



WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER  
**SPECIAL ISSUE**

1963

## INTRODUCTION.

For the last two years, by means of the greatest straining and effort, I have managed to turn out a monthly magazine for those interested in the pursuit of fighting battles with model soldiers. Frequently badly printed - duplicating machines are the devil's own invention - and always ending up far below the standard I desire, WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER endeavours to please everyone by printing articles connected with the hobby written by those who fill its ranks.

Now and then an article is sent to me which has everything required to make it interesting to wargamers - but it is too long for the small pages of the WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER. Finally, I had a folder bulging with these epic works and I had to do something about them before I incurred the very righteous wrath of the writers. Hence the idea to put out an annual enlarged WARGAMERS NEWSLETTER to be composed of these lengthy articles, together with numerous pictures and illustrations. It is hoped that this blown-up edition will arouse enough interest to justify its regular annual publication.

Technically, it has been a far harder job than I ever imagined it could be - apart from typing most of the sixty-odd stencils, it has taken up a timed 39½ hours of work on the duplicating machine! I mention this as part excuse for the fact that in a few copies readers will find a page transposed in the article on the Foreign Legion and in others an illustration has been inserted the wrong way. Both items were soon spotted but not before a few copies had gone through the machine.

Thank you for your support.

Donald.F. Featherstone.



"I wonder if this French Hussar would convert  
into a Waterloo-period Lifeguard?"

The author about to embark upon yet another  
war-gaming period! Some of the fruits of  
other labours can be seen on the adjacent  
shelves.



Wargaming and the amassing of armies with which to fight our battles is an occupation which sometimes seems to me to bear a remarkable resemblance to WOMEN! This might seem an incredible statement but reflect upon it - the Opposite Sex are reputed to be fickle, charming and tantalising by turn, changeable, acquisitive, beautiful to behold etc etc

Wargamers and their hobby possess many of these qualities and faults - we are fickle in that we go to enormous expense and trouble to build up an army for one specific period and then, on a whim or impulse, leave it to

acquire dust on the shelf whilst we dash off at a tangent with another period. This makes us changeable also and brings us into eligibility for the title of acquisitive - we just like to amass various armies, don't we?

To discuss this one has to start somewhere and the best place is with oneself - because one knows one's experiences in this acquiring business of little fighting men, is conscious of one's mistakes and omissions. In my own case, I began by plumping for 30mm solid figures of the American Civil War period; in a year or so I had built up quite large armies and two or more campaigns had been fought. One's conversation and reading habits revolved around Gettysburg, Chancellorsville, Grant, Kearney; Battles and Leaders and Lee's Lieutenants - it all seemed very fascinating and glamorous.

Then a latent ambition began to raise its head; I was tied very firmly to the era around 1860-1880 or so - it had much to recommend it in that it held the beginnings of modern war plus two very illustrative set-to's in America and France upon which to base one's thoughts. Then, it held a colourful period when British troops, shedding their redcoats, were busily engaged with Zulus, Afghans, Afridis, Fuzzy-Wuzzies and other warlike natives in building what has subsequently become almost a dirty word - our Colonies. The rather alfresco, tough, rough and ready background that gave charm to our American Civil War troops began to pall; one felt the need for more colour, more tradition and professionalism. Where could it be found in greater measure than in the Prussian Army that fought the French in 1870-71? And the French themselves, losing a war for which they turned out to be ill-prepared, they still had elan, colour and masses of fascinating atmosphere that lent itself well to wargaming.

# A GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT

by

Don Featherstone.

Then began a huge programme of moulding, casting, trading and buying - Jack Scruby and the Swedish African Engineers had various lines of 1870 troops in their lists but there were many that had to be converted or home-cast from converted master-figures. Originally, the scheme was to have 12 infantry regiments and five cavalry units but this proved far too inadequate to cover all the gloriously named regiments that sprang into my line of vision. I had a brigade (two regiments) of the Prussian Guard, and similar numbers for the French Imperial Guard, but what of the Guard Fusiliers with their mitre hats, or Guard Zouaves and Chasseurs to combat the Prussian Guard Jägers? Soon, these elite troops sprang into two brigades of four regiments; infantry units multiplied in the same alarming manner - it was so easy to fall into!

The Prussians had allies - they were in league with the Bavarians, the Saxons, the Wurttembergers, troops from Nassau, and Brunswick; the French had so many colourful troops in their Algerian armies. I just HAD to have the Foreign Legion, then there came Tirailleurs Algeriennes, Spahis, Turcos, (I already had two regiments of Zouaves) and Chasseurs D'Afrique. There were the ubiquitous French Marine Fusiliers, those jacks-of-all-trades who did so much colonising in Tonkin for example - it soon happened that I had three units of them plus a band of colourful sailors with red pom-poms on their hats. To cut a very long story short - I ended up with 34 infantry regiments on each side and 15 cavalry regiments!

We fought a couple of Franco-Prussian Wars and the French lost each time in strict accordance with history; then we did one or two of the battles of that war - Spicheren stands out in my memory as a most successful example of fighting a single battle in three or four parts with separate corps laid down on a very large scale battlefield. Each Corps result was co-ordinated to bring the grand result of the battle - this was a sort of short campaign but on a single map formed of three wargames tables by three - nine tables in all.

Then came another yearning, what of my own country; why didn't I do something about the glorious wars in India and in Africa fought in the 1880 period? So I began to form a British army of the period - it began with the troops in khaki but that soon became prosaic so Highland units were added, then Rifle Regiments, and of course, I had to have a Guards Brigade but the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards don't look half so good in sun helmets and bearskins had to be introduced in my forces. Cavalry were a favourite arm of mine - I had Horse Guards and the Blues, then the 16th and 17th Lancers, the 11th and the 3rd Hussars, the Scots Greys, the K.D.G's and the Bays all took their place.

It was round about this time that I fought off a great challenge presented to me by that veteran wargamer of Roman soldiers - Archie Cass. Mentioning in a careless moment that I

I had recently been reading about (and, with Tony Bath, writing a book on the First Sikh War of 1846) I had become very interested in these tough warriors, who were trained by renegade European officers and who possessed artillery of a heavier calibre than anyone else on the continent. So my Akbarians became a home-cast and colourful force of six infantry regiments, each with two European officers (converted from a French Cuirassier dismounted officer and looking very much like the old Bengal Artillery of the period). They had a standard covered with Arabic symbols, each standard being the basic colour of the robes of the regiment. They also had a nice little cavalry regiment of spearmen with white turbans, who were officered by Italian Lancer officers of the Custozza period and two home-cast camel regiments. This was the first-ever mythical army I had done and I got a lot of fun out of being able to indulge myself as to colours and equipment. Their artillery was very powerful - four batteries of heavy guns with white officers and these guns have given the Akbarians an unbeaten record so far in East Asia!

Colonial Wars need Colonial troops - I had the British side alright (strengthened by Indians and Sudanese); whilst the French had their North African Armies plus their naval forces. But the Germans had nothing - so I was again committed to building up a force from scratch. I soon had a regiment of white-uniformed, sun-helmeted German sailors; more sailors in landing dress with rolled blankets and sun-helmets, then three regiments of Marines with awfully long Teutonic names that escape for the moment. They weren't enough to colonise any part of East Asia, so they were strengthened with a number of regiments of German S.W.African troops in broadbrimmed hats, together with some units of native Askaris. The cavalry side of this force was built up by adding broadbrimmed hats (turned up at one side) to a lot of surplus artillery outriders from some sets of S.A.E Civil War artillery and limbers that I had spare. I also converted some others into Jagers zu Pferde but Tony Bath always rudely calls them mounted policemen because of their spiked helmets.

Now onto the scene come that arch-disturber and stirrer-up of peaceful wargamers - Peter Gilder. I had looked at my forces and noted the packed shelves, realised that I had far more than I would ever be able to use at one time (or in any one year) and swore a solemn vow that there was going to be an end to it - no more moulding, casting or painting - I was going to devote my time to using those figures that I had already got! But our friend Gilder, by his very infectious example, makes one's fingers itch to get hold of a brush - and he began by presenting me with some fabulous terrain features he had made. That made me so discontented with the terrain that I already had that I went raving mad and took down my wargames table, completely rebuilt it and began to put all my terrain on squares of hardboard so that I could build up a terrain from a map in quick time by



had been impressed by the Roman soldiers in 'BEN HUR' or some other film. In a flash, Archie had flooded me with unpainted flats of Roman soldiers and their auxiliaries, together with a most impressive scaled-down chart of a Roman Legion that only consisted of about 908 figures! I had to have the Legion Flavia Firma or Macedonica or some such name because Archie himself had such-and-such a Legion, Dereck Guyler had this one, P.D. Connett that one - which left only the ones already mentioned for me! I regarded these shining, impressively positioned and numerous flat figures with great awe - the only time I'd ever tried to paint flats in the past they had looked awful! And, there were so many of them! As I apologetically muttered to Archie at a later date - "The only way I'll ever get around to painting up that lot is if I have some relatively serious illness that isn't painful but keeps me in bed for about six months" I still have them and - Archie, I swear it - I'll do them one day!

Having assembled a British Army I had to have someone for them to fight - didn't want them to take on France or Prussia because, frankly, we were sick and tired of fighting with both of these countries. So, we had a little gem of a campaign in which the Boers, in three commandoes, tried to invade a British province and were repulsed. It was interesting - Tony Bath got a bit cheesed-off with the campaign rule that made him get all the civilians and livestock to safety before he could fight me, but those Confederates, doubling as Boers, did quite well.

When one forms a British Army of the 1880 period then one inevitably turns towards more colourful allies - and by that I mean India! Yes, I next had to build an Indian Army - and some searching glances at McMunn's book 'THE ARMIES OF INDIA' showed me that there were about twenty five uniforms that attracted me! I compromised by having 12 infantry regiments, including Ghurkas and a pack-mule gun team with six regiments of Indian cavalry. Then I got a Sudanese War bug - and had to have three or four regiments of white-fezzed infantry led by trim khaki clad British officers. Oh, and I nearly forgot - a Camel Corps, too!

Someone sent me one of Jack Scruby's British Sailors of the period and, once again, I was a dead duck - I got hold of two lots of the standing figure in his cute little straw hat, with a unit of the matloes kneeling; then had to have a force of Marines to go with them. That Naval Landing Party is now about 80 strong and has a nice little Gatling Gun team - what about ships, did I hear someone say - wait a minute, they came via Peter Gilder and I hadn't met him at this stage.

I began to work out a most comprehensive Colonial Campaign in a country or continent called East Asia - it originally all belonged to the tough, warlike Akbarians back in the 18th and early 19th centuries - but then the march of progress brought the British, French and, much later, the Germans all hungrily seeking empires. The Akbarians were thrust back into a little land-locked kingdom - and then I had to have some Akbarians so another bright little idea struck me.

merely laying them out in jigsaw fashion. It amazes me how with a table 8' x 5' and using terrain-squares that are multiples of 8" (that is, they are either 8" squares; 16" squares of 2' squares) one cannot possibly seem to ever fully cover all the table-top! So little pieces of river, crossroads, long stretches of ditch-lined track and bushes, trees, hedges etc all had to be manufactured to fit in and cover up the gaps. The end result is an undulating terrain with lots of dead ground that has revolutionised our tactics but we often go back to the almost bare table top with a mere hill and track etc.

In addition to this insidious business, Gilder next makes me two river gunboats each of which will hold forty men - so I am fully committed to making and planning terrain and campaigns that include lakes, rivers, wharves and landing places for 1880-style amphibious attacks. Still, they are fun and I would not have missed them for anything! So, now with all this lot of British, Indian Army, Sudanese irregulars, French Foreign Legion, Zouaves, French low-morale conscripts from France; Prussian Marines and sailors, askaris, German Colonial troops and heavily gunned Abarians, we are fighting a busy Colonial Campaign in which the Germans have sent a lot of crack line regiments from Europe to try and wrest some of the French territory from them. But, the plot thickens here - because whilst Moltke has denuded the Fatherland of all but the Guard at Potsdam and sundry cavalry units dotted about, the other countries, once allies, have decided to break away from Prussia and so we have the Southern Confederacy, formed of Bavaria, Saxony, Wurtemberg, Nassau and Brunswick all trying to capture Berlin before the Prussians can get their line regiments back from East Asia. So, we have a European Campaign within a Colonial Campaign, each of which is interdependent upon the other. The beauty of the situation lies in the fact that there is always a map-contact made somewhere so that a battle is always brewing - when visiting firemen come thirsting for action we can give them the choice of handling the French against the Prussian Naval Division at Ferryvue or the Akbarians (and all those damn guns) against the British at Fort Windsor.

I have forgotten to mention a most interesting early affair when the British got chased out of India in a rather late Mutiny circa 1879. The rebellious sepoys (composed of Zouaves, Turcos, and generally French Colonial forces with the early nucleus of my Indian Army) played an insidious part in that even if they seemed loyal when the battle began, a dice throw of 1 or 2 would mean that they turned round and fought for the enemy against you!

Also omitted up to now is the insidious influence of all those wonderfully cheap and varied boxes of figures turned out by Arctix. I don't claim to be equal to painting these 20mm soldiers - my eyes don't seem to be as good as they were just as painters seem to be so much younger these days - but I was



swayed by their cheapness and by the variety of positions of the figures. Consequently, I embarked upon a modern set-up, in which I had a scaled-down infantry battalion of World War Two with its four company's; carrier, heavy weapons, a/tk and support sections etc. Once again, another spot of bother arose in that I got hold of a number of plastic tanks and vehicles made by Roskopf and DBGW in Germany - apparently in the right scale. Then Airfix started bringing out their own well-known range of plastic kits of tanks etc and I found that they are much larger than the German models so I had to make up my mind which lot to use and which to dump - I still haven't arrived at this vital decision and my modern wargames are few and far between. I also got involved, in a wild outburst of enthusiasm, in a project to make a diorama of the Trooping of the Colour, using Airfix Guardsmen and civilians - I intended having the same number of troops as actually take part in the ceremony. Partly because I recoiled at the thought of trying to convert 20mm Airfix cowboys etc into Lifeguards and partly because I tired a little after painting a red coat on my five hundred and fourteenth guardsman - this enterprise is a bit stillborn.

Getting nearer to the present, the business becomes even more hectic and it is all really against my will - but I've no force of character where model soldiers and wargames are concerned! I paid one of my annual pilgrimages to Peter Gilder's place in Lincoln last August, where we fought a couple of most memorable American Civil War battles with his Airfix, Hinton Hunt and Gamage figures. Peter converts the most unlikely things, such as Napoleonic, into Civil War characters - and does so most convincingly and ending with a brilliant paint job. Anyway, in the intervals between fighting we got to talking and Peter revealed a hidden obsession to fight Napoleonic Campaigns. It tied in with a book I had recently been reading - Jac. Weller's WELLINGTON IN THE PENINSULAR which seemed to me at the time to be almost the ideal volume upon which to base wargames because of its simple, diagrammatic maps and its very complete lists of the forces involved in the battles. There is also a great attraction about the Peninsular - that area of some of the most glorious battle-honors on regimental colours and one that Napier has brought to life so vividly.

Anyway, Peter and I decided to have a go at this period - painting 20mm figures is beyond me so Peter (who is a glutton for punishment besides being a great painter) offered to paint ALL the figures! This was too good to resist so I became committed to assemble a small army of the British and a similarly sized force of the French - about eight infantry units and three cavalry, with artillery. With them, Peter and I intend to re-fight the Peninsular straight from Weller's book - each of the battles is going to be fought simultaneously by the solo method, one half of the battle, say the right flank part, here

in Southampton; whilst the other half - the left flank, is to be fought with similiar forces by Peter Gilder in Lincoln. We then co-ordinate the two results to decide who won the battle and points are allotted accordingly. We can't do retreats and advances in accordance with our table-top results because they may not fit in with the actual sequence of events in the book. This Napoleonic set-up is being prepared by Peter at the time of writing.

Next came a completely new venture - Tony Bath talked me into this one - but it was my big mouth that first started all the trouble! I had been doing a lot of research for a book and T.V script dealing with the English archer - that incomparable character who didn't lose a battle between 1340 and 1429 and whose tactics changed the face of mediaeval warfare. I became quite fascinated with him and mentioned the fact during an Ancient wargame at Tony's place. The next thing I knew, I had ordered a small army of FLMTS from Tony - and he had cast me 120 archers, 55 dismounted men-at-arms and 55 mounted, plus figures for Edward III and the Black Prince! I must admit that it is most interesting painting them and I am enjoying delving into the heraldry of the period - I have divided the archers into six groups, each of which bear the livery of the King, Sir John Chandos, Salisbury, Warwick and Northampton; the men-at-arms being similiarly adorned. When they are completed, Tony and I are going to refight Crecy, Poitiers and Agincourt but with the rules suitably adjusted so that the archers do not have the same vital advantages that they had in real life.

I can't quite recall how I got involved in the French and Indian Wars of the middle of the 18th century - but I have paid for half a flat army of British and French infantry, whilst we are historically using my 30mm solid 150 strong Red Indian force with them. Incidentally, these Indians have had a checkered career, doubling as hillmen, Zulus, and many other native tribes in their time besides winning a great campaign over the 7th US Cavalry way back in our distant wargaming past.

Since Christmas a new vista has been spread before me as the direct result of the researches that I had to do when writing books on Naval Wargames and Wargames with Model Aircraft. I now have a longing to do some more of this sea warfare, apart from the odd affair with triremes and biremes that I have fought as integral parts of Tony Bath's Ancient Campaigns. We have done one Napoleonic battle when, in sublime ignorance of what I was doing, I executed a perfect crossing of the 'T' and won it! Now I am planning some naval additions to my own campaigns - using home made or converted vessels of the 1880 period. Tony and I discovered that the Eaglewall firm (who made the waterline model ship kits of WWII era) had gone out of business so we managed to corner the local market and bought up all the shops held. As a result of this we have plans for Hunting the Raider and for fleet actions of our own just as soon as we have completed the

rather fiddling business of assembling them.

The second new interest lies in these model aircraft - I have been very interested in the great diversity and cheap accessibility of these kits and it seems such a pity not to put them to some use! Bob Trimble of California, who has greatly aided me in my book on the subject, has propounded some really colourful and great ideas for using model aircraft in cooperation with a World War One set-up. He has demonstrated how it is possible to use observation balloons and to alter the whole complex battle situation by the use of spotter and observation aircraft. This period of early air fighting is quite the most colourful time in the short history of aircraft and, once again I've a shrewd suspicion that I have got beyond the point of no return with this idea. Anyway, I am going to start on a small scale by using just one aircraft in a land battle - possibly a Spad or S.E.5 for the British and an Albatross or Fokker for the Germans - which will ascend and descend on a sloping wire stretching from the ceiling down to the war games table and then up again to the other end of the room.

And that brings me to the final change of tempo that has insidiously crept up on me. Joe Morschauser did it this time - by casually mentioning that our Colonial Campaigns of 1880 would on the same maps and with the same contestants, transfer very easily to the World War One period. He conjured up pictures of boiler-plate armoured cars, motor-cycle combinations with Lewis guns in the sidecar, old tanks that stalled every other move - all being used in a sort of brush-fire jungle affair with all types of native auxiliaries, irregular cavalry, German sailors and marines, aiding their colonial forces against British forces formed of Indian troops, etc etc. I have been even further sold on this because Joe, in a typical outburst of generosity, has made me a set of these tanks and armoured cars and shipped them here - so I've got to use them, have 'nt I?

This might all add up to an apparent muddle, to a diversity of interest bordering on the incoherent - but that isn't the case really. All of these periods and types of warfare have their own fascinations, each of them gets a fair crack of the whip and all of the troops are used; put away and brought to light again perhaps many dusty months later - but they all get their share of combat! If I had to do it again, I think I'd follow my present practice of not making huge armies, but forming smaller groups of about 250 infantry, proportionate cavalry and artillery - in this way one can have sufficient troops to fight a good battle; by using them as 'other formations' they can take part in a campaign and, because they don't take too long to assemble, it is possible to have the widest variety of troops and periods at your command.

I've still got a more than sneaking interest in the Sikh Wars and I've always wanted to do Marlburian Campaigns - oh well there's plenty more painting evenings left, I suppose!





1st U.S. Sharpshooters (Berdan's), 1862

## AN ELITE FORCE.

by

Bob Trimble.

Berdan's Sharpshooters weren't line infantry in the usual sense of the word; they didn't wear the usual Federal uniforms, and they never fought in the usual lines, either in fire-fights or attacks - which they never made. They were specialists with special weapons, who worked upon colour-bearers, officers, artillery crews and any one else whose absence would be felt badly.

Their uniform was basically Rifle Green, the leather (including the leggings) was black, with brass belt-plates and buttons. The rifles, which were even carried by the officers (as the drawing shows) were the .52 Sharps breech-loading rifle, firing a linen cartridge. They carried forty shells in their carbidge-boxes and the Sharpshooters called these "Forty Dead Men" with good reason!

Take a look at the drawing - the corporal with his back to you, standing at the left side, is wearing one of the early, elaborate coats. As far as I can tell, the later coats were just plain. The second man is wearing the early grey overcoat and havelock hat, dropped after the Sharpshooters were fired upon by their own side. The third and fifth men are wearing the regular issue blue overcoats. The knapsacks were goatskin, with the hair left on. Originally, a plume was worn on the kepis but it soon wore out or was lost - the bugler is using a feather in place of the plume. The bayonet laying on the ground is not the type used by Berdan's boys, they preferred the regular, triangular model.

These troops did not fight as a unit, but were broken up into small groups and sent wherever their particular talent was needed. I think that Berdan was only able to get them all together (including the 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters) a couple of times during the entire war.

(For those Wargamers who delight in having 'special' units this one is a very good example of something out of the ordinary. Berdan's Sharpshooters can justifiably take their place with similar units of other forces - such as the British Rifle Brigade and the K.R.R.C; the Prussian Jagers and the French Chasseurs a pied. EDITOR).

Camel, in trying to machinegun German defenders at the left ford, had been downed by MG fire, although it had already done considerable damage to the defenders. So the Germans were left with air supremacy of 1 plane and they promptly used it to work over the Peerless armoured car and the supporting riflemen.

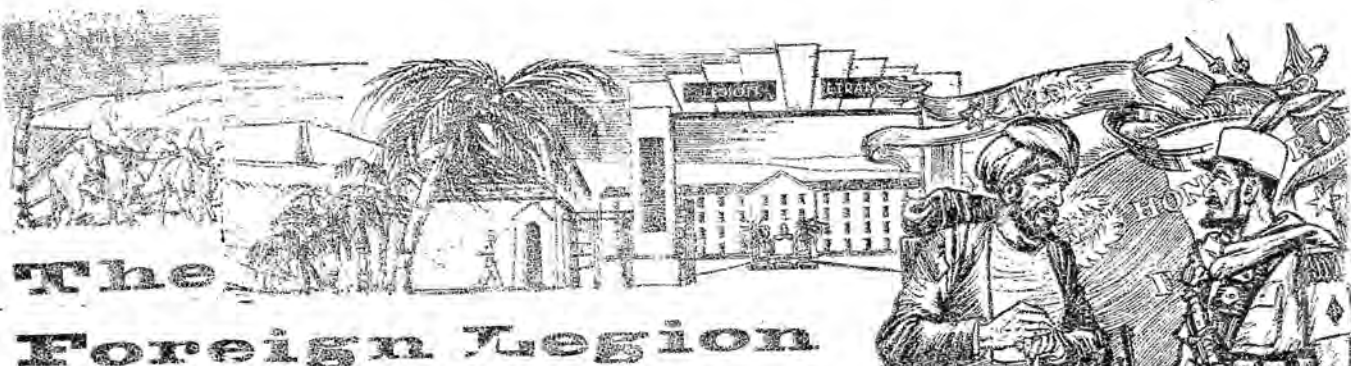
It should be mentioned at this point that MG's in this game have an anti-armour capability with armour-piercing K amn. In this way, the triplane shot out the engine of the armoured car although it did not knock out its gun turrets. It was enough to stop the British advance and, on the next turn, the remaining naval gun finished off the car.

To bring it to an end, the British did get across the river on the left (German) at the ford finally, and there pushed out the defenders, forcing them back towards their road and dump. But, at the same time, a small force of German machines crossed the right ford (which the British had left unprotected) and with the help of a single motorcycle machinegun had begun to put pressure on the spread-out British defenders of their left flank dump. It was enough to cause hesitation, a shift of some forces and this proved fatal. The 2½ hours ended and, as it was the maximum time without direct supply for the British to sustain their attack, their hopes of victory departed.

It is not pretended that this little action was an absolute test of unbalanced (in numbers) forces. Certainly, the German side had much luck and a good position, whilst the British suffered bad luck, especially with the stalling of their Whippet tank and its destruction by flood-waters and <sup>their</sup> bad dice in the air action. Readers might feel that Fiddlingham-Smith might have handled his attack in a better way with more thought to his tactics - but the action does prove that unbalanced battles are possible and are fun if strength of both sides is balanced by compensations of one sort or the other.

The Germans had a fine defensive line, longer range guns, but fewer troops and planes. The British had air superiority, tanks and men but a tough tactical nut to crack with the terrain. That they didn't make it is no slur on them - the dice bounce funny ways sometimes and bring tears to the eyes of many a wargamer, hardbitten by many campaigns. Still, there was a balanced-im-balance of forces. Unbalanced War Gaming is possible and it can be made rather true-to-life. After all, how does that old saw go .... "For the want of a nail....etc".





## The Foreign Legion

The French Foreign Legion, which brings back to many of us little more than recollections of P.C.Wren, BEAU GESTE, Onda and all that, has been fighting almost continuously since its foundation in 1831.

With one other long-service Corps d'elite - the Infanterie de la Marine - it was responsible for almost all of France's colonial expansion by force of arms in Africa and Indo-China, while the conscript army guarded France's frontiers at home.

In addition, the Legion fought in the European wars of France - including the Crimea, the 1870 War with Germany, World Wars One and Two (in which their casualties were 80%) - and in Korea. But it was in Mexico in 1863 that the Legion won its greatest battle honours of all; CAMERONE, when a company of sixty-five men held at bay over 2,000 Mexican soldiers - until all the legionnaires were dead, save five severely wounded men. They also were sent to Spain to fight in the Carlist Wars of the mid-19th century - where their losses were 3,500 out of 4,000 men.

But this article is not entirely about the Foreign Legion, in spite of its title - it is concerned with all those highly colourful regiments, both infantry and cavalry, who formed the French Armies in North Africa and their other Colonial possessions during the latter half of the last century. For the wargamer, the formation of such an army brings in its train the most fascinating possibilities, besides providing a wealth of variety and colour sufficient to satisfy even the most ardent painter. Wargames-wise, he will have an army capable of taking part in campaigns against the eternal enemy - the Arab, or else in mythical Colonial Campaigns where they will come up against the disciplined troops, and native levies, of Great Britain and Germany, to name the main two colonial aspirants of the period.

Personally, the author has not sought further afield for

for uniform details of his Foreign Legionnaires than the traditional and well-known baggy white trousers, long-tailed blue great-coat and white kepi with neck-protector (known sometimes and in other fields as a 'Havelock'). White gaiters, with a yellow-leather top and large green epaulettes were worn; on his back the legionnaire wore (or rather bore) a most voluminous pack with blanket wrapped around it, and topped with cooking utensils and messin. This frightening-looking burden will be familiar to students of the French army of the period, as such a pack was common also in the French home army and was in use right up to World War One.

During the early days of the Franco-Prussian War in August 1870, at the battles of Worth and Weissenburg, the Prussians were surprised to encounter fierce and worthy fighting men in an unaccustomed garb. They were the TURCOS - three regiments of light troops or skirmishers; Arabs with ash-coloured complexions - in contrast to the ZOUAVES who were usually European. The Turcos, whose correct designation is TIRAILLEURS ALGERIENS, were first raised in 1840 and were a corps of native Algerians; apart from the war of 1870 and World War One, their service was restricted to North Africa.

They wore a waistcoat, jacket and baggy trousers of a woollen material, sky blue in colour - the trousers being replaced in summer by similarly shaped garments in linen. The upper edge of the waistcoat was trimmed with yellow in a broad stripe going down straight to the middle but usually covered by a sky-blue jacket, trimmed like the waistcoat with Moorish ornamentation on both sides; this was so made that it left a hand-sized oval free. The first regiment had a red oval; the second wore white and the third wore yellow. The Turcos wore a broad red waistband, on top of which was a black leather belt. On the left of the belt was the bayonet in a burnished sheath, its brass handle being concealed by the white cloth food-bag that hung over it. On the right side of the belt hung a large soldiers flask covered by a sky-blue cloth; also on this side was a small black leather cartridge belt.

On their feet they wore black shoes covered by a white linen legging, buttoned on their outer sides and trimmed at the top with light brown or leather yellow in colour. Knapsacks were of light brown jackal skin, tents and capes were rolled and fastened to the knapsacks, on top were cooking utensils - every second man carrying a big cooking pot and every tenth man a huge copper cooking vessel.

Their officers were French and wore red caps with sky-blue stripes and a sky-blue coat with a yellow collar. This coat was very small around the hips becoming very wide and having pleats, it was single breasted and had nine golden buttons. Their trousers

were worn long so that they came down onto the boots; they were of red woollen fabric and had a broad sky-blue stripe running down the outer seam - they were very wide but became very narrow across the boots. Officers usually wore their coats open, with a sky-blue waistcoat underneath; their revolver case was worn on the right-hand side.

There is often confusion between the Turcos and the Zouaves, caused by the similiarity of their dress; both regiments wore the red chchia cap, short jacket, cummerbund and baggy trousers. Even the braid on the seams of the jacket and on the false pockets is in the same style. But the Zouaves are yet another of these French Colonial regiments who acquired a well-won reputation both in North Africa, during the Franco-Prussian War and in World War One. The first Zouave regiment was raised for the French Army in Algeria in 1831, most of its men came from the Zouave Berber tribes, but in 1840 the recruitment of Europeans began. In 1852, three further regiments were formed and the Zouaves of the Imperial Guard came into existence in 1854; their first service outside North Africa was in the Crimea where their dashing tactics made them firm favourites with their English comrades.

In 1860 a sixth regiment was formed - the Papal Zouaves; to be used for service in the Papal States in Italy. After the occupation of Rome by Victor Emmanuel II, the regiment returned to France and was disbanded about the time of the siege of Paris in 1871. The reputation earned by the Zouaves was so great and so colourful were they in appearance that their name and style of dress was adopted by many American regiments during the Civil War of 1861-65 - fans of this war will know of Dureyea's Zouaves, the Louisiana Zouaves and the famed Wheat's Louisiana Tigers who made their baggy breeches out of blue-and-white striped mattress ticking because of lack of a suitable red material.

The Zouaves wore dark blue waistcoats and jackets, light blue cummerbunds and either baggy red or white trousers, the former having blue piping down the outer seam. On their feet they wore spats or leggings of the same type as the Turcos. When the regiments were first formed, a green turban was worn around the red chchia cap which then had a tassell - blue for the Zouaves, white for the Turcos; about 1870, the turbans were changed to white although trumpeters wore red and in 1914 the early soft hanging cap was replaced by the straight sided chechia - the turbans having been discontinued in 1900.

In 1870 there were three regiments, forming part of Marshall McMahon's army; they were almost destroyed at Sedan. Then they were distinguished by the 'Tombo' a piece of cloth placed on each side of the vest, surrounded by braid; with this was coupled a distinctive way of wearing their hats.





Above: French Marine Infantry fighting in Indo-China during the 1880's.

Right: A group of French Colonial Infantry from North Africa.



ON THE MARCH IN TUNIS—BY HENRI JACQUIER



Mention has already been made of the ubiquitous French Marine Infantry, those jacks-of-all-trades who did so much to colonise Indo-China in the 1880's. They are well worth investigating and bringing into one's wargames armies as they represent yet another of the tough and colourful formations about which we are talking. They wore a blue tunic, white baggy trousers, white gaiters and had a white haversack on their left side; waterbottle on the right and leather pouches in front. They wore sun-helmets of a khaki colour - very probably white when issued but dyed with coffee or something similar to render them less conspicuous. The general outfit can quite clearly be seen in the accompanying illustrations.

We began with the Foreign Legion, let us end with them - they wore their renowned uniform until 1914 - at that date it consisted of a blue tunic, red or off-white baggy trousers, blue greatcoat and a blue cummerbund; hats white with neck protector although some authorities quarrel with the existence of the latter except in films. Their officers never wore the white kepi but always the usual French officers ornamented kepi of the French army.

It may be that the wargamer will require to have this famous regiment in his later games - they fought in North Africa right up to the late 1950's; when they wore American-style khaki-green uniforms but still had the white kepi. The writer recalls with nostalgia a week's leave spent in Tunis during 1943 when he met up with a band of legionnaires from the British 8th Army - they had acquired a very wholesome reputation at Bir Hacheim in the Desert. Wearing American lease-lend uniforms and khaki stiff kepi, one Legion Corporal, Hungarian by birth, had won a British Military Cross and truly upheld the Legion reputation for off-beat recruiting - a medical student in London in 1939, he had fled to the Cameroons to avoid internment as an enemy alien, spent all his cash and then joined the Legion! He was unfortunately killed in the Belfort area during the invasion of Southern France in late 1943.

And what is the availability of these fabulous warriors? Airfix turn out Foreign Legion and Arabs - conversions can produce most of the others. Jack Scruby has a good line in such types both in 20mm and 30mm; Hinton Hunt turn out a 20mm American Civil War Zouave that can easily be painted to suit North Africa. Swedish African Engineers - now defunct - also did Foreign Legion, Zouaves, Spahis. For the 54mm fan - it is possible to obtain most of these soldiers from Britains. But, most fun of all - they can be readily cast or converted from existing figures and painting them seems to depart from the usual chore because of the colourful results, maybe!

1st Regiment: Tombo red; hat inclined to right.  
2nd Regiment: do. white: do. left.  
3rd Regiment: do. yellow: hat straight, on back of head.

Zouave Officers were French; they wore the flared tunic, and similar trousers to Turco officers narrowing over the shoes, madder in colour, with a dark blue stripe. Their kepi's were also the red shade called madder, with a dark blue band and gold stripe. Buttons and braid were also of gold.

One particularly interesting unit to make-up is the famous mule company in which a mule was shared by two men, each taking it in turn to ride whilst the other trotted along at the side. In this way they were able to traverse the desert at cavalry speed besides being able to carry additional equipment. These were dressed in the usual Foreign Legion uniform.

In an old French military book, available from the Print Room of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the writer discovered a hitherto unknown (to him) unit of the French North African forces. Unknown but suspected of being perhaps another battalion of the Foreign Legion or a punishment or penal formation. They were entitled INFANTRIE LEGERE AFRIQUE or African Light Infantry - but were obviously shown as white men and not natives. They wore a white kepi with neck protector; blue greatcoat, white baggy trousers and white gaiters; around their pack was rolled a white blanket or tent-portion, whilst the usual utensils piled high upon its top.

Glamorously arrayed are the two principal cavalry units of the French North African Army - the Chasseurs D'Afrique and the Spahis. The former were Europeans who were mounted on wiry Arab greys; they wore a sky-blue tunic, red trousers tucked into riding boots or with leather insets in the trouser bottoms, there was a blue stripe running down the outer seam of the trousers. Their facings were black and they wore a red sash; the tunic had a yellow collar with numerals upon it. The headgear was a stiff kepi-type tapering away slightly to the top; it had a red crown and top half, sky-blue bottom half with a black peak, at the front and on top of the crown was a gold 'bobble' or rosette. The kepi bore a hunting-horn badge. Their horses had the usual equipment with a blue saddlecloth.

The Spahis were Arab cavalry, who rode the smaller Arab steeds and wore the usual native costume; in their case a voluminous white cloak, covering a drab uniform, the turban bound with a scarlet cloth; their soft leather boots were also red. Later, they wore a soft round hat, rather like an oversize fez that did not taper towards its crown. Henri Jacquiem, the French military painter has shown a Spahi in one of his paintings, notable for the unusual manner in which the rifle is carried - it is hoped to include this painting as an illustration for this article.



## TERRAIN IDEAS by E. BUCKNER YOUNG.

Here is an "Idea" if you'd care to hand it on to some fellow Wargamers:

Tired of the glare from overhead lights reflecting on the almost-white plywood surface of our 6' x 8' playing field, I obtained two sheets of 4' x 8' soft fibre wall board, cut one of the sheets in two to make it 2' x 8', and placed it, along with the full-sized 4' x 8' sheet, atop the bright plywood surface of the field, so that no longer does the blasted reflection from bare wood tend to wear us down during an 8 or 10-hour session!

One side of this fibreboard sheet is a stark white - apparently whitewashed, or some such - but the reverse side is left "rough" by the manufacturer. This presents a delightful light-absorbing neutral brown surface, slightly rough, which appears for all the world to be an actual earth-brown battlefield.

It is very light weight and extremely easy to handle (which is important to us, since we must put our board(s) away at the conclusion of each battle, setting them up once more for the next engagement) and costs only \$3 for a full-size 4' x 8' sheet. I have no way of knowing, of course, whether such material is available in England; but it certainly should be, since it is stocked here by almost every lumber yard and builder's supply house across the country.

It is known by various trade names; one being "Homasote", another "Celotex", and yet another "Fir-tex". What outlandish "handle" might be attached to it there, it's difficult to say; but a description of the stuff should suffice to make clear to any building materials dealer exactly what it is the would-be purchaser is trying to obtain.

It cuts easily with a "wallboard knife", or with any fine-toothed saw. As a consequence, we have "built" a number of "hills" from it to break up the monotony of an otherwise flat terrain. These, of course, being made from the same material as the surface of the "field", do not look out of place and artificial to anywhere near the extent that raw pieces of lumber do when "pyramided" for hills or mountains. And it has the additional great advantage to the Wargamer of being very reasonable in price, as compared with the cost of finished boards as quite frequently used for "terrain pieces".

AS a final tip from the same point in its favour is the fact that, since it is easily cut into any desired (flat) shape, when laid upon a hard flat surface beneath it for support, it becomes very simple to cut from this soft fibreboard sections of any desired size - to represent lakes, small pools, or even a watercourse of whatever nature, wending its way across the Battlefield. These "depressions", if carefully and cleanly cut from the "parent" sheet, are easily replaced in the positions which they originally occupied, whenever it is desired to revert to a "flat terrain" once again, while, at the same time, still other sections may be removed from the sheet so that a lake, or a pond, or a creek or a river "occur" in even different sectors than did the declivity which has just been "filled in". There seems to be no end to the variety of sizes, shapes, and locations which these segments, removed from the full sheet, will allow the wargamer who is weary of fighting forever on the flat and barren - and almost always waterless - surface of the usual table top.

Wherever such segments are removed from the fibreboard, the solid table top immediately under that section and so revealed by its removal, may, at the whim of the Wargamer, be painted any sort of water colour - blue, green, brown, or any combination of them which occurs in Nature - preferably with a gloss varnish to give still more the illusion of actual water. Then, as said, they may be "plugged up" with the section as removed, and still other such pools or streams "made" for subsequent Battles.

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How many wargames did you fight last year? How many did you win or lose - were many of them drawn or undecided? Are the best of them firmly entrenched in your memory to inevitably fade with the passing of time, or have you got a record of your battles? And, if you have is it illustrated with drawings or photographs?

The keeping of wargames records is a facet of the hobby that possesses a unique fascination, it unfolds another path along which our interests can flow when we are not hard at it moulding, casting or painting.

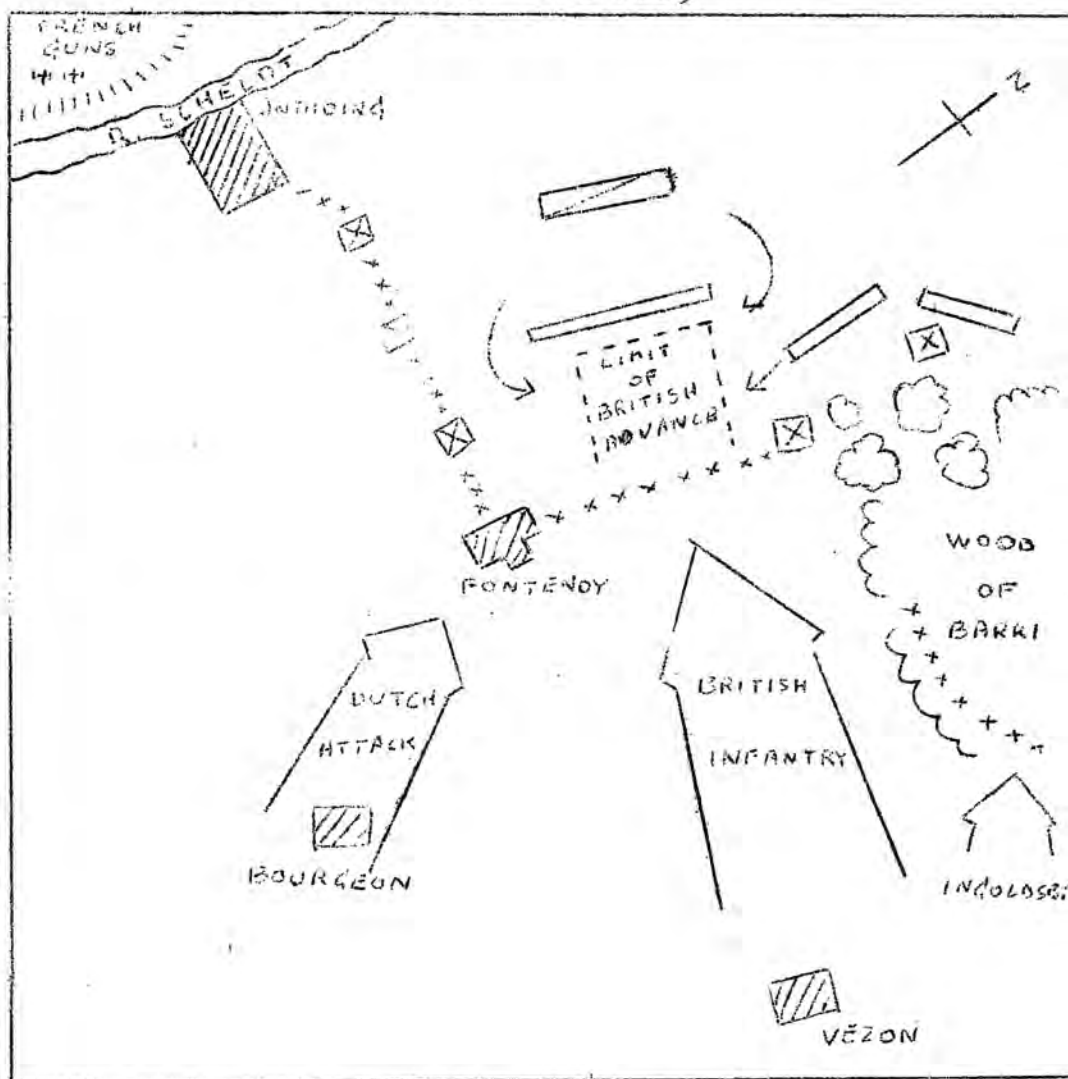
To some of us, these records fill almost as big a part as the actual games themselves; Lionel Tarr of Bristol solo-modern wargamer, writes up all his battles and illustrates them with pen and camera. This is facilitated by the fact that he fights against himself - the apparent disadvantage of lacking an opponent is more than compensated for by the leisure and time during a game when records can be made and situations translated onto paper to become a part of posterity.

Diagram No. 1

# ELEMENTS OF FONTENROY

ELEMENTS OF FONTENROY

(NOT TO SCALE)



XXXX - FRENCH POSITION

☒ REDOUBT

→ - FRENCH COUNTER ATTACK.



## EXPERIMENTS WITH A BATTLE.

by

Charles Grant.

Many musket-period battles have been refought here in Dover, ranging from Ramillies in 1706 to Gettysburg in 1863. All produced good fighting, although only one - Shiloh - followed the exact course of its real-life prototype. In every case, too, the entire battle-field was transferred to the wargames table, which is not always a satisfactory undertaking, particularly where the combat is an extensive one, so for some time the possibility of examining and re-fighting an actual battle in a piecemeal sort of way had been considered - fighting one section of it on the table, then another, and attempting to link up the different sections into a coherent whole - if possible, of course. Finally getting round to this, the Battle of Fontenoy, 1745, was chosen for several reasons: it seemed to be a suitable battle for sub-dividing; being a Jacobite of long standing, anything concerning the supporters of the Stuarts, in this case the "Wild Geese", the Irish regiments in the French service, always drew my interest, and thirdly, it appeared that the nature of the battle - a victory of defence over attack - would provide an excellent all-round test for the Grant rules for mid-eighteenth century type wargames.

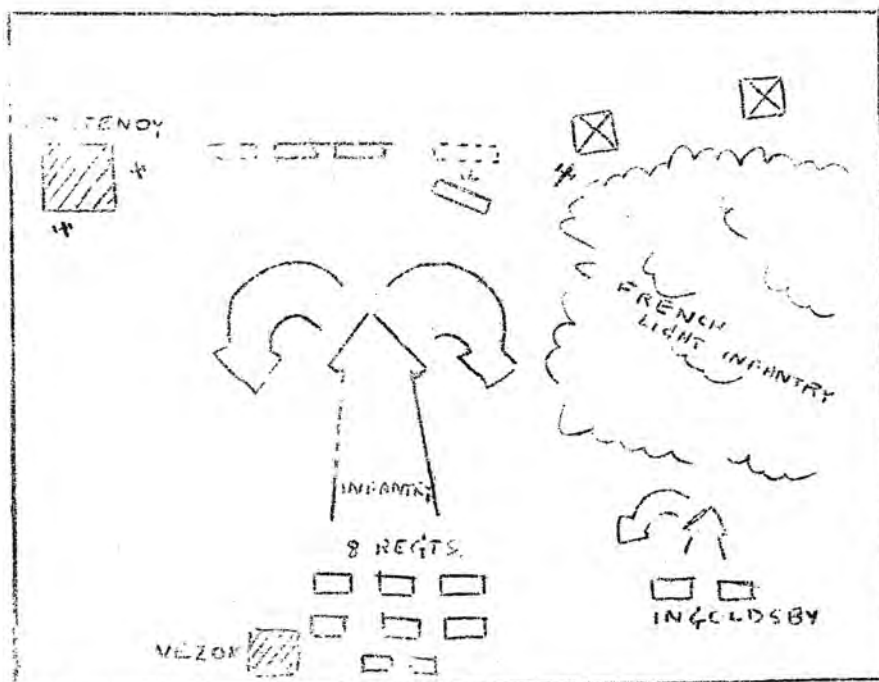
The background to Fontenoy is simple - an Anglo-Dutch army, with the Duke of Cumberland as senior general, marching to relieve the fortress of Tournai, besieged by the French, found the latter, under Marshal Saxe, arrayed in a formidable defensive position around the village of Fontenoy. The position, reduced to its simplest terms, was in the form of a capital 'L', and its essentials are shown in Diagram No.1, with the French holding the interior and the Allies the exterior of the 'L'. In brief, the battle resolved itself into an abortive and pretty half-hearted attack by the Dutch from the south-east and a desperate advance by the British infantry, who broke through the French line and pretty well reached the heart of the enemy position before being driven back by repeated counter-attacks and by tremendous cross-fire from Fontenoy, which had been fortified, and from the redoubts at the western end of the Wood of Barri. This wood should have been cleared earlier - it was strongly held by French light infantry - by a force under Brigadier Ingoldsby. This operation failed to take place and Ingoldsby was later court-martialled, and acquitted.

Authorities vary in the number of combatants they give for the battle, but the French actually engaged appear to have numbered 53,000, and the Allies about 47,000, while the former had 100 guns to the 80 of their opponents. Having the result of the actual battle in mind, there seems to be some sort of moral here - never attack a prepared position with forces equal to or less than those of the defender. That is exactly what the Anglo-Dutch did, but let's get on with the experiments we carried out to reproduce the battle on our

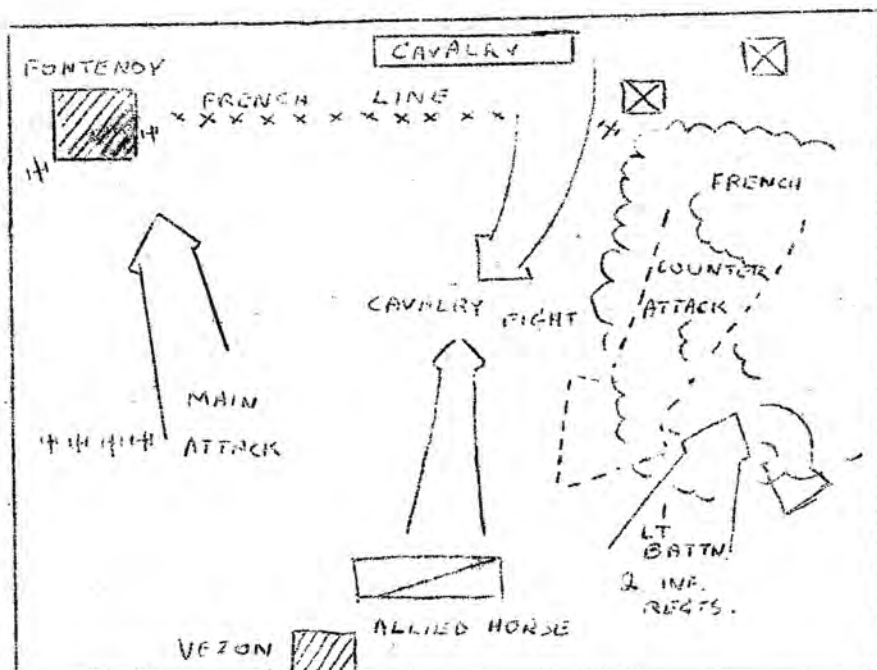
The FIRST EXPERIMENT simulated the attack by Cumberland/8s exactly as possible so far as the forces engaged were concerned, times of movement and so on, and the action taken. The troops engaged were as follows:- British - 10 infantry and 3 cavalry regiments; French - 9 infantry and 3 cavalry regiments, with a light infantry battalion in addition. Considering that at the Anthoing-Fontenoy position where the Dutch faced the French right wing, the opposing forces more or less neutralised each other, the whole wargame table (9' by 7') was occupied by the other section, i.e. from Fontenoy across to the Wood of Barri, and downwards to the British point of arrival about the village of Vezon (Diagram No.2). At 6 a.m. (all times given are the actual ones which we translated to the table in the ratio of 1 hour = 4 table moves) the attack was launched on the Wood of Barri defended by the French light infantry - mainly the Arquebussiers de Grassin (they really were the Grassins on the table) - by the two regiments of infantry which represented Ingoldsby's brigade. (Throughout these notes a regiment of infantry is 5 officers and 80 men; a light infantry battalion 3 officers and 24 men, and a cavalry regiment 4 officers and 24 men). The first regiment to approach the wood was shot to pieces before it could penetrate - about 8.45 a.m. - and when it too had to retire (with strength reduced to 50% or less a unit must retreat). The Grassins had lost only half a dozen men, and the remnants of Ingoldsby's brigade fell back to reform in the rear of the main body of infantry.

This main body - the bulk of the British infantry - had massed in front of Vezon - it consisted of eight regiments, numbering with generals etc. 432 men, and it was arrayed in three lines, of 3, 3 and 2 regiments.

Having withstood French long-range artillery fire (2 guns in Fontenoy and one in the nearer redoubt) until the moment for the advance - 9 a.m. - it set off at that time on the march up the slope towards the French line. As it moved forward, losses from cannon fire increased slowly, becoming very heavy when the flanks of the column came within grapeshot range, and in short, it had lost 14½% of its strength before its front line came within musket range of the French. Consequently, its firing line, as happened in the actual battle, had shrunk, by continual dressing towards the centre, to about half the length of the opposing French line. As soon as the British column had opened fire its speed of advance was cut by half - our rule being that infantry in line can advance in 6" moves but if it fires at the same time, the forward movement is only 3". (CF Lloyd's "Review of the History of Infantry", p.146 - "The old rule that battalions should halt for each volley, had been changed by this time. They kept on the move, but stepped short; while the platoons in their turn stepped out, halted and fired."). In the ensuing firefight the French, who had moved another regiment onto the British flank - more or less 'en potence' - had considerably greater firepower than the latter. The British, too, did not enjoy the benefit of the initial shattering volley which in the actual battle laid low some 700 Frenchmen, and simply stood the chance of the dice throw which - in a firefight - determined which side fires first. Further heavy losses reduced the British column, another 7½% by grape and no less than 30% by musketry, until finally, at about



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1.15 p.m., when still outside charging distance - 9" - every regiment save one had been reduced to half its strength or less and was retiring (see earlier for 50% rule). Before this, at 1 p.m., the British cavalry had been moved forward in support of the infantry - following history - only to meet the shattered remnants of the column falling back. As in the battle itself, no pursuit took place, the Allies being allowed to retreat without further trouble.

This first experiment proved adequately how a strong and well-gunned defensive position can be held, although it must be conceded that the historical tactics to which the attacking player had to adhere were not of the best. Only three French infantry regiments - which it is true lost 46% of their strength - and three guns were sufficient to repulse a column of eight regiments, these having been very shaken by fire from round shot and grape during the advance. The fourth French regiment in the firefight - the flanking one - lost only a handful. The figures of the actual losses were - British infantry 294 and French infantry 96. In other words, the British losses exceeded those of the French by the numerical equivalent of very nearly four infantry regiments.

This first experiment was not tremendously exciting, but satisfactory in that it demonstrated that our moves per hour - 4 - together with our table scale of distances measured up very well with the real thing. Taking the movements of the British column as an example - it set off on move 13 (9 a.m.) and firing broke out with the French on move 21 (same as the actual time of 11 a.m.). The firefight on the table did not last as long as did the penetration of the French position in the battle itself, where Cumberland gave the order to retreat at 2 p.m., while on the table the retrograde movement was under way at 1.30 p.m. This may have been due to the severity of our grapeshot rules in this experiment, but of that more later. Incidentally, the times, as always, vary with different writers and authorities but, in the main, I have accepted those of John Manchip White's biography of Saxe, 'Marshal of France'.

The SECOND EXPERIMENT took place on the same terrain as the previous one, and with substantially the same forces engaged. The players, however, instead of sticking to the pattern set by the actual battle, were able to make their own tactics as they desired. The only difference in the armies was in the Allied one, where a battalion of light infantry was substituted for a regiment of infantry. This seemed reasonable, as one of Ingoldsby's regiments was the Black Watch, of which it is said (in Skrine's 'Fontenoy and the War of the Austrian Succession') that "the Highlanders would have made short work of the Grassins". In addition, two 'Free Companies' presumably light infantry, formed part of Cumberland's army, so that the addition of a light battalion seemed permissible. On the French side the dispositions were more or less as they had been for the First Experiment, save that one additional infantry regiment was transferred from the right at Fontenoy, to a position on the French left wing, near the Wood of Barri. Evidently 'Saxe' considered that 'Cumberland' would attack more strongly through the wood. In point of fact, 'Cumberland' had been superseded by 'Sir John Ligonier', who looked upon

the Fontenoy - Wood of Barri position with considerable misgiving, as being a pretty tough nut to crack. However, his plan was to initially make a strong attack through the wood, and either to exploit this, if it were a success, or if sufficient troops were drawn together from other parts of the French line, to make an attack on the French right centre or even on Fontenoy itself.

So, at 6 a.m., the entire British artillery (4 guns) moved up and commenced a bombardment of Fontenoy while, led by a battalion of light infantry, two infantry regiments - with a third in support - moved against the Wood (Diagram No.3). At first, good progress was made the Grassins being driven well back into the Wood. This, as 'Ligonier' had hoped, caused an immediate sideways movement on the part of the French, two infantry regiments entering the Wood in support of the Grassins, while two others were moved from the centre to the left wing near the redoubts. Soon, fighting was going on all through the Wood, and the French right had been considerably depleted, only two regiments remaining in Fontenoy itself. At 8 a.m (Move 9) the left of 'Ligonier's' line - five regiments in all - advanced on Fontenoy, immediately coming under heavy artillery fire. As soon as they came within grapeshot range great gaps were cut in their ranks, and ultimately only one of the five was able to press home its attack. In the resulting melee it was repulsed without difficulty.

Meantime, the tide of battle in the Wood had turned in favour of the French, who were in the process of mounting a strong counter-attack, and by 11 a.m were debouching on the Allied right flank. Earlier, there had been a cavalry fight in the centre, the result being in favour of the French, who were able to take advantage of the slope to increase the impetus of their charges. The Allied cavalry were flung back with considerable losses and by midday the Allied army was in a pretty parlous state, with French horse and foot well out of the Wood of Barri and pressing hard on its right. At this juncture, much to 'Ligonier's' relief, the experiment was considered at an end!

This was a much more exciting game than the previous one, probably because of the tactical latitude allowed the 'generals', but it was still tremendously in favour of the French, whose infantry losses of 134 compared favourably with the 316 of the British - cavalry losses were about equal - again an excess of between three and four regiments of infantry. 'Ligonier' made one bad tactical error, for which he was later seen kicking himself all round the wargames table - he brought his artillery into action too far away from Fontenoy so that he was unable to destroy the French guns there (at extreme range a roundshot hit on a gun only silences it for two moves). He might have increased the strength of his attacking force by one of the regiments which had been directed into the wood. Not that this would have made much difference, however, as the French infantry which had moved towards the redoubts from the centre were able to retrace their steps, and could have reinforced Fontenoy in time, had it been in any danger.

The THIRD EXPERIMENT was not approached with great enthusiasm, as it covered the Dutch attack on the Fontenoy-Anthoing position. It wasn't easy to get the relative strengths of the forces engaged in this sector, most British histories being understandably rather brief in their accounts but it seemed that, in infantry, the proportion was about 10:7 in favour of the Dutch, with equal cavalry, and more guns on the French side. Therefore, when the battlefield was set out - once again the entire table was devoted to the particular section of the terrain we were considering, with Fontenoy on one side and Anthoing and the River Scheldt on the other - the French deployed seven regiments of infantry and the Dutch ten, with three cavalry regiments each. The Dutch had four guns, the French five - two at Fontenoy, one in Anthoing and two across the Scheldt, covering the approach to Anthoing and enfilading the entire line almost as far as Fontenoy. With these two guns in mind, the Dutch commander, 'Prince Waldeck' decided to avoid Anthoing and to make his main effort against the south side of Fontenoy. So, at 6 a.m., he boldly advanced all his guns on his right to bombard this village, bringing up the bulk of his infantry behind them, and leaving only his cavalry and a couple of infantry regiments on his left to face Anthoing (Diagram No.4). Dutch gunfire was accurate, and by 8 a.m., both the French cannon in front of Fontenoy had been destroyed and the Dutch infantry was advancing.

Despite the loss of the guns, French musketry fire from Fontenoy was effective, the Dutch losing heavily in their approach - some 60 casualties fell out of the five regiments initially in the advance, despite the fact that, on four successive moves, the French lost the dice throw which, in a firefight, determines which side fires first, with corresponding advantage to the Dutch. French cavalry was brought forward from the centre to break up, if possible, the infantry attack, and 'Saxe' had early deemed it necessary to move reinforcements into Fontenoy on his right. His line was dangerously thin, only the two redoubts between Anthoing and Fontenoy having an infantry. About 11 a.m. the Dutch broke into the latter village and street fighting was quickly in progress. Further cavalry fighting took place but by 11.30 a.m. about of Fontenoy was in Dutch hands and the situation was tense in the extreme, with fresh Dutch infantry pouring over the breastworks, houses being taken and re-taken and charge and counter-charge taking place in the streets. All in all, this was tremendously exciting and continued in this way until 12.15 a.m.

At this point - i.e., on the completion of the 25th move - the battle would in normal circumstances have been decided in favour of the attacking Dutch as, at this time, the French had lost 51% of their strength, while the Dutch loss was only 46%. As previously pointed out, when an army has been reduced to half its strength or less, it must break off the fight and retreat, but for the purposes of this operation the experiment must be considered at this stage together with the state of things operating at the same time in the previous experiments,



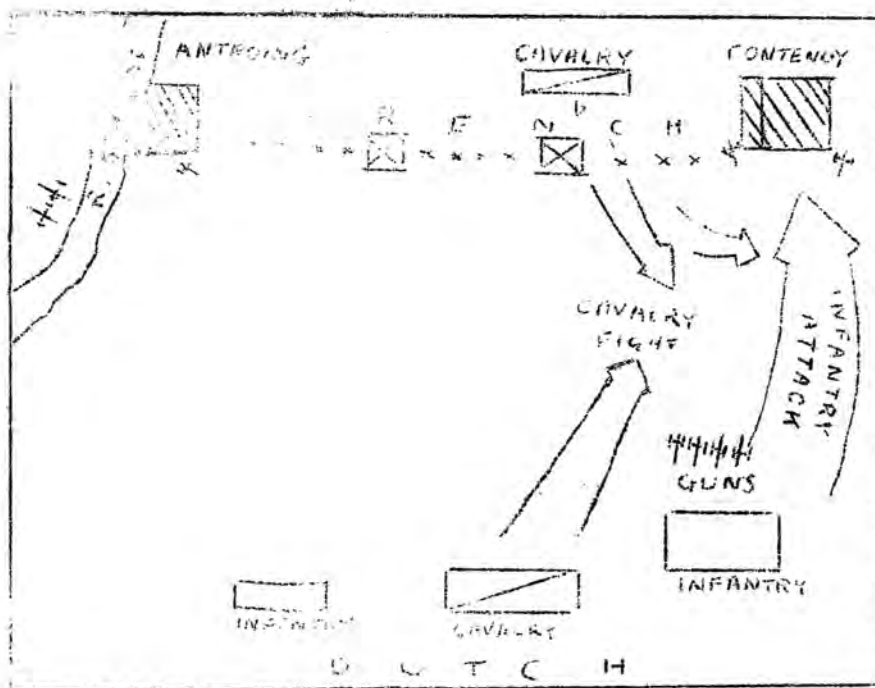


DIAGRAM NO. 4.

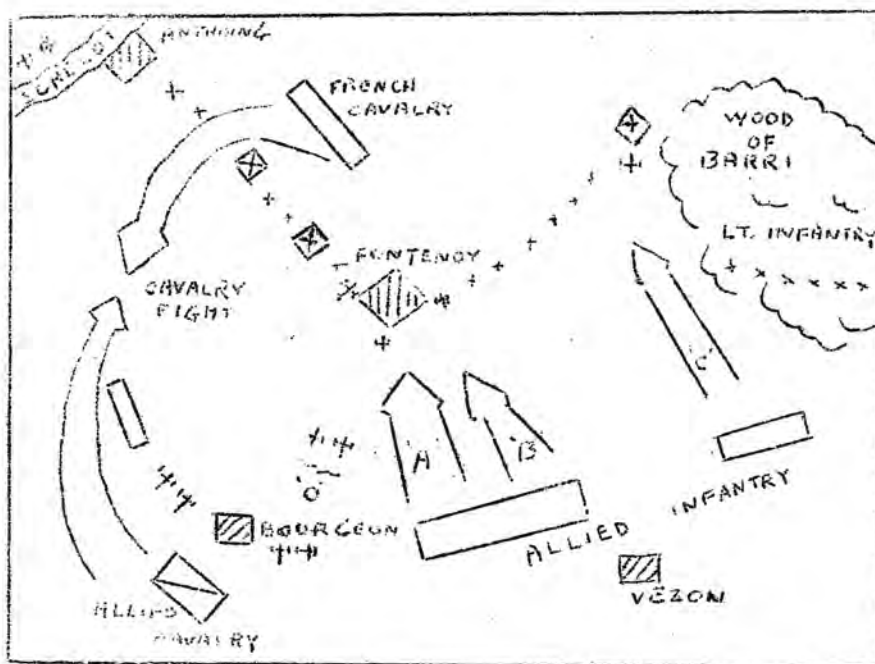


DIAGRAM NO. 5

- 'A' - 1st INF. ATTACK.
- 'B' - 2nd INF. ATTACK
- 'C' - SUBSIDIARY ATTACK
- 'O' - POSITION OF ADVANCED BATTERY
- xxx - FRENCH POSITION

By 12.15 p.m in the FIRST EXPERIMENT the firefight between the British column and the French line was approaching its climax, with the former having already suffered a loss of 29% of its strength. It was already abundantly clear that a breakthrough, such as took place in the actual battle, was extremely unlikely, and that the four infantry regiments actually confronting the column, together with the unengaged cavalry in their rear, could easily have held off the British attack, and that, consequently, three and possibly four French infantry regiments could have already been fed into Fontenoy in ample time to hold out successfully against the Dutch attack.

This is even more applicable to the SECOND EXPERIMENT, where by 12.15 p.m., the French counter-attack was pressing against the British right, the attack on Fontenoy having been repulsed as early as 11 a.m. And once again the uncommitted French infantry could have been utilised in Fontenoy against the Dutch, who in any case, with 46% losses at this time, were rapidly approaching the 50% limit and were in no condition to exploit their partial hold on the village.

For the FOURTH EXPERIMENT, the final one, the whole battlefield was transferred to the wargamestable. It was thought that this might consequently give a rather restricted game, compared with the previous occasions when only half the field had been reproduced on the table, but by dint of some juggling the result wasn't too bad and indeed gave more room than had been expected. In view of the results of the previous experiments, particularly in the first two, it was decided to give the Allies a reasonable chance, by allowing them fairly substantial advantage in infantry, namely fourteen regiments to the ten of the French. Each army had three cavalry regiments - possibly an error, as Colin, in 'Campagnes de Louis XV' gives the comparable mounted strengths as 15,000 and 12,000 for the Allies and French respectively, and the former could thus have had an extra cavalry regiment. It is doubtful, though, whether this would have made any difference to the result. The French had six guns - two across the Scheldt, three in Fontenoy and one in the redoubt (for the sake of a little simplification, the actual number of redoubts had been reduced to two between Anthoing and Fontenoy and one at the west end of the Wood of Barri). Diagram No.5 shows the positions. The troops engaged on the table were, of all ranks - Allies 891 and French - 681 - all in all it was quite a battle.

With the entire field on the table, it was again apparent to all and sundry what a formidable proposition confronted the Allied Commander, and he - the said 'General' - confesses that he didn't have a great deal of inspiration as to how to go about the operation. The French forces were disposed much as they were in the actual battle - the bulk of the infantry between Fontenoy and the Wood of Barri, the former being fortified and strongly held, and light infantry posted in the latter. The cavalry was in reserve behind the Anthoing-Fontenoy redoubts, and the latter line was covered by enfilade fire from over the Scheldt. On the Allied side, about two-thirds of the infantry were massed to the right and rear of Bourgeon, the remainder to the left of this village, behind which was stationed the cavalry. Allied guns were on either side of the Bourgeon.

When the action commenced at 6 a.m., all parts of the Allied line came under French artillery fire, and fighting broke out at once in the Wood of Barri between light infantry of both sides, with Allied line infantry moving into the wood in support. Allied guns, coming into action on both sides of the Burgeon, scored an early success, destroying one of the cannon in Fontenoy. Following this, the entire Allied right wing - seven regiments of infantry in all - moved forward to the attack. The French artillery, particularly the gun in the Wood of Barri redoubt, took heavy toll, but the attack was pressed home, and about 10.30 a.m. hand-to-hand fighting broke out around the defences of Fontenoy. Before this, however, the Allied infantry had lost - all along the line - no less than 172 casualties, and had also had a stroke of bad luck, when the leading brigade lost its General, who inadvertently got in the way of a whiff of grapeshot. This mishap, following our rules, caused the brigade to miss a move, during which it stood still, receiving a gratuitous volley from guns and muskets, which reduced the two regiments involved to perilously low proportions, as well as holding up the units following. Despite this, however, as already said, the infantry closed with the defenders and even, at one point where the roundshot had opened a breach in the breastworks, penetrated the defences. This incursion was speedily liquidated, however, and the attack was flung back from Fontenoy, which was now literally jammed with French infantry, pouring in from both sides to reinforce the garrison.

However, under cover of this attack, a battery of two guns had been moved up very close to the village and as soon as it had been unmasked by the retreating infantry it opened up with grape and roundshot on the village which at this time was rather reminiscent of Blenheim, when it was packed with Clerambault's battalions. Indeed, the Allied general momentarily thought that, were he able to induce such a concentration to remain in Fontenoy, there was a chance that a breakthrough might be effected through the rather denuded Fontenoy-Anthoing line. This dream was quickly shattered, the heavy damage and casualties caused by the advanced battery, together with the Allied extension towards the river Scheldt, resulting in an immediate withdrawal of most of the infantry in the village. During the Allied move towards the river an infantry regiment was caught by French cavalry in a rather exposed position and badly cut up. At once the Allied horse moved up from behind Burgeon and there followed prolonged cavalry fighting almost up to Anthoing. In this the French had very much the advantage, their cavalry being handled with great skill but apart from some desultory musketry fire, there was little further activity in this area, the fire from the French guns over the Scheldt inhibiting any Allied action.

However, after the regiments which had already been in action were reorganised and reserves brought up, at about 11 a.m. the Allied right wing again moved forward, the main column being directed against Fontenoy, with a subsidiary attack moving up the side of the Wood of Barri, in which for some time the opposing light infantry had been in a condition of stalemate. Thanks to the Allied forward battery, all



the Fontenoy guns had been silenced, but the one in the redoubt inflicted severe casualties. The advance continued, though, and at 12.15 a.m., the main attacking force was within assaulting distance of the village.

At this point - i.e. the 25th move - we must as before, according to our rules, examine the situation. In brief, it was pretty catastrophic for the Allies who, although now having four guns in action to the French three, had suffered no less than 455 casualties while the French having lost only 258, were actually a shade stronger numerically. It seemed fairly obvious that to assault such a position with a force less than that of the defenders was indeed asking for trouble. Still, just to make sure, the experiment was continued for two or three more moves - just to see. As expected, the attacking regiments were quickly ruined and the assault could not be pressed home.

Thus, the FOURTH EXPERIMENT confirmed what, in fact, had become increasingly evident throughout the previous three games, to wit, that even with a 14:10 superiority in infantry, the Fontenoy position was pretty impregnable, and that to attack it without a two-to-one superiority was most unwise. Quite apart from the existence of the redoubts and the strengthening of Fontenoy village by breastworks, the fact that the French enjoyed the possession of interior lines had a tremendous bearing on the course of the battle. In point of fact, infantry marching from the centre of the French right wing to the left centre were able to do so in rather less than half the moves it took the Allied infantry to get from their left centre to their right ditto. There was really no chance for the Allies to achieve any local superiority before the French were able to counter it by moving their own troops in ample time. However, much was learned from the series of battles, and this may be summarised as follows:

CONCLUSIONS: Although 'Operation Fontenoy' was really intended to be a fairly serious attempt to try out our Seven Years War rules against the background of an actual battle, nevertheless it provided some of the most exciting fighting that we have ever had. My own feeling - in the Fourth Experiment - when the general of my leading brigade became a casualty have to be experienced to be understood! However, all things being considered, the rules came out of the test fairly well, although it was found necessary, as the experiments progressed, to make certain alterations. The principal one was probably to the 'grapeshot cone', the device - it is made of thin brass wire soldered into the appropriate shape - which we use to assess the results of grape or canister fire. We began with the one we had used for some time - 15" long and 4" wide at the extremity, divided into two sections, with dice throws of 4, 5 or 6 and 5, 6 required to kill any troops in the inner and outer sections respectively. This, with its extreme range of 15" compared with musketry range of 18" was really a leftover from our American Civil War game, a period in which the rifled musket outranged grapeshot, and some research showed that this was inapplicable in the middle 18th century. After consultations with certain pundits it was learned that grapeshot was very effective up to about musketry range, beyond which, chiefly due to 'spread', and possibly also to the propellant charge's being comparatively weak, its

efficacy deteriorated very rapidly. So, during the experiments we evolved a new 'cone' which was 24" in length, divided like the old one into two sections - 4,5,6 and 5,6 killing in the inner and outer sections respectively. This was found to be too lethal in practice at extreme range and the definitive 'cone' was constructed thus - still 24" in length, with a maximum width of 2", divided into three sections: 0 - 12"; 12 - 20", and 20 to 24", with dice throws of 4,5,6; 5,6; and 6 to kill in the respective sections. Subsequent experience has shown this new device to be a much closer approximation to the 'real thing' than its predecessors.

At this point perhaps I may be permitted to enlarge a little on my references to a 'Fifty-per-cent-rule' in this wise. Way back, I used to take a very dim view of wargames which were literally fights to the death, with the winner having about three soldiers on their feet at the end, and the loser none. This seemed pretty puerile, as well as unrealistic, placing as it did no value whatever upon tactics, and reducing every game to a species of slogging match. Besides - despite the romantics - history shows very few, if any, examples of 'fights to the death', and indeed rarely did an army, or a unit, for that matter, receive losses of even half its initial strength without breaking or at least abandoning the fight. In fact, the only example I can call to mind is Bunker's Hill, where the British force had lost very nearly half its strength in killed and wounded when it finally drove off the Americans. So, in accordance with what seems to me to be sound precedence, our 'Fifty-per-cent Rule' is this:

"When a unit has suffered 50% losses in a battle, it must break off the action and retire to a Base Point. There it may regroup with portions of other similar regiments to form a provisional regiment, which, before taking any further part in the fighting must be at least three-quarters of the strength of the normal regiment. When perchance, a provisional regiment has itself suffered 50% casualties, it retires and can take no further part in the action. The regrouping process takes four moves. The same rule applies to the complete army - with 50% losses it must retreat; there is, of course, no regrouping."

Incidentally, it might be of interest to point out the amount of time involved in the above games. Taking the first experiment as an example, we know that the actual battle time was 6 a.m to 2 p.m - or at least that portion we are concerned with. Our actual table fighting time was six hours forty minutes, and of that period a considerable time - at least forty minutes - was devoted to making fairly copious notes of the casualties, how they were inflicted and by what means etc. So, fighting time was in the neighbourhood of 6 hours for the 8 hours engagement. Interesting, if only to show that our action was quicker by quarter than was the actual fighting.

A notable occurrence at Fontenoy was the remarkable initial volley by the British infantry which, it is related, laid low some 700 Frenchmen and caused this part of the French line to cave in. To be honest, I had always thought that this was a bit of a fluke, but, having sought advice from the learned, had it pointed out to me that the first volley of any unit would almost certainly be better than subsequent ones - the muskets had been carefully loaded in camp, under supervision of sergeants and so on; there was no risk of the ramrod's being left in the barrel; the charge and ball had been carefully rammed home and not just 'tamped down' by banging the butt of the musket on the ground, etc., etc. It should, too, be pointed out that the 18th century musket fire should not be altogether despised. General Fuller ("Decisive Battles of the Western World", Vol. II) describes the first Prussian volley at Crefeld, 1758, as accounting for some 75% of the enemy, and mentions Wolfe's men who, at Quebec, reserved their fire until, with the French within 40 yards, they delivered a perfectly devastating fire, which absolutely shattered the advancing enemy line.

Solving the problem of the more destructive first volley was easy, and we have taken the following rule into use: Normally, from the dice throw determining the casualties a firing group of 6 infantry inflicts on its target group, deductions of 3 and 2 for ranges 9 - 18" and 0 - 9" are made respectively. However, from the first volley of any infantry regiment in a battle, deductions of only 2 and 1 are made from the dice throw for distance and close firing respectively. Thus, if infantry gets within 9" of its enemy, it can deliver a really murderous volley - so that it pays to hold one's fire. I may be wrong, but I cannot recall this provision being made in any other rules that I have come across.

That's all, and about time, too!

oooooooooooooooo

In connection with this extremely well-conceived article and experiment, I do not think that Charles Grant will object if I add one or two minor points which appear to me to be of some slight relevance.

The figures that Charles has used for this, and other battles of the period, are 30mm plastic solids; the line infantry being mostly in a marching position. All are beautifully and extremely accurately painted to give one of the most attractive and impressive layouts that I can ever recall seeing on a wargames table. Light Infantry, cavalry and generals etc are conversions of the basic figures, some of them even sport a neat lace collar! These figures can be purchased for about 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d each for infantry and 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d each for cavalry - so that it is possible to build up large armies at ridiculously low cost. And, some of us might claim that although, even so, they are a bit more expensive than Airfix, they are considerably easier to paint and convert in their larger size!



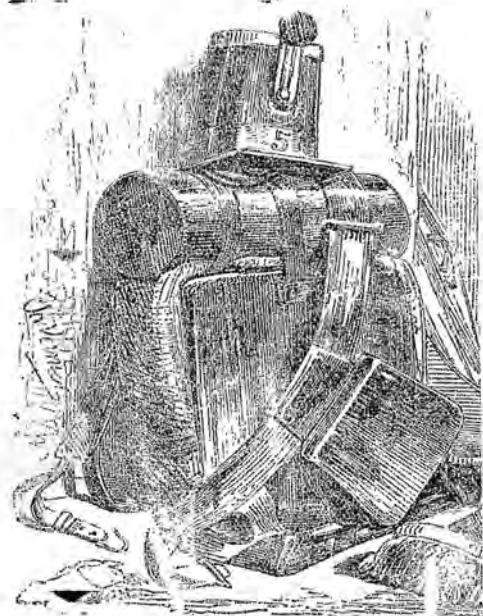
The Chasseurs de Vincennes, expected by the writer of the article in the well-known ILLUSTRATED LONDON News 'to be sure to play so important a part in the next European War' were crack French light infantry of the period.

They were taking part in experiments at the time to test the new system of drill invented by General Louvemel, who had written a pamphlet in which he contended that all the line regiments ought to be drilled and armed as the Chasseurs de Vincennes. This screed was answered by Captain Pernot (the author of a celebrated work on fire-arms). These two pamphlets, and the new system of fortification proposed by Mr. Ferguson (?), the author of 'The Perils of Portsmouth' not only seemed to cause a great deal of discussion among the French authorities but also among the general public. Today, we probably know little or nothing of these points which, at that time, obviously were considered to be of great importance.

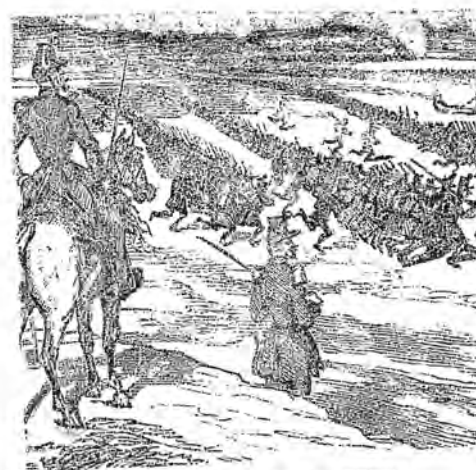
Apparently, the high-ranking officers who had served with the Chasseurs in North Africa and in Rome had spoken with great contempt for all fortifications, as they contended that the new firearms must always be able to destroy artillerymen at their guns! (This smacks of the remarkable French idea in 1914 that machine-guns could best be combated by enthusiastic bayonet charges).

However, the French artillery officers and engineers are reported to have been most contemptuous of the view of the Chasseurs officers! At the same time a discussion was taking place as to the efficacy of the new Minie rifle against a charge of cavalry -- one viewpoint being that the movements of the cavalry would be so rapid and their attack cause such confusion that the rifles would be

be very effective! As always in war, the truth had to be discovered by the poor old infantryman and cavalry trooper in the hardest possible way. The American Civil War and, to a lesser degree, the Crimean War, showed that the Minie rifle was highly effective and paved the way for the very deadly results of Prussian massed infantry fire against French cavalry in 1870.

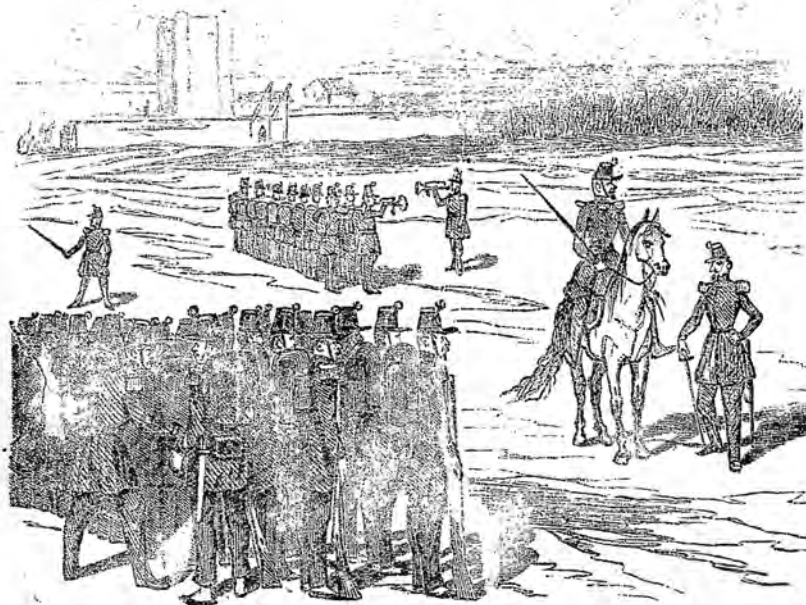


CHASSEURS' ACCOUTREMENTS.



GYMNASTIC PAGE.—180 STEPS IN ONE MINUTE.





SIGNALS BY BUGLE.

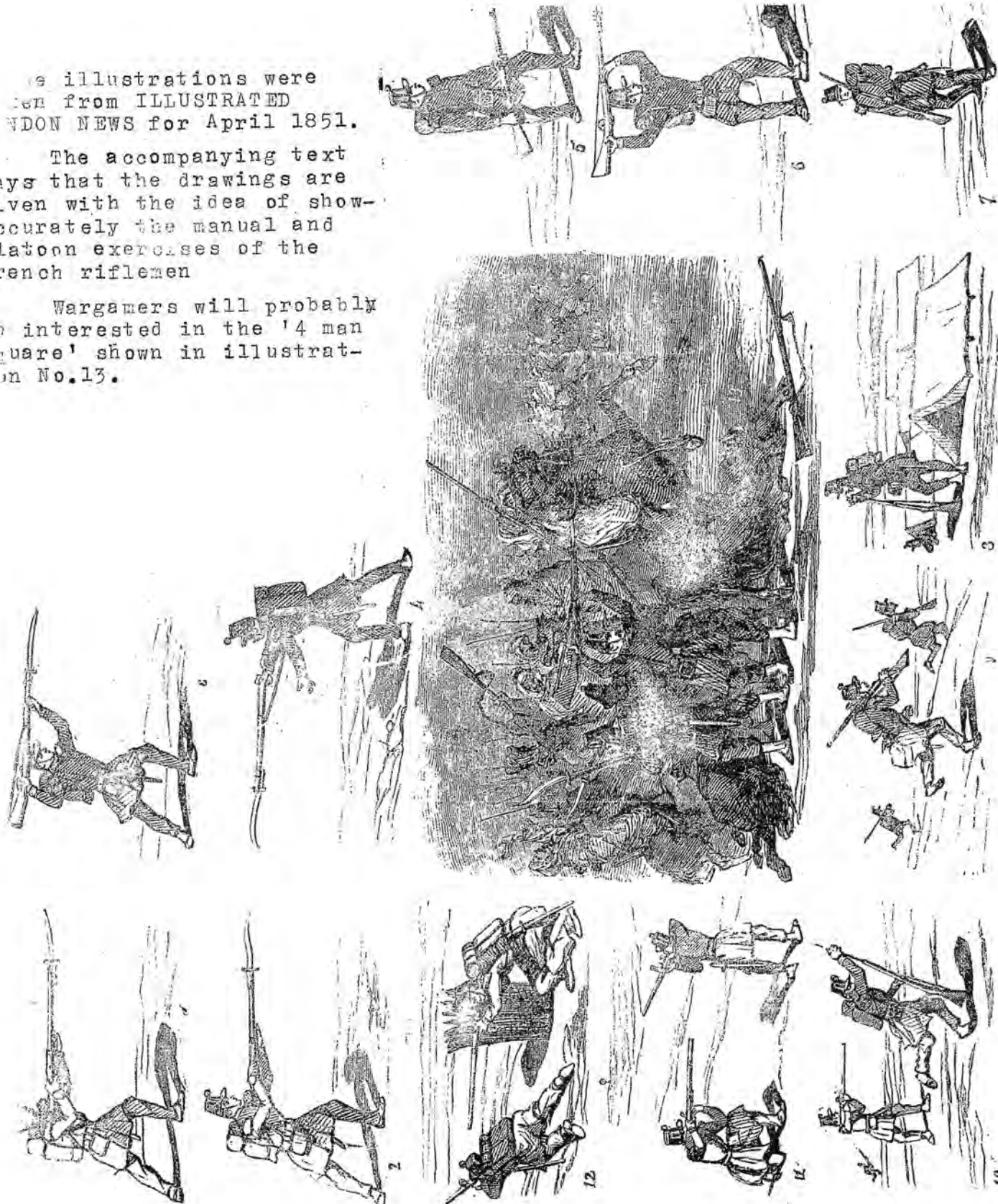


The tank used on the miniature armour battlefield - it is a model of the M48A2; built to the scale of 1:25 inches.

the illustrations were  
 taken from ILLUSTRATED  
 LONDON NEWS for April 1851.

The accompanying text  
 says that the drawings are  
 given with the idea of show-  
 ing accurately the manual and  
 platoon exercises of the  
 French riflemen

Wargamers will probably  
 be interested in the '4 man  
 square' shown in illustrat-  
 ion No.13.



THE CHASSEURS DE VINCESNES.

- 1. To rest Cavalry—(fourth position) Point.
- 2. To rest Cavalry—(third position) Point.
- 3. To rest Cavalry—(second position) Point.
- 4. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 5. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 6. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 7. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 8. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 9. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 10. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 11. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 12. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 13. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.
- 14. To rest Cavalry—(first position) Point.

## HOW ABOUT GETTING ORGANIZED ?

Readers of WARGAMERS' NEWSLETTER will be familiar with the ebullient attitude towards wargaming that is taken by Jack Rimer of U.S.A. I can pay him no greater compliment than to say that he seems to have an English counterpart in Peter Gilder - both of them work amazingly quickly and to the highest possible standards in bringing their chosen armies up to the desired level. Recently, Jack sent me what he calls his 'Organisational Chart' of the German Army for 1870-71. He uses Ochel portrait-figures in flats for his personalities, having them as closely as possible fulfil their original roles in history.

Jack uses 'Chance Cards' in his rules, to bring him new and different eventualities and situations - this is very vital when fighting solo games, as many of Jack's games are. In close conjunction with these 'Chance Cards' is the Chain of Command that this organisational table lays out. By Jack's rules it takes an adjutant or a courier to countermand an order, and when he rides from Royal Headquarters to one of the three main armies, he takes his chances on never getting to his destination - due to sniping or artillery fire.

The French are organised in a kindred manner, with Napoleon IIIrd., Bazaine, Ducrot, McMahon et al being represented by their Ochel counterparts. Jack reports that this system has produced real excitement in his games besides building up a greater interest in his collection.

He still has some units to add to his present organization to bring it up to chart specifications - particularly Hussars. In his hunt, Jack has recently come across a wonderful set of pre-war Ochel KILIA Hussars with a magnificent paint job on them. He has bolstered the French forces with some BORIE castings, and is working on Franc-Tireurs now, as they are an important part of his French organisation; he has some fifty of them in action at present. He intends to design his own Papal Zouaves and is going to add the S.A.E representation of Garibaldi.

Jack has a justifiable pride in his collection and says that repainting all the commercial figures is a man-sized job - as he spends from one to two hours on a single figure repaint!

It does seem that there is a considerable amount of scope in Jack's methods of organization for those wargamers who like to keep such details of their forces and to whom documentation is of great interest. Oddly enough, this coincides with recent discussions by mail concerning the fairly obvious fact that the solo wargamer - the man without a regular opponent - seems to delve deeper into the complexities and organizational aspects of his armies. He seems invariably to be a more knowledgeable man about the game and to seek higher levels of realism - so it appears that lacking an opponent brings its own compensations!

# TABLE OF ORGANIZATION.

## German Army 1870-71.

### Royal Headquarters.

King Wilhelm I C.I.C.

Bismarck.

von Moltke. Chief - General Staff.

Gen. von Bredow - Cavalry Bde Cmdr.  
Garde du Corps -- Gen. von Pape - Cmdr of the Guard.  
 Gen. von Schmettow.

Gen. v. Alvensleben III Prinz. Fred. Karl. C. Prinz. Fred. Gen. v. Roon.  
 Wilhelm. (Kriegsminister)

### I Armee.

### II Armee.

### III Armee.

### LANDWEHR.

Line Inf.  
 Line Inf.  
 Jagers.

Leib Hussars  
 Gd. Grenadiers  
 Gd. Inf.  
 Gd. Jagers.  
 Gd. Schutzen  
 Line Inf.

Line Inf.. 2nd Gd Landw.  
 Saxon Inf. Landw. Cav..  
 Saxon Reiters Siege Arty.  
 Saxon Schutz. (2 btys)  
 (regt 108)

Cuirassiers.  
 Hussars (1st Rgt)  
 Dragoons  
 Uhlans

Gd. Cuirassiers.  
 Gd. Uhlans (3rd  
 Rgt).

Wurt. Inf. Naval Bde. +  
 Wurt. Gd. Pioneers.  
 Grens. Train  
 Wurt. Uhlans. Gendarmerie.  
 Band.

Artillery.

Artillery.

Nassau Schutz.

### BAVARIAN CORPS.

Gen. v. Hartman.

Leib Inf.  
 Line Inf.  
 Jagers.

Kurassiers.  
 Chevaulegers.

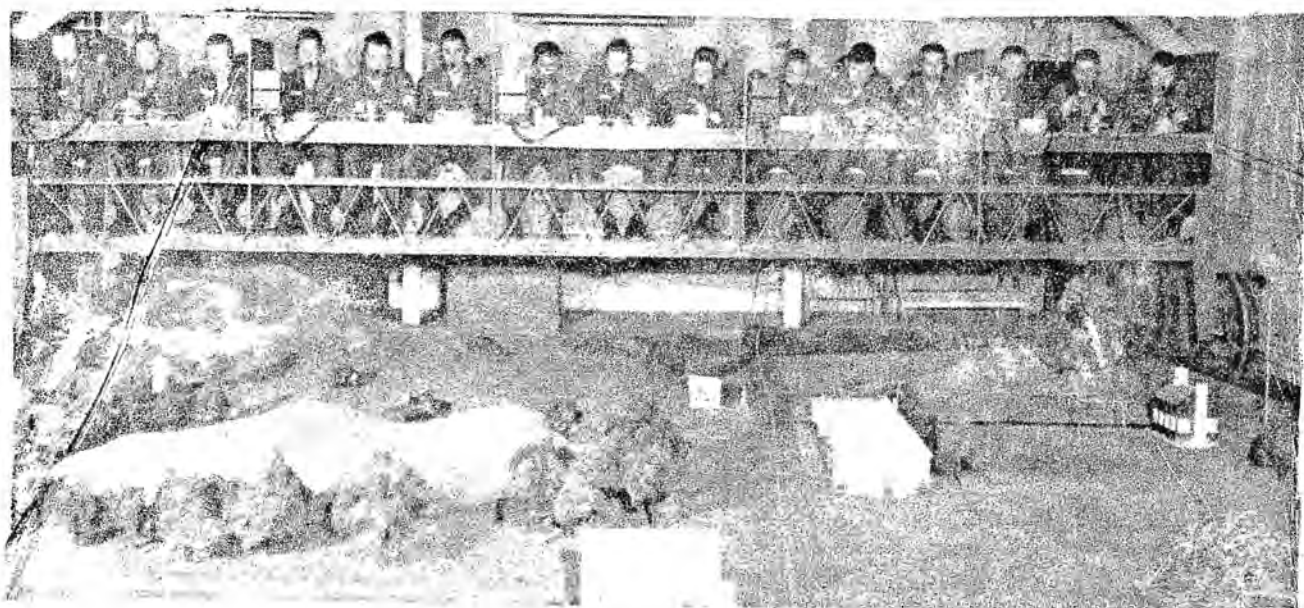
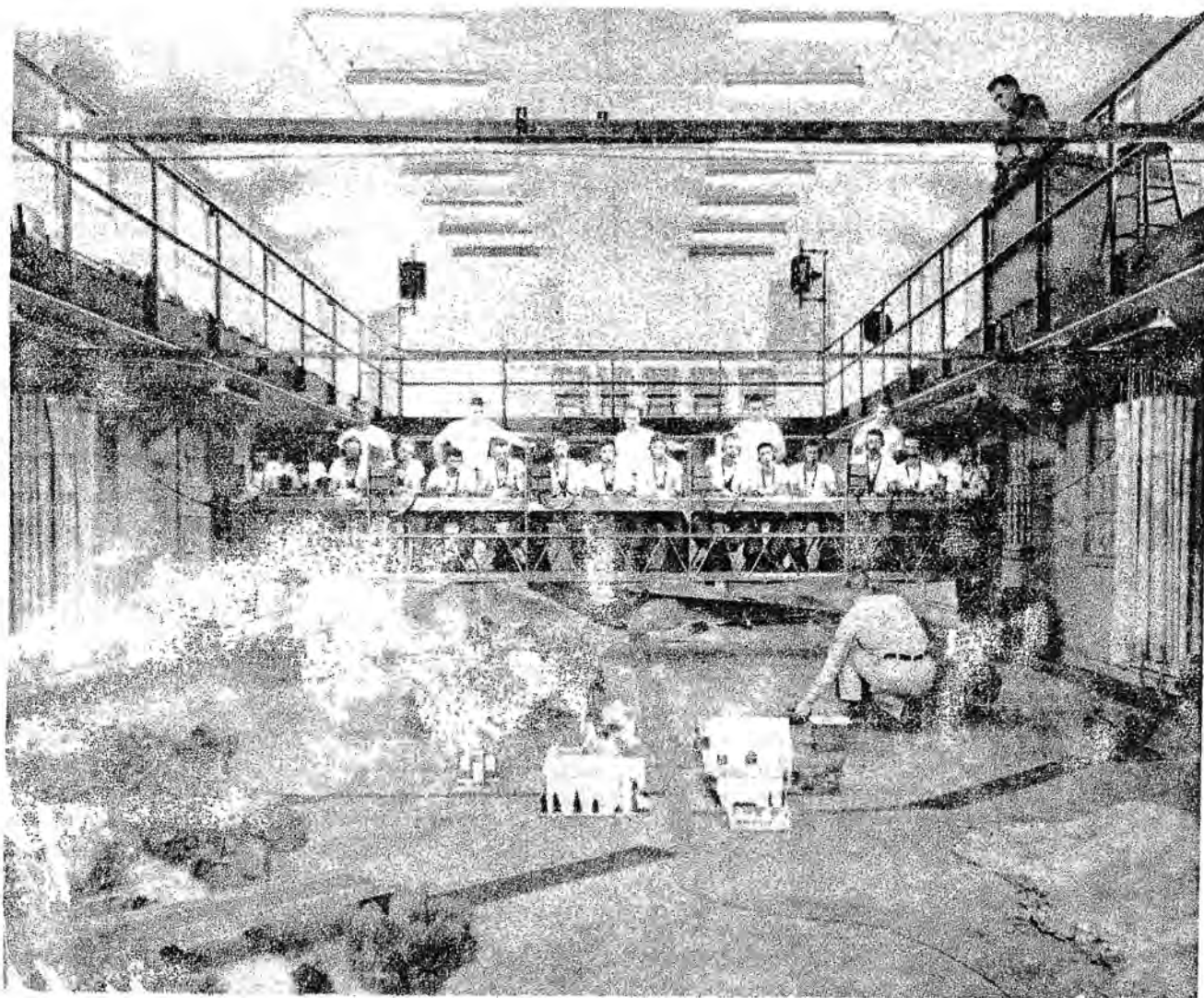
Artillery.  
 Siege Battery.

Braunschweig Inf (92)  
 Braunschweig Hussars (17)  
 Hessian Artillery.

Direct lines of supervision  
 or command are denoted by  
 connecting lines. Army Cmdrs.  
 report directly to Wilhelm I.

These five groups are not  
 reserves, but may be assigned  
 to any of the three armies.





### THE MINIATURE ARMOUR BATTLEFIELD.

Readers of the Wargamers Newsletter will remember the series bearing the above title that ran for three or four months in 1963. At that time it was greatly regretted by the Editor that he was unable to reproduce the most interesting photographs that accompanied the original article in 'ARMOR' magazine for September 1960. It is now possible to remedy that defect and it is hoped that these illustrations will be of interest not only to those who read the original articles but also to all wargamers.

All tank unit commanders would like to see an increase in the amount of field training that their units receive. However, manœuvres and exercises are costly particularly when they involve armoured units, because large terrains are required, vast amounts of petrol, oil and ammunition together with a great many different units. The United States Army Armour Human Research Unit at Fort Knox believe that they have overcome many of these difficulties with the construction of an indoor 'miniature armour battlefield'.

The model tank shown is a model of the M48A2 built to a scale of 1:25 inches - it is operated by a transmitter which controls its tracks; rotation of its turret, depression of the gun and actual firing are controlled by another small box-like apparatus. Gun-fire is simulated by the small high-intensity light source affixed to the gun barrel, this will project a beam 20-25 feet. Each tank contains photo-electric cells mounted on the right and left sides just below the support-rollers; when the concentrated light beam from another tank strikes one of these cell plates, a disabling relay is activated and the tank becomes inoperable - red light showing that the tank is hit.

The larger photo shows the whole set-up, with tank crews in their places working the apparatus setting their vehicle in motion; referees are in position and a technician is carrying out some sort of alteration to the terrain or to a tank down on the floor. The terrain is 76 by 28 feet and its features are built to a scale of 1:25 inches; it contains various types of natural and man-made terrain features such as hills, valleys, rivers, trees, grass, underbrush, boulders, buildings, houses, bridges etc. These are constructed of lightweight materials and can be placed in any position on the board to simulate almost any type of terrain. By re-setting these terrain features it is possible to make continuous any particular problem by running it in a series of phases.

At the opposite end of the movable steel platform that contains the tank crews in their five separate compartments is a permanently fixed bench containing 15 aggressor personnel.

The entire set-up is said to have cost \$24,000.00 - the most expensive item being the radio-controlled tanks.

## JAN ZISKA

and Fourteenth Century Armored Warfare  
by  
LIEUTENANT BEN W. COVINGTON, III.

MILITARY HISTORY records the many times that the evolution of a new weapons system or doctrine has proved to be the decisive element on the battlefield. Perhaps one of the greatest innovations and certainly one of the least recognised revolved about the figure of John of Trocznow, a Bohemian General who has been likened to Napoleon in his daring and ingenuity, and who is given credit by some for the fall of feudal cavalry.

Born the son of a minor nobleman, in Bohemia, circa the year 1360, John of Trocznow was brought up amid the mediaeval splendour of the court at Prague. There is little account of his early life, but it is known that he lost his right eye during childhood, and was thereafter known as Jan Ziska (the one eyed one).

Ziska left Prague to serve Wenceslas IV, the king of Hungary, with whom he probably became acquainted at the court in Prague. He served as the king's hunter for a number of years and when fighting broke out between the nobles who supported the king and those who did not, Ziska joined a band of guerrilla forces on the side of the king.

During this period (1389-1408), Ziska learned the art of war as conducted by small units against overwhelming odds. This experience was to prove of great value to him later when his own troops faced constant numerical superiority.

In 1409, Ziska was hired for an expedition to help the king of Poland against the Teutonic Knights. It was then that he became a leader of men. The accounts show his name was on the rolls as a Czech officer. In this position he fought in the battle of Grunwald-Tannenberg. There are indications that he participated in the battle of Crecy also. At any rate there can be little doubt that during this period he observed, first hand, what a combination of a defensive barrier (dismounted men at arms) and firepower (long bow) could do to undisciplined mediaeval cavalry. At the termination of hostilities Ziska returned to Prague as an officer of the palace guard.

It was not until his later years that Ziska came into prominence as the scourge of Central Europe. With the coming of the Reformation, Europe found itself divided into two armed camps. One of the leading Reformists, John Huss, came from the same area that Ziska called home and they became friends. Ziska became an ardent admirer of Huss and a devoted follower of his teachings. Huss seemed to be just the man for Ziska who was particularly embittered by the seduction of his sister which caused him to have little use for the other camp. When Huss was burned at the stake, Ziska took a vow to avenge the death of the man he admired.



By the death of Huss, Bohemia was under attack from the Papal forces for being heretics. Bohemia was divided into two groups, the Moderates who controlled the Prague area, and the Taborites under Ziska. Although these two groups were mutually supporting against the common enemy, later developments were to pit them against each other.

With the death of Huss, Ziska had rallied his followers and established a fortress at Tabor (hence the name Taborites). The average Bohemian soldier of the day was poorly equipped and trained. Most of them were peasants who had never seen a crossbow or a mace and few had been in battle. Ziska set out to rectify this situation with the minimum of wasted time. He required of his soldiers and officers the utmost in discipline and devotion, and he set the example through endless work.

Ziska had noted that wagons had been used in warfare by a number of countries (Russia was one), and set out to improve on this concept. Previously the wagon had been used as a defensive barrier to protect its occupants from attack. A number of groups had used them much as our own Western settlers did to form a circle for defence. Ziska, being the forward looking individual that he was, determined that they could also be effectively utilised in offensive operations. With this in mind he set out to train special crews for his wagons. His drivers were taught to form squares, rectangles, circles, or triangles on a given signal and under virtually all conditions. Each wagon had a complement of about 20 soldiers, and every soldier had his own particular position and mission. With this concept Ziska started making local raids from Tabor which proved to be highly successful.

With the flush of victory and added strength derived through the capture of enemy weapons, Ziska decided to extend his operations. To this end, he discarded the conventional wagons (obsolescence being a problem in the 14th century also) and started to construct new combat wagons built specifically to fight with. These medieval predecessors to the tank were built of solid, heavy slabs of wood, reinforced with iron and leather. The sides were generally about chest high and were pierced with slots for firing bows and hand-guns. Accounts indicate that about one third of Ziska's men were armed with handguns at this time. This seems like a high percent for the time; the actual figures were probably on the order of one out of every five or even fewer. The wagons were drawn by heavy draft horses and were outfitted with chains to link them together when under attack. Of the twenty warriors assigned to each vehicle, half were pikemen who defended between the wagons while the other half poured fire on the enemy from the medieval tanks. In addition to the Armored Infantry, Ziska employed medium and heavy Artillery mounted on square carts and also in some of the wagons. With this additional firepower he could hurl rocks weighing up to one hundred pounds at the enemy. This Artillery was composed of rock throwing catapults, and iron cannons firing stone cannon balls. However, all of this was not enough. True to the combined arms concept, Ziska employed a small group of highly trained Cavalrymen who rode with his combat wagon trains. With this well trained, well balanced combat team Ziska was to defeat virtually all foes. Often facing armies of up to 200,000, his own Army never exceeded around 25,000 troops. The essential difference between the Bohemians and their foes lay in Ziska's appreciation of mobility, training, and Armor-protected firepower.

The usual formation consisted of either one of the well rehearsed geometric configurations or a battle line of wagon forts across the front, pikemen or Artillery in the gaps, and cavalry on the wings. After the initial assault by the enemy cavalry, which was their chief concern, the Bohemians launched a counterattack on the disorganised enemy and gave no quarter.

Ziska was inspired by two things, the death of Huss and the desire to unite his country. The fervour of his troops eventually inflicted terror into the hearts of their enemies, and armies often disappeared at the sound of the hymn singing Hussites.

Six major crusades were launched against the troops of Ziska and each one was decisively repulsed. The numerous minor campaigns that they fought were always terminated in a Hussite victory. Ziska, who was 64 when the campaigns began, lost his left eye as he was directing an attack on a castle at Raby near Glattau, the result of a splinter knocked off a tree under which he was sitting on his horse. Although blind in both eyes, he continued to direct all operations through the eyes of his subordinate commanders and his own intimate knowledge of the terrain of his country and the surrounding areas, much of which he had fought on before.

The Hussites eventually gained such proficiency that they attacked into Hungary, Austria, Silesia, Saxony, Bavaria, Thuringia, and Franconia. By this time, they had become so well versed in the art of mobile warfare that they could ride into the midst of attacking armies before forming their battle lines.

The forward looking tactics of the Hussites, never really grasped by their foes, gave them an aura of invincibility that saved them the trouble of fighting a number of potential battles. The opposing commanders lacking the ability to enforce discipline, could not keep a fighting force in the line to stand up against them. His tactics were obviously centred on a mobile defensive-offensive, and employed the modern concept of movement in Armored personnel carriers.

Ziska died on 12 October 1424, the victor in 11 major and numerous minor campaigns. His forces never suffered defeat under his leadership and his name remains as the name of a town and a mountain in the area that he defended. It was not until long after his death that the "Wagenbergs" or wagon towns were defeated, and then they fell to other Bohemians. After the Hussite wars, Bohemia split into two opposing groups and eventually a test of arms came about. Ziska's commanders divided themselves, and they made the fatal error of not realising where the true strength of the concept lay. The ability of the Hussite troops to gain a victory lay to a great extent in disorganising the enemy, using the inherent Armor protected firepower of their vehicles, and following up with a powerful counter-attack. The moderates realised this and took advantage of it by feigning retreat. When the Hussites saw them retreating, they left the battle formation for the pursuit. Shorn of their Armor protection they were cut off from their primary weapons system and defeated.

It is hard to believe that a general of the fourteenth century could recognise and utilise the combined arms concept so effectively. Ziska's realisation of the inherent capabilities of mobile, Armor protected firepower utilised with the combined arms concept enabled him to command a powerful, well organised, well trained, supremely confident force, the likes of which it has taken the Western powers over five hundred years to recognise, develop, and put into the field.

The important lesson to be learned from this slice of history is that a forward looking commander who appreciates the combat power of an integrated combat team based on mobility and Armor protected firepower and recognises its limitations is a tough man to deal with in any age.

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### ARE WARGAMERS GREGARIOUS ?

In the last four years there have been three Wargamer's Conventions - two lasting over a weekend and one a single day. Other than that there does not seem to be any record of organised and advertised gatherings of wargamers in Great Britain, at any rate.

This seems rather surprising, because wargaming is a hobby that needs more than one person to adequately pursue, and if there are large groups in an area then it seems obvious that the chances of regular games are more likely. Nevertheless, and in spite of the fact that there are known groups of wargamers in certain localities, there have been no other organised meetings except those held in Southampton - surely the most lively of the English wargaming towns!

Conventions are great fun - they enable the novice to see how the experienced wargamer goes about things, they enable even the veteran to learn something from his fellows - but, more than that they give the opportunity for an exchange of ideas, a stimulation and an encouragement to branch out in other fields and periods.

How about some of the other localities organising meetings? What about the Huddersfield group, the Birmingham boys, those in Liverpool and London - how about getting together and having one of these meetings? It can take many forms - a good idea is to have it organised around a 'Bring-and-Buy' sale, where wargamers bring along their old and unwanted figures, terrain, books, plates etc and return home with their arms full of things that they do want - we hope! Demonstration battles can be fought - favourite rules and tactics displayed and one's armies shown off to admiring eyes.

It doesn't have to be an expensive business, because to these local affairs obviously only relatively local people will come so that they won't need a large hall - just find a member with a big house and get on the right side of his wife! Mention can be made in SOLDIER Magazine of the event, the local Press are usually helpful and the word spreads around. The Wargamers Newsletter will give all possible publicity to any such events. But be wary of organising the gathering around one huge battle in which about five generals a side wage cumbersome war with about 15,00 troops - in the sad and regretful experience of the writer - the bigger the battle the bigger the bore. Have you ever fought in a wargame where it took 1½ hours to move each side - I have!





Fletcher Pratt, the famous  
American historian and the  
inventor of the naval war  
game that bears his name.



### FLETCHER PRATT'S NAVAL WARGAME.

This was a game that flourished in the U.S from 1929 until the end of World War Two; on the surface its rules and its organisation appear highly complex but it caught the fancy of thousands of people and it was played all over the country.

Fletcher Pratt was a writer and a naval expert, before he died in 1956 he had written some 60 books about naval and military affairs - including the wonderful American Civil War text book ORDEAL BY FIRE. One day in 1929, bored by poker and craps he and a group of maritime-minded friends decided to invent a naval wargame. They bought a division or two of model ships, pushed back the furniture in Pratt's living room and set to gaming.

By the time they were done, they had come up with the rules for a mammoth contest that required up to 60 people on a side, a large ballroom to play in and vast fleets of accurately scaled ships, and the Naval War College started sending down experts to take lessons.

Pratt's most limited of limited wars was essentially simple. There were fleets of model ships, each commanded by an admiral; each ship in each fleet had a captain. The captains manoeuvred around the floor under the direction of the admiral, steaming at scale speeds - a 30-knot ship could move so many inches a turn, a 20-knot ship two-thirds that distance and so on. All the ships would move at the same time. Pratt blew a whistle, everybody moved and then another whistle announced that it was time to stop moving and start shooting.

Shooting was the key to the operation, and it gave Pratt and his assistant inventors the most trouble. They tried all sorts of methods; aiming flashlights, firing toy-cannon at each other, even retiring to another room and whanging away with air pistols at battleship pictures pasted on the wall. Finally, they contrived a paper arrow with a metal-headed drawing pin at each end. When you were a ship-captain and it was time to shoot, you sprawled on the floor, lined up the pins on an enemy ship, tried to guess how many inches away the enemy ship was and wrote that estimated range on a handy pad of paper. After everybody had finished moving, Pratt - who was too good at the game and usually headed a board of referees - would go around with a big tape-measure measuring out the shots and putting a gold-tee upside down on the floor to simulate shell splashes for misses. A satisfactory-looking cardboard painted with rolling, black oily clouds showed a hit.

There was a vast formula for calculating the fighting power of each ship:  $(Gc^2 \times GN + Gc^2 \times Gn' + 10TT + 10A^2 + 10A'' + 25Ap + M) Sf + T$ .

There were also elaborate tables for telling each captain what had happened to his ship when the turn's shooting was over. There were other devices for torpedoing, laying smoke screens and shooting down airplanes, but most of the erudite calculations were made by Pratt and his referees. It really took just a good eye for distance and an old pair of pants to qualify for a floor command in Pratt's game!

As a result, Pratt's battles attracted a clientele ranging from professional naval officers to pretty girls. Some of the girls were extremely combative, and the first night I played the game I found myself salvoed at short range by a redhead in slacks commanding a Chinese torpedoboat. "I'll get you yet, wiseguy" she said, unsmiling, as she chased me behind a battle-ship. The naval officers, on the other hand, tended to emesh themselves in the intricacies of their profession, and were always getting into trouble. My fondest memory of my Saturday night service with Pratt came with the command of my own torpedoboat. A regular-Navy commander, fresh from Pacific destroyers, steered smartly down the floor with his model destroyers. He executed a snappy starboard turn and ran smack into 12 of my torpedoes! He looked on, slack-jawed, as they came and took away his ships; and then he got up and walked out of the ballroom.

By the time it got refined, Pratt's game was so like real naval battles that its players liked to try out actual fleet actions from history to make sure the right side had won. It almost always turned out that the right side had. Sometimes, however, Pratt would experiment with battles before they happened, and in one celebrated case he pitted the German pocket-battleship GRAF SPEE against three small British cruisers. The British won, and everybody decided there had been a mistake and forgot about it. Then the same thing happened in the real fight, and Pratt's players reacted with awe when they realised that they had been right and the experts wrong.

During the war the game caught on all over the country. It was played by National Reserve Officer Cadet Units in gymnasiums - one in Buffalo, had spectators, refreshments, a band and a big scoreboard to show who was getting sunk. Splinter groups played it in living-rooms and on table-tennis tables; three days after Iwo Jima fell, some Marines started a game in a Quonset hut; and after Japan surrendered, some occupation people staged a battle on the floor of the Diet (Japanese Houses of Parliament).

Pratt published a book about the game - long out of print - and the New York group met regularly in Caravan Hall, a big ballroom on East 59th Street. Everybody put 25c into a kitty to defray ballroom rent and beer, and the games often slugged long into the night. With great fleets fighting monthly, supplying sufficient ship models was always a problem. Pratt used to have model-building parties at which whittlers carved out whole classes of tiny warships in a night. Another problem was the vulnerability of balsa wood battleships to the human foot, and many branch wargames required players to take off their shoes!



The game flourished until 1946, then - partly because of rising ballroom rents, partly because Pratt had so many books going and mostly because Pratt's players had had such a belly-full of real life-sized war - it succumbed. There are still a few groups playing today, some are said to be in England, but nothing survives on the scale of those big, post-midnight clashes of mighty fleets in a big ballroom - great battles in which men were men and light cruisers were seven inches long!

(Reprinted from an article by Paul Mandel in SPORTS ILLUSTRATED for December 18th 1961).

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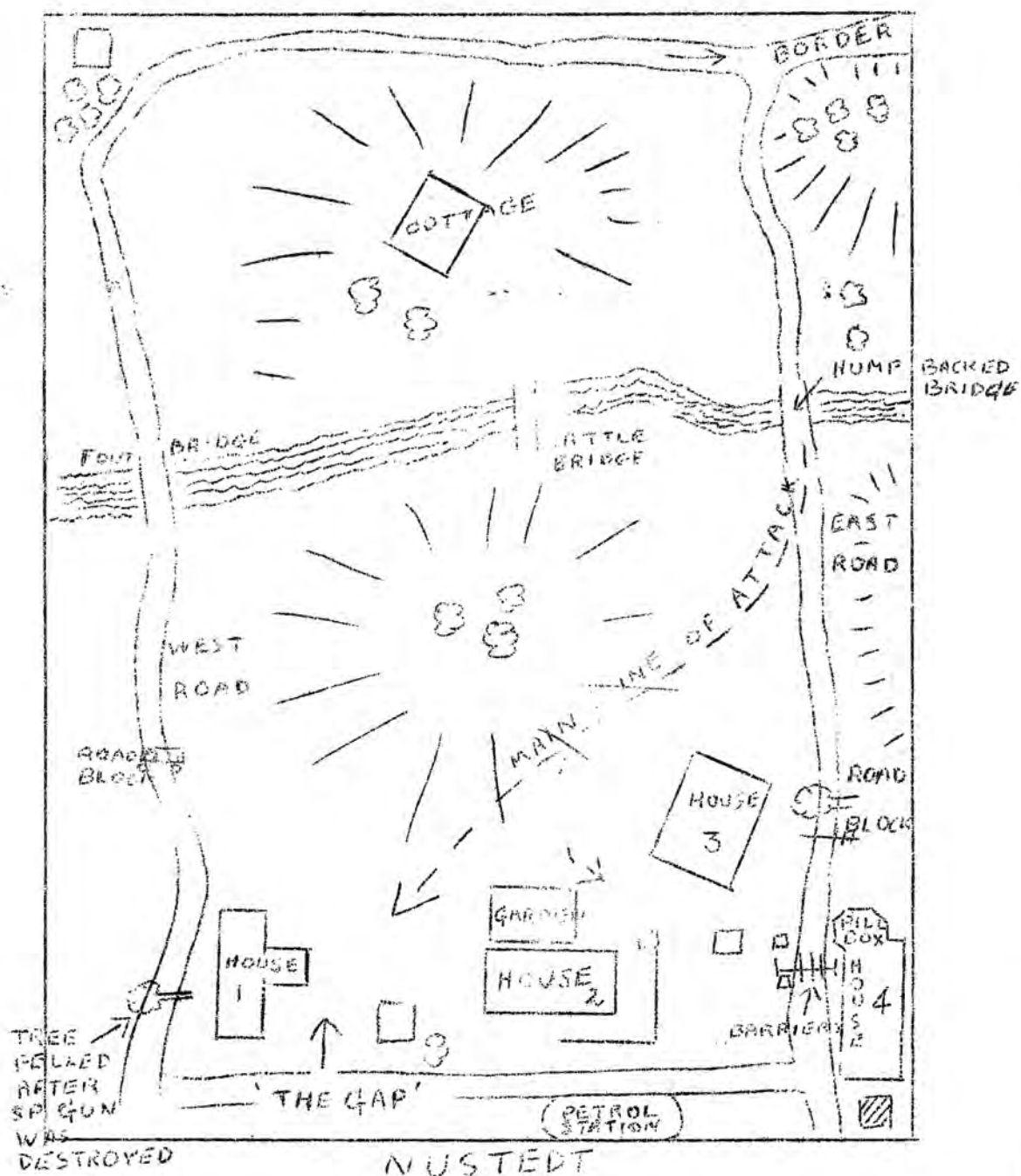
#### NAVAL AND AIR WAR GAMES.

With the toyshops abounding in brilliantly conceived and turned out plastic kits that make-up into scale models of just about all the well known aircraft and ships imaginable, it does seem an awful waste to just look at them and sigh - or else succumb to the lure, make them up and then leave them to just accumulate dust on a shelf.

The playing of wargames with these models is the answer- Fletcher Pratt would have given his eye-teeth to have been able to lay his hands on these models - but he had to make his own! Most of us go steely-eyed and look at the far distant horizon when we consider naval battles, I suppose its a part of our national heritage - how much better to fulfil ourselves and to command fleets on the high-seas and conquer or die in the attempt! They can be triremes or biremes of the Greeks and Romans, galleases and galleons of the Spanish Armada period, ships of the line - three-deckers - of Nelson's days, the tiny MONITOR and MERRIMAC can refight their epic battle, early ironclads may be incongruous in appearance but they fight well, and then we come to World War One - wouldn't you like to make up your own mind who won at Jutland? And in World War II there is the added and singular fascination of aircraft flying off carriers; of the hunt for the Bismark, the chasing of raiders and submarines. What a vista this spreads before one's eyes!

Air games seem difficult to carry out - you are quite correct-they are! But there are so many different and highly ingenious methods of making them perform over the battlefield that it is almost unbelievable. Like the warships, the aircraft can very ably be fitted into a campaign on land, using armies in active cooperation with them. There are scores of really first-class ideas possible in this field of combined operations - of course, with the aircraft one's periods are restricted to to fairly modern times although there is much of great interest in the part played by aircraft in early World War One.

With the invaluable assistance of these international wargamers who do already fight with ships and aircraft, two books have been written by Don Featherstone on the subjects of air and sea wargames.



## THE BATTLE OF NUSTEDT.

This is an account of a modern war game fought between Brian Baxter and Bill Gunson when Bill paid a flying visit to Germany about eighteen months ago. Rules used were a modified version of Carl Reavley's modern wargame rules published not long ago in War Game Digest.

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The Nordland army was alerted early on the morning of 28 September, 1961, when the anti-western propaganda broadcasts of Ostland Radio announced that "the time draws near when Kronlandia (a disputed border area) will be liberated by the glorious forces of the Peoples Republic of Ostland". Full scale mobilisation was begun when UN officials failed in their attempt to find a peaceful solution. But before the Nordland army could deploy the Ostland forces struck.

Air attacks soon reduced border towns to ruins and in the wake of the air attacks came probing attacks across the border by armoured columns. One armoured reconnaissance column, after a brief skirmish with border police, pressed on towards the important rail junction of Nustedt.

A warning was received from the border police and the village was occupied by the only Nordland forces in the area, a militia unit of 4 sections of infantry with a Regular army commander and support weapons section (one mortar and one medium machine gun). Also attached were four engineers, two Border Police Daimler Armoured cars and a section (two guns) of a Regular army Self-Propelled Anti-Tank Battery.

Minor fortifications had been begun previously and the main (East) road into the village was blocked by a concrete and steel barrier. The West road had no barrier as it petered out soon after leaving the village and became a track suitable only for jeeps.

One militia section occupied the pillbox and barrier, one set off to occupy the outlying "house 3", and the remaining sections, one in a requisitioned cattle truck, moved down the west road to form a road block where the road narrows. One armoured car was sited behind the barrier. The other supported the move down the west road. One SP A tk gun was sited by house 1, and the second in the gap between houses 1 and 2, which was later to become the scene of much fierce fighting.

The enemy, hoping to find the village unoccupied, moved swiftly down the road before the defending forces had finished deploying. Their forces comprised one scout car, three heavy armoured cars (Panhard), four armoured personnel carriers, each carrying a section of assault troopers, and a self-propelled heavy mortar.

The scout car, moving down the track towards the footbridge, was destroyed at very long range by an SP A tk gun. The enemy, now alerted, slowed down and began to seek out the opposition. They soon found it when the Daimler on the west road "sank" an APC as it tried to cross the river. First Nordland casualty was this Daimler brewed up by the leading Panhard firing its heavy 75 mm. gun from the East road.



Engineers who moved with the militia section to house 3 had successfully blocked the road with a tree and a telegraph pole, so the enemy armoured cars tried to cross behind house 3 and enter the village by the west road. As the leading Panhard emerged from behind house 3, the last man of the militia section occupying it was just running across the open ground to the house. As luck would have it, he wore the special badge on his fore arm of the "Pantserjaiger" (this word comes from the Nordland language; any resemblance to German is co-incidental!) or tank hunter. Each section has its tank hunter, who carries Energa A-tk grenades. This chap fitted and fired a grenade before the Ostlanders could swing the turret machine gun towards him. His grenade hit the turret, putting the vehicle out of action for some time.

This success was short-lived as enemy assault troopers began to dismount and attack house 3. The section there was forced to withdraw with heavy losses. As the enemy occupied the building it became the target of the Nordland mortar and was nearly flattened by the end of the battle.

As it became clear that the enemy were moving across to enter the western side of the village the SP gun by house 1 moved forward to support the two militia sections on the west road. As it moved out of the cover of house 1 it was destroyed by one of the Panhards attacking from house 3. The second SP gun moved through the gap and came into action. To block the west road a tree was felled by house 1.

The situation soon became critical as the enemy succeeded in brewing up the other Daimler behind the barrier. A heavy attack developed in the area of the gap as assault troopers with covering machine gun fire from their APCs and two Panhards tried to force their way into the village. The attack was broken up by flanking fire from the militia, entrenched now, on the west road. One Panhard and one APC fell to the Nordland SP gun before it in turn was destroyed.

Unaware that all the Nordland heavy support weapons were destroyed and seeing only his own heavy losses in men, the enemy withdrew to behind house 3 just at the point when he might easily have taken the village.

Just as the Nordland commander was preparing to withdraw his forward troops and was weighing up the possibility of withstanding another armoured onslaught, long awaited re-inforcements began to arrive. But help was coming too for the enemy.

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Re-inforcements half way through was part of the agreed plan for the game, but in the event we brought them on two moves in advance, or there would have been precious little for them to re-inforce!

AS 1.00 PM the 1st Nordland Airborne Battle Group (an HQ and 4 sections with 3 anti tank guns) motored into the village from the airstrip, an Ostland armoured infantry company was moving on the village - over 50 men in APCs.

The airborne troops, distinctive in their camouflage uniforms (3 colours and some painting job) moved into action quickly, anti tank guns to the fore. One 6 pounder was sited behind the barrier, one in the gap and one in reserve near the west road. A bazooka team also moved up to the barrier. The need for this soon became apparent as the enemy reinforcements were seen to include two more armoured cars and the one damaged early in the battle was now battleworthy again.

Sporadic fighting and mortar fire had reduced the strength of the militia on the west road to about one section. One of the four airborne sections was sent to re-inforce them, but was soon forced to withdraw under heavy fire.

A new attack was made from house 3 by surviving Ostland assault troopers, but was repulsed by airborne troops and the militia MMG. Thereafter the assault troopers were never strong enough to make an independant attack. But the fresh Ostland infantry were.

First a diversionary attack was made on the pillbox by an APC and a section of infantry. The bazooka team at the barrier demolished the APC, and men in the pillbox wiped out any survivors from it. But all this was of little consequence. The main attack was building up in the area of the gap. Infantry attacking from house 3 over-ran the 6 pounder in the gap before it could fire a shot. Although this sortie was repulsed by the airborne and militia troops in houses 1 and 2, the lead was flying too fast and furious for the gun to be retaken.

Realising that the village was still strongly held, the enemy commander, surveying his preponderance of armour and infantry, decided on a massive attack in the centre to split the Nordland forces and force a way through the village.

Before the reserve A tk gun could be brought into the gap, the enemy had arrived. Three armoured cars followed by APCs. As their armoured cars tried to move through the gap, the Ostland infantry dismounted and swept forward in a two pronged attack on each side of house 2.

Now came the climax of the battle. Fighting stubbornly, the airborne troops and surviving militia stopped two Panhards in the gap with A tk grenades and fire from a heavy machine gun using AP ammunition. But the defence was doomed. After a long duel the enemy mortar scored a direct hit on the Militia mortar. Now nothing could stop the sea of Ostland infantry swarming through and round house 2. With supporting fire from APC machine guns they decimated the troops defending the barrier, and to avoid being cut off the men in the pillbox were forced to withdraw. No longer in a position to fire at the enemy armour, the two surviving 6 pdrs were limbered up just as the order to withdraw came.

As the airborne troops piled out of house 1 and 2, enemy infantry poured through the gap. They were mowed down in a cross fire from troops withdrawing from each house in a fierce rear guard action in which officers, drivers, gunners and signallers took part, often at pistol range. The ferocity of this rearguard action caused such damage to the enemy morale that they were forced to withdraw from the gap, giving the Nordland survivors a chance to escape piled into heavily overloaded jeeps. With barriers still intact and the gap blocked by wrecked armoured cars and the troops' morale shattered in their hour of triumph, the Ostlanders were unable to give pursuit.

Despite the heavy losses (90% militia and 60% airborne), the enemy was given a severe mauling, and by the time he was in a position to advance further, a Nordland armoured group and another airborne battle group were bearing down on the village to retake it - which they did in a later game fought against Wally Langdon.

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Many useful lessons were learned from this game - mostly tactical - since these rules cover all eventualities and cannot easily be improved upon. The vulnerable unarmoured SP anti tank guns have been scrapped. The airborne troops now use handy wire guided anti tank missiles and have an airborne artillery battery of 75 mm. howitzers, and both airborne and militia groups have been built up to two full platoons, each of three sections of seven men. Looking at things from the other point of view, all attacking forces now have ample supporting fire, rockets or mortars, and they include engineers with weapons to demolish road-blocks and pillboxes. This game proved the success of the armour and armoured infantry combination. It is for consideration whether troops transported into the thick of the battle by APC and supported by its MG when they dismount need to have rifles, or whether the carbine (sub machine gun) with its superior firepower at close ranges, might not be better.

Many thanks to Bill Gunson, whose account of the battle - from the other side of the hill - was of great value in building up a complete picture of the game. Even so, I have written this account as the erstwhile Nordland commander.



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