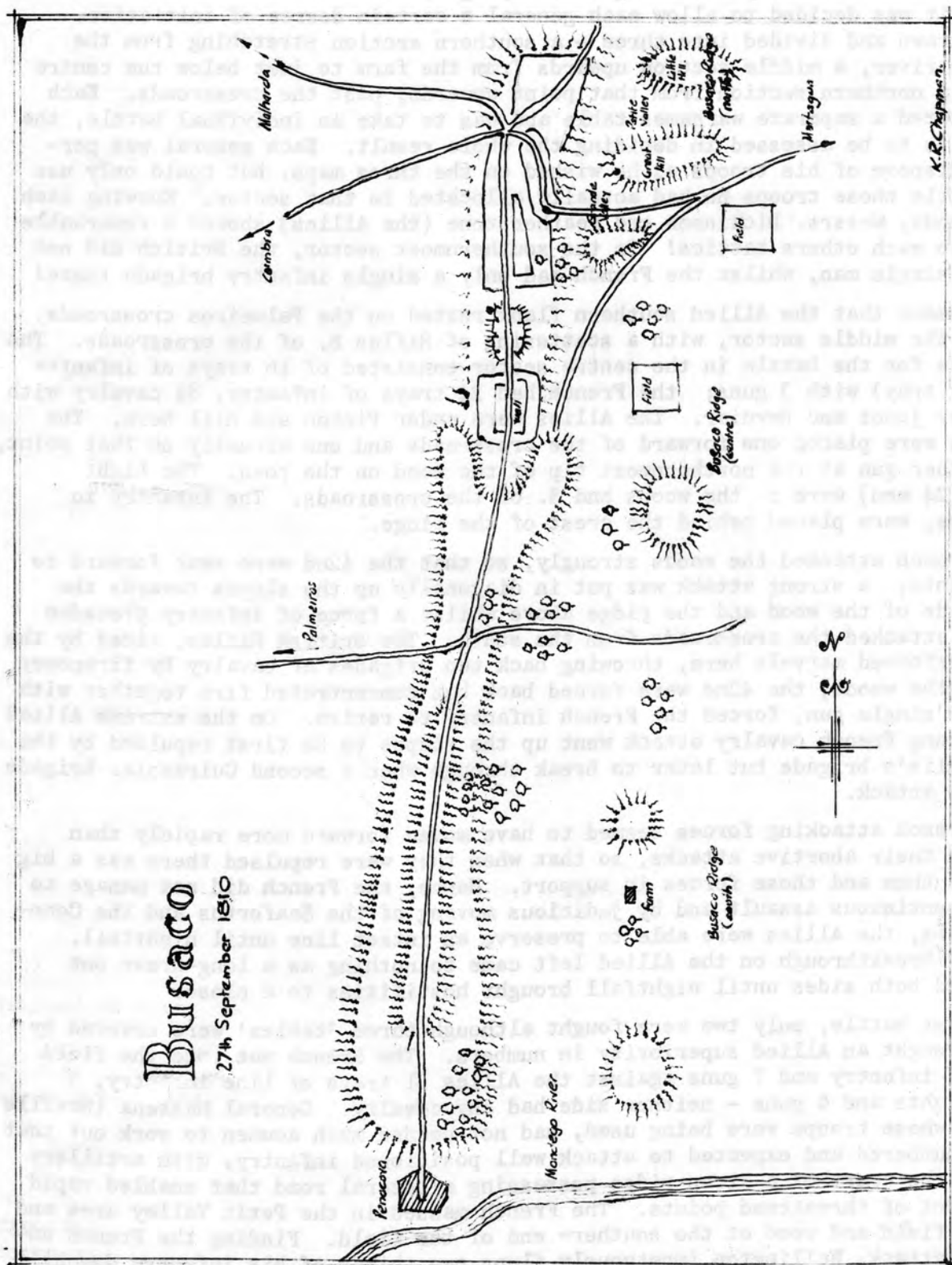
For details of the separate French attacks and their repulse, see 'Wellington in the Peninsula' by Jac Weller, who gives a most picturesque (almost Napier-esque) description of the way they fought in the Peninsula.

#### REFIGHTING THE BATTLE OF BUSACO AS A WARGAME

In the actual battle, the French had about 65,000 men, of whom about 50,000 were infantry, with about 6,700 cavalry - artillery strength not known but thought to be superior to Allies. Wellington had 24,000 British and about the same number of Portugese infantry, with two squadrons of cavalry which took no part in the battle. Respective losses were 4,600 to the French and 1,252 Allied. For the table-top battle, the French were given 507 infantry, 84 cavalry and 16 guns; The British having 488 infantry and 9 guns.

# Busaco

27th September 1850



Rather than slavishly follow the actual sequence of the original battle, with French columns blindly attacking semi-impregnable Allied lines in defensive positions, it was decided to allow each general a certain degree of initiative. A map was drawn and divided into three - a southern section stretching from the farm to the river, a middle section upwards from the farm to just below the centre field, and a northern section from that point upwards, past the crossroads. Each map constituted a separate wargames table and was to take an individual battle, the three results to be assessed in deciding the whole result. Each general was permitted to dispose of his troops as he wished on the three maps, but could only use in each battle those troops he had actually allocated to that sector. Knowing each others methods, Messrs. Dickinson and Featherstone (the Allies) showed a remarkable insight into each others tactics! In the southernmost sector, the British did not position a single man, whilst the French had only a single infantry brigade there!

This meant that the Allied southern flank rested on the Palmeiros crossroads, halfway up the middle sector, with a scattering of Rifles S. of the crossroads. The Allied force for the battle in the centre sector consisted of 16 trays of infantry (12 men per tray) with 3 guns; the French had 24 trays of infantry, 84 cavalry with 7 guns under Junot and Revnier. The Allies were under Picton and Hill here. The Allied guns were placed one forward of the crossroads and one actually on that point, with the other gun at the northernmost tip of the wood on the road. The Light company's (24 men) were in the woods and S. of the crossroads. The infantry in double-lines, were placed behind the crest of the ridge.

The French attacked the woods strongly, so that the 42nd were sent forward to aid the Lights; a strong attack was put in diagonally up the slopes towards the northern side of the wood and the ridge above whilst a force of infantry preceded by cavalry attacked the crossroads from the south. The British Rifles, aided by the two guns performed marvels here, throwing back two brigades of cavalry by firepower alone. In the woods, the 42nd were forced back but concentrated fire together with that of the single gun, forced the French infantry to retire. On the extreme Allied left, a strong French cavalry attack went up the slopes to be first repulsed by the fire of Inglis's brigade but later to break through when a second Cuirassier brigade renewed the attack.

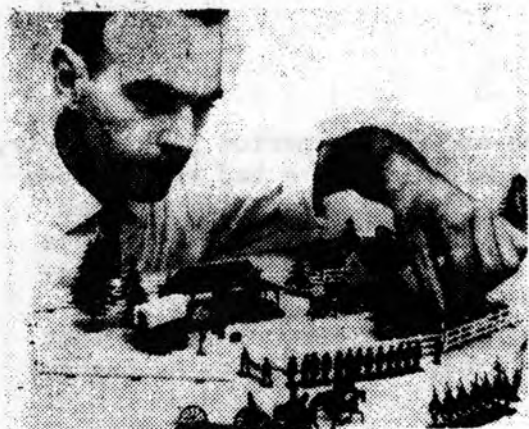
The French attacking forces seemed to have moved forward more rapidly than expected in their abortive attacks, so that when they were repulsed there was a big gap between them and those forces in support. Hence, the French did not manage to keep up a continuous assault and by judicious moving of the Seaforths and the Connaught Rangers, the Allies were able to preserve an intact line until nightfall. The cavalry breakthrough on the Allied left came to nothing as a long-drawn out melee sapped both sides until nightfall brought hostilities to a close.

The last battle, only two were fought although three 'tables' were covered by the map, brought an Allied superiority in numbers. The French put into the field 18 trays of infantry and 7 guns against the Allies 21 trays of Line infantry, 3 trays of Lights and 6 guns - neither side had any cavalry. General Massena (Neville Dickinson) whose troops were being used, had not needed much acumen to work out that he was outnumbered and expected to attack well positioned infantry, with artillery parity, on the crest of a steep ridge possessing a lateral road that enabled rapid reinforcement of threatened points. The French massed in the Petit Valley area and around the field and wood at the southern end of the field. Finding the French unwilling to attack, Wellington impetuously flung two thirds of his infantry downhill at this last French grouping. A stubborn and prolonged melee ebbed and flowed for the last part of the day until nightfall brought a - not - very interesting battle to a close. Busaco as a Wargame had been about as successful to the French as the actual battle of 1810!



## **WARGAMER OF THE MONTH -**

Philip Heath of Carlingford, Sydney, Australia.



The Sydney "Morning Herald" was responsible for Philip Heath contacting four new opponents through an article published about his wargaming.

"I'm a soloist," explained Mr. Heath, an industrial chemist, "because I don't know of anyone in Sydney who plays 'the War Game.' I'd like to found a club, if I could. 'The War Game' isn't for kids bang-bang. It's historic. H.G. Wells and Robert Louis Stevenson played it, and I grew interested in the subject after reading a book by Donald F. Featherstone.

Mr. Heath, a subscriber to the British "War-gamers Newsletter," has a private army of 700 hand painted soldiers. Their battle-ground is a table".

Don't be bashful! Photographs and personal details URGENTLY needed for this feature!

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## GENTLEMEN! HAVE A CARE!

When a force was large, in the horse-and-musket period particularly, it moved on several roads. But this separation had a bad effect upon combined action at a set time or place. Thus, when working out map movement during a wargames campaign, forces moving on separate roads should have their marches regulated so that they arrive together at the rendezvous. It is possible that the opposing commander might try to force action whilst your columns are separated; to avoid this, arrange your columns so that they afford each other mutual support. Otherwise, they are liable to be beaten in detail.

At Hohenlinden the Austrians moved in four columns through a forest so dense that intercommunication was impossible. Moreover, the march of the different columns was so badly timed that the main body arrived at the outlet long before those on the flanks. The French, drawn up outside the forest, fell on the head of this isolated column, while a detached force attacked it in flank and rear. The result was its total rout, with heavy loss in guns and prisoners. This disaster entailed the retreat of the remainder and the total failure of the enterprise.

Alvinzi in 1797, advancing from Roveredo against the French at Rivoli, divided the force, about 30,000 men, into six columns and moved on six different roads. The right column was separated from the three next on its left by the mountain of Monte Baldo; these were again separated from the fifth column on their left by the heights of San Marco; and this latter was separated from the sixth column, still more to the left, by the Adige.

The march of the fifth column was through a defile some three miles long. On trying to issue from it to the plateau of Rivoli, its head was overthrown and the whole driven back in disorder through the defile. The sixth column, having no means of crossing the Adige, could only intervene with its artillery, and that to a small extent and at a distance. The right column, employed on a wide turning movement, did not come into action till the battle was lost elsewhere. In the meantime, the three weak divisions forming the centre were totally defeated by the French acting from their central position.

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The encounter battle of Ette-Virton in 1914 between the Fifth German Army and the French Third Army, is a very interesting case of a misunderstanding of an order, which brings out the danger of a verbal order, unconfirmed in writing. The right of the French Sixth Corps was completely uncovered by a misunderstanding. This flank was covered by the 40th French Division, which, after very severe fighting, had to withdraw. General Hache, in command, ordered verbally its elements to withdraw to "l'Othain," where they still covered the right of the Corps. The liason officers, who took the order, thought he said "Etain," also close by, where the elements of the division consequently moved, and uncovered the right of the XI Corps.

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W.T. Thurber writes:- "I have been interested in the game GO for many years, but have never got down to playing it or trying to find an opponent. I believe there is an English association. It is said to be the most difficult and abstruse game in the world. It was originally a Chinese game "W'ei Chi" (meaning, I think, the War Game). The Japanese took it up and called it GO. The moves seem almost as simple as - or simpler - than draughts. The strategy and combinations are infinitely more difficult than our Chess.

I have a book, published by Leyman Green and Company in 1929 called "The Game - W'ei Chi" and a paper back published by Dover Books in 1960 (a reprint of a book published in the U.S.A. in 1924) "GO" by Edward Lasker, the Chess player. This was on sale over here a year or two ago. Lasker says (in 1960) there was a GO Club in New York and he mentions four suppliers of the game. I have a cutting (from I think The Daily Telegraph) referring to a proposed GO Congress in London in 1966 - I don't know whether it took place.

I was interested in Colonel Churchill's reference to the Crossbow. I think perhaps our pride in the English longbowman sometimes makes us less than just to the continental crossbowmen.

Payne-Gallwey's book is very interesting - although expensive if one wanted to buy even the reprint - and difficult to borrow. The Spanish Conquistadors included crossbowmen - and I believe the stonebow was in use by poachers well into the 19th century.

I have often thought that while the longbowman was the equivalent of the redcoat with his 'brown bess', the crossbowman was the equivalent of the rifleman-sniper. I believe the Americans, who shoot almost everything from the latest target and hunting rifle to Kentucky muzzle-loaders, also go in for crossbows as well as archery.

I believe Richard I's archers were mainly crossbowmen - and he himself was mortally wounded by a crossbow bolt.

Isn't Brigadier Young's book on the British Army fascinating? And it prompts two quite different questions to me.

- (1) How would one plan a war game based on the situation in Aden before we withdrew?
- (2) How does the horse and musket wargamer allow for the smoke of battle on his war game table?

I recently read a book on the American West - and again I ask myself, what rules should one devise for a campaign of U.S. Cavalry against Indians - a la Custer's last stand?

All very interesting, but I realise it is much easier to ask the questions than find the answers."

Further to Aram Bakshian's notes in "Gentlemen! Have a Care! (April 1968) here are some interesting details of the Turkish Army in 1655. They are taken from Thevenot's Travels in the Levant, 1655.

As to the army, which consists of horse and foot, it is punctually paid once in two months. The Infantry are of several orders, as the Capigis or Porters, who keep the gates of the Seraglio, stand round the Grand Seignior when he gives audience to Ambassadors, and put to death those who are fallen under his displeasure. These amount to only 3,000.

The Solaques are the Grand Seignior's Life-Guards and attend him when he goes abroad in the city: they wear a dollman with hanging sleeves, and a cap stuck with feathers in the form of a crest; their bow always hangs on their arm, and their quiver is full of arrows.

The chief of the infantry are, however, Janizaries, who are either children taken for tribute and educated in the schools of the Seraglio, or renegado Christians and some few Turks. This order was instituted by Ottoman, the first Turkish Emperor. They call one another, brothers; they will not suffer the meanest of their body to be in the least injured, and none but their officers dare lift up hand against them; for no interest or money can save the life of him that has struck a Janizary. Upon which account, Ambassadors take them into their retinue, and travellers hire them for their guides. The Janizaries of the Port are 12,000 in number, and live in two inns or colleges containing 160 chambers. The whole number, however, of the Janizaries is 25,000 and there may be 100,000 more that purchase the name and privileges of Janizaries, to avoid paying their debts and taxes; but these neither serve in the Army nor receive pay.

The Grand Seignior's cavalry are the Chiauses, whose employment is very honourable, for they execute most of the commands of the Grand Seignior and his Bassas, and are even sent on embassies to foreign princes.

The Spahis are the ordinary light horse, and are about 12,000 in number divided into two bodies. The Grand Seignior has also a numerous Militia raised and maintained by such persons as hold their lands by military tenures. These gentlemen are denominated either Zaims or Timariots, according to the number of men they bring into the field: a Zaim being obliged to raise from four to nineteen soldiers, and a Timariot no more than four. The Zaims and Timariots are also obliged to find men for the sea-service; and both of them are to serve in person by land, but the Timariots only on board the fleet. The Horse raised by the Zaims and Timariots only, are computed to amount to 100,000 men.

The tributary countries, as Tartary, Wallachia and Moldavia, are also obliged to raise a certain number of troops. Thus the Cham of the Crim Tartars, is to join the Turkish Army with 100,000 men when required.

Mike Arnovitz says: "I was very interested in the two modern period articles in the March Newsletter. However, the APC article covered only the British practice and theory; in the American Army, the APC has been used only for transport for a long while. Vietnam has changed this for it was discovered that an APC with its roof-mounted .50 MG augmented by two 7.62 MG (all behind shields) makes a very good fighting vehicle. This adapted "light tank" with its light weight (it is armoured with aluminium) has good off-road capabilities and also can "swim". When troops are carried, they ride on top, not inside - for two reasons - the APC has no firing slits for use in an ambush and the heat. Anyone who has been cooped up in one of those things all buttoned up in 100° weather knows what I mean! An American Advisor to a South Vietnamese Army unit in 1963-64 records a platoon of 5 APC "tanks" running into a VC ambush. A/T fire knocked out one APC and damaged two others. The latter plus the two good ones were given an immediate "right wheel" and, firing madly, charged into and over the VC unit as they came on. Needless to say the VC lit out and never bothered that platoon again! If the VC had stayed dug in or the platoon leader of the APC's hadn't been so quick the result would have been quite different."

Paddy Griffith says: "I was very interested to read the "Counsels of War" in the April issue on the column and line controversy, as representing a French view of the Peninsular War soon after the event. It seems to me that the French officer in question had been conditioned by British soldiers and historians into accepting the British point of view. His citation of Maida and not the Zype Sluys or Alexandria, for example, is an emphasis which might have come straight out of Oman. It is interesting to reflect that Maida was perhaps the worst possible illustration of British tactical superiority which could be chosen because in that battle the French attacked in line. (Oman: "Wellington's Army p.78). In the Peninsular battles, moreover, it is untrue

to say that the French "were not masked by swarms of Tirailleurs", for at some battles the skirmish lines were specially reinforced.

The anonymous French writer does, however, make two vital points neglected by his contemporaries; the earlier French successes were won by musketry (i.e. the Tirailleurs), and the British attacks were made immediately after their first volleys. There were rarely the "rolling half company volleys" for long periods about which we hear so much (e.g. from Jac Weller), because the British use of musketry was only, as your French witness says, "preliminary". There was a very highly developed bayonet tradition in even the most defensive of Wellington's battles.

Your writer's last point is interesting as it may provide the clue to his identity. The only similar description of British skirmishers retiring behind their line, and then the 1st line itself retiring behind the 2nd line, that I know is in Chambray's "De l'infanterie" (1824) page 21, and it may be that it is Chambray again who wrote your extract. I have always considered the action at Maya (on the 25th July, 1813, and not the 21st as stated) to be a very rare example of this manoeuvre. The same thing happened in the centre at Talavera and with Cole's and Clinton's divisions at Salamanca, but on very few other occasions. It was not a deliberate "system" but a necessity in moments of crisis. Not was it confined to the British Army. The idea of a "passage of lines" if the first line is forced to retreat features prominently in the French ordonnance of 1791, and in Ney's Instructions of 1805. It was often used by the French in war (Colin: La tactique et la discipline. p.LI).

There was a complete "volte face" in French tactical thinking after Waterloo when British ideas were allowed to circulate inside France, and had the added advantage of a victorious record. Napoleon on St. Helena revised his earlier advocacy of columns and chose lines. Bugeaud, who had fought the British once at the most, went into passionate descriptions of disastrous column attacks he had never witnessed, and now this French writer is found heading in the same direction. At least he puts stress more on morale and training than on formation, and emphasises the British use of the bayonet. These things are indispensable for a true picture of what the line was, and have often been obscured in the past."

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## COUNSELS OF WAR.

Mining is a most important resource, in siege operations, both for attack and defence. It was greatly practised by the ancients, but simply as a means of obtaining a subterranean entrance into the besieged city, or the camp of the besiegers, through which to make a sudden assault. It was not until near the end of the fifteenth century that gunpowder was used in mines for the purpose of blowing up the surface of the ground under the fort, or the works of a besieging force, or of making a breach in a revetment wall.

### Mining at the Siege of Harfleur, 1415.

When Henry V besieged Harfleur, he gave himself no rest by day or night, until he had fitted and fixed his engines and guns under the walls, and planted them within shot of the enemy, against the front of the town, and against the gates, walls and towers, of the same; and had covered them against the shot and offensive weapons of the enemy, with protecting edifices of tall and thick planks, which were so contrived and fitted with timber and iron work, that whilst the upper end was drawn downward, the lower would raise itself towards the front of the town, so that taking aim at the place to be battered, the guns from beneath blew forth stones by the force of ignited powders. On each side of the battery he caused trenches to be made, which served, together with the excavated earth cast up upon faggots placed there, as a protection to those who were appointed to attend the guns and engines, and who kept daily and nightly watches, for preventing the sallies of the enemy.

From "The Diary of a Priest who accompanied the Expedition." Sloane MS., 1776, Brit. Museum.

### Underground Fighting at the Siege of Candia.

The use of subterranean works having been introduced, it is incredible how cruelty waxed on both sides, at one time half-burnt men were blown into the air, at another the living were buried alive, for the cellars were filled with gunpowder which was set on fire and exploded, hurling everything to a great height from the ground and with such shocks as to destroy everything.

In the tunnels the soldiers met at every hour, either to gain the different ramifications, or contest the enemy's advance. The horror of combating in the dark, particularly with grenades, in those obscure recesses, and even fighting with their hands when the places were too narrow to allow the use of fire-arms, was indescribable. The Turks dug even lower than the Venetians, who in their turn burrowed deeper still, seeking by sheer toil to outwit craft, and it often befell that those who penetrated the lowest blew up those who at that very moment had thought to be the destroyers of others above them. In one common sepulchre the torn limbs and corpses of friend and foe were mixed in hopeless confusion, and rivers of blood and sweat ran indiscriminately down the cavernous passages.

Battista Nani, "Historia della Republica Veneta, 1686". Quoted in The Navy of Venice, by A. Weil. By kind permission of Mr. John Long.

# SOME REFLECTIONS ON ANCIENT MISSILE WEAPONS

by R.B. Nelson

A passage in Xenophon's Anabasis (III IV) gives some rare details of the relative capabilities of some Ancient missile weapons. For convenience these may be summarised thus, in order of range:-

1. Rhodian sling.
2. Persian bow (including horse archers?)
3. Persian sling.
4. Cretan bow.
5. Greek Javelin.

These weapons may be considered in three different classes: (a) the Rhodian sling (firing a lead bullet) (b) the two Persian weapons (the Persian sling fired a stone ball about fist size) and (c) the Cretan bow and the Greek javelin. Xenophon describes a series of skirmishes in which Persians armed with class (b) weapons engaged Greek forces armed with class (c) (mainly javelins) and had much the better of the engagement. The Greek force then improvised a force of slingers from the Rhodians among their number, and by this means kept the Persians at a distance at which they could not effectively molest their enemies.

This account is full of interest when we attempt to draw up some kind of comparative range table. Xenophon states that the Rhodian sling shot twice as far as the Persian, and that it outranged 'even the Persian bow', which, perhaps, means not by very much. However, the Cretan bow could use Persian arrows, which leads one to suppose it should be in the same class as the Persian.

Giving the Rhodian sling a range of 200 yds., this makes the range of the Persian sling 100 yds., and therefore the Cretan had less than that, which seems very short, since we must allot the Persian bow say 175 yds.

I think that the answer to our problem is that Xenophon does not distinguish between horse archers and foot archers. It is clear that the Persians were using both, since Xenophon makes specific reference to their cavalry shooting behind them accurately as they rode off. These were obviously Parthian-type horse archers in Persian service.

Now one would not expect Parthians to be using the big Persian bow, nor indeed to be able to shoot so far as foot archers. We get a much better and more consistent table of ranges if we assume that the arrows which the Cretans used came from the Persian horse archers. Xenophon does not tell us 'hat the Persians were using Creta arrows, and we could take this to mean that the Cretan bow was smaller than the Persian 'Parthian' bow, and therefore that the Cretan arrows could not be reused. Although it is a possible explanation, I do not think that Xenophon's words can be made positively to support this.

However, this does enable us to postulate much more likely ranges for the various missile weapons. I think we must allow the Persian sling slightly more range, and therefore the Rhodian sling also. This gives us:

Rhodian Sling ...	...	240 yds.
Persian foot bow ...	...	200 yds.
Persian horse bow ...	...	140 yds. (Parthians).
Persian sling ..	...	120 yds.
Cretan bow ...	...	110 yds.
Javelin ...	...	75 yds.

These figures are all guesses, but they seem reasonable to me.

As to the efficiency of these weapons, as has been pointed out in WARGAMERS

NEWSLETTER, Ancient light troops seem to have been strangely ineffective. It is only after several days fighting that the Greeks in Xenophon's account appoint eight of their number as surgeons to handle the wounded, and we are not told of any man having to be left behind before that time.

It is true, of course, that the Persian attacks on Xenophon were sometimes not pressed home with resolution, as we hear in some of the later actions of Persians being lashed into battle, but this is not true of the earlier fighting before the Greeks swung the balance with their slingers. But what are we to make of the battle of Pylor, when the Athenians overcame the Spartans? Here at least 1,600 Athenian light troops spent nearly the whole day firing, unopposed, at 400 Spartans. They killed 100 of them: in other words, it took 16 archers, javelinmen and slinger to kill one Spartan hoplite!

Are these figures just applicable to this particular period of ancient history, or was this a general failing of Ancient light troops? The greatest triumph of Ancient light forces was perhaps Carrhae. The Roman losses suffered on the first day were probably:-

- (a) Publius Crassus sortie force - 1,000 horse, 500 archers, 8 cohorts (4,000 mer). Total - 5,500.
- (b) Main body - 4,000 wounded (abandoned at the end of the day). The killed are not detailed: if they totalled  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the casualties this would give us 2,000 killed with the main body.

This gives a total Roman casualty figure of 11,500 including wounded and prisoners. We must however, remember that the Parthian victory was not solely due to the horse archers: their cataphracts played a large part in the victory over Publius independent command. Indeed, it is surprising to read in Plutarch that the original intention of Surenas was to charge home with his cataphract lancers; he only called up the horse archers on seeing the depth of the Roman formation.

Now Surenas is said to have had 10,000 horse archers at Carrhae. Surely these too were strangely ineffective? If we take the casualty of the main body, which can be solely attributed to the horse archers, we see that it may have taken 5 horse archers to kill one Roman. This is firing unopposed, with unlimited ammunition, at enemies whose armour was not effective against their attackers missiles.

We do not have really accurate figures for the 100 Years War, but surely the English longbow was better than this? It appears to me that the ratio for the longbow should be much nearer 1 bowman, 1 Frenchman killed.

Are we not, therefore, able to estimate finally from these facts the probable result of Parthians attacking longbowmen, which has been put forward as a problem recently in Wargamer's Newsletter. Assuming that the longbow outranged the Parthian bow, which seems a fair assumption, and bearing in mind the apparently considerable advantage in effectiveness enjoyed by the longbow, I cannot see Surenas keeping his reputation, although with the Parthian Royal preference for unsuccessful Generals, he might have kept his head!

- - - oo000oo - - -

Cavalry charges are equally good at the commencement, the middle, and the end of the battle; they should be made as often as possible on the flanks of the infantry, especially when the latter is engaged in front". "Napoleon's War Maxims."



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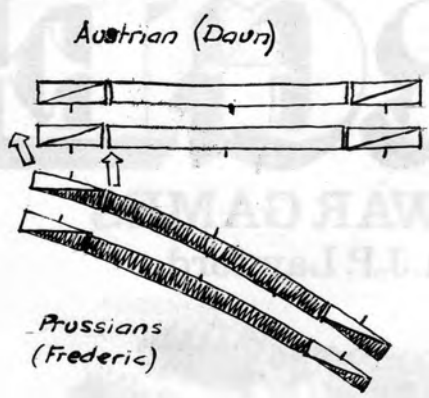
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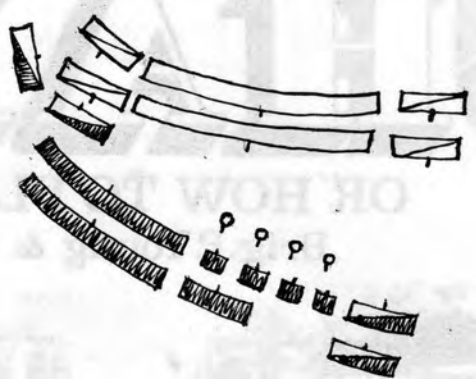
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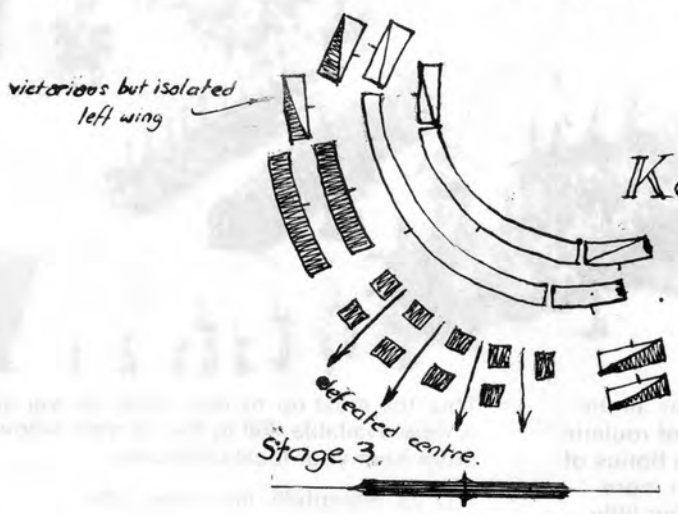
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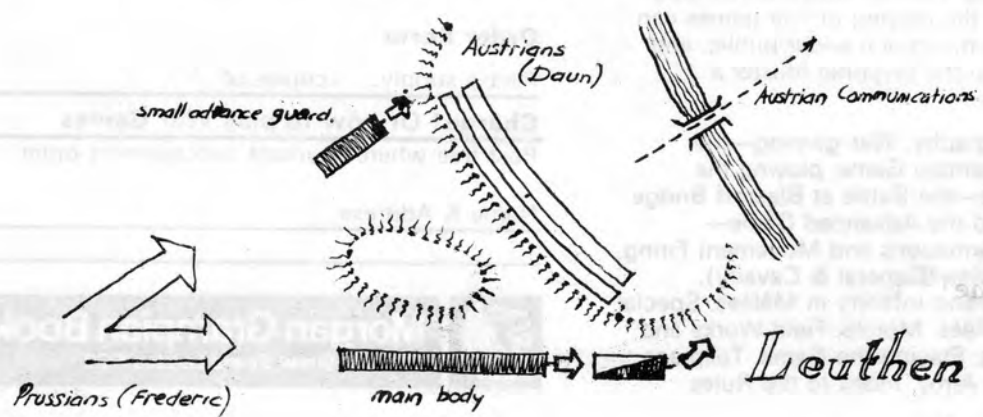
Stage 1.



Stage 2



# Kollin 1757



## ATTACK IN OBLIQUE ORDER

by Neil Cogswell

Have you ever wondered why Frederick the Great's famous attack in oblique order never works on your wargames table? It did not work very often for Frederick! During the 7 Years War at least half his battles were disastrous defeats. He did well only because of the superb Prussian civil service which enabled him to recover.

Think of those great victories of Rossbach and Leuthen - think of the staggering defeats of Kunersdorf and Kollin, the near disaster at Prague so brilliantly retrieved by Ziethen and the dreadful blunder of Torgau again remedied by Ziethen.

The oblique order only works by surprise or if the enemy line is fixed. Kollin 1757 is probably the purest example of the oblique order. The initial Prussian assault drove back the Austrians, whose light troops, from their left wing, moved forward and fired upon the Prussian line. The Prussian troops halted and returned the fire, while their successful left flank pushed forward.

The Prussian line advanced at one end and halted at the other as the Austrian line was compressed. The strong Austrian centre now thrust forward and burst through the Prussian line.

But for the Austrians being too idle to follow up it would have been a rout. The miracle of Frederick and his armies is that less than six months after a second dreadful trouncing at Breslau they recovered to win Rossbach and Leuthen.

Now for Leuthen - the successful oblique order.

The small advance guard fixed the Austrian right flank while the main body attacked their left. Because of the terrain, the Austrians did not know which was the main attack (in fact most of the reinforcements went to their right). As a result, the Austrian left was turned and their communications threatened.

The essential maxim for attack in oblique order is - NAIL THE ENEMY LINE.

Frederick was fortunate in his choice of enemies, all of them liked to fight linear defensive battles in which they could be easily nailed.

- - -ooOoo - - -

### A VIET-NAM WARGAME by STEPHEN DOUGLAS.

My brother and I decided to do a real Viet-Cong night attack, blocking out most of the only window and agreeing that what you could see you could shoot at. A pass ran the length of a 6' x 4' table, having several gaps leading off into the hills on either side. A cleared zone for helicopters lay near a stream, with a barbed-wire enclosure and a camouflaged hut; on a hill were more huts, a supply-dump plus a 105mm gun and a dug-in mortar.

You cannot see much through a periscope in a model jungle in the dark, so that the Viet Cong held back their attack until their men were positioned. One unit was located and pinned down by a rifleman and a jeep-mounted m/g. The base was defended by 15 troops and attacked by 70 V.C.'s, whose mortars fired dangerously near their own men. A helicopter landed 10 men, and shot up some charging VC's on taking-off. Engaged by five m/g's, it was destroyed after two moves by cumulative damage.

Reinforcing infantry arrived in APC's and the Viet-Cong moved out, after lobbing a grenade into the supply dump and knocking out a tank in a gully. The Viet Cong lost 34 killed, 2 surrendered, with 3 mortars and an MMG. The South Vietnamese and Americans lost 27 troops, a jeep, a light tank, some supplies and a helicopter. One Viet Cong entered the back of a hut as an armed soldier and emerged a few moves later out of the front door as a civilian! He was taken as a V.C. suspect!



# THE AMERICAN SCENE

by

## Pat Condray



In common with British theory, tank to tank combat, by 1943, was regarded as "unsound". Bazooka's, anti-tank guns (towed and self-propelled) and aircraft were to attack yanks, tanks in infantry division (independent tank battalions) were to attack enemy infantry and artillery in support of infantry in close combat, while armoured divisions were supposed to strike deep into the enemy rear once a hole was opened - in practice, tank to tank warfare was common, and armoured units frequently were drawn into the grinding combat of the main lines.

Heavy armour was available to the U.S. Army in World War II in the form of the M.6. heavy, a big heavily armoured bruiser with a 76mm gun and a coaxial 37mm gun in the same turret. It was to be used by the heavy tank battalions, which were suppressed in pursuance to an Army Ground Forces regulation banning vehicles more than 108" wide and weighing more than 30 tons - a regulation ordnance officer (who were pushing the T-20 series on which the late M-26 through M-60 Main Battle tanks were based) was simply being cyanosed by Hitler's armoured forces.

The only actual heavy tank used was the M4A3E2 (the middle numbers subject to variance according to manufacturer and power plant) which boasted 7" frontal and 3" side armour, had a speed of 22 mph, and weighed 42 tons, normally armed with a 75mm medium velocity gun but regunned with a 76mm weapon in some cases (usually post war). One of these took 6 88mm hits without stopping at a range under 1,000 yards. Most Shermans after 1943 had extra plate welded on at crucial points, and some mounted 75mm high velocity, 76mm high velocity, and 105mm howitzers main armament. The E-2 'Jumbos' were very popular with the troops and were used to lead the 3rd Army into Bastogne. They were also rare as hens teeth, and usually served in H.Q. companies of fortunate tank battalions. The Mini-tank M4A4 can be converted with sheet plastic to an M4A3E2 configuration, as it features the welded hull and standard suspension similar to that of the Jumbo.

But that will have to do for the time being. More on U.S. Army wargames T.O. at some future date (if the editor doesn't get too many protests about the trivia in Wargamer's Newsletter before next issue).

If you have any arguments with these articles, write direct to Pat Condray 4936 Powder Hill Road, Beltsville, Maryland, U.S.A.

- - - oo0oo - - -

### RED UNIFORM

The archers in illuminations of the time of Henry VII are clad in a shirt of chain mail, with wide short sleeves, such as that worn by the cross bowmen of the time of Henry VI and over this a small vest of Red Cloth laced in front, with pantaloons or tight hose on their legs.

Ibid.

# MINIATURE FIGURINES

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# MUST LIST

WHAT NOT TO MISS



Air Wargamers will be interested in 1/72nd scale No.130 Hannover CL IIIa. One of the most successful of First World War German two seater planes, the Hannover was unusual because of its biplane tail; it was extremely manoeuvrable and difficult to shoot down. The kit comprises 31 accurately scaled detailed parts including pilot and rear gunner, full armament and bombs at 2s. 6d.

Barry Carter informs me that Welgar Shredded Wheat have details on their packets of a Tudor Rose medieval castle - "worth 74s.11d" - obtainable for 39s. 11d. and one packet top. It has a keep, a gatehouse, a chain and winch operated drawbridge and portcullis, cannons, shields, ladders, flag and pole. All on a base with overall dimensions of 18" x 14" x 11" and intended for figures 2" high. I have not seen this model but it sounds as if it might be interesting.

World War II wargamers who have been eagerly searching for tanks to go with their Airfix Japanese figures can now get them in 1/76 scale in kit form in the Midori range. There is the Type 4 Medium of 1944-45; the Type 61 Medium which was the current standard Japanese Defence Force tank and the same firm are turning out a Sherman which is said to be very like the existing Airfix model. Each of these kits cost 2s.11d., postage extra, from BMW Models Ltd., 329 Haydons Road, London S.W.19.

A recent advertisement in "Tradition" magazine indicates that Norman Newton Limited have extended their range of 30mm Staddon figures to include a very good selection of British and Russian troops of the Crimean War. As Ted Suren already has a most interesting selection of figures of this period in his "Willie" range, it would seem that the wargamer who wishes to have a real connoisseurs army in this period is now well served. All he needs is money!

Many wargamers are already members of the Society for Army Historical Research and therefore receive its journal. Many others probably do not know of it and the issue for Winter 1967, number 184, contains so many articles of interest that I think it is worthy of being pointed out. For example there is a very lengthy article on Military Historiography 1850-1860 in which Lieutenant-Colonel H. Moyse-Bartlett discusses the 400 odd military publications that appeared during this significant period in the history of British Military progress. The man with a social conscience will find interest in the article discussing the control of V.D. in the Army of mid-Victorian England whilst Major G. Tylden gives a most valuable table of the principal small arms carried by British Regular Infantry from 1645 to the present day. There are many other features, including uniform details and book reviews. If you wish to become a member write to the Secretary, the Society for Army Historical Research, c/o The Library, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, London S.W.1. The annual subscription is two guineas.



### VISIBILITY OF RED OR SCARLET UNIFORM AS COMPARED WITH OTHER COLOURS

To the ordinary reader there is no doubt that Red would present itself as the most conspicuous of all colours, and therefore as presenting the best target to the fire of an enemy. But this is by no means certain. The following estimate published in a Journal of 1852, however, supports this theory.

"It would appear", it says, "from numerous observations, that soldiers are hit during battle according to the colour of their dress, in the following order: Red, the most fatal colour; the least fatal, Austrian Grey. The proportions are: Red, 12; Rifle Green, 7; Brown, 6; Austrian Bluish-Grey, 5." Five years later an officer wrote: "Better to run the risk in Red, of a rifle bullet, than to be shot by one's own people, for wearing a foreign uniform. I lately tried the effect of Blue, Black, Grey and Red jackets at 1,000 yards. All were faintly distinguished and nearly alike marked, but a white belt across the body made a man a target at once."

Since then various experiments have been made as to the respective conspicuousness and therefore protection or danger of different coloured uniforms. In one held in Germany the first test was to discover which colour disappeared from sight first. Ten men were dressed, two in Dark Grey, two in Scarlet, two in Blue, two in Light Grey and two in Green. The first to vanish were the Light Grey men, and, contrary to all expectation, the Red-clad soldiers were next to disappear. Dark Grey, Blue and lastly Green, were successively lost to sight. The next test was on the Rifle range to see which colour was the more readily hit by the marksman, and this, stranger still, proved that Red was far the most difficult colour to hit. According to another account a German experiment went to prove that a Blue target is hit three times, while a Red one is hit once. A Swiss Military Journal of about thirty years ago gives the following description of a series of experiments which had just been carried out by the Society of Civil Engineers in Paris.

"To designate the visibility of colours at great distances numbers from one to eight were taken, eight signifying invisibility. It was regarded as a matter of importance to determine how these numbers compare in clear weather, in cloudy weather, and at night. The result of observation at 650 yards is given as follows: In clear weather White is most distinctly visible (I) then comes Hussar Blue, Light Blue (II), Scarlet (III), Green (IV), Grey and the colour of Dry Foliage are almost invisible and were marked (VII). Dark Blue was called (VI). In cloudy weather nothing was altered in the case of White, Blue, Green and Brown. Hussar Blue became less visible (III), so also Scarlet (IV); on the other hand Green became more visible (III). At night the results were the same as in cloudy weather, except that White becomes invisible and so passes from (I) to (VIII). The colours of the German and Italian Infantry (Iron Grey (?) and Dark Blue) were classified as (VI). In France, in consequence of the Red kepi, the Dark Blue Coat and the Scarlet Trousers, the average number obtained was  $4\frac{1}{2}$ . But it is believed that in reality the disadvantage of the French infantry will turn out to be less, because only that part of the Red trousers between the lower edge of the coat and the top of the boot is visible, and even this will be so dusty after the first day's march that no actual colour will be visible."

Background, an important point, and dust do not seem to have been taken into consideration in the above experiment. The latter certainly has a great influence on visibility. The writer's personal experience is that, where there is much dust, red becomes far less conspicuous than either Blue or Rifle Green. The adoption of Khaki by our own Army goes to prove the correctness of this view. The Germans, however, have chosen a Light Greenish Grey for their service dress, while the French, abandoning Red and Dark Blue, have selected "Horizon Blue" as a universal uniform colour.

"Old Times Under Arms" by Cyril Field (1939).



## FIRING INTO THE BROWN!

### Suggestion No. 4.

That a publisher (or an enterprising organisation) forms a Military Book Club, along the lines of the various Book Society's.

--- oo0oo ---

The cuirassiers rode in and out  
As fierce as wolves and bears;  
'Twas grand to see them slash about  
Among the English squares!  
And then the Polish Lancer came  
Careering with his lance;  
No wonder Britain blushed for shame,  
And ran away from France!

My uncle, Captain Flanigan,  
Who lost a leg in Spain,  
Tells stories of a little man  
Who died at St. Helene;  
But bless my heart, they can't be true;  
I'm sure they're all romance;  
John Bull was beat at Waterloo!  
They'll swear to that in France!

--- oo0oo ---

"Frankly, I think we are all caught up in some prodigious rat race which gets racier every month, and, as a consequence, we overlook manners and the niceties of life. I rise above it and attribute much of the ability to do so to the fact that I paint the occasional figures; but I would hardly call the hobby therapeutic in this sense for many people, for there is (at least here) a tremendous kind of pressure to have more than the other fellow, or, as you are well-aware, collecting nowadays is in some circles a kind of status symbol. I used to write about the "romance" of it and the "fun" of it, but I think now this approach would fall upon deaf ears generally. There is too much inclination to put a price-tag upon everything... maybe I am just too old-fashioned, conservative, or, as some would say, naive."

Newell Chamberlin.

--- oo0oo ---

STRATEGY AND TACTICS - March-April 1968. A good issue this! Contains an informative new series on Naval wargaming; artillery fire in wargaming and old friend Fred Viemeyer continues his valuable Introduction to Napoleonics. Preliminary details given of a new low priced magazine "Valhalla", coming out later.

by

Colour/sgt. John Corrigan B.E.M. (Royal Marines)

I have used 'MK 66' modelling grass extensively on training and operational models and found that it will cover large areas quickly and cheaply.

Materials required: Foam rubber material - Dunlopillo or Woolworth's cushion filling. Household dye - Dylon and a linen bag or square of linen (approx. 24" square or larger)

Tools: Old saucepan, bucket or tin. A household mincer and any sort of sieve with various size holes.

Method: Break the foam rubber into thumbnail pieces. Put the pieces through mincer, carefully catching the 'fall out'. Place ground-up pieces in linen bag and secure the neck, leaving enough to hold. Prepare the dye in the saucepan. Place bag in dye and simmer for approx. 15 - 20 minutes over gentle heat. Ensure that the bag is agitated during this time to enable the dye to completely penetrate. When the colour is of the required density (it looks darker when wet), remove the bag from dye and hang up to drain (it may be squeezed out with rubber gloves). When dry, put through sieve. Various grades can be obtained by using different size holes.

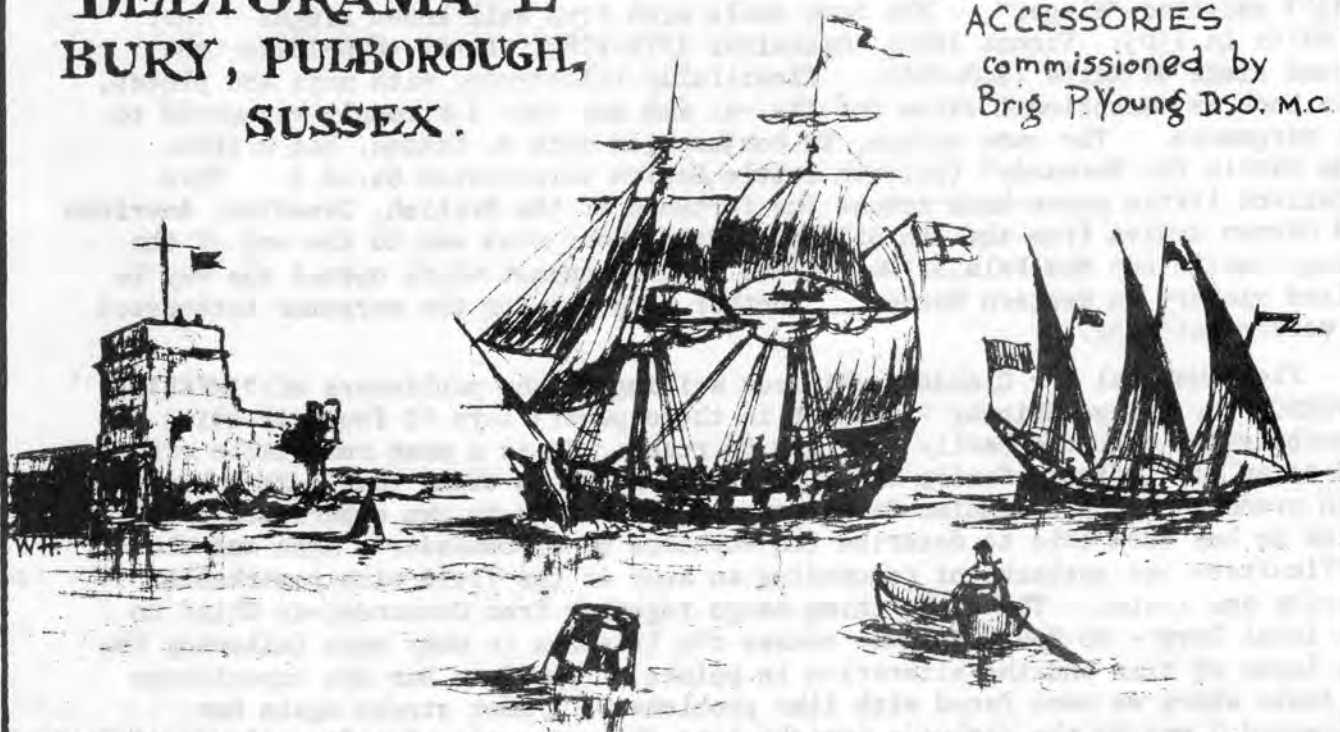
The final result will be "grass" with a texture ranging from fine lawn to rough meadow grass that can be used in a number of ways as foliage, for embellishing walls making river banks, creeping vines or hedges. Troops can stand in it for dioramas. Splendid hackles and plumes can be made and even lambs wool saddle-covers! By mixing various shades pleasing results can be obtained on model trees and other foliage. Gum Arabic can be used for covering large areas - Evostick for small areas.

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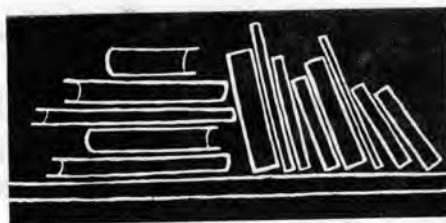
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## Book Reviews

I have been reading Brigadier Peter Young's book "A Short History - World War 1939-1945" (Arthur Barker Limited, London. 45s.-d.). I was halfway through this book before I realised that it was the first time I had ever read a complete history of World War II! Probably because this is about the first of the "potted" accounts that I have come across - and it could well become the recognised work for those who want to quickly look up something or check on a fact of the war.

To those who lived through it and served in some of its theatres, this book will produce a very marked nostalgia, a quickening of the pulse as the book is lowered and the head is raised to stare into space and to recall one's own personal recollections of the incident printed on the pages of the book. There is an absolutely amazing amount of fact, detail, statistics and figures encompassed in the 450 odd pages of this book. There is not a wasted word but neither is any facet of the war neglected or given short shrift. It is easy to read, racy in parts and I know that Peter Young will be delighted when I say that, here and there, I can detect a certain almost-Churchillian whimsicality!

Last week, the Wessex Branch of the British Model Soldier Society were fortunate to have Eversley Belfield, Senior Lecturer in Services subjects at Southampton University, come along to their meeting and discuss the Battle of the Falaise Gap. Arising from this talk came the realisation that Mr. Belfield had recently had published by Batsford at 18s. -d. a fascinating little book (size 8" x 8½") entitled "Sieges". The book deals with five well known sieges - that of Malta in 1565; Vienna 1683; Gibraltar 1779-1783; Paris 1870-1871; the second siege of Malta 1940-1942. Plentifully illustrated with maps and plates, this book is exceptional value for 18s.-d. and one that I strongly recommend to all wargamers. The same author, in conjunction with H. Essame, has written "The Battle for Normandy" (British Battle Series Illustrated 6s.-d.). This excellent little paper-back traces the fortunes of the British, Canadian, American and German Armies from the 7th of June, 1944, D-day plus one to the end of the savage battle for the Falaise Gap on the 22nd of August which opened the way to Allied victory in western Europe. Another good buy for the wargamer interested in modern battling.

Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck writing to the publishers of "IMPERIAL GOVERNOR" by George Shipway (reviewed in these pages) says "I found it quite absorbing and extraordinarily exciting to read. It is a most remarkable effort and as an old Indian Infantry man myself I am proud to think that such a book has been produced by an ex-Indian Cavalryman! "So far as my own experience goes I think he has been able to describe the workings of a Commander's mind and the difficulties and setbacks of commanding an army in the field with remarkable clarity and truth. The whole thing hangs together from Commander-in Chief to the local levy - No doubt Shipway senses the likeness in many ways (allowing for the lapse of time and the alteration in points of view) to our own experiences in India where we were faced with like problems. I must stress again how impressed I was by the author's insight into the processes of a Commander's mind when faced with momentous decisions!"

# LOOKING AROUND

23.



AIRFIX MAGAZINE - May 1968. Useful articles on the German Army and its artillery 1914-18 and conversions of the M3 half-track.

THE BAYONET - April 1968 - The Journal of the Horse and Musket Society. In addition to an article by veteran wargamer Charles Grant, also contains useful painting instructions for the figures of the Franco-Prussian War together with other **interesting** features.

THE GRENADIER - April 1968 - The Bulletin of the Cheltenham Wargames Club. Contains interesting battle reports of the six different period combats fought at the Regional Meeting on March 30th.

HISTORY TODAY - May 1968. This very professional magazine contains two articles mainly of interest to wargamers - The Siege of Rhodes, 1480 and "Ermine Street", famed Roman thoroughfare in Britain.

MECCANO MAGAZINE - May 1968. With the first of a series of articles on wargaming by Charles Grant.

MILIHISTRIOT - January 1968 - The Magazine of the Military Miniature Collectors and Historians of America. A cover picture and instructions for painting a French Crossbowman of the early 15th century; uniform details of the Canadian North West Mounted Police; the units in the Charge of the Light Brigade and a French Garde de Paris.

MODEL BOATS - May 1968. Plan and article about the Japanese aircraft carrier "Taiho"; Part V of an illustrated series of articles on German U-boats and a plan and historical description of a French Privateer of 1760.

TRADITION - Number 26. Getting larger and better - this one contains Standards and Colours of the King's German Legion; the French Army in Canada in 1750; full page coloured plates of Austro-Hungarian Infantry 1809-1815 and a French Line Regiment; illustrated article on British Artillery in Egypt 1882; a full page of coloured photographs of 18th century troops; part 12 of Charles Grant's articles on The War Game and illustrated uniform details of Light Dragoons of the mid-18th century.

THE TRUMPETER is a Canadian wargaming magazine produced with verve and enthusiasm. In its latest issue it has a new series of uniform colouring details for Napoleonic figures (in this case Russian Infantry) compiled by **erstwhile** English wargamer Peter Milner, now resident in Canada.

# THE NOTICE BOARD



The following wargamers are anxious to locate opponents in their area - write them if you are interested:

David Barnsdale (teenager?) "Chipstand Churt,  
Nr. Farnham, Surrey.

Bernard Bradley (16) 3 Soho Street, Glasgow, S.E.

Peter Grehan (14) 55 High Street, Cowbridge,  
Glam. CF7 7AE.

Edward Lunn (15) 36 Malvern Crescent, Branksome, Darlington, Co. Durham.

P.J. Ridgeway (16) 11 Trent Valley Road, Penkull, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.

John E. Williams, (teenager?) 6 Cynthia Road, Kingsland, Holyhead, Anglesey.

J. Young (17) 40 Jubilee Road, Southsea, Hants.

Alan B. Yuill (30) 44 Sighthill Crescent, Edinburgh 11.

- - - ooOoo - - -

FOR SALE: 40 Stadden 1" Crimean Figures, unpainted. List price 2s.-d. each.  
The lot 30s.-d. D.S. Smith, 161 Loke Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk.

- - - ooOoo - - -

"WILLIE" is always on the look-out for good painters of 30mm figures.  
Top prices paid. Bring or send samples of work to Edward Suren, 57 Ovington  
Street, London S.W.3.

- - - ooOoo - - -

FOR SALE: 225 Painted 20mm 7 Years War Infantry - \$30.00 and 230 Painted SAE  
30mm 7 Years War Infantry - \$30.00. Christopher J. Osborn, 2360 North Park  
Building, Santa Ana, Calif., U.S.A.

- - - ooOoo - - -

Kevin A. Smith of Tidnams, Howley, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos., would be  
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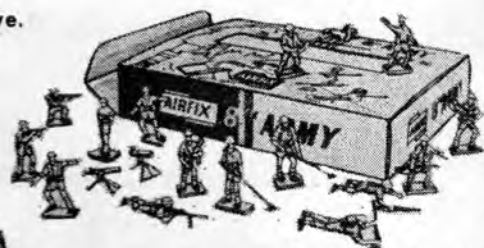
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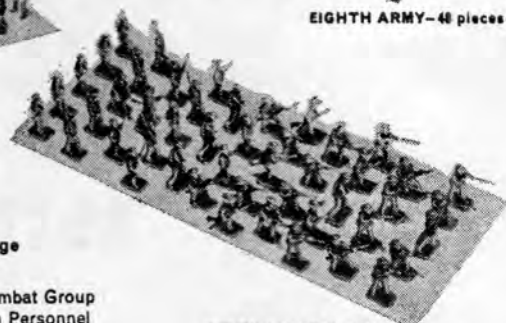


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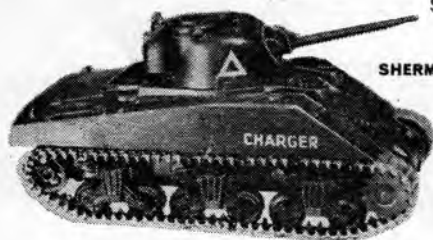
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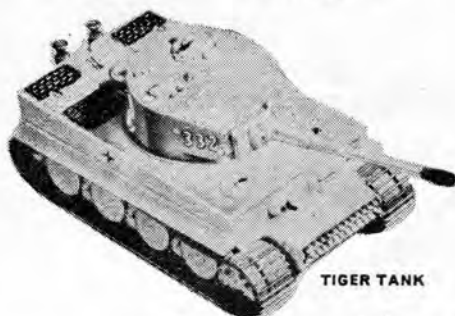
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